

Options College Stoke

28 February 2017

Phoenix House, Marlborough Road, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST3 1EJ

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 1, 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(c), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(f), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- The school has a distinct policy that presents a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils currently on roll. Scrutiny of plans shows evidence of a clear awareness of the needs of key stage 2 pupils. Based on the current good practice for older pupils, the curriculum is likely to meet the needs of younger pupils included in the material change.
- The policy includes an explicit statement for personal, social and health education. These aspects are included in the planned timetables, to ensure that the individual learning needs of pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans are fully met. Planned schemes of work reflect the appropriate national requirements for pupils in key stage 2.
- The school has reviewed the curriculum annually to evaluate its effectiveness and plans to continue the process to ensure that it meets the academic and pastoral needs of younger pupils. Teaching staff have received curriculum training for key stage 2.
- Effective assessment procedures are in place for all aspects of the curriculum. Currently, the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, who form a large proportion of those on roll, is assessed meticulously. As a result, teachers, parents and carers have a well-informed view of their progress. The school plans to use similar systems to monitor the progress of key stage 2 pupils, should the material change be approved.
- The school is aware of the expected progression of pupils through the key stages. The planned curriculum is likely to effectively prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education and for life in modern Britain.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) agrees to approve implementation of the material changes.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j)

- The headteacher and the proposed lead teacher for key stage 2 demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the range of subjects to be taught to younger pupils. They showed evidence of an approach that aims to present subjects in an interesting way that is relevant to the particular needs of the pupils to be enrolled at the school.
- Plans are in place to ensure that appropriate resources will be provided to meet the needs of the key stage 2 pupils. Planning sheets refer to specific materials to be purchased. Clear lesson planning is in place which is designed to meet the needs of pupils. Careful consideration is given to planned lesson activities and the management of class time.
- The proprietor and headteacher provided substantial information to demonstrate that the standards relating to the quality and impact of teaching are likely to be met if the school admits key stage 2 pupils. Currently, regular evaluations of teaching are undertaken and there are plans to extend the practice to those teachers likely to teach younger pupils.
- The company has built strong links with other schools and providers and learns from good practice in other settings. As a result, the school is able to build effectively on the prior learning of pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE agrees to approve the implementation of the material changes.

Paragraph 4

- A clear framework for pupil performance is in place, enabling the school to effectively assess the progress of pupils, and it will be used to measure the progress of those to be admitted if the material changes are approved. An assessment policy clearly details how information about progress is shared with teachers, parents and carers and it is envisaged that these procedures will also be implemented for key stage 2 pupils, should the material change be approved.
- It is planned that information about the prior attainment and pastoral progress of younger pupils will be gathered to indicate their abilities, aptitudes and skills.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE agrees to approve the implementation of the material changes.

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

Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)

- The school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance. References are clear in the curriculum policy, with details of how they are incorporated into schemes of work and events in the school. The school places great emphasis upon pupils developing personal responsibility.
- The headteacher and key stage 2 leader demonstrated good knowledge and awareness of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural policy and illustrated well-planned links with the personal, social and health education curriculum and planned

activities for younger pupils. It links well with the curriculum in place for older pupils and provides effective continuity.

- Pupils who have complex behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are admitted to the school. Themed throughout the policies and planned schemes of work are well-informed references to the building of self-confidence and the encouragement of self-esteem, planned to enable pupils to maximise their potential.
- A wide range of visitors to the school and visits to places of interest support the development of pupils. Strong links with the local community provide opportunities for pupils to engage and participate in events, for example recent fundraising to support Macmillan Nurses. It is envisaged that younger pupils will be included in the activities.
- Religious education is provided through well-planned schemes of work. Appropriate resources support the curriculum and the progression of pupils through the planned age ranges. The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE agrees to approve the implementation of the material changes.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- An appropriate range of policies are in place to ensure the safety of key stage 2 pupils, should they be admitted to the school. They are coordinated with those for older pupils currently on roll. The policies include safeguarding and child protection, health and safety, complaints, risk assessment and first aid. All policies have regard to current guidance issued by the government.
- The safeguarding policy is published on the school website and is readily accessible to parents, carers and other stakeholders.
- The headteacher is the designated safeguarding lead and procedures are in place to ensure that all staff have undertaken appropriate training for safeguarding and first aid.
- Strategies for behaviour management are identified in the school's behaviour policy, and include pupils in key stage 2. A separate anti-bullying policy expresses a clear view that bullying in any form is not tolerated.
- The school's health and safety policy identifies the regular checks undertaken and what actions will be taken to remedy any defects that might be identified. During the refurbishment of the new building, health and safety has been regularly monitored and reports evaluated by the headteacher and governors.
- Fire safety checks have been consistently monitored throughout the building works, with a programme clearly planned to ensure that the school conforms to all statutory legislation associated with fire risks when the building is opened for use.
- The school is acutely aware of the welfare and safety needs of its pupils. It takes great care to ensure appropriate levels of staffing to ensure the safety of pupils, with full regard for their complex needs.
- The risk assessment policy ensures that detailed risk assessments are undertaken for individual pupils and for activities in the school and during any visits outside the school. Evidence of recorded actions illustrates how effectively the school deals with

issues raised, for example changes made to the building plans to ensure the safety of pupils of all ages.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE agrees to approve the implementation of the material changes.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Paragraphs 17, 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(2)(f), 18(3), 18(4), 18(4)(a), 18(4)(b), 18(4)(c), 19(1), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(2)(e), 19(3), 19(4), 19(4)(a), 19(4)(b), 19(4)(c), 20(1), 20(2), 20(3), 20(3)(a), 20(3)(a)(i), 20(3)(a)(ii), 20(3)(b), 20(3)(b)(i), 20(3)(b)(ii), 20(3)(b)(iii), 20(4), 20(5), 20(5)(a), 20(5)(a)(i), 20(5)(a)(ii), 20(5)(b), 20(5)(b)(i), 20(5)(b)(ii), 20(5)(b)(iii), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 20(7), 20(7)(a), 20(7)(b), 20(8), 20(8)(a), 20(8)(b), 20(8)(c), 20(9), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b), 21(8)

- The school's single central register provides evidence of appropriate checks carried out on all staff. Appropriate checks ensure the checking of identity, medical fitness and the right to work in the United Kingdom. Enhanced criminal record checks have been undertaken appropriately.
- The school engages an agency to provide appropriately qualified supply staff and all relevant procedures are followed to ensure the vetting of staff by the agency.
- The school's policy is to ensure that appropriate checks are made for all who serve as governors and all staff employed by the parent company, Options Ltd.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE agrees to approve the implementation of the material changes.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22, 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 23(2), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 24(2), 24(3), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b), 29(2), 30, 31, 31(a), 31(b), 31(c)

- The material changes request includes the intention to relocate from the current school building to refurbished accommodation on another site. A full site inspection was undertaken to ensure its fitness for purpose.
- Throughout the refurbishment of the building, a full range of detailed health and safety checks have been undertaken and documented. Final checks are planned to ensure that the building is safe when it is made available to the school from 12 March 2017.
- Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils, with separate facilities for girls and boys. Disabled facilities are provided, which are also accessible to others, whether or not they are disabled. There is an adequate supply

of hot and cold water to meet the needs of users.

- A large, well-resourced room is provided to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, and it also provides for the medical examination and treatment of pupils.
- A large proportion of pupils currently on roll and those to be admitted, should the material changes be approved, have a range of complex needs. The building is designed to fully meet the needs and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils.
- The acoustic conditions have been tested to ensure that they have full regard to the requirements of the activities to be undertaken. Internal and external lighting fully meet requirements. The external lighting ensures that people can safely enter and leave the building.
- Well-resourced and landscaped outdoor areas are likely to enable pupils to play and to reflect. Areas are designed to meet any special requirements resulting from the complex difficulties experienced by pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE agrees to approve the implementation of the material changes.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c), 34(2)

- The proprietor and headteacher demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of the pupils for whom a material change has been requested. The evidence of existing provision for the 11- to 19-year-old pupils indicates a high quality of care. Through their links with other schools and agencies, they have developed their good practice and now have a clear vision and purpose to extend provision into the thoughtfully designed new accommodation.
- Appropriate systems are in place to ensure that the independent school standards are met and are likely to be met, should the material changes be approved. The headteacher demonstrates a good understanding of what needs to be done to ensure that policies for the younger pupils are effectively implemented.
- Policies for safeguarding, child protection and health and safety are given a high priority and effectively include all pupils. The well-being and safety of pupils are evident in curriculum planning for key stage 2.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE agrees to approve the implementation of the material changes.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an appropriate equality policy which meets the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act. For example, the access and egress requirements for the youngest pupils have been checked and there is relevant provision for disabled pupils. Full consideration has been given to the promotion of equality in the new school building. The behaviour and bullying policies ensure that those who have protected characteristics are defended against discrimination and detail how pupils will be taught to understand and practise tolerance and respect.

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 that are relevant to the material change.

School Details

Unique reference number	136220
DfE registration number	861/6004
Inspection number	10026728

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Day special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Options Group Ltd
Chair	Jarrold Elcock
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Caswell
Annual fees (day pupils)	£68,900
Telephone number	01782 320 773
Website	optionscollegestoke.co.uk
Email address	karen.caswell@optionsbesd.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	2 December 2014

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 19	7 to 19	7 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	10	30	30

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	9	30
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	9	30
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	7	30
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	9	30

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	16
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	5
Number of staff in the welfare provision	3	5

Information about this school

- Options College Stoke is currently located in a mixed residential and commercial area of Longton, Stoke-on-Trent. It is owned by Options Group Ltd and currently provides full-time education for up to 15 pupils in the age range of 11 to 19. Currently there are nine pupils on roll.

- At its last inspection, in December 2014, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school admits pupils who have complex behavioural, emotional and social difficulties from a number of local authorities. Most of the pupils are children looked after by a local authority and almost all have an EHC plan. None of the pupils is disabled.
- The school aims to meet the specific learning and pastoral needs of its pupils and to support their educational and personal development. It aspires to enable them to meet their full potential and to become independent members of the community.
- Should further pupils be admitted as a result of the material change application, appropriate further appointments will be made to the staff of the school.

Information about this inspection

- The school is currently registered for pupils aged 11 to 19 years old and has applied for a material change to be registered for pupils aged seven to 19 years old. In addition, the school wishes to increase the maximum number of pupils on roll from 15 to 30.
- The school currently operates from premises in Phoenix House, Marlborough Road, Longton. It proposes to move to fully refurbished accommodation in a former day-care centre at Heron Cross House, Grove Road, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 3AY. The building is due to be commissioned and handed over on 12 March 2017.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the newly appointed key stage 2 leader and the chair of governors, and toured the proposed new premises.
- School policies and other documents were examined to check compliance with the independent school standards and to check whether the request for material change was supported by school documentation.
- Information relating to safeguarding was also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Michael Onyon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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