

V.A.S.E Academy

Oakland Young People Centre, Oakland Road, Handsworth, Birmingham
B21 0NA

Inspection date

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)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h), and 2(2)(i)

- Since the previous pre-registration inspection, leaders have revised the curriculum policy and associated schemes of work. The curriculum policy now outlines how leaders propose to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The proposed curriculum is broad and balanced and is likely to provide pupils with opportunities to experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, creative and aesthetic and physical activities. Core subjects, such as English, mathematics, science and humanities, are to be supplemented by an 'enhanced' curriculum. The 'enhanced' curriculum is likely to support pupils' personal development. It will cover areas such as independent living and social skills. The schemes of work in each subject outline how pupils' knowledge and skills will be developed overtime.
- Leaders have developed a programme to provide pupils with independent careers advice and guidance. It is proposed that pupils will access qualifications in personal development, functional skills and GCSE qualifications.
- Leaders have developed a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education scheme of work. The PSHE education programme is closely linked to, and is likely to support, the promotion of fundamental British values. For example, pupils will learn about the differences between right and wrong by reflecting on why schools have rules in Year 7, learning about human rights in Year 9 and then the criminal justice system in Year 11. The relationships and sex education programme is also likely to support pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, including sexuality and different forms of relationships. The proposed curriculum is likely to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

- Leaders have developed a teaching and learning policy that outlines their expectations for all teachers. The policy details how leaders propose to monitor the quality of teaching, with a focus on quality first teaching, challenge for all pupils and promoting positive relationships. Expectations for lesson planning and the learning environment are also set out. The behaviour policy details the proposed expectations of pupils' behaviour and the sanctions staff should enforce if needed.
- The assessment policy has also been redeveloped since the previous pre-registration inspection. It outlines a range of proposed assessments that teachers will undertake to enable them to track pupils' progress. On entry to the school, leaders propose that pupils will undertake a series of baseline assessments, including social and emotional assessments. The proposed reports to parents include information on pupils' academic attainment and progress, behaviour information and effort grades.
- The school is now equipped with appropriate resources to enable teachers to deliver the proposed curriculum. For example, tables can be adjusted to match the differing sizes of pupils, computers and electronic boards are in place and reading resources are being developed.
- Leaders have 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)

- There is a spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) policy in place. The policy sets out the school's aims to promote pupils' SMSC development. These aims are reflected throughout the whole curriculum, especially the social development programme. The proposed social development programme includes a focus on areas such as: rights and responsibilities, relationships, prejudice and discrimination, anti-social behaviour, county lines, the criminal justice system and health and well-being.
- Leaders propose to supplement pupils' SMSC development through a range of values, such as respect, tolerance, honesty, democracy and fairness. Leaders also propose to have 'themes of the week' where pupils will focus on areas such as e-safety, sexual health, human rights, cancer awareness, racism, addiction awareness and Pride month.
- Leaders demonstrate that they are committed to promoting SMSC education in a non-partisan way and to present pupils with balanced views. The social development programme is likely to promote fundamental British values and develop pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics. It is also likely to support pupils' personal development to help them become responsible citizens in modern Britain.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), and 32(1)(c) [Part 6 provision of information]

- There is a safeguarding policy in place that adheres to current government guidance. The school does not have a website. Leaders propose to provide parents with a copy of the policy on request.
- Leaders have set out procedures to safeguard pupils. Staff will be required to complete 'concern' forms if they are worried about any aspect of a pupil's safety and welfare. Two leaders have completed designated safeguarding lead (DSL) training and there are plans to train a third member of staff. The DSLs demonstrate a secure understanding of how to follow up concerns, including working with external agencies, such as social care.
- It is proposed that all staff will complete safeguarding training prior to starting work. The proprietor provided evidence to show that 'Prevent' duty and physical-restraint training will also be provided for all staff prior to the school potentially opening. The staff code of conduct sets out leaders' expectations for staff's behaviour, including their use of language, whistleblowing and health and safety.
- The PSHE education and social development programmes include a range of proposed activities to teach pupils how to keep themselves safe when in school and also when they are outside school. For example, there are planned sessions to teach pupils about the dangers of county lines, child sexual exploitation, drugs and e-safety.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

- The behaviour policy sets out the proposed sanctions for misbehaviour. It also details examples of serious misdemeanours and how incidents are likely to be reported and recorded. There are separate physical restraint and exclusions policies, which supplement the behaviour policy. Both outline the proposed procedures staff should follow if needed.
- The anti-bullying policy details the school's proposed anti-bullying strategies. It includes the signs and symptoms of bullying that staff should be alert to, and staff's responsibilities in tackling any bullying incidents. The policy includes information about bullying for pupils, parents and carers.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

- The health and safety policy outlines the responsibilities of leaders, staff and all visitors in relation to health and safety. The policy covers all aspects of keeping individuals safe while in school. For example, it includes the proposed procedures for dealing with accidents and first aid, the arrival and departure of pupils, the use of computers and electrical equipment, emergency evacuation and the storage of hazardous substances.
- A tour of the school's site shows that the school is well maintained and is secured by lockable gates and fences. There were no hazards apparent during the site tour. Electrical equipment has been recently tested. Hazardous substances were locked away. Leaders also shared how they propose to carry out daily, weekly, monthly and annual health and safety checks across the school's site.
- Birmingham City Council carried out a fire risk assessment of the premises in September 2019. This did not identify any fire hazards. Fire extinguisher checks are

dated January 2020. Two members of staff have completed fire-marshal training. There is a proposed register of fire safety procedures that will be carried out, including fire drills. There is clear fire exit signage throughout the building and the fire exits were clear of obstructions during the site tour. Emergency lighting is operational.

- There is a proposed first-aid policy. It names the qualified first aiders and the location of the first-aid boxes. The policy outlines proposed actions to be taken in the event of an accident, including recording procedures and reporting to parents. Procedures to follow in the event of specific medical emergencies are also covered in the policy, such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and anaphylaxis. The policy is supported by an administration of medication policy. During the site visit, first-aid boxes were fully stocked. There is a log book ready to record any accidents.
- The supervision policy details the proposed supervisory arrangements from the start of the school day to the end. It also includes supervision arrangements for trips, breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Proposed attendance registers include the Department for Education (DfE) coding and will record morning and afternoon attendance. Proposed admissions registers will record at least two emergency contact numbers. Both registers adhere to current government regulations.
- There is a proposed risk assessment policy. The policy identifies which activities and areas of the school will require risk assessments and the proposed procedures to follow when undertaking them. It is proposed that guidance on undertaking risk assessments will be included as part of staff induction. The proposed risk assessment forms outline potential hazards, who may be at risk and the required control measures to mitigate the risk.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

- *Paragraphs 18(1), 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(1), 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), 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) and 21(5)(c)*
- All required safeguarding checks have been completed for the proprietor, staff who are currently employed and governors. The recruitment folders show that references are followed up prior to appointment. All checks are recorded and dated on an electronic register. Leaders do not intend to use supply staff. However, they propose to use a supply agency if needed. Leaders know that written confirmation of checks will be required prior to supply staff working in the school.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b) and 24(2)

- There are suitable toilet facilities, with separate toilets for female and male pupils clearly marked. The medical room is clean and provides adequate facilities for the short-term care of sick pupils. Leaders have secured an agreement with a local leisure centre to provide physical education and shower facilities.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraph 25

- There were no apparent hazards visible during a tour of the school's premises. The site is well maintained and clean. Hazardous materials are stored in a locked cupboard. All electrical and fire testing and checks are in place. The site is secured by fencing and the school gates will be locked during the school day.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 26, 27, 27(a) and 27(b)

- Acoustic conditions in all four classrooms are adequate. All areas of the school are suitably lit. External lighting is functional.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

- There are two water fountains in the school supplying drinking water, which are clearly marked as such. Toilet facilities have adequate hot- and cold-water supplies. The water from the hot taps would not pose a scalding risk to pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

- There is a large area outside the school that would provide a suitable place for pupils to play. Leaders intend to provide physical education off-site.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d) and 32(3)(f)

- The school does not have a website. Leaders provided all relevant documentation and policies required under Part 6 either electronically or during the on-site visit. For example, these included proposed admissions and attendance registers, the school's prospectus, curriculum schemes of work and safeguarding information. The school's prospectus includes information on the school's ethos.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards 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) and 33(k)

- The school's proposed complaints policy details the school's procedures for handling complaints. It adheres to government guidance. For example, it includes informal and formal processes and the timescales in which complaints should be dealt with.

- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor is also the headteacher. He demonstrated a strong understanding of the independent school standards. Since the previous pre-registration inspection, the proprietor, governors and leaders have acted to ensure that all standards are likely to be continually and consistently met. For example, the proposed curriculum policy and schemes of work have been improved significantly. Appropriate resources are in place to teach the curriculum. The proprietor has also recruited experienced staff.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to actively promote pupils' well-being.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. There is a proposed accessibility policy and plan in place. The policy sets out the school's commitment to ensure that the site and curriculum will be accessible to all pupils.

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	147702
DfE registration number	330/6134
Inspection number	10144085

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 school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Muhammad Majid
Chair	Mohammad Zahed
Headteacher	Muhammad Majid
Annual fees (day pupils)	£14,625 to £30,000
Telephone number	0121 551 4882
Website	The school does not have a website
Email address	info@vaseacademy.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 – 16	11 – 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	48	48

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	48
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	48
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	48
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	48

Staff

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

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is situated in Oakland Young People's Centre. The premises are leased to the proprietor by Birmingham City Council. The school has sole use of the facilities until 4pm each school day. Leaders intend to use a local leisure centre facility to provide physical education.
- The premises consist of four classroom areas, a room that is suitable for small group sessions, a sports hall, an outdoor all-weather area, first-aid room, kitchen and an office/administration area.
- The proposed school intends to offer up to 48 places for pupils aged 11 to 16 years. They are likely to be pupils who are vulnerable to exclusion from school and/or have a special educational need, specifically social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils may have an education, health and care plan.
- The proposed school does not intend to use alternative provision.
- It is proposed that local authorities and local schools will place pupils at the school.
- The proposed school's motto is 'daily growth, high achievers'.
- The school does not have a religious character.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the DfE during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic of 2020, to determine whether or not the proposed school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is given permission to open. This is the school's second pre-registration inspection.
- This inspection was conducted remotely with an on-site element to assess the suitability of the premises. This was due to restrictions placed on non-essential travel during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The lead inspector conducted a tour of the premises with the proprietor and the designated safeguarding lead.
- The lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documents and policies submitted electronically by leaders. The lead inspector also reviewed some documents on the school's site.
- During the site visit, the lead inspector met with the proprietor, the designated safeguarding lead and the administration officer. The lead inspector also met with three members of staff who have been recruited but are yet to take up employment at the school.
- The lead inspector discussed safeguarding and welfare arrangements with the safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Ann Pritchard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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