

New Skill Centre

Wolsey House, 2–5 the Drift, Nacton Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9QR

Inspection dates

23 November 2018

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

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)(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)(h) and 2(2)(i)

- The director and headteacher have written a detailed and well-thought-out 'holistic approach to whole-school curriculum policy and procedures'. The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the specific needs of each pupil and leaders intend to involve pupils and parents and carers in developing individual learning plans.
- Schemes of work are comprehensive and cover all the required areas of learning. There are opportunities for pupils to gain qualifications in all of the subjects taught, for example functional skills from entry level to level 2 in English and mathematics.
- British values will be woven throughout the curriculum and specifically within personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- Leaders recognise the importance of developing pupils' communication skills and are planning to teach both Makaton and British Sign Language when identified as a specific need within individual learning plans.
- The requirements of the standard in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

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

- Staff have the appropriate skills, experience and qualifications to work with the range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) the school has applied to cater for.
- The 'holistic approach to whole-school curriculum policy and procedures' clearly sets out leaders' expectations for teaching, learning and assessment. There is a strong emphasis on accurate, on-entry assessment of need for pupils.
- The requirements of the standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

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)

- Schemes of work indicate that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development will be threaded through all areas of learning and specifically within the PSHE education curriculum.
- A wide range of enrichment activities is planned to enhance pupils' SMSC development through visits to external providers, for example for personal gym training and horse riding.
- The requirements of the standard in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a) 7(b)

- Leaders have clear procedures and detailed policies to safeguard pupils and promote all aspects of their welfare, health and safety. For example, a wide range of therapeutic support is available, including counselling, occupational therapy and art therapy.
- The director and headteacher are designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) and have undertaken the required training. All new staff will be trained at an appropriate level, with regular updates. The chair of governors is also required to be a trained DSL and will be given appropriate training.
- The safeguarding policy is comprehensive and includes all current requirements. The policy will be posted on the school's website once this is operational.
- The requirements of the standard in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c) and 10

- Leaders have a strong understanding of the needs of pupils they are hoping to cater for. The behaviour policy clearly sets out the expectations for pupils' behaviour and the roles and responsibilities of staff to enable pupils to behave well in school.
- The anti-bullying policy explains leaders' approach to supporting both victim and bully.
- The handling (restraint of pupils) policy is clear that this approach is a last resort for the most extreme cases. All staff will be trained in current approaches, with regular updates.
- The requirements of the standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- Leaders have prepared a comprehensive health and safety policy. This is supplemented by rigorous risk assessments for the school building. In addition, leaders have prepared examples of risk assessments that consider pupils' potential behaviour difficulties.
- The proprietor has ensured that required fire-safety and electrical-safety measures are fully in place. All equipment, including fire extinguishers, is serviced annually.
- First-aid resources are readily available to staff, several of whom are first-aid trained.

- Admissions and attendance registers are ready for when the school opens.
- The requirements of the standard in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

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(2)(f), 18(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(a)(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) and 21(4)

- Leaders understand all the required pre-employment checks and will ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Processes in place meet statutory requirements.
- The proprietor and headteacher will not employ supply staff. Higher level teaching assistants who work with pupils every day will cover staff absence.
- Leaders will recruit additional staff as the school grows and to meet the special educational needs of the pupils.
- All appropriate checks on the suitability of staff, the proprietor and governors are recorded on the school's single central record. This meets statutory requirements.
- The requirements of the standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

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), 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 school buildings are extensive, with considerable potential to create effective learning spaces. There are currently two classrooms that are suitably set up and ready for use. The proprietor has a clear vision for how the building will be developed and detailed architect's plans are currently being prepared.
- There are suitable and separate toilet and washing facilities for staff and pupils. There is a separate adapted toilet for use by pupils with disabilities.
- There is access to suitable drinking water in the school kitchen. The proprietor plans to put drinking water facilities in every classroom.
- There is one shower in the building. This is sufficient, as most physical education will take place in nearby local-authority-run sports centres, where pupils have access to shower facilities.
- There is a reasonable-sized space outside for pupils to use at breaktimes. However, the site around the school has potential for expansion and plans are in place to develop this space.
- The requirements of the standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f) and 32(3)(g)

- The school's website is not yet live. All school policies and schemes of work will be placed on the website once this is up and running. The proprietor plans that the website will be functioning by early December 2018. In the meantime, copies of all policies are available on request.
- A school brochure with all the required information is currently at the printers.
- Leaders will provide parents with written reports about their child's progress at least termly. Reviews of individual learning plans are likely to be more frequent than this, depending on the needs of each pupil.
- The majority of pupils at the school will have education, health and care (EHC) plans and are likely to be fully funded by the local authority. Leaders know they must account for how this funding is spent and give a detailed annual breakdown of income and expenditure to the local authority.
- Leaders will also consider placements for those pupils who do not have an EHC plan but present with multiple and complex needs and are consequently unable to cope in mainstream provision.
- Leaders are prepared to consider placements for privately funded pupils.
- The requirements of the standard in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii) and 33(k)

- The complaints policy is comprehensive and covers all the required processes and procedures.
- The requirements of the standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor and headteacher have considerable experience of the type of special educational needs they would like to cater for in the school. They are passionate about meeting the needs of pupils they describe as 'the hardest to reach and the hardest to teach'. Consequently, they have a strong understanding and clear vision for the school.
- Leaders' vision is visible in every school policy and threaded through every scheme of work.
- The requirements of the standard in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The accessibility plan provides details of how all pupils can access the premises and the curriculum effectively.
- This requirement is likely to be met by the proposed school.

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	146332
DfE registration number	935/6013
Inspection number	10081651

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	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Centre for Care T/A New Skill Centre
Chair	Jo Kerley (Director)
Headteacher	Elizabeth Bethell
Annual fees (day pupils)	£14,000 to £32,000
Telephone number	01473 290276
Website	Not yet operational
Email address	jo@newskillcentre.org
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	N/A
Number of pupils of compulsory school age for whom a statement is maintained under section 324, or who is looked after by a local authority	N/A
Total hours operating as a school per week	N/A
Total hours of teaching provided per week	N/A

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	N/A	11–16	11–16
Number of pupils on the school roll	N/A	40	40

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	N/A	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	N/A	40
Number of part-time pupils	N/A	4
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	N/A	40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	N/A	40
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	N/A	40

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	N/A	12
Number of part-time teaching staff	N/A	36
Number of staff in the welfare provision	N/A	1

Information about this proposed school

- The proprietor seeks registration for the school with the Department for Education (DfE) as an independent special school, to cater for pupils who have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including autistic spectrum disorder, cognitive and learning needs, specific learning difficulties, moderate and severe learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social development needs, behavioural, emotional and social difficulty, communication and interaction needs, sensory and/or physical needs, and physical disability. The provider also seeks to cater for children looked after by the local authority.
- The proprietorial body is a private limited company. There are two directors.
- There will be a governing body.
- The proprietor seeks capacity for 40 pupils. There is a graduated plan in place to stagger pupils' entry, before building to capacity over a three-year period. The school intends to open with 16 pupils in April 2019.
- The proprietor intends to cater for pupils between the ages of 11 and 16.
- The local authority will commission placements to the school.
- The school is located on a single site at 2–5 The Drift, Nacton Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9QR.
- The school currently shares the same site as an established provision for older students and adults who have learning disabilities and those who require rehabilitation following medical issues, such as a stroke. Attendance is on specific days to access training in woodworking.

Information about this inspection

- This is the first pre-registration inspection for the provider.
- The inspector met with the director and the headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents attached to the inspection commissioning form and additional documents requested on the day of the inspection.
- The inspection included a guided tour of the site.
- The inspector scrutinised the single central record of employment checks for staff.

Inspection team

Julie Winyard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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