

Alchemy School

72 Station Road, Teynham, Sittingbourne ME9 9SN

Inspection dates

19 December 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

All paragraphs

- Leaders have developed appropriate curriculum and assessment policies, which consider the needs of pupils who require an alternative learning experience.
- The proprietor (who is also the headteacher) and her team have developed appropriate teaching plans, which cover all the required areas of learning for pupils aged 11 to 19. This planning takes account of pupils' different ages, abilities and, in many cases, their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The planned curriculum incorporates opportunities for pupils to achieve a wide range of qualifications. Proposals include qualifications in the core subjects of English and mathematics, as well as in citizenship, religious education, science, sports leadership, health and social care, and personal and social development.
- There are arrangements for fundamental British values and information about protected characteristics, as identified in the Equality Act 2010, to be taught across subject disciplines, as well as through the personal and social development programme.
- The school is likely to be suitably resourced. Proposals indicate that an adequate number of staff will be appropriately deployed to meet pupils' needs.
- The arrangements for careers education are likely to be appropriate. There are well-considered plans in place to provide pupils with the impartial information, advice and guidance they will need to make informed decisions about their futures.
- An appropriate assessment system has been devised. Pupils' starting points in all areas of learning will be identified when they join the school. Their progress will then be reviewed and reported on a termly basis and teachers will use this information to plan accordingly.
- Suitable arrangements are in place to monitor the quality of teachers' planning, teaching and assessment.

- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

All paragraphs

- The school's plans for citizenship, life skills and personal and social development outline a clear commitment to the promotion of fundamental British values and to ensuring that pupils are encouraged to show respect for all the protected characteristics.
- The school will not have a religious ethos and will welcome pupils of all faiths. The planned programme for religious education ensures that pupils will learn about religions, cultures and beliefs from around the world. Pupils are likely to develop tolerance and appreciate the diversity of modern Britain.
- The school's staff induction information makes it clear that no member of staff may promote partisan views, and that balanced viewpoints must always be presented in the teaching of all subjects.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

All paragraphs

- The school's child protection policy is appropriate. It is supported by a range of additional policies. They reflect the most recent statutory guidance, including 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2018) and 'Working together to safeguard children' (July 2018).
- The designated safeguarding leader and two deputies have completed an appropriately enhanced level of safeguarding training.
- Arrangements for staff induction, training and regular updates have been thoughtfully designed. The plans indicate that staff will be provided with the knowledge and skills they need to safeguard pupils. There are also plans in place for leaders to check how well staff understand safeguarding policies and practice.
- Leaders are knowledgeable and aware of their safeguarding duties. The school's proposed system for recording concerns, referrals and any actions taken is fit for purpose.
- The school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies are likely to meet requirements. Associated logs for recording incidents of serious misbehaviour and the sanctions imposed as a result of any breaches in behaviour are suitable.
- Arrangements for the implementation of the proposed first aid policy are likely to meet requirements. There are trained first aiders and the recording of accidents and the provision of first aid is appropriate.
- The school is likely to be compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The fire alarm system and fire extinguishers are new. Appropriate actions following an external fire risk assessment undertaken in October 2018 have been taken. All staff will be fire safety trained in January 2019. Leaders understand the

importance of completing and logging all the required checks on electrical equipment, fire-safety equipment, emergency lighting and the alarm system. Evacuation drills will be carried out termly.

- The school's health and safety and risk assessment policies are likely to meet the required aspects of health and safety in reducing identified risks. Appropriate risk assessments are in place, including for the premises.
- An appropriate number of staff will be deployed to ensure that there is a ratio of one adult for every three pupils.
- Templates for the admission and attendance registers are likely to meet requirements.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

All paragraphs

- All the required vetting checks will be recorded accurately on a single central register, in line with statutory requirements.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of safer recruitment and understand the importance of completing all the required checks on new staff, before they work with pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

All paragraphs

- The proposed school will have its own premises, which were formally used as a doctors' surgery.
- The premises are secure, well maintained and clean. There are strong indications that they are likely to be safe.
- The premises have been repurposed and include four classrooms, an external common room and a small outdoor garden area.
- There are suitable toilet, washing, shower and changing facilities.
- The medical room is suitably located opposite the pupils' toilet. Plans indicate that it is likely to meet all requirements.
- A chilled drinking water supply is suitably marked as such.
- The acoustic features, sound insulation, regulated hot water supplies and internal and external lights are all suitable.
- The outdoor space is not large enough for physical education. However, appropriate arrangements are in place for pupils to use local sports fields and a leisure centre.
- The school's proposed health and safety policy is detailed and thorough and addresses all key areas required. There is strong evidence that the policy is likely to be well implemented.

- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

All paragraphs

- All the required policies and information, including those relating to safeguarding are appropriate and currently available in hard copy. Leaders' plans indicate that all required policies, including the safeguarding policy, will be made available on the school's website once it is created.
- The school's intended termly report template for parents identifies pupils' progress and attainment in all the required areas of learning.
- Leaders are aware of their duty to provide local authorities with annual statements of income and expenditure for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans, if such placements are funded by them in the future.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

All paragraphs

- The school's complaints policy and complaints log are likely to meet all the requirements.
- Leaders have considered how they will create an open culture, which is receptive to any learning opportunities that may arise from complaints. Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

All paragraphs

- Leaders are well organised and have paid good attention to detail in planning to open this independent school.
- All the independent school standards are likely to be met and pupils' well-being is likely to be assured if Alchemy School is registered as an independent school.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school's accessibility plan is likely to meet requirements.

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	146736
DfE registration number	886/6153
Inspection number	10084599

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	Secondary day school/alternative provider
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	L&P Educational Services Ltd
Chair	Jill Ansell
Headteacher	Lisa Scott
Annual fees (day pupils)	£26,910
Telephone number	01795 521 941
Website	None
Email address	lisascott@alchemyschools.co.uk

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	11 to 19	11 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	30	30

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	Up to 30
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	None
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	Up to 30
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Up to 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	Not applicable	Up to 30

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	5
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	2
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	7

Information about this proposed school

- Alchemy School occupies a former doctors' surgery in Teynham, Kent.
- The school intends to operate from January 2019. It will cater for pupils in need of an alternative educational programme, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) such as social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- The school is not currently in operation. The provider currently operates alternative provision, which consists of part-time tuition and support for a very few pupils.
- The school does not have a website.
- The school's proprietor will be L&P Educational Serviced Limited, which comprises the headteacher and one other director. The school will be led by the leadership team and supported by an 'advisory council'.

Information about this inspection

- This is the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The 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.
- The inspection was conducted with two days of notice.
- The inspector conducted the inspection with three leaders, including the proprietor (who is also the headteacher) and the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector considered a wide range of evidence to check the likelihood of the school meeting all of the independent school standards. As examples, he toured the premises, reviewed key documents and policies and considered the school's proposed curriculum.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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