

# Options Trent Acres School

Alrewas Road, Kings Bromley, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE13 7HR

## Inspection dates

5 December 2017

### 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 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)(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)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j) and 4*

- School leaders have developed a curriculum policy that is clear and detailed. This policy and the associated schemes of work take into account the different ages, aptitudes and needs of the pupils that the school leaders plan to admit.
- The curriculum plan covers all the required areas of learning and provides opportunities for prospective pupils to develop speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. The programme for personal, social, health and economic education supports the school's aims to develop a positive and nurturing school ethos and promotes democracy, respect and acceptance of people with different protected characteristics. The intended curriculum also includes opportunities for working with and caring for the school's animals, and to learn life skills such as how to make a bed, do the laundry and tackle household budgeting. Careers education is planned to begin in key stage 2 and extend throughout the school. Through careful and detailed planning, the school is preparing to enable its future pupils to develop into socially skilled and confident young people.
- Staff training has been carefully structured to potentially achieve consistency in implementing policies and procedures. This includes preparing risk assessments, addressing safeguarding issues and planning for learners with autistic spectrum disorders. Staff have received information about assessment practice and how to use information effectively. They have continued to work in local schools, which has maintained their classroom skills while they wait for pupils to be admitted to Options Trent Acres School.
- The school's assessment, recording and reporting procedures are clear and familiar, having been in place for previous cohorts and used in other schools within the parent company. Pupils' starting points for academic and personal development are to be assessed on entry and this information is to be used to produce personalised

interventions and learning plans. The school is to use established methods to track each pupil's learning journey. Plans for close monitoring and regular reviews of pupils' progress have the potential to enable curriculum adjustments to occur at an early stage so that pupils can make the most of their time at the school.

- The school's equalities policy sets clear expectations for teachers to match learning to pupils' educational, social and emotional needs.
- It was not possible to observe any teaching or plans for lessons because the proposed school does not yet have any pupils enrolled at the school. However, the school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard because preparation is very knowledgeable, detailed and thorough.

## 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) and 5(d)(iii)*

- All staff received training in September 2017 in promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This has enabled staff to identify spiritual, moral, social and cultural strands in their subject area and incorporate them into their subject policies. They have identified which activities actively promote these aspects of pupils' development. Consequently, planning for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Similarly, preparation for promoting fundamental British values has also been the subject of staff training. The house system is closely aligned to the promotion of British values with each house represented by a significant landmark and positive characteristics. For example, one house has the Shard hotel as its landmark symbol and one characteristic is that 'It's good to be different.' In this way, pupils will get a daily subtle reminder of what it is to be British.
- The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities which includes sports, art and crafts, looking after animals, gardening and riding. Educational trips are to be supplemented with leisure activities and pupils are to be encouraged to develop interests outside of school.
- The school has a small library that is arranged so that pupils can sit comfortably to read. The school has links with a larger local library which pupils will be taken to and can use. In this way, pupils are likely to have opportunities to improve both reading and social skills.
- Next to the school is a Buddhist temple and retreat. Leaders have established a link with the establishment which has previously supported and enriched the curriculum. Leaders hope that pupils will learn to welcome and appreciate a different faith and culture.
- The school has adopted the national 'No platform for extremism' as a policy document for dealing with radicalisation and extremism. Staff have received training and are required to sign to say they understand their responsibilities under this policy. As a result, leaders have prepared staff for identifying potential risks and for educating pupils against the risks. Staff have also been trained to ensure that inappropriate materials are not brought into school, thus working to keep pupils safe.

- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard for the pupils it plans to admit.

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

*Paragraphs 6, 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)*

- Safeguarding has a high profile in this school. The arrangements are extensive and thorough. A suitable policy is published on the school's website. It includes indicators and symptoms of abuse to guide staff in recognising potential safeguarding issues and incorporates clearly set-out systems for how concerns are to be managed, recorded and reported. The policy follows the most recent national guidance and is comprehensive.
- The single central register demonstrates that all the required checks on staff have been carried out.
- School leaders have developed a range of policies designed to keep children safe at school, and plans to teach children about how to keep themselves safe. This approach contributes to keeping the working environment as safe as it can be, and aids the development of pupils' personal skills.
- Staff training has been extensive and included safeguarding and therapeutic interventions, ensuring staff are well prepared for the complex issues the proposed intake of pupils may present.
- The school has developed a well-constructed anti-bullying policy which links with current national documents. The school's behaviour policy is suitable and appropriate and includes safe sanctions that may be imposed on pupils as a result of misbehaviour. It also addresses the use of safe restraint.
- Health and safety policies are also detailed and thorough, aimed at keeping the site and those that use it or visit it safe. Audits have informed planning, and regular risk assessments and checks of the site, utilities and facilities help to keep the environment safe for all.
- Each classroom and teaching space has a poster detailing who the designated first aiders are, and the first aid policy details where first aid equipment is located.
- The school has templates for recording admissions and registering pupils.
- Risk assessment is a core activity in keeping children safe and enabling inclusion. Leaders have developed a comprehensive policy and staff interpret this effectively.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard because safety and safeguarding are high profile features in policy, planning and implementation.

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

*Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2), 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) and 29(1)(b)*

- The accommodation is well maintained, attractive, clean and hygienic throughout.

- The facilities are all on the ground floor level and are attractive and well-appointed. Classrooms are bright and welcoming, and some have quiet spaces within them which enable safe withdrawal when classroom pressures threaten to overwhelm anxious pupils. This arrangement increases flexibility in managing the learning and behaviours of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and social, emotional and mental health needs. All classrooms are well resourced and enabled for the use of modern media which extends teaching and learning opportunities.
- Outside facilities have the potential to broaden the curriculum, and are also maintained to a high standard.
- The combined facilities create a school with ample space for the pupils that it plans to admit.
- Toilet facilities are adequate for the pupils that the school proposes to admit. There are separate toilets for boys and girls provided for primary-aged pupils and the secondary phase has gender-free, disabled-enabled facilities that can be secured from the inside. The school's supervision arrangements should ensure that these facilities are used by one pupil at a time.
- The acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each teaching space are suitable and appropriate for the activities that are planned to take place in them and the temperature of classrooms is maintained at a comfortable level.
- Drinking water is supplied and clearly labelled and toilet facilities have adequate supplies of hot and cold water. The temperature of the hot water does not present a scalding risk and is checked weekly to ensure this.
- The school has a dedicated medical room which meets requirements.
- The school site is secure. All visitors have to report to the main reception once the electric gates have been opened for them. No access is authorised without the proper clearances.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard.

## Part 6. Provision of information

### *Paragraphs 32(1) and 32(1)(c)*

- The school has posted its safeguarding policy and school prospectus on the school website. Leaders have ensured that the required information is readily available to parents. If internet access is not available to parents then hard copies can be obtained from the school on request.

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

### *Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)*

- School leaders have invested their own expertise, experience, and detailed knowledge of the special educational needs of the pupils they plan to admit into training staff. They have developed a detailed and comprehensive framework of policies and procedures through which they intend to shape practice.
- The headteacher works closely with proprietors and has secured a substantial investment in the school. Proprietors support and challenge the school effectively.

- The headteacher has a strong and clear vision for the school and has developed positive working relationships with the school staff, the local authority and other agencies. She has effectively demonstrated a detailed knowledge of, and shown the skills necessary to effectively implement, the independent standards consistently.
- The work of the headteacher, staff and proprietors collectively promote and hold to account the safety and well-being of pupils.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school meets the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 as accessibility planning is in place, incorporated in the school development plan.

## **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	131004
DfE registration number	860/6029
Inspection number	10043277

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
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Options Autism (4) Limited
CEO	Graham Baker
Headteacher	Mrs Melanie Callaghan-Lewis
Annual fees (day pupils)	£90,467.77
Telephone number	01543 473 772
Website	<a href="http://www.optionsautism.co.uk/school_home/options-trent-acres/">www.optionsautism.co.uk/school_home/options-trent-acres/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:melanie.callaghan-lewis@hillcrestcs.co.uk">melanie.callaghan-lewis@hillcrestcs.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	26–28 January 2016

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	12 to 19	8 to 18	8 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	5	21	30

The school site has seven operational and well-resourced classrooms in addition to outside facilities that include a covered riding (equestrian) facility, games areas and gym, and horticultural facilities. The school also utilises facilities at a local indoor gym and sixth-form pupils have access to college courses and placements if these suit their needs. Staffing ratios are high and pupils are likely to be well supported. Provided that the behaviour of pupils and their learning needs are met effectively, and the planning

indicates that this would be so, the additional increase should support the development of interpersonal skills.

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Girls	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	30
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	0	30 (max)
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	0	30 (max)
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	0	30

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	7	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	4 (Teaching assistants – education). There is also the potential for additional staffing, dependent on the identified needs of pupils.  2 (Care assistants)



## Information about this school

- Options Trent Acres School is a small, special independent day school located in the rural village of Kings Bromley, Staffordshire. It is one of seven schools that are run by a parent company called Options Autism (4) Limited.
- The school is housed in refurbished former farm buildings with security gated access. In addition to a range of different sized and well-equipped classrooms and learning spaces, pupils benefit from extensive external facilities which include play and games areas, a gym, equestrian facilities, gardens and animal husbandry.
- Options Trent Acre School was offering integrated care, education and clinical services to girls aged between 12 and 19 with a range of learning and social needs. Currently, there are no pupils registered at the school while the school waits for the outcomes of its application to change the age range of pupils and to become co-educational.
- The school is proposing to offer education to boys and girls between the ages of eight and 18 with autism spectrum disorder, complex needs and learning difficulties.
- The school does not have a religious ethos.
- Pupils will be placed at the school by a range of local authorities.
- The school was inspected in January 2016, when a number of independent school standards were not met. A new headteacher was then appointed and at the last progress monitoring and emergency inspection on 13 September 2016, all of the independent school standards were judged to be met.

## Information about this inspection

- Ofsted carried out this inspection at the request of the registration authority, the Department for Education, under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The school applied for a material change in respect of proposals to change the age range of pupils to eight to 18 years of age and to become co-educational.
- This inspection was conducted in one day, with two days' notice.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the company's head of service, teachers, and the school administrator.
- No teaching was observed because the school has not admitted any pupils while it awaits the decision of the Department for Education on the proposed material changes.
- A range of documents were examined in relation to the independent school standards. These included, policies, schemes of work, audits, risk assessments, the school development and accessibility plan, templates for assessment, recording and reporting, historical data to illustrate how the templates were used, staff's training certificates, the school prospectus and information the school intends to supply to prospective parents. The school's website, safeguarding policy and single central register were also checked.
- The inspector, with the headteacher, also checked the internal and external facilities against the independent school standards.

## Inspection team

Elizabeth Ellis-Martin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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