

Progress Schools – Stockport

Belgrave House, 211 Chestergate, Stockport SK3 0AN

Inspection dates

22 July 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

Paragraph 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 school's curriculum policy shows that the school's leaders have a clear intent to teach an appropriate range of subjects in key stage 3 and key stage 4. These subjects encompass linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical education and aesthetic and creative education. The associated schemes of work contain sufficient detail about the content or sequencing of learning in the curriculum in key stage 3 and key stage 4.
- Each pupil will have an individual education development plan to map out a suitable, personalised plan for their learning. Pupils at key stage 4 will be able to study for a range of qualifications which lead on to post-16 study, including functional skills and, where appropriate, GCSEs.
- Leaders intend to draw on their experience in supporting pupils in their other currently operating schools. Leaders will provide pupils with effective impartial advice and guidance about careers and future educational opportunities to enable pupils to make informed choices. This will be done in a variety of ways, including for pupils to gain nationally accredited qualifications linked to careers. Pupils will also receive advice and guidance from appropriate impartial advisers and have opportunities to gain advice and guidance from links to local businesses, educational providers and employers.

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

- The school's schemes of work include clear planning of sequences of activities that systematically develop pupils' knowledge and skills.
- The school's written assessment policy is detailed and aligns with the schemes of work for different subjects. As a result, it ensures that assessments are appropriate. This will allow teachers and leaders to appropriately monitor pupils' attainment and progress.

- Leaders will make sure that there are suitable and sufficient high-quality resources in order to support learning for secondary-aged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This includes a range of computers, tablet devices and other technology devices which allow pupils to access high-quality, online learning. These resources will be in place before the school opens. Leaders have ensured that the school has suitable internet connectivity with appropriate filtering and monitoring in place to provide pupils with access to a safe online learning environment.
- The proprietor has identified a successful senior leader from within the company to lead the school. In addition, the proprietor is currently completing a well-considered recruitment process to appoint suitably qualified members of staff to the school. Senior managers have high expectations of all teachers and staff appointed to the school. Leaders have well-established, carefully-planned and comprehensive induction programmes for all new staff, to ensure that pupils are taught well and make effective academic and social progress.
- The standards relating to the quality of education are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 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)

- Curriculum plans show that the school will actively promote fundamental values, including the understanding of right from wrong and the rule of law. The school will actively promote pupils' mutual respect and tolerance of those with protected characteristics, including those relating to gender, sexuality, and different faiths and beliefs.
- Clear programmes of study are planned for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), and also for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC). Leaders intend all pupils to follow these schemes of work. The scheme of work contains well-chosen topics to promote pupils' social skills and cultural understanding. It also provides for pupils to gain national accredited level 2 qualifications relating to their studies in equality and diversity, and citizenship and British values. Additionally, practical activities linked to charitable work will develop pupils' financial knowledge and promote their understanding of responsibility.
- Leaders have appropriate policies and procedures in place to inhibit the promotion of extremist or partisan materials and views. This includes the intent to develop a register of appropriate speakers and visitors to the school, similar to that seen in the proprietor's other educational establishments. As part of their induction to the school, all staff will be trained in strategies to identify and act effectively on any concerns relating to extremism. This is in line with well-established procedures in the proprietor's currently operating independent schools.
- The standards relating to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The school's written safeguarding policy and procedures show regard for the current guidance from the Secretary of State.
- Leaders propose that safeguarding training will be undertaken in line with current guidance from the Secretary of State. All staff appointed to the school will receive this training, which includes training in first aid and in their duties relating to the prevention of extremism and radicalisation. Systems to record staff training are in place.
- The school has appropriate selection procedures in place to ensure that suitable persons are appointed to leadership and staff roles. All required checks regarding the suitability of the staff have been completed for the headteacher, company directors and those with leadership and management responsibilities.

Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c)

- The school's written policy relating to behaviour is fit for purpose and takes account of appropriate legislation. It clearly identifies leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour, a range of strategies that teachers and staff may use to promote pupils' good behaviour, and the sanctions that may be enforced when an individual pupil's behaviour falls below the standards expected.
- The proprietor has appropriate systems established to record any incidents of poor behaviour. These systems are currently used effectively in the proprietor's other independent schools. The system promotes appropriate record-keeping and will allow the school's leaders to evaluate any emerging trends in behaviour.

Paragraph 10

- The school's anti-bullying and behaviour policy is detailed, comprehensive and fit for purpose. It takes account of the ages of pupils in school. It identifies the different types of bullying that may occur within the school. It also contains appropriate strategies that are to be implemented to prevent bullying.

Paragraphs 11, 13, 14, 15

- The school has a comprehensive range of health and safety policies in place to ensure compliance with relevant laws. For example, systems to ensure frequent checks on the operation of the fire alarm, emergency lighting and firefighting equipment are in place. Appropriate logs are maintained. Leaders have up-to-date certificates for the fixed electrical installation check that was carried out by a competent and qualified person. Health and safety checks have been planned for specific dates in the future to ensure that compliance with regulations is maintained.
- The school has an appropriate first-aid policy in place. All staff who are appointed to the school will complete training as part of their induction to ensure that they have a current first-aid certificate. Leaders have ensured that an appropriate number of well-stocked first-aid boxes are distributed around the school. This will ensure that aid is administered in a timely manner.

- Leaders have established effective record-keeping systems to record and evaluate any incidents relating to health and safety, accidents and behaviour.
- Planned staff numbers are sufficient to ensure the appropriate supervision of pupils at all times when the school is operating.
- Leaders have established an appropriate system to record pupils' admission to the school and also their attendance. This system is rooted in an electronic school management application. It is currently used effectively in the proprietor's other educational establishments.

Paragraph 12

- The school complies with all of the relevant fire-safety regulations. Annual maintenance of firefighting equipment, such as fire extinguishers and the fire alarm, ensures that they are in an operational condition. The fire-alarm system is of high quality and includes appropriate use of automatic detection devices, alongside sufficient break glass points. The fire alarm is complete and operational.
- The school has a fire risk assessment in place. Leaders intend to further review and refine the risk assessment prior to the opening of the school. This is to ensure the safety of pupils and the effective management of any new risks brought about by any changes to the deployment of furniture or electrical devices in the school building.

Paragraph 16(a), 16(b)

- The school's written policy on risk assessment and risk management includes detailed risk assessments that demonstrate leaders' secure understanding of the management of risk and their effective use of control measures to reduce or mitigate any identified hazards. Risk assessments are appropriately detailed and cover a wide range of activities. These include the proposed use of off-site sports centres for the provision of physical education, including the safe use of shower facilities.
- The standards relating to welfare, health and safety are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 18, 18(2), 18(2)(b), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(ii)

- The proprietor has carried out the required checks to ensure that persons intended to hold leadership roles in the school have not been prohibited from the leadership and management of a school under section 128 of the 2008 Act. These checks have been completed on the headteacher and officers of the proprietary company

Paragraph 17, 18, 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 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)

- The proprietor has ensured that leaders undertake all the other necessary checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. Appropriate criminal record checks, identity checks, qualification and health checks, and, where appropriate, checks to ensure that teachers are free from any prohibition relating to teaching will have been completed before newly appointed staff begin working at the school. Leaders have ensured that staff who are to transfer to the school staffing structure from other educational establishments or roles within the company, have completed all checks on

their suitability to work with children. The proprietor has appropriate procedures in place to recruit any additional staff as necessary and required by the school in the future. These procedures demonstrate the proprietor's intent to ensure that members of staff who are appointed will not be allowed to take up their posts of employment until all required checks are completed. Leaders demonstrate an awareness of the appropriate checks that need to be made for any staff who have lived or worked abroad.

Paragraph 19(2), 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)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 19(4)

- Leaders do not initially intend to use any supply staff in the school. This is because the proprietary company has some centrally employed and suitably checked staff who can be deployed at short notice to cover short-term absences. However, leaders do demonstrate a secure understanding of the need to ensure that suitable checks are completed before any person does undertake any supply or contract work in school. Leaders have appropriate procedures in place to ensure that this happens for supply staff who are contracted to work in the school.

Paragraph 20(1), 20(2), 20(3), 20(3)(a), 20(3)(a)(i), 20(3)(a)(ii), 20(5), 20(5)(a), 20(5)(a)(i), 20(5)(a)(ii), 20(5)(b), 20(5)(b)(i), 20(5)(b)(ii), 20(5)(b)(iii), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c)

- The proprietor has completed the required identity and suitability checks on the directors of the proprietary company, including those checks relating to prohibition from leadership and management of a school under section 128 of the 2008 Act.

Paragraph 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), 21(7)(b)

- The school's single central record of the requisite checks that have been carried out on members of staff contains all the required information. This includes information relating to the completion of identity, health, qualifications and prohibition from teaching checks that have been completed and recorded. It also records information about the outcomes of any checks on leaders and proprietors relating to their prohibition from leadership and management of a school under section 128 of the 2008 Act.
- The standards relating to the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 25

- Refurbishment work on the school has been completed to a high standard. Rooms, recreational spaces and the outdoor areas of the school are well maintained and clean.
- Suitable toilet facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils. Toilets are equipped with suitable signage and locks and are accessible to pupils, including those with

SEND. Separate toilet facilities are available for adults. The school does not have changing or showering facilities on-site. Leaders have designed a curriculum for physical education which intends to make effective use of off-site, specialist sports centres. Appropriate plans and risk assessments are in place to ensure that pupils have safe access to showering facilities after physical activities.

Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(c)

- The school has a suitable room designated for the purpose of a medical and care room. This room is equipped with washing facilities and is located close to toilets. It provides suitable facilities for medical examinations or short-term care of sick or injured pupils and has a well-equipped first-aid box.

Paragraph 26

- The acoustic conditions of the classrooms ensure that they are suited to the activities that take place within them.

Paragraph 27, 27(a), 27(b)

- The lighting in all rooms is of high quality and suitable for pupils' learning. External LED lighting is in place outside the school's building. This lighting automatically illuminates the playground area and approaches to the school during periods of low light, and aids safe entry and exit from the building. Emergency lighting is extensively installed in all rooms and corridors in the school. It is of high quality and operational to aid any necessary evacuation.

Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- Pupils will have access to drinking water at all times from clearly marked taps supplied by mains water located in the work spaces of the three kitchens in the school, and also from additional water coolers.
- Washing facilities are available in all toilets. The temperature of the hot water, supplied to all sink units, does not pose a scalding risk to users.

Paragraph 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- Pupils will have access to an area, formerly a car park, to enable them to play and socialise. This area is of suitable size for the proposed number of pupils on roll. It has a safe, level and hard surface suitable for most games, including small games of football. The yard is appropriately secure to ensure the safety of pupils on-site.
- The standards relating to the premises and accommodation at the school are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 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), Paragraph 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b)(i), 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 school currently does not have a website. It is the proprietor's intent that when the school opens it will have a dedicated page on the company website, similar to those of the company's other schools. This page is currently under construction. Leaders have a secure understanding of what is required to be published on the

school's website.

- Leaders have ensured that copies of all the school's policies, including the safeguarding policy, are available to prospective parents and any placing authority on request.
- Leaders have ensured that appropriate procedures are in place to report on pupils' progress and attainment to parents and/or carers, as well as to local authorities who place children in the school. Leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the obligation and duty to report on the income and expenditure of funds for pupils placed in the school by a local authority. Leaders intend to draw on their experiences and the effective procedures used in the proprietor's other schools to provide information to support the annual reviews of pupils with education, health and care plans.
- The school has not been subject to any previous inspection.
- The standards relating to the provision of information are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 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)

- The school's detailed and well-constructed complaints procedures fully comply with all the requirements set out in the independent school standards (ISS). Typically, the procedures are comprehensive and available for parents or others on request. They set out clearly the steps for each stage of the school's actions. The policy identifies appropriate time scales for each stage of a complaint and the rights of parents to be accompanied to meetings. The procedures outline the rights of appeal if a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcomes of each stage of a complaint. The policy makes it clear that the panel who hear a complaint will have, as one of its members, a person who is independent of the management and running of the school. Leaders have secure knowledge of the requirements of the procedures.
- The implementation of the policy will ensure that any complaint is dealt with in a timely manner and that the findings arising from a complaint will be used to inform improvements to the quality of the school's provision and practice.
- The standards relating to the manner in which complaints are handled are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- Senior leaders have ensured that all the standards are likely to be met.
- Leaders have drawn on their extensive experience in the other schools operated by the proprietor. They demonstrate a secure understanding of the anticipated needs of those pupils expected to attend the school. Leaders plan an appropriate curriculum to ensure that pupils make effective academic progress and develop their social skills. This will mean that pupils are likely to be well prepared for their next stages in

education, employment or training.

- Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring the health and safety of pupils and have ensured that all health and safety standards are likely to be met. Building refurbishment work has been completed to a high standard and systems are in place to ensure that all health and safety checks are carried out appropriately.
- Leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the independent school standards and have ensured that school policies reflect their school and pay due regard to appropriate national legislation.
- Senior leaders, including the proprietor, have high expectations and demonstrate a clear vision for the school. Consequently, the standards relating to leadership and management are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has in place a well-considered and appropriate accessibility plan. Consequently, the requirements under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 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.

Proposed school details

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 147235 |
| DfE registration number | 356/6013 |
| Inspection number | 10114030 |

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 school |
| Proprietor | Progress Schools Limited |
| Chair | James Madine |
| Headteacher | Sion Hughes |
| Executive Headteacher | Charlotte Barton |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £20,000 |
| Telephone number | 0151 559 1867 |
| Website | www.progress-schools.co.uk |
| Email address | StockportPS@progress-schools.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 yet operating | 11–16 | 11–16 |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | Not yet operating | 35 | 35 |

Pupils

| | School's current position | School's proposal |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Gender of pupils | Not yet operating | Mixed |
| Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age | Not yet operating | 35 |
| Number of part-time pupils | Not yet operating | As required |
| Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities | Not yet operating | As required |
| Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan | Not yet operating | As required |
| 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 yet operating | As required |

Staff

| | School's current position | School's proposal |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff | 1 | 4 |
| Number of part-time teaching staff | 0 | 0 |
| Number of staff in the welfare provision | 3 | 5 |

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is to be established in a recently refurbished Victorian office building for children and young people aged 11 to 16. The school will be the sole occupier of the building, which is located close to Stockport Town centre.
- The school is to be one of nine other similar schools located across the country. Progress Schools Limited are the proprietors. As well as the executive headteacher and headteacher, there is a chief executive officer and a managing director with responsibility for leadership. The proprietary company also has a governing board of directors that offer support and challenge to the chief executive officer of Progress Schools Limited in his work. A head of school oversees the school's day-to-day operation.
- Progress Schools' stated mission is 'We support the potential to succeed'. The proprietor states its schools prepare pupils for further education, work-based learning and employment.
- The proprietor intends that the school will cater for pupils who have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The school intends to offer places to pupils with education and health care plans as appropriate.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first pre-registration inspection of Progress Schools – Stockport.
- The inspector checked on the proprietor's compliance with all parts of the independent school standards.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, executive headteacher and a director and chief executive of the proprietary company.
- The inspector also checked documentation relating to the curriculum, including schemes of work and the curriculum policy.
- The inspector reviewed the proprietor's policies in relation to welfare, health and safety. A scrutiny of the proprietor's safeguarding procedures, including recruitment processes and checks, was also undertaken. A tour of the school premises was undertaken jointly with the executive headteacher.
- In carrying out this type of inspection, inspectors assess the extent to which the school is likely to meet 'The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014' when it opens.

Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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