

Peak Education – Cannock

Longford Road, Cannock WS11 0LG

Inspection dates

20 June 2019

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

- Leaders have plans to provide a tailored curriculum for each pupil. The proposed curriculum includes a mandatory core of English, mathematics, science, humanities, personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, and careers. Beyond this, pupils will have access to a wide range of vocational courses and outdoor educational experiences, all of which have appropriate schemes of work.
- Leaders plan to offer accredited courses in subjects including construction, hair and beauty and motor vehicle maintenance. The school has been reconfigured to include a bespoke construction area, a hair and beauty salon and a garage.
- The proposed school will be part of Peak Activity Services, a registered company that owns and runs a range of outdoor education centres. Pupils attending the school will have access to a wide range of outdoor activities at these centres, including canoeing and climbing.
- The majority of pupils will attend school on a full-time basis. A smaller number of pupils will attend part time, for the purpose of accessing the wide range of vocational courses on offer.
- All pupils are likely to have social, emotional and mental health needs. Leaders have carefully considered how they will manage pupils' behaviour. The behaviour policy is comprehensive and leaders have plans to ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in managing behaviour before they take up their post.
- Each pupil, most of whom will have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, will have a personalised programme of study which will take into account their age, aptitude and needs. Leaders have clear plans in place to ensure that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. These will be taught explicitly through the English and mathematics curriculums and more discreetly through vocational subjects. For example, pupils studying catering will develop their

mathematical skills when buying and weighing ingredients.

- The school's planned PSHE programme is comprehensive. It seeks to promote diversity and is designed to teach pupils about respecting themselves and others.
- Provision for pupils to receive appropriate independent careers advice and guidance is in place. Leaders have plans for a careers fair and are already working closely with a range of further education providers and businesses to provide this.
- Leaders have decorated the school building to a high standard. Classrooms are equipped with a range of appropriate teaching resources, including information and communication technology equipment. Leaders have good plans to ensure that teaching is of a high quality so that pupils can learn, make progress and fulfil their potential.
- The quality of teaching will be checked so that any gaps in teachers' knowledge can be rectified with appropriate training. Leaders will seek to ensure that teaching promotes in pupils the desire to learn, work hard and develop their physical and creative skills.
- Leaders have developed an appropriate assessment framework. Teachers will assess pupils' work regularly and use this information to help them plan work that is appropriate for each pupil. Pupils' performance will be evaluated and their progress checked regularly against the school's own aims. Teachers will provide termly reports to parents and carers.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for this part.

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), 5(d)(iii)

- Leaders have considered carefully how pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development can be promoted. Leaders are proposing an exciting and vibrant curriculum with a wide range of SMSC opportunities. Leaders have plans for pupils to engage in adventurous team-building activities, such as raft-building and kayaking. Pupils will also have opportunities to study drama and music, as well as enter for the Duke of Edinburgh award.
- The proposed curriculum is designed to actively promote fundamental British values. There are plans for pupils to visit a local magistrates court to learn about the rule of law, as well as visits to places of worship to learn about different faiths.
- Leaders intend that pupils will be taught about the protected characteristics according to the Equality Act 2010. The proposed schemes of work and wall displays that are already in place actively promote diversity and equality.
- Pupils will study a personalised curriculum that will include a range of vocational and adventurous activities that are appropriate for them. The adventurous activities include sailing, climbing and raft-building. This will ensure that all pupils have opportunities to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Leaders have clear plans to ensure that pupils can distinguish right from wrong and accept responsibility for their behaviour. Leaders plan to introduce a restorative

justice approach to resolving conflict and all staff will receive appropriate training before they take up their post.

- The proposed curriculum indicates that pupils will be taught about different public institutions. Leaders have established links with the army, the ambulance service and the police. Leaders plan to teach pupils about crime scene investigations and have set up a mock crime scene in one of the classrooms.
- Leaders are aware of their responsibility to ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school or during any of the extra-curricular activities. Leaders will ensure that all staff employed to work in the school are aware of the requirement to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views when discussing political issues with pupils.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for this part.

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), 16(b)

- Leaders have prepared a safeguarding policy that is clearly written and reflects the Secretary for State's most recent statutory guidance. The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. The proposed staff induction programme will include safeguarding training and the appropriate use of restraint.
- Leaders are intent on promoting good behaviour. They have developed a behaviour policy that explains clearly how behaviour should be managed and it includes a list of rewards and sanctions. The policy explains that serious incidents, and any sanctions imposed as a result of a serious incident, will be recorded electronically on the school's management information system.
- Leaders have produced an anti-bullying policy that promotes respect and tolerance. The policy makes it clear that bullying will not be tolerated in the school. The policy includes clear definitions of different types of bullying, including racist, homophobic and sexist bullying.
- Leaders have carried out a thorough risk assessment of the school site, including a full fire risk assessment. Leaders have responded to the risk assessment by taking action to reduce the risks that have been identified. Leaders have carried out further risk assessments of both the on-site and off-site facilities. For example, leaders have produced risk assessments for the on-site construction area as well as the outdoor education centres. Leaders propose that every pupil will have their own personalised risk assessment, and these will be shared with all staff.
- Leaders demonstrate a good knowledge of health and safety legislation and have produced a health and safety policy that is compliant with current health and safety laws.
- Leaders have a suitable first aid policy. There are plans to ensure that there will be a sufficient number of first aiders in place. Pupils should receive appropriate first aid when needed, if the policy is implemented fully.
- Leaders have initiated a fire safety review of the site. They are aware of their responsibilities to ensure a safe site that can be evacuated quickly and safely in the

case of a fire. There are various fire exits around the building that are clearly marked. All but one of the fire exits allows immediate and easy access.

- Leaders have plans to record pupils' admissions appropriately, using an official register. They also have plans to record attendance correctly, using the Department for Education codes for recording a pupil's absence from school. Plans for supervising pupils during the school day are appropriate.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for this part, provided that the proprietor fixes the broken fire door so that all staff, pupils, students and visitors have immediate and easy access in the case of a fire or other emergency.

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(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(6)

- The proposed procedures for appointing new staff are appropriate. The recruitment procedures, if applied fully, will ensure that those appointed to work in the school are suitable to work with children. Leaders are aware of their responsibility to refer a person who is deemed unsuitable for working with children to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- A number of staff have already been appointed, including the executive headteacher and headteacher, who work across a number of schools within the organisation. The proprietor has ensured that all of the required checks have been carried out. These checks are recorded on a single central record that is maintained electronically on the school's management information system.
- Leaders have plans in place to ensure that before a person offered for supply by an employment business begins work at the school, the person's identity is checked by the proprietor, irrespective of any such check carried out by the employment business before the person was offered for supply.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for this part.

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), 29(1)(b)

- The proposed school is located in a former day care centre. The building is set in attractive grounds with established trees and plants to the front and an expansive car park to the rear. The site is secure, with a high perimeter fence and two vehicular entrances. There is clear signage for visitors on the exterior walls and adequate external lighting.
- Inside the building, there are appropriate toilet, washing and changing facilities for

pupils. There are separate male and female toilet facilities for the sole use of pupils. Additional facilities are available for staff use. The toilet, shower and changing facilities are clean and well maintained and supplied with warm running water.

- There is a small medical room near to the main reception. Inside the medical room there is a bed, sink and a locked medical cupboard. The facility is appropriate for providing pupils with medical attention. It is also close to a toilet.
- The buildings are maintained to a high standard. The interior has been completely refurbished and attractive displays adorn the walls. Classrooms are bright and airy and are appropriate for teaching and learning activities. The acoustics inside the classrooms and corridors are good and the lighting is appropriate.
- Pupils will have access to drinking water from various locations around the school site, including in some classrooms. Water that is suitable for drinking is clearly labelled.
- There is a small outside play area to the rear of the building. This is suitable for small-group games. Leaders' plans, however, are for most of the physical education to take place off-site at one of the outdoor education centres owned and run by the organisation.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for this part.

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)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 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)

- The proposed school will be part of Peak Activity Services, an organisation that is already running three schools successfully. The organisation has a central website with links to the various institutions. Here, there is a clear statement of the school's ethos and aims. The majority of the school's policies and the information required on names and contacts are already available for parents and carers on the organisation's website.
- The school will publish a report on pupils' progress and attainment, provided there are sufficient numbers of pupils so that individual pupils cannot be identified.
- Leaders have plans to provide an annual written report to parents of each pupil's progress and attainment in the main subject areas taught.
- The executive headteacher and headteacher are aware of their responsibilities to provide local authorities with annual statements of income and expenditure for pupils with EHC plans. Leaders will also provide the necessary information required for each pupil's annual review.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for this part.

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), 33(k)

- Leaders have drawn up a complaints procedure that meets all of the requirements of the independent school standards. The procedure sets out the various stages of the complaints procedure very clearly, including timescales. This is easy for parents to understand.
- Leaders intend to retain information relating to each complaint, including whether they were resolved following a formal procedure, or proceeded to a panel hearing. Leaders will also record any action taken by the school. This information will be stored securely and confidentially. Leaders are confident that the procedure will be implemented effectively.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor, executive headteacher and headteacher demonstrate good knowledge and skills appropriate to their roles. They also have a good knowledge of the independent school standards, which they have acquired through the establishment and management of other independent schools.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the types of need of the pupils that the school is proposing to accommodate. They have gained this knowledge through their work with pupils with similar needs on roll in the other schools within the organisation.
- Leaders demonstrate a clear commitment to actively promoting the well-being of pupils. They have developed a curriculum that is thoughtful and varied and have created an attractive and well-resourced school site. Leaders have comprehensive plans in place to support pupils emotionally and socially and are proposing high levels of pastoral support.
- The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for this part.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has developed a suitable accessibility plan. Therefore, the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are likely to be met.

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, provided that the proprietor ensures that the broken fire door is fixed, thus allowing immediate and easy access in the case of a fire or other emergency.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	146806
DfE registration number	860/6049
Inspection number	10100500

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 day school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Paul Ball
Executive Headteacher	Andrew McCreedy
Headteacher	Sharon Cliff
Annual fees (day pupils)	£57,525
Telephone number	01543 622461
Website	www.peakeducation.co.uk
Email address	andrew.mccreedy@peakpursuits.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	11–19	11–19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	100	100

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	80
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	20
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	100
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	100
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	100

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	5
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1
Number of staff in the welfare provision	2	20

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is located in a former day centre to the south of Cannock town centre. The building is owned by a private landlord. The school will not have a religious ethos.
- The school plans to offer full-time places to pupils aged 11 to 19 with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most of the pupils will have an EHC plan and are likely to have social, emotional and mental health needs. All full-time pupils are likely to be referred by local authorities or schools.
- The school plans to offer part-time provision for pupils who would benefit from a vocational programme of study. The planned curriculum includes motor vehicle maintenance, construction and health and beauty. The building has been adapted to

cater for these courses.

- The proposed school is part of Peak Activity Services Limited, a registered company that owns and runs a range of outdoor education centres. Pupils attending the school will have access to a wide range of outdoor activities, including canoeing and climbing.
- The proposed school, if registered by the Department for Education, intends to open in September 2019.
- The school does not intend to use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the school's first pre-registration inspection commissioned by the Department for Education under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is registered. The inspection was conducted with two working days' notice.
- The inspector toured the school site with school leaders.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of school documentation, much of which is available on the school's website. The inspector also met with the proprietor, executive headteacher and headteacher to discuss their plans for opening the school.

Inspection team

Niall Gallagher, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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