

Queensmead House School

Kings Road, Windsor SL4 2AX

Inspection dates

25 February 2020

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 1 and 2

- The proposed school will provide a bespoke curriculum for its pupils. The curriculum will be based on the national curriculum and will provide pupils with an appropriate breadth of subjects. This includes older pupils who will follow one of three pathways which will provide opportunities for them to obtain both academic and vocational qualifications.
- The curriculum will provide opportunities for pupils to acquire and consolidate speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders have well-developed plans to teach pupils to read. This includes pupils who join the school who may have gaps in their education and require additional help to develop their phonics and early reading skills.
- The school will provide well for pupils' personal, social, health and economic development through the planned curriculum. This will be delivered through the school's own tailored scheme of work for personal, social and health education. This also includes key aspects of fundamental British values and encouraging respect for others.
- Secondary-aged pupils will receive up-to-date careers guidance. This will be delivered in part by a suitably qualified independent organisation and include appropriate work experience for those pupils who are able to access this.

Paragraph 3 and 4

- Leaders have already appointed experienced and qualified teaching staff for both the primary and secondary phases of the proposed school. Leaders are very clear about the curriculum areas individual staff are responsible for. Leaders already have appropriate systems in place to monitor the quality of education pupils will experience.
- Leaders and teaching staff are knowledgeable about the specialist support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) require. This will enable staff to

modify and adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils, as well as using a range of resources and approaches to ensure that pupils make good progress.

- Expectations of behaviour will be high. All staff will undertake training to ensure that there is a common approach to managing the complex behaviour that pupils are likely to present.
- School leaders and the proprietor have a clear vision of the values that will underpin the school's culture. They will ensure that discrimination is not tolerated and that fundamental British values are promoted. Equalities will be actively promoted through the wider curriculum.
- Systems are already in place to measure the progress pupils make. This will include monitoring pupils' academic and social and emotional progress. Careful use of specialist resources, including qualified staff to deliver a range of therapies, will be at the heart of the school's day-to-day provision.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements in this part of the independent school standards.

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

Paragraph 5

- Leaders and staff will promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively through the taught curriculum and through establishing a culture of tolerance and respect between staff and pupils alike.
- Curriculum plans ensure that pupils will learn about British values, as well as actively promoting the development of pupils' self-esteem and sense of self-worth.
- Leaders understand that developing pupils' confidence and resilience will be an important aspect of what the school does. Many pupils who attend the school will have been unsuccessful in previous educational settings. The ethos of the school is that all pupils will be successful, no matter what their backgrounds.
- Leaders have set high expectations of themselves and staff. These include ensuring that pupils are not exposed to partisan political or religious opinions.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements in this part of the independent school standards.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 6 and 7

- The school's policies, written guidance and procedures to ensure that the welfare, health and safety of pupils are sound. Suitably qualified professionals have already carried out a wide range of work to ensure that the school site and buildings are safe. The directors' oversight of this aspect of the school is particularly strong.
- Key leaders have already undertaken safeguarding training appropriate to their levels of responsibility. This includes safer recruitment training for those who are responsible for employing staff. Induction training for new staff is comprehensive. This covers safeguarding training, and training to ensure that staff are aware of the school's wider policies and procedures to keep children safe.

- The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. The published policy meets current requirements.

Paragraph 9 and 10

- The behaviour policy is suitable for the ages and the needs of the school's pupils. The school also has an appropriate anti-bullying policy. The behaviour policy sets out clear aims and lists the consequences of poor behaviour. Leaders will keep records of sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour.

Paragraph 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16

- Leaders have set out a clear policy to comply with relevant health and safety legislation. The proprietor has a clear overview of this and has already established a cycle of regular checks for all aspects of safety at appropriate intervals. The school's fire alarm system, emergency lighting and equipment such as fire extinguishers have recently been renewed.
- The new site manager is undergoing appropriate training and will be responsible for the ongoing cycle of checks once the proposed school is open. This is being supervised by a suitably experienced and knowledgeable leader from the proprietor's quality assurance team.
- The first aid policy is suitable and makes provision for effective first aid. All staff, including leaders, will be trained at an appropriate level to administer first aid prior to the proposed school opening.
- The admissions and attendance registers will contain all of the information required. Because the school is not yet open, pupils have not yet been accepted onto the school roll. Plans for the effective supervision of pupils are in place.
- The school's risk assessment policy states clearly how risks are to be managed. A range of risk assessments are already in place. These include the school's own transport and aspects of the premises, including classrooms. Others will follow prior to the proposed school opening, including those for off-site visits.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements in this part of the independent school standards.

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

Paragraph 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21

- Leaders know about the checks that need to be made on adults working with children in regulated activities. These include all of the required verifications such as medical fitness and qualification checks. Leaders are clear that staff will not begin work at the school without the necessary checks in place.
- The single central record of checks on adults is already established, is sound, and administered competently.
- Suitable checks have already been carried out on directors, senior leaders and other members of staff who have already been appointed. Appropriate checks will be completed if supply staff are ever required.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements in this part of the independent school standards.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 31

- Since purchasing the site, the proprietor has carried out wide-ranging refurbishment of the school. Much of the school has been redecorated. Some adjustments have been made in communal areas and on staircases, for instance to ensure that the school is a safe place for pupils and staff. New external lighting has been fitted.
- New showers and changing rooms have been installed for older pupils. Most toilets are also newly installed. This includes appropriate toilet facilities for primary- and secondary-aged pupils.
- The school has extensive grounds which are suitable for pupils to play outside, as well as for sport and physical education. These include a sizeable field and tennis courts. Pupils will also receive some aspects of their physical education off-site at a local sports centre and swimming pool.
- Classrooms are spacious and well lit. Heating, lighting and acoustics in rooms and internal spaces are suitable. There is a dedicated and well-equipped medical room. Drinking water is available from newly installed water coolers across the school.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements in this part of the independent school standards.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32

- Leaders and the proprietor are aware of the requirement to provide specified information detailed within Part 6. This includes when pupils are funded or partly funded by a local authority. They also know that they need to publish certain reports and other information, as necessary, on their website, particularly information required by parents or carers.
- The school plans to provide regular written reports to parents or carers.
- The website includes all of the required information such as policies, contact details and information about the school's education provision. This includes the school's safeguarding policy.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements in this part of the independent school standards.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- The complaints policy and procedures are published on the school's website. They set out clear timescales for the management of a complaint and provide for complaints to be resolved informally if possible.
- There is provision for formal complaints to be heard by a panel of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the complaint. The policy rightly stipulates that one of the members of the panel must be independent of the management and running of the school. It also states that complainants have the right to be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish.

- The complaints policy makes clear that any findings of a panel must be available to a complainant, and, where relevant, the person complained about.
- Leaders plan to keep any copies of complaints confidentially and available for inspection on the school premises.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements in this part of the independent school standards.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- Leaders and representatives of the proprietor demonstrate a good understanding of the requirements within the independent school standards. Most of the systems, policies and procedures that will be used at the proposed school are based on those established at the proprietor's other settings.
- Leaders are aware of their duty to actively promote the well-being of all pupils. They are also aware and knowledgeable about their statutory duties to safeguard pupils.
- Plans are in place to establish a governing board for the proposed school. Roles and responsibilities have already been identified. Systems are in place for those in positions of governance to receive the key information they need to hold leaders to account for the quality of education the school provides.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements in this part of the independent school standards.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have compiled a suitable accessibility plan to improve access to the premises. Leaders intend to update the plan at appropriate intervals. The school is likely to meet paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of The Equality Act 2010.

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	147663
DfE registration number	868/6026
Inspection number	10132381

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 special day school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Witherslack Group Limited
Chair	Judith Jones
Headteacher	Justine Sims (Executive Headteacher)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£72,744 to £107,405
Telephone number	01539 566 081
Website	witherslackgroup.co.uk/queensmead-house-school
Email address	Justine.sims@witherslackgroup.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	5 to 16	5 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	130	130

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	130
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	130
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	130
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	130

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	7	Depends on pupil numbers
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	Depends on pupil numbers

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school will be situated in a residential area of Windsor. The premises were formerly occupied by an independent school which closed in January 2019. Since then, the proprietor has done much to upgrade the fabric of the buildings, while retaining the distinctive charm of the original house.
- The school will cater for up to 130 pupils in the age range five to 16.
- The school will provide for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. These include autism spectrum disorder, as well as social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Most pupils will be placed by local authorities and will have education, health and care plans.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first pre-registration inspection of the proposed school. The purpose of the inspection was to check whether the proposed school is likely to meet the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Schools must comply with the independent school standards to be registered.
- The inspection focused on compliance with the regulatory requirements of the independent school standards, safeguarding procedures and Schedule 10 of The Equality Act 2010.
- I toured the school's premises and grounds. I reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the single central record, safeguarding information, policies, and curriculum and assessment information.
- I met with the executive headteacher and other school leaders. I also met with representatives of the proprietor, including members of the proprietor's quality assurance teams.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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