

# Orion School

Dudley Road, Hockley, Birmingham B18 7QH

**Inspection date**

22 August 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) and 4*

- The curriculum policy sets out appropriate aims. The curriculum policy weaknesses identified during the first pre-registration inspection in July 2018 have been suitably remedied. The framework is up to date and is appropriately personalised. The planned provision is likely to ensure that, for those pupils in full-time education, all of the required areas of learning will be taught.
- Suitable schemes of work are in place for all subjects. High priority is to be given to improving pupils' basic skills and their personal, social and emotional development.
- Programmes of study are suitably differentiated and take into account pupils' differing starting points on entry. The aim is to ensure that pupils are on courses that best meet their specific needs, age and aptitudes. The school plans to offer a range of accredited subjects, ranging from entry level to GCSE. A vocational course in motor vehicle maintenance is to be a key part of the school's curriculum offer.
- The curriculum and teaching aim to enable pupils to acquire the necessary academic and personal skills to succeed in adult life.
- The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme takes into account all of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Two weaknesses identified in July 2018 have been suitably addressed. The proposed PSHE programme provides sufficient opportunities to support pupils' social development. History is to be taught as a subject in its own right. An adequate scheme of work currently exists so that history can be taught in a meaningful and cohesive way. Planned activities aim to promote British values and help pupils develop a tolerance and understanding of lifestyles and cultures that are different from their own.
- An appropriate careers policy is in place. It is much improved from the version evaluated by the inspector in July 2018. It proposes how impartial careers advice is to be delivered. The head of school intends to use the eight Gatsby Foundation benchmarks to provide a framework for good-quality careers advice.

- An adequate range of resources has been purchased to support learning. For example, GCSE textbooks have been purchased to support English literature course work and science equipment has been purchased to support practical science work. The motor vehicle maintenance workshop is well equipped. It has all of the required specialist equipment to support learning.
- The proprietors plan to implement a range of assessment methods to determine pupils' attainment on entry and to track their academic progress and improvements in their personal development over time.
- The proprietors have a track record of employing staff in their established alternative provision who have the necessary expertise and subject knowledge to teach the subjects for which they have responsibility.
- The proprietors have ensured that all standards for this part are likely to be met.

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

*Paragraphs 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)*

- The school's programmes of study have been improved since the first pre-registration inspection. They appropriately explain how pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development will be promoted. Bullying and anti-bullying guidance has been designed to enable pupils to know right from wrong, take responsibility for their behaviour and understand how they can contribute to school life and society more widely.
- Learning activities aim to promote British values and improve pupils' awareness of life in modern Britain and their knowledge of its institutions.
- It is highly likely that many of the pupils admitted will have behavioural, social, emotional and mental health needs. Many will have had a disrupted education and poor attendance. The school's ethos aims to improve pupils' self-worth and self-confidence, so that they succeed and fulfil their potential.
- Policies demonstrate a commitment to a non-partisan approach to the teaching of political views.
- The proprietors have ensured that all of the standards for this part are likely to be met.

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

*Paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)*

- The school's safeguarding policy is based on Birmingham's safeguarding board guidance. Its contents reflect current government requirements. The policy is available to parents and others via the school's website.
- The head of school, the curriculum leader and those staff who currently work in alternative provision have undergone appropriate child protection and 'Prevent' duty training to help them fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. The proposed designated persons in charge of safeguarding have undergone advanced safeguarding training, as required. The head of school plans to ensure that all staff receive the necessary safeguarding training as part of their induction into school life.

- The head of school has undergone safer recruitment training. She is involved in all interviews to employ staff.

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

- Since the last pre-registration inspection, behaviour and anti-bullying policies have been improved. Appropriate personalised and up-to-date policies and procedures are in place with regard to the management of behaviour and to prevent bullying in all of its forms. These frameworks provide suitable guidance to support staff to implement their responsibilities effectively. The values specified in the frameworks match those of the school. This was not the case at the previous inspection.
- Records of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour, including racist and bullying incidents, are in place.

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

- Clear and concise policies exist for promoting health and safety, including first-aid and fire-safety procedures. Guidance is sufficiently detailed about health and safety matters so that staff know how to fulfil their welfare, health and safety responsibilities. Safety concerns identified by the inspector in July 2018 no longer exist. Regular fire-risk assessments are to be conducted. The most recent fire-risk assessment made recommendations for improvement that have been addressed effectively. At the previous inspection, the inspector reported that the location of the fire assembly point was unsuitable. This shortcoming has been remedied. The fire assembly point is in a sensible position. It is no longer near the front entrance, thereby impeding access by emergency services.
- At the time of the first pre-registration inspection, hazardous materials were not stored securely, and the inspector identified several risks in and around the premises that were likely to have an adverse effect on pupils' welfare and safety. Hazardous materials are now properly stored in secure containers with appropriate signage. Tools and equipment for motor vehicle maintenance are no longer stored in an insecure way.
- There are already a sufficient number of first aiders and fire marshals on site. In July 2018, the inspector reported that the first-aid room could not be accessed without a code, potentially delaying emergency treatment. The first-aid facility no longer has controlled access, so is easily accessible at all times. The first-aid policy makes clear who the first aiders are and their responsibilities. This was not the case at the time of the previous inspection.
- Improvements have been made to the quality of risk assessments in the past 13 months. Suitable risk assessments have been conducted of the premises, classroom activities and for off-site visits. In July 2018, physical education (PE) was to be taught in a local leisure centre but leaders had not assessed the risks associated with using it. This weakness has been rectified. A suitable risk assessment is in place for off-site activities, including at the local leisure centre. Risk assessments for the motor vehicle workshop are of good quality. This was not the case at the time of previous inspection.
- Leaders have ensured that all portable equipment has been subject to inspection by a competent person. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

- Appropriate registers are in place for recording admissions and attendance. The aim is to maintain them in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- The intention is that the ratio of adults to pupils will be high. Consequently, it is likely that pupils will be well supervised at all times.
- The proprietors have ensured that all of the standards for this part 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) and 18(3)*

- The proprietors have ensured that all of the required recruitment and staff vetting checks are carried out on all staff and others who work with children. For example, those staff who currently work in alternative provision and, if the Department for Education (DfE) application is successful, are likely to work in the school have undergone the required checks. This includes checks on their identity, qualifications, medical fitness and right to work in the United Kingdom (UK) as well as UK and overseas criminal-record checks.
- The school does not intend to employ staff from supply agencies.

*Paragraphs 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) and 20(6)(c)*

- All of the required vetting checks have been carried out on members of the proprietorial body to confirm their suitability to work with children. No one is barred or prohibited from working in a school.

*Paragraphs 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(6)*

- The single central register contains all of the required information that it should regarding the checks conducted on the proprietors and staff who are likely to work in the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when information held in the register was not recorded accurately.
- The proprietors have ensured that all of the standards for this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b) and 23(1)(c)*

- The premises comprise three classrooms, a large motor vehicle workshop, medical room, reception area, two offices, careers room, small kitchen plus toilet, washroom and changing facilities. The premises can accommodate the proposed 35 pupils on roll.
- There are sufficient toilet, washing and changing facilities for the proposed number of pupils on roll. A disabled toilet is available for use by those with a disability, including staff and visitors.

- PE is to take place at a local leisure centre, where pupils have access to adequate shower and changing facilities.

*Paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b) and 24(2)*

- A suitable medical room is provided in the current provision for the care and treatment of those who are sick or injured. This will continue to be used by the proposed school.

*Paragraphs 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) and 28(2)(b)*

- The accommodation is in good decorative order and is kept clean and tidy. Current facilities ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils. In July 2018, the inspector reported that several coat pegs and benches were not secured to the wall and floor, so could be a danger to pupils and others. All benches, lockers and coat pegs are now properly secured, so do not present a hazard. The inspector also reported that a dilapidated store on site constituted a fire hazard. The store is no longer dilapidated and does not constitute a fire hazard. It is currently not in use. It is fenced off until it can be put into productive use.
- There is adequate lighting, heating, acoustic conditions and ventilation in all areas. External lighting is provided to ensure safe entry and exit to the premises.
- Drinking water is clearly labelled. Toilets and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. The temperature of hot water does not pose a scalding risk.

*Paragraphs 29(1), 29(1)(a) and 29(1)(b)*

- There is adequate outside space for play and recreation.
- PE is to be provided in accordance with the school's curriculum plans.
- The proprietors have ensured that all of the standards for this part 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)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(b), 32(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), 32(3)(g), 32(4), 32(4)(a), 32(4)(b) and 32(4)(c)*

- All of the required information that must be provided or made available to parents and others is available on the proposed school's website.
- The safeguarding policy is published on the proposed school's website, as required.
- Suitable arrangements are in place to provide information about income and expenditure to local authorities, where relevant.
- The proprietors intend to comply with any requests for information or decisions made by the Secretary of State.
- The proprietors have ensured that all of the standards for this part 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 contains all of the information that it should, in line with independent school requirements. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the policy did not meet all government requirements. A copy of the complaints policy is located on the school's website.
- The proprietors have ensured that all of the standards for this part 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 first pre-registration inspection report, published in July 2018, stated that a significant number of independent school standards were not met. Since then, the proprietors have improved their understanding of the independent school standards and appropriately addressed the regulatory shortcoming identified 13 months ago. This has resulted in all of the independent school standards being likely to be met.
- The curriculum, teaching and safeguarding arrangements actively promote pupils' well-being.
- The proprietors have ensured that all of the standards for this part are likely to be met.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietors fulfil their Equality Act 2010 responsibilities.

## **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	147234
DfE registration number	330/6061
Inspection number	10117823

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	Georgina Mendez and Murett Mendez
Chair	Marie Rooney
Headteacher	Murett Mendez
Annual fees (day pupils)	£11,400 to £14,250
Telephone number	01212 457200
Email address	murett.mendez@orionschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	32
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	0
Total hours operating as a school per week	12
Total hours of teaching provided per week	12



## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	13-16	13-16	13-16
Number of pupils on the school roll	32	35	35

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	25
Number of part-time pupils	32	10
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	7	25
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	0	0
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	0	0

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	7	10
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	2

## Information about this proposed school

- The current name of this alternative provider is Orion Training and Development Limited. Provision is part time and pupils remain on the registers of their host schools. Most participate in a motor vehicle maintenance course and some attend mentoring activities as part of a local police crime commissioner scheme.
- The proposed school is to be located on its current site in Hockley, Birmingham. It is not envisaged that off-site provision will be used.
- The proposed school plans to provide full-time education for up to 35 pupils aged 13–16 years. It is likely that a significant number of the pupils will have special educational needs and/or disabilities and it is anticipated that most will have behavioural, emotional, social and mental health needs. Some pupils may be children looked after and some may not have English as their first language. The school does not intend to admit pupils with a statement or an education, health and care plan.
- It is proposed that pupils will be admitted from nearby local authorities and Birmingham schools.
- The school does not have a religious character or special ethos.

## Information about this inspection

- Ofsted conducted the inspection at the request of the DfE. The school applied to become an independent school with the request to provide full-time education for a maximum of 35 pupils aged 13–16 years.
- The DfE specified that this inspection should check whether the school is likely to meet all of the independent school standards.
- This was the school's second pre-registration inspection. Its first was in July 2018, when it was judged as not likely to meet many of the independent school standards.
- The proprietors are currently providing alternative provision on the proposed school's premises. The proprietors have applied to the DfE to become an independent school and will cease being an alternative provider if their application is successful.
- The inspection was carried out during the summer holiday when pupils were not attending alternative provision. Therefore, teaching and learning was not observed on this occasion.
- Meetings were held with the two proprietors, one of whom is the head of school, and the curriculum leader. A tour of the premises and accommodation was undertaken. A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including welfare, health and safety policies and procedures and schemes of work. Safeguarding guidance, recruitment and staff vetting arrangements were evaluated to check that they meet government requirements.

## Inspection team

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David Rzeznik, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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