

Aurora Hanley School

Cambrian Way, Eaves Lane, Stoke-on-Trent ST2 8PQ

Inspection dates

22 January 2018

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

- Since the last inspection in June 2017, the school has opened and admitted 20 pupils during the course of its first term.
- The policies and schemes of work are now being implemented for the benefit of the school's pupils.
- Pupils have settled well because the support and pastoral arrangements are effective and, as a result, positive relationships are developing.
- Assessment is used to identify baseline levels and inform planning. Resilience is fragile in some learners and staff have been careful not to overextend pupils while trust and confidence is established. However, for some pupils the work set lacks challenge.
- School leaders have addressed the issue of planning for a sixth form. They have identified three basic curriculum pathways, which incorporate taking GCSE examinations later than 16, A/AS-level qualifications, vocational qualifications and experiences and supported placements at the school and/or at colleges. This has the potential to enable pupils to progress to further and higher education at a rate that is more suited to their rate of development.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard.

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)

- The ethos of the school is embedded in the equalities agenda. Staff model polite and respectful behaviour and pupils mirror this most of the time.
- The curriculum plans and lesson planning incorporates spiritual, moral, social and

cultural development of pupils and this also extends to the proposed sixth form arrangements.

- During the inspection, pupils were discussing plans for a trip next term. They understood that they would be taking an important part in making the arrangements but that responsibilities, including managing risk, also featured in the planning. They were excited by the prospect of being involved and also made some sensible observations.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 6, 7, 7(a), 7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- School leaders have developed a suitable safeguarding policy which is published on the school's website.
- The school's policies and arrangements to promote the welfare of pupils continue to be thorough and are implemented effectively. The vast majority of pupils feel safe at the school. The minority of pupils who said they did not feel safe were known to the headteacher. She knew who the pupils were and why they felt the way they did. It usually related to new pupils who were still building relationships with other pupils in their class.
- Pupils' behaviour was good during the inspection because expectations were high, inappropriate behaviour was appropriately challenged and staff were deployed effectively in lessons and around the school during lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Health and safety audits and logbooks continue to show that equipment and premises safety checks are routinely carried out and site safety is effectively maintained.
- Risk assessments are effective and staff complete them for teaching, behaviour issues and event management. In this way, school leaders ensure that risk is reduced as much as possible and pupils are kept as safe as possible.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard.

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

Paragraphs 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(3), 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(3), 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), 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)(a)(viii), 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) and 21(7)(b)

- The single central register is up to date, and all the required checks are carried out systematically.
- Staff files illustrated the suitable and effective use of safer recruitment procedures.
- The administrator clearly understands the procedures and processes, and is well organised.

- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard because the procedures are clearly understood and continue to be implemented appropriately.

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(1)(c), 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 condition of the school environment continues to be clean, attractive and welcoming.
- The school's teaching accommodation is currently being extended. The new accommodation is almost ready for handover. When that happens, the school will have additional physical capacity to support their arrangements to increase the age range and numbers on roll in line with its material change application.
- The new accommodation will offer more specialised facilities for science and art, thus extending the scope of the curriculum, especially for the more mature pupils and students.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard in respect of its material change application.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- Since the last inspection, the school has appointed an experienced headteacher to take the school forwards.
- During the last term, the headteacher has begun to build a determined and effective teaching team. She is well aware of the need to balance the development of pupils' resilience with learning outcomes. She is carefully shaping the foundations of policies, procedures and management to enable teachers to teach and for pupils to safely develop their academic, personal and social skills.
- Staffing levels are to continue to increase in line with increases in pupil numbers. This is likely to increase the range and scope of expertise in the leadership and teaching teams, and also ensure that sufficient staff are available to safely manage the numbers and behaviours of pupils on and off-site.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements for this standard because school leaders are promoting a positive, respectful ethos through which they are demonstrating that they have the knowledge, skills and understanding to deliver the independent school standards consistently.

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.

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	143839
DfE registration number	860/6044
Inspection number	10044407

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	Residential special school
School status	Independent residential special school
Proprietor	Aurora ASD Ltd
Chief Executive Officer	Stephen Bradshaw
Headteacher	Tracy Whitehurst
Annual fees (day pupils)	£51,776 (day provision, education only)
Telephone number	020 3617 0170
Website	www.the-aurora-group.com
Email address	enquiries@the-aurora-group.com
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	6–16	6–19	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	20	40	Not applicable

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	20	40
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities	20	40
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	20	40
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	20	40

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	8 teaching assistants 1 clinical lead	8 teaching assistants 1 clinical lead

Information about this school

- The Aurora Hanley School is a relatively new independent special school. The Aurora Hanley School is part of a larger private organisation known as the Aurora Group. The Aurora Group runs eight other schools nationally and offers adult services for people with complex needs and learning difficulties.
- The school has been open since September 2017 and has already reached its approved capacity. The school caters for pupils who have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder, learning difficulties and additional complex needs.
- Pupils are placed at the school by local authorities and come from mainstream schools or academies.

- The school provision is all on the ground floor level and comprises of seven classrooms, a spacious dining area with lounge area, a clinical hub, a medical room with an en-suite toilet and shower facility, toilets, various storage rooms and administrative offices. There is a secure inner quadrangle for play, and some classrooms have access to gardens which will extend their learning experiences.
- The new premises will add a suite of six additional classrooms, a large meeting room, some smaller offices, a staff kitchen and toilet facilities.
- The school does not have a religious character.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by Ofsted 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 to change the age range of pupils to 6 to 19 years of age, and to increase the numbers on roll to 40 pupils.
- This inspection was conducted in one day, with two days' notice.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the company's regional director and corporate head of governance, teachers, support staff, pupils and the school administrator.
- The teaching of all groups of pupils was observed during a learning walk. Pupils were observed during lessons in information technology, food technology, science and topic work. The inspector took lunch with the pupils and observed their behaviour during this social time.
- A range of documents were examined in relation to the independent school standards. These included policies, schemes of work, pupil assessments, pupils' books, health and safety audits and fire safety maintenance logs, risk assessments, the school's accessibility plan and the school prospectus. The school's website and information to parents and carers were also checked, as were the safeguarding policy, single central register and a sample of staff files.
- The inspector also checked the premises and new facilities against the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Ellis-Martin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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