

# Aurora Hanley School

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

## Inspection dates

26 February 2019

## Overall outcome

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented**

## Main inspection findings

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

*Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b) and 32(1)(c)*

- Leaders have robust safeguarding procedures in place to ensure that any signs a pupil may be at risk of harm are addressed without delay. They work closely with other agencies as necessary. Record-keeping is thorough and shows that leaders remain ever vigilant and act promptly in the best interests of pupils. Several staff have responsibility for managing safeguarding issues and all are appropriately trained. The current safeguarding team has the capacity to deal with an increase in the number of pupils on roll, without diminishing the quality of their work. Staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure that pupils are well supported and safe.
- The school has an appropriate safeguarding policy published on its website that has regard to the most recent guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Staff implement the policy effectively.
- Leaders, working in partnership with site staff, have adopted an efficient and effective system for managing any health and safety concerns that arise. This means that any health and safety issues are identified early and dealt with in a timely way by site staff or contractors. As a result, the school premises are maintained to a high standard and the site is safe and secure.
- Site management staff ensure that all appropriate fire checks, such as emergency lighting, fire drills and tests on the alarm system, are carried out routinely. The first floor of the secondary school building, previously residential accommodation, is gradually being converted to provide more classrooms, offices and toilets. The refurbished area is part of the existing fire system and is already fitted with the necessary equipment to tackle fire.
- High pupil–staff ratios ensure that levels of supervision are more than adequate. Leaders propose that as pupil numbers increase, staffing will increase to ensure that there is always an appropriate level of supervision proportionate to pupils’ needs.
- Leaders’ current arrangements for undertaking risk assessments are appropriate and thorough. Staff complete risk assessments for a variety of purposes, including ones

related to managing pupils' behaviour. These assessments identify potential triggers and suggest strategies to minimise risk and keep pupils as safe as possible. Staff deal quickly with pupils who have had minor accidents and need first aid.

- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard in respect of its material change application.

*Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10 and 15*

- Leaders have an effective electronic system for recording pupils' behaviour and attendance. Leaders analyse the recorded information and use their findings to identify pupils who may need additional support. Staff implement effective strategies to help pupils to modify their behaviour or improve their attendance. This system could easily be extended if there was an increase in the number of pupils attending the school.
- Some pupils display very challenging behaviour and staff manage this well, adopting a proactive approach to reducing pupils' high levels of anxiety. Staff's use of physical intervention to manage very challenging behaviour is carefully recorded and monitored to ensure its appropriateness. In the few cases where there are a relatively high number of physical interventions, staff work together to try and find alternative ways to manage behaviour and reduce the need for physical intervention.
- During the inspection, almost all pupils demonstrated good behaviour because teachers set appropriate work that was interesting and well-matched to their needs. Teachers know pupils well and have positive relationships with pupils. Staff implement the anti-bullying policy effectively and incidents of bullying are rare.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard in respect of its material change application.

## 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)*

- Leaders are currently in the process of converting the previous residential accommodation on the first floor to provide additional teaching space. Once completed, there will be adequate teaching space for the proposed increase in the maximum number of pupils. The first floor is accessible by stairs or a lift for pupils, staff or visitors with a disability.
- Toilets are currently situated on the first floor, although these are inside classrooms (former large bedrooms). However, building work is planned for Easter 2019 when the former bathroom on the first floor will be converted to three separate unisex toilets for the sole use of pupils. This will ensure a sufficient number of toilets for pupils.
- The building and premises are maintained to a high standard. The school has a light and airy feel and is conducive to learning. Site staff take pride in their responsibilities to keep the school facilities in good working order and sustain a pleasant, safe environment for pupils, staff and visitors.
- Leaders and the company understand the challenge of providing additional outside

play space for pupils. They are currently exploring different options. However, the space that is currently available is adequate for the proposed increase in numbers.

- 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) and 34(1)(c)*

- Leaders plan to increase staffing as the need arises, in line with the proposed increase in numbers of pupils. This will ensure that pupil–staff ratios are appropriate to meet the specific educational, social and behavioural needs of the pupils in school. Leaders have an appropriate rationale for the increase in the number of pupils related to demand. They expect the increase in numbers to be gradual over time.
- The company’s regional school improvement director maintains a sharp overview of the school’s work and performance. They visit monthly to check on progress towards the school’s key performance indicators. They will oversee the growth in the school’s population to ensure that it is managed appropriately and does not have a negative impact on the school’s current performance.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this standard in respect of its material change application.

## **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	10093687

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	Other independent special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Aurora ASD Ltd
Chair	Jeanette Young
Headteacher	Tracy Whitehurst
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,000
Telephone number	0203 6170 170
Website	<a href="http://www.the-aurora-group.com/hanley">www.the-aurora-group.com/hanley</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@the-aurora-group.com">enquiries@the-aurora-group.com</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	19–21 June 2018

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	6 to 19	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	40	60	60

## Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	40	60
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	40	60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	40	60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	40	60

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	7.75	7.75
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	15 teaching assistants	15 teaching assistants

## Information about this school

- The Aurora Hanley School is part of the Aurora Group. It is an independent day special school for pupils with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
- The school comprises of two separate buildings within close proximity. The school has grassed areas, a garden, dining area, administrative offices, kitchen, science laboratory, classrooms and other practical rooms. Physical education is taught offsite at local sports facilities. There is also an inner quadrangle for play.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. They are placed at the school by local authorities and typically come from mainstream schools or academies. Some pupils have been out of school for a significant period of time.

- The school stopped offering residential provision at the beginning of this academic year. The former residential area of the school is being refurbished to provide additional classroom space, toilets, a kitchen and other work areas.
- The proprietor is 'The Aurora Group' and this has always been the case. However, the name of the proprietor on the Department for Education (DfE) website 'Get information about schools' refers to an individual person. This is incorrect as there is not a sole proprietor.
- The school does not have a religious character.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority, the DfE, under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002. The school applied for a material change to increase the numbers on roll to 60 pupils.
- This was the school's second material change inspection. The last material change inspection was on 22 January 2018.
- The inspection was conducted in one day with one day's notice.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the company's regional school improvement director, the school business manager and premises staff. He spoke briefly to teachers and other staff.
- The inspector visited classrooms and spoke to pupils informally about their learning. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and in other communal areas around the school.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents related to safeguarding, school policies, site management and behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

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Tim Hill, lead inspector
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Her Majesty's Inspector
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