

# Maypole School – Melville

8 Melville Avenue, South Croydon CR2 7HY

**Inspection date**

27 January 2026

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraph 2(1) to 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(g) to 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d) to 4*

- The proposed curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully sequenced. It is based on the national curriculum and builds from Year 1 to the end of key stage 4. Leaders have developed detailed curriculum plans, stored centrally, to support consistency and reduce staff workload. These plans build on established practice from the proprietor's existing Maypole schools.
- Post-16 pupils will typically access up to the key stage 4 curriculum due to their needs. However, leaders do have an appropriate key stage 5 curriculum in place should they need to use it. Leaders have carefully considered the importance of preparation for adulthood for these pupils. The proposed school intends to offer a range of experiences to develop their independence and readiness for adult living.
- The planned timetable prioritises English and mathematics alongside a wide range of other learning opportunities. Targeted support, including phonics and reading interventions, is built into the school day. Staff will include trained phonics practitioners, with further training planned before the school opens.
- Assessment arrangements are clear and staged. Leaders plan to prioritise pupils' emotional security and settling-in on entry, using informal baseline assessments before introducing more formal tracking. Where appropriate, early years guidance will be used to meet pupils at their developmental starting points. Individual targets will be woven into daily teaching, with progress reviewed continuously and shared regularly with parents.
- Leaders confirmed that teaching staff have already been recruited, with some currently working in the organisation's existing schools. This supports continuity and readiness. The proposed staffing model reflects the school's therapeutic approach. There will be very small groups, typically at least one-to-one support, and access to a multidisciplinary team.
- The school intends to admit up to 75 pupils aged five to 19, all with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) and education, health and care (EHC)

plans. The proposed provision is well matched to this group, with a strong focus on individualised learning, emotional regulation and therapeutic support.

- A clear therapeutic approach underpins the school's planning. This is rooted in nurture, trust and emotional safety, supported by staff training and reflective practice. Leaders described an in-house multidisciplinary team, with therapy integrated into the school day and strategies applied consistently by staff.
- The site provides extensive specialist accommodation, including spaces for small-group teaching, nurture provision, therapy and calm regulation. High staffing ratios and an 'eyes on' approach to supervision are planned. This will be supported by strong safeguarding systems, to ensure pupils are safe, supported and able to engage positively in learning.
- The proprietor has ensured that all relevant independent school standards (the standards) in part 1 are likely to be met.

## Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

### *Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)*

- The school plans to promote a clear ethos of fairness, respect and positive choices. The aim is for pupils to be encouraged to have a voice in school life through planned activities such as a pupil council, voting and discussion. Through personal, social and health education (PSHE) and daily routines, pupils will learn about rules, boundaries and why they matter. They will be supported to make choices, understand consent and develop self-advocacy skills in ways that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Respect for different cultures, faiths and beliefs will be promoted through inclusive teaching and the celebration of diversity.
- The school intends to operate with a strong nurturing and therapeutic approach, supported by high staff-to-pupil ratios and close, trusting relationships. This approach is designed to help pupils feel safe, valued and understood from the outset. Daily routines will focus on emotional wellbeing. This aims to support pupils to recognise and manage their feelings, reflect on behaviour and build confidence. Individual goals will be reviewed regularly. Families will be closely involved to support pupils' self-esteem.
- Pupils will be supported to understand right and wrong and to take responsibility for their actions. Teaching will be adapted to pupils' cognitive and emotional needs. It may include social stories, reflection time and clear, consistent explanations. Staff plan to use calm, restorative approaches so pupils can learn from situations in a supportive and structured way.
- The proposed curriculum and wider school life aims to encourage pupils to develop independence, responsibility and initiative at a pace that is appropriate to their needs. Pupils will have opportunities to contribute positively through classroom communities, pupil voice activities and real-world learning. For older pupils, there will be a clear focus on preparation for adulthood and participation in wider society.
- The school's planned inclusive ethos, curriculum content and calendar of events are intended to promote understanding and appreciation of pupils' own cultures and those of others. Teaching across the curriculum will aim to support pupils to develop respect

for diversity, while daily practice will reinforce kindness, acceptance and positive relationships.

- Respect for others, including people with different backgrounds and characteristics, will be embedded through school policies, curriculum planning and everyday practice. Teaching about relationships, identity and respect will be delivered sensitively and, where appropriate, in partnership with parents.
- Pupils will be encouraged to take part in age- and stage-appropriate decision-making, such as voting or contributing through a pupil council. They will be taught how to express their views respectfully, listen to others and understand that different opinions exist.
- The school will not promote political views. If political topics arise, they will be presented in a balanced and neutral way, allowing pupils to explore ideas safely and appropriately, without pressure or influence.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in part 2 are likely to be met.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), 9 to 16(b)*

- The proprietor has planned strong safeguarding arrangements to protect and promote pupils' welfare from the point the school opens. A comprehensive safeguarding and child protection policy is already in place. It is published on the school website and reviewed regularly. The policy reflects national guidance and clearly sets out staff roles, responsibilities and procedures.
- The intention is for safeguarding to be everyone's responsibility. Designated safeguarding leads and clear reporting systems will support this. The aim is for there to be a strong culture of vigilance. Staff will receive thorough safeguarding training before opening and regular updates thereafter, so they know how to recognise concerns and act promptly. These arrangements are designed to ensure pupils feel safe, supported and listened to.
- The proprietor plans to promote positive behaviour through a clear written behaviour policy. This sets out expectations, support strategies and sanctions where behaviour is inappropriate and reflects the school's therapeutic and nurturing approach. The focus is on helping pupils understand their behaviour, develop self-regulation and make positive choices.
- The behaviour policy will be implemented by trained staff, with an emphasis on restorative approaches rather than punishment. The school plans to keep appropriate records of serious incidents and any sanctions used, enabling leaders to monitor patterns and ensure pupils receive suitable support.
- The school plans to prevent bullying as far as reasonably practicable through a clear anti-bullying strategy. This includes teaching through PSHE, close supervision, strong staff-pupil relationships and prompt action when concerns arise. Pupils will be taught how to seek help. Staff will be trained to recognise and respond to bullying, including online and peer-on-peer concerns.
- Robust health and safety arrangements are already in place through a detailed written policy that sets out responsibilities, training, checks and reporting procedures. These

systems are already operating within the building. They are intended to continue once the school opens, supporting compliance with health and safety legislation.

- Fire risk assessments have been completed by an external provider. Fire safety equipment is installed and checked regularly. Evacuation procedures are in place. Fire drills are planned to take place routinely.
- The proprietor intends to ensure that first aid is provided promptly and competently. There is a written first-aid policy. Staff will be appropriately trained. First-aid equipment will be readily available. Clear procedures are in place to ensure pupils receive immediate care and parents are informed when required.
- Pupils will be carefully supervised through high staffing ratios and thoughtful deployment of staff. The proposed model includes very small classes and typically at least one-to-one support, supported by clear risk assessments and structured routines. These arrangements are designed to keep pupils safe at all times, including during transitions, unstructured periods and arrival and departure.
- The proprietor plans to maintain admission and attendance registers in line with statutory requirements. Systems are in place to record attendance accurately, monitor patterns and support safeguarding and engagement with education.
- A comprehensive risk assessment policy has been developed. This is alongside a wide range of specific risk assessments covering pupil movement, transport, activities, health and safety and safeguarding risks, including mixed-age provision. These risk assessments will be reviewed regularly. Where risks are identified, appropriate and timely action will be taken to reduce them.
- The proprietor has ensured that all relevant standards in part 3 are likely to be met.

#### Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

*Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3) to 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c) to 21(8)*

- The single central record (SCR) is already set up and clearly structured for staff, governors, agency staff and consultants. All central team members are included on the SCR across all three schools. Sampling of recently appointed staff shows that checks are thorough. These cover verification of identity, original qualifications, enhanced DBS checks, right to work documentation and two references, including from the most recent employer. Additional overseas checks are completed where relevant, including police checks for staff with overseas history. Section 128 checks are in place for all leaders and are seen.
- The SCR is checked at least half-termly by the head of school and directors.
- The proprietor has ensured that all relevant standards in part 4 are likely to be met.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraphs 23(1) to 24(1)(b), 24(2) to 29(1)(b)*

- The school building is large and well suited to the proposed capacity of up to 75 pupils. All renovation work has been completed to a high standard, with modern facilities throughout that are appropriate for a specialist school. The building is clean, well maintained and welcoming. Classrooms are light, spacious and organised so that

each pupil will have their own work area. Furniture has already been purchased and is suitable for pupils' ages and needs, helping to create calm, orderly learning spaces.

- The site includes a wide range of breakout, nurture and therapy spaces, which are well designed for small-group and individual work. The layout supports effective safeguarding, with clear separation of areas and controlled access so that pupils of different ages are supervised appropriately. Classrooms and key areas will be accessed using staff-controlled keys and fobs, ensuring oversight and safety.
- Health and safety arrangements within the building are robust. Fire safety equipment is in place and regularly checked. Fire exits are clearly marked and well lit. Door systems are designed to release automatically in the event of a fire alarm. The school has an appropriate number of toilets for pupils, which are new, clean and well maintained, with separate facilities for staff. Safe handwashing arrangements are in place, with warm water at appropriate temperatures and clearly marked drinking water points.
- The school also benefits from a large hall suitable for assemblies and indoor activities, along with ample outdoor space to support physical education and social times. For older pupils, appropriate changing facilities and showers are available. Overall, the premises are well planned and provide a safe, comfortable and supportive environment for pupils if the school opens.
- The proprietor has ensured that all relevant standards in part 5 are likely to be met.

#### Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(1)(c), 32(1)(e) to 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii) to 32(5)*

- The proprietor plans to provide all required information to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on request. The school's website is already live and includes key policies, with arrangements in place to supply further information promptly when requested.
- Required policies, including safeguarding and complaints, are already published and kept up to date on the school website. Once the school has been inspected, any inspection report will be published on the website and shared with parents within required timescales.
- Parents will be provided with an annual written report on their child's progress and attainment in the main subjects taught, unless they agree otherwise. This will be supported by regular communication and review meetings throughout the year.
- Where pupils are funded wholly or partly by a local authority, the school plans to provide annual financial information as required. For pupils with EHC plans, the school will supply all information needed to support annual reviews.
- The website includes the school's contact details, leadership and proprietor information, and a clear statement of ethos and aims. Policies covering admissions, behaviour, safeguarding, SEND provision and complaints will be available to parents.
- The proprietor has ensured that all relevant standards in part 6 are likely to be met.

#### Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

*Paragraphs 33 to 33(k)*

- The complaints policy includes staged resolution, timescales, written responses, and escalation arrangements including a panel stage. The maintenance and availability of a written record of complaints and outcomes are made explicit.
- The proprietor has ensured that all relevant standards in part 7 are likely to be met.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34(1) to 34(1)(c)*

- The evidence indicates that the proprietor has appointed leaders with appropriate experience, skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles effectively. Senior leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the independent school standards. This is informed by their experience of leading two existing Maypole schools that are already evaluated positively at inspection. Leaders have engaged in relevant training, including updates on inspection frameworks. They will draw on shared systems and expertise across the group to support consistent compliance.
- Leaders are likely to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Clear leadership structures are in place, with defined roles, regular leadership meetings, and strong central oversight of safeguarding, staffing, policies and compliance. During the inspection activity, leaders responded promptly and appropriately to feedback by updating policies and producing additional risk assessments, demonstrating effective oversight and the capacity to ensure standards are met consistently.
- Leaders actively plan to promote pupils' well-being, as defined by the Children Act 2004, through a therapeutic and nurturing school model. High staff-to-pupil ratios, integrated therapeutic support, strong safeguarding arrangements and close partnership working with families are central to the proposed provision. Leaders' planning and policies place clear emphasis on pupils' physical and mental health, emotional security, positive relationships and preparation for adulthood, indicating that pupils' well-being will be a core priority from opening.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- All arrangements are made to fulfil duties under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Proposed school details

Unique reference number	152315
DfE registration number	306/6041
Inspection number	10431733

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent day school
Proprietor	Maypole Therapeutic Education Ltd
Chair	Adrienne Cherrywood
Headteacher	Kitty Clark
Annual fees (day pupils)	£65,00 to £100,000
Telephone number	07955 286 016
Website	<a href="http://www.maypoleschool.co.uk">www.maypoleschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:acherrywood@maypoleschool.co.uk">acherrywood@maypoleschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 19	5 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	75	75

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	75

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	75
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	75
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	75

### Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	80
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0

### Information about this proposed school

- Maypole School – Melville intends to register as an independent special day school in Croydon. The site is at 8 Melville Avenue, South Croydon CR2 7HY.
- Leaders intend to open the school in April 2026 to pupils with EHC plans for their SEND needs. The needs catered for include cognitive and learning; speech, language and communication; autistic spectrum disorder; social, emotional and mental health; multi-sensory impairment; moderate learning difficulty; severe learning difficulty; and specific learning difficulty.
- The proprietor has two other independent special day schools, Maypole School Sunbury-on-Thames and Leigham Court.
- The headteacher listed is the executive headteacher. As well as this, there will be two co-heads of school.
- Leaders may make use of alternative provision, such as further education colleges for older pupils and sixth-form students.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspection was conducted with two days' notice.
- The inspector met with a group of senior leaders, including the proposed school's executive headteacher and the chair of the proprietor body.
- The inspector toured the premises and considered a range of evidence to check the likelihood of the proposed school meeting all the standards.

## Inspection team

Aliki Constantopoulou, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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