

The New School

St Mary's Lodge, 149 Central Hill, Upper Norwood, London SE19 1RT

Inspection dates

4–5 August 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

All paragraphs

- The curriculum policy is based on leaders' determination that pupils will become 'motivated and happy' learners. Each pupil will have a personalised learning plan. For secondary-age pupils, this will include studying towards GCSE qualifications in subjects such as English, mathematics, science, geography and art. Leaders intend to involve pupils closely in agreeing and reviewing their personalised plans. This approach reflects the school's ethos, which is centred on democratic principles.
- Pupils will study a broad range of subjects. Leaders have purchased commercial products to support the planning and delivery of most areas of learning. Schemes of work for pupils aged four to 16 provide clear information on the knowledge and skills pupils should develop. Appropriate consideration has been given to ensuring that pupils' different needs and abilities are catered for. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Suitable assessment systems are in place to check how well pupils are learning.
- Leaders intend that pupils will become fluent and enthusiastic readers. Children will begin learning phonics in the Reception class. Pupils will study a wide range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. They will also visit the school's well-stocked library to explore different authors and books.
- Suitable resources are likely to be available to support teaching in all subjects. Classrooms are well equipped, including in the early years. Dedicated teaching spaces are available for science, art and technology. Leaders have appointed suitably qualified teaching staff, including for the Reception class.
- Alongside the formal curriculum, pupils will take part in regular extra-curricular activities. Examples planned include chess, photography and outdoor pursuits. Leaders intend that these opportunities will enable pupils to explore different interests and talents.
- The policy for careers education is likely to be suitable. It sets out how pupils will be supported to make informed choices about their future education and employment. Secondary-age pupils will receive advice from an independent careers officer. Pupils

will have opportunities to visit local colleges and sixth forms and take part in work experience.

- Leaders have devised an appropriate programme for pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. The programme is based on three themes: health and well-being, relationships, and living in the wider world. The promotion of British values is threaded through each theme. The themes also give due regard to respect for the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- The requirements in this part are likely to be met if the registration is approved.

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

All paragraphs

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is likely to be suitably promoted. Leaders aim to pay close attention to supporting pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain. Pupils will learn about ways that they might make a positive contribution to the wider community, for instance by helping others or taking care of the environment.
- The school's ethos will be centred on encouraging pupils to express their views, alongside being considerate of the beliefs and choices of others. Leaders intend to create an environment in which diversity is celebrated and respected. This includes opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths, cultures and traditions. External speakers will be used to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Through the proposed PSHE programme, pupils will explore themes related to healthy relationships, different families and challenging stereotypes. Pupils will also be taught about potential risks to their safety and how to ask for help if they feel worried or unsafe.
- Leaders have ensured that the requirements in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

All paragraphs

- The safeguarding policy reflects the most recent government guidance. The policy is available to parents and carers on the school's website.
- Leaders have appropriate systems in place to ensure that potential safeguarding concerns are identified and managed effectively. Staff will receive suitable safeguarding training. The training will include information on the signs and symptoms of different types of abuse. Staff will also be given clear guidance on how to report any concerns about pupils' welfare. The designated safeguarding leaders have undertaken additional training appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.
- Policies related to the health and safety of the premises are suitable, including a written risk assessment policy. Leaders have drawn up a comprehensive maintenance plan. This is likely to help leaders ensure that the building and equipment remain safe and suitable. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for the building and grounds, as well as any off-site activities. Leaders have put in place suitable security

arrangements for the premises. These arrangements are likely to minimise the risks associated with sharing the building with other users.

- Suitable records will be kept regarding the fire safety of the building. This includes records related to fire drills and the testing of fire detection equipment. Emergency evacuation routes have clear signage and emergency lighting is in place. A competent person has undertaken a fire risk assessment of the premises. The risk assessment identifies that the risk to pupils and staff is tolerable. Leaders have drawn up an action plan to address any remedial work identified in the fire risk assessment. For example, leaders provided evidence that the required maintenance of the fire alarm system and electrical equipment will be finished before the school proposes to open. Leaders explained that the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic had delayed the timely completion of this work. Leaders also provided evidence that work will be undertaken to improve a number of fire doors on the premises. The majority of this work will be finished by 1 September 2020. However, in one area of the premises, work to a small number of fire doors may not be completed by this date. Leaders anticipate that it will be completed by the end of September 2020. In the interim period, leaders have put in place a suitable risk assessment. This includes making sure that pupils and staff do not use this area of the premises until the required work has been undertaken. It is therefore likely that the school will comply with the requirements of the independent school standards.
- Leaders plan to ensure that appropriate adult-to-pupil staffing ratios are in place, including in the early years. This is likely to ensure that pupils are supervised effectively. The proposed policies for behaviour and anti-bullying are likely to be suitable. Pupils will be encouraged to take responsibility for their choices and actions in an age-appropriate way. Pupils' views will be sought on the school's expectations for behaviour as well as how any issues should be resolved. Additional pastoral support will be available for pupils who need it. Pupils will be taught about different forms of bullying, including that bullying behaviour can be motivated by prejudice. Assemblies and PSHE workshops will cover themes related to bullying, positive friendships and how pupils can raise concerns. Appropriate sanctions and record-keeping are in place for any incidents of poor behaviour and bullying, should they occur.
- Attendance and admissions will be managed using a suitable online system. The system is likely to record all the required information.
- The first-aid policy is suitable. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure that pupils receive timely first-aid treatment when necessary. The policy also sets out how the school will cater for pupils with medical needs. An appropriate number of adults have undertaken first-aid training. This includes staff who will work with the Reception class.
- The requirements in this part are likely to be met if the registration is approved.

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

All paragraphs

- Leaders have a good understanding of the statutory requirements regarding the safer recruitment of staff. All the required vetting checks have been carried out on the

persons who will be working at the proposed school. This includes leaders and members of the trust board. The single central record is in place and completed accurately.

- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to comply with the requirements in this part.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

All paragraphs

- The premises are located in extensive grounds, with ample space for pupils to play and learn. Classrooms have suitable lighting, acoustics and ventilation. Teaching areas can comfortably accommodate the number of pupils the school proposes to admit. Additional classrooms are available for the teaching of science, art and technology. There is also a large school hall which will be used as a dining area and for assemblies and the teaching of physical education.
- Children in the early years will have access to a well-equipped outdoor area. Alongside the school's own outdoor play areas, leaders have made arrangements for pupils to share playing fields with a neighbouring school. Leaders also have an agreement to use suitable shower and changing facilities in the neighbouring school's building.
- Toilets and washing facilities are likely to meet requirements. Hot water does not pose a scalding risk. Sources of drinking water are clearly labelled, both inside and outside the building. The separate medical room is likely to be suitable for the short-term care and treatment of pupils. It is located close to pupils' toilet facilities and is equipped with first-aid supplies and a washbasin.
- The requirements in this part are likely to be met if the registration is approved.

Part 6. Provision of information

All paragraphs

- The website is already operational and is likely to provide parents with comprehensive information on the school's work. This includes information related to admissions, behaviour and how the school will cater for pupils with SEND.
- Leaders have devised a suitable written format to ensure that parents receive clear information on their children's progress and attainment on an annual basis.
- Leaders understand their duties to provide the local authority with the required information on pupils with SEND.
- It is likely that the school will comply with the requirements in this part.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

All paragraphs

- The proposed complaints policy is in writing and published on the school's website.

- The policy provides detailed information on how parents can raise concerns and how the school will respond. Appropriate records are likely to be kept regarding any complaints received and how these were resolved. The policy includes provision for an independent panel should parents not be satisfied with the school's response.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

All paragraphs

- Leaders have a secure understanding of the requirements of the independent school standards. They are likely to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding appropriate to their roles and responsibilities. In preparing to open the school, the proprietor has also drawn effectively on advice and support from consultants with experience in health and safety and human resources. This work has ensured that the school is likely to promote pupils' well-being and provide a safe and welcoming environment.
- Leaders are ambitious in their aims for the quality of education, including in the early years. Their vision is driven by a determination that pupils will develop the knowledge and skills they need to positively influence their own lives and the lives of others. Leaders have developed a clear framework to check and evaluate the impact of their work. The proprietor has credible plans to appoint a board of trustees, who have the necessary expertise to hold leaders to account.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to comply with the requirements in this part.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The accessibility plan sets out how leaders propose to meet the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The plan details the steps that leaders will take to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the physical environment, curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
- The school is likely to comply with the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

- The school intends to offer full-time education for up to 10 children in the Reception class. The proposed curriculum covers all the required areas of learning. Suitable arrangements have been made to assess children's development, including working in partnership with parents. Procedures for safeguarding, staffing and first aid are also likely to be suitable.
- The proposed school is likely to comply with the statutory welfare and learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage.

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	147986
DfE registration number	306/6023
Inspection number	10154375

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 day school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Lucy Stephens
Chair	Freya Aquarone
Headteacher	Lucy Stephens (co-headteacher) Emma Thompson (co-headteacher)
Annual fees (day pupils)	No fees will be charged
Telephone number	07899 895 600
Website	www.thenewschool.org.uk
Email address	office@thenewschool.org.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	4 to 16	4 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	Up to 120	Up to 120

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	Up to 110
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	All pupils will attend at least four days a week with an option for home study one day per week
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	Up to 18
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Up to 10
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Up to 10

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	1
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	2

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school intends to provide mainstream education for boys and girls aged from four to 16. The premises are located in the London Borough of Croydon, in a building that was previously occupied by another school.
- The school has never operated and plans to open in September 2020. Initially, the school will admit up to 46 primary-age pupils, with a maximum of 10 children in the Reception class. The proprietor intends to increase the number of pupils on roll gradually until the school reaches its maximum capacity of 120 pupils.
- The school's ethos is focused on democratic principles. The school does not have a religious ethos.
- The proposed school will have a sole proprietor who will also fulfil the role of co-headteacher. The proprietor has appointed an advisory board to support leaders' work.
- The proposed school has no plans to make use of any alternative or off-site provision.

Information about this inspection

- This is the proposed school's second pre-registration inspection. The registration authority commissioned Ofsted to consider whether the school was likely to comply with the independent school standards and associated requirements.
- The inspection was commissioned by the registration authority during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. Some inspection activities were conducted remotely. This was to ensure that the inspection was conducted in accordance with the most recent government guidance related to COVID-19.
- I conducted the inspection with the co-headteachers. One of the co-headteachers is also the sole proprietor. I visited the school to check the independent school standards related to the suitability of the premises.
- Documentation related to the curriculum, safeguarding, health and safety of the premises and the suitability of staff was also reviewed. Some of this evidence was reviewed together with leaders. I also evaluated a range of documentation and policies remotely, including information on the school's website.

Inspection team

Sarah Murphy, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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