

# Rowan House School

207/209 Weston Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 6AT

## Inspection dates

15 July 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

*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)(h), 2(2)(i) and 3(i)*

- The chair of the proprietorial body and leaders clearly set out their vision for the proposed school. They articulate how they will improve the social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) of pupils, as well as providing pupils with a personalised education programme that meets their individual needs. The ultimate goal of the proposed school is to get all pupils back into mainstream education within 12 to 18 months. This aim is supported by the 'restorative parenting recovery programme'.
- The proposed curriculum, which covers key stages 1 to 3, is based on the national curriculum. Curriculum plans map out the order of learning that pupils will follow. These plans indicate that pupils are likely to access a suitably broad range of experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education. Curriculum plans in key stages 1 and 2 are particularly detailed, especially in the core subjects. This is likely to help pupils to develop their speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders are already looking into how they can further develop curriculum plans in the future. In particular, they are looking at the early reading curriculum and further improvements to the key stage 3 curriculum.
- Leaders have put in place a suitable assessment framework. It is intended that all pupils will have a baseline assessment when they join the school, using information provided by the previous setting, as well as in-house assessments. It is proposed that pupils will have an individual education plan, which identifies their education and pastoral needs and possible strategies to meet these. Formal and informal assessments are used to inform future teaching. It is intended that pupil progress will be tracked using an assessment progress report.
- Leaders have high and consistent expectations of how pupils should behave in lessons. The behaviour policy sets out a positive approach to behaviour management.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

*Paragraphs 2(2)e, 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii) and 2(2)(e)(iii)*

- Leaders have developed a suitable plan to ensure that pupils are likely to receive impartial careers advice and guidance in key stage 3. It is proposed that this will involve visiting a careers show, subject taster sessions and involvement with mainstream schools. In particular, the school is keen for pupils to be well informed about key stage 4 qualification options.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

*Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(j) and 4*

- In line with the school's overall ethos, leaders demonstrate the necessary knowledge, understanding and expertise to improve pupils' self-confidence, self-esteem and levels of motivation. This is likely to support pupils in making good academic progress in line with their ability.
- Leaders propose to establish a stimulating learning environment that is rich in high-quality resources. During the inspection, the final touches to the refurbishment were being carried out, including the mounting of wall boards, the setting up of laptops and the unpacking of other resources.
- The headteacher and other teachers in the school have qualified teacher status. Leaders intend that pupils will be taught by highly qualified staff with good subject knowledge.
- Leaders talk confidently and expertly about how they will check on the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The headteacher plans to carry out a range of monitoring activities, including looking at achievement information, lesson visits, book scrutinies and pupil interviews. It is proposed that these findings will be used to formulate a support plan that will help staff to improve their teaching.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

**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) and 5(d)(iii)*

- Leaders are aware of the possible SEMH needs of their prospective pupils. Consequently, a well-planned pastoral care programme threads through the intended curriculum, which is also likely to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders are keen for pupils to develop a love of learning through the curriculum and wider school activities. The school is likely to help pupils gain an understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, as well as the consequences of their choices. Developing pupils' social skills in a range of situations, including around the dinner table, is also a clear focus of the school.
- There is no evidence in curriculum plans and wider documentation to suggest that fundamental British values would be undermined. Rather, leaders articulate clearly how they intend to promote these values through the school's aims, the curriculum

and special activities. Leaders plan to engage in local community activities and raise pupils' awareness of different faiths, beliefs and cultures.

- The proprietor has ensured that these standards 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 takes account of the most recent government guidance. Leaders are about to begin a review of the policy, taking into account the new version of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', when it is published.
- The headteacher, who will be the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the deputy DSL have completed suitable training in relation to their roles. The DSL has signed up to government safeguarding updates, which she believes will keep her abreast of new guidance when it is issued.
- Leaders' proposed safeguarding training for staff at the start of the autumn term 2020 is appropriate. For example, the training will focus on identifying signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as looking at more specific safeguarding issues, such as the 'Prevent' duty.
- Leaders demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding to make sure that pupils are kept safe throughout the school day and beyond. For example, leaders display a secure understanding of site security, managing behaviour, nurture and prevention of harm. Planned high levels of supervision support these plans.
- The planned personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is likely to help pupils to learn how to keep safe in different situations, including when they are working online.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

- Leaders have put together a detailed behaviour policy that outlines their proposed approach to developing positive behaviour management. The school's approach to behaviour management is built upon the 'restorative parenting recovery programme'.
- Leaders' comments and documents outline how high expectations, a calm environment, a consistency of approach, positive rewards and graduated sanctions will support pupils to improve their behaviour. It is planned that all staff will engage in a three-day behaviour management training programme at the start of the academic year. This training covers the use of appropriate physical restraint, but only as a last resort.
- The proposed school has a suitable anti-bullying policy in place. It complements the behaviour policy and specific links are made to the protective characteristics outlined in the 2010 Equality Act. It states that pupils will learn about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

- A detailed health and safety policy and other related policies are in place, such as a risk assessment policy. Staff already appointed are first-aid trained and it is proposed that all new staff will be trained to the basic level of first aid.
- A fire risk assessment of the newly refurbished building has been carried out. The risk assessment has identified three areas for improvement, some of which have already been addressed. The remaining actions are due to be completed by 8 August 2020. Leaders provided examples of proformas that will be used to record fire safety checks, including records of evacuations. It is planned that staff will undertake fire-warden training every two years.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

#### *Paragraphs 14 and 15*

- There are currently no pupils attending the school, but the admissions policy outlines all the information that needs to be recorded on the admissions register. This is in line with DfE guidance.
- The staff-to-pupil ratio suggests that pupils are likely to be suitably supervised throughout the school day. The teaching staff within the school also provide support for pupils' welfare. This is part of the school's holistic approach to supporting pupils' social, emotional and behavioural development.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards 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), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 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(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c) and 21(6)*

- The proposed school is acting in line with the proprietorial body's recruitment procedures, which include three references and a medical check prior to appointment.
- The single central register contains the full range of pre-employment checks. It is stored centrally in an electronic format. The register is being updated as new members of staff are recruited.
- Leaders state that they do not intend to use supply staff, but they are clear about the checks and procedures that would need to be followed if they did.
- Leaders have completed safer recruitment training. It is intended that there will always be at least two members of the recruitment panel who have completed this training.
- An educational consultant conducts regulatory checks for schools within the organisation and has supported them in this area of the independent school standards.

- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

## 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) and 29(1)(b)*

- The proposed school will be located in half of the ground floor of a larger two-storey building that houses the attached children's home. Building work has been carried out so that there is no internal access between the proposed school and the children's home. Leaders are keen for pupils to see the school as a separate entity to their home.
- The premises have been newly refurbished and decorated to a very high standard. All rooms are well lit and have good acoustics. There are three classrooms that provide a suitable space for the proposed number of pupils to learn.
- There are two separate unisex toilets available to pupils, with hot and cold running water and handwashing facilities. The temperature of the water is suitably regulated. Both are in close proximity to the medical room. The medical room is spacious and well resourced, including a wash basin and foldable bed. There is a separate toilet for staff and visitors.
- There are two separate, self-contained shower rooms in the school for pupils to use if required. There is also space within these rooms for pupils to change.
- There are two separate outdoor areas that can be used for pupils to play and socialise. These areas are suitably secure and well lit. One outdoor area has the potential to support pupils in developing gardening skills, which the headteacher is keen to pursue. The other area is large enough to cater for some aspects of the physical education curriculum. However, leaders are engaging with the local sports centre and swimming pool to arrange other aspects of physical education on a weekly basis. The former of these two sites is within walking distance. Leaders have considered fully the risks associated with travelling to the sites and using the facilities, including the presence of members of the public.
- The proposed school has a kitchen area that pupils will use for cooking activities. The kitchen is also the place where pupils can obtain drinking water. However, leaders are putting systems into place so that drinking water is available in the classrooms for pupils throughout the day.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

## Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(b)(ii), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d) and 32(3)(f)*

- The proprietorial body's website provides a range of information, including relevant contact details and the main aims of the organisation. It also includes an education

tab that provides information about the other registered schools in the group. Rowan House School does not currently have its own website, but leaders are in the process of creating one. All required policies and documentation will be available through this site. Leaders also shared the format of the school's intended prospectus, which contains a range of useful information.

- All policies, documents and information required for the pre-registration inspection were provided in a timely manner. The proprietor has used model policies and documents from other schools within the organisation, but many of these have been personalised to Rowan House School.
- Leaders shared an example of the annual written report to parents that they intend to use. The report contains information about behaviour, attendance and academic performance.
- Leaders shared evidence of how they have contributed to annual reviews for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans in their other schools. The information shared was comprehensive.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards 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 school's complaints policy sets out the steps that both adults and pupils need to take if they have a concern about the school. The aim is to resolve complaints informally, where possible, but more formal steps are outlined if required, including a panel hearing. It sets out a suitable timeframe for handling complaints. There was no evidence of how previous complaints have been handled, due to the fact that the school is not currently operating.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards 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 chair of the proprietorial body and school leaders are clear about why they want to register as an independent school. They have a track record of operating schools attached to children's homes in the Greater Manchester area and now want to provide similar opportunities for pupils at this site. Leaders demonstrate a good knowledge of how to cater for the wide and varied needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), particularly SEMH. They possess wide and varied experience in this area.
- The headteacher has recently been appointed and she will be supported by the education director if the school were to open. In turn, the proprietorial body support and hold the education director to account through monthly practice meetings.
- All leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the independent school standards. The education director evaluates the four schools within the social enterprise against

these standards. The proprietorial body employs an educational consultant to provide independent support and advice, as well as carrying out internal checks on the schools.

- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have ensured that they have a suitable accessibility plan in place that meets the requirements 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	147985
DfE registration number	861/6023
Inspection number	10154394

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	Other independent special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Halliwell Homes Ltd
Chair	Karen Mitchell-Mellor
Education director	Mathew Hargreaves
Annual fees (day pupils)	£19,500
Telephone number	0161 437 9491
Website	No website currently
Email address	mathew.hargreaves@halliwellhomes.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5-14	5-14
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	10	10

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	10
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	10
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	10
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	0

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	7
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	0

## Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is one of five schools in the Halliwell Homes Ltd social enterprise. The other four schools are registered with the Department for Education (DfE) and have been inspected by Ofsted.
- The proposed school is located in a building that will be shared with a children's home. The school and children's home have the same proprietorial body. Whilst the proposed school and children's home share the same building, there is no internal access between them.
- Leaders propose that the school will cater solely for pupils who reside within the children's home. The majority of these pupils are likely to have SEND linked to SEMH. It is also likely that they will have an EHC plan.
- The proposed school will not have a religious denomination.
- The proposed school does not intend to use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the DfE during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic of 2020, to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is given permission to open. This is the proposed school's first inspection.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many documents were submitted electronically and were reviewed remotely by the lead inspector prior to the inspection. Several additional documents, including the school's single central register, were scrutinised on site.
- As the inspection included an on-site visit, a tour of the premises was possible.
- Social distancing was maintained throughout the inspection. This was aided by the fact that the proposed school currently has no pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the newly appointed headteacher. He also met with the education director, who has a strategic role across the organisation that includes supporting current headteachers. The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietorial board. He was also introduced to the senior lead teacher.
- The final feedback meeting was conducted on site. It was attended by the education director and the headteacher, with apologies from the chair of the proprietorial board.

## Inspection team

Wayne Simner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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