

# Beacon Lights School

Rifaaiyy Building, Francis Street, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX1 5JY

**Inspection date**

22 July 2020

**Overall outcome**

**The school is unlikely 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)(c), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i) and 3(i)*

- The school leadership and proprietors have set out their ethos and vision for the school clearly and succinctly. They are passionate about improving the life chances of prospective pupils by delivering a high-quality curriculum.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the community of prospective pupils. They show a desire to ensure that pupils achieve their full potential.
- The proposed curriculum is based on the national curriculum. Planned learning is in place across the proposed year groups in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative subject areas. Detailed schemes of work are in place. These demonstrate clearly how the needs of pupils with a broad range of abilities will be met.
- Plans provide a coherent sequence of work across each subject area. Leaders, including the deputy headteachers, are clear about the importance of a curriculum that builds on pupils' knowledge and skills year on year.
- Due to the constraints of the current school building, leaders have scaled down their original plans for a separate primary and secondary school. Their current plan is for a school which meets the needs of pupils aged from five to 14 years. However, leaders' long-term plans are to increase the age range of pupils attending the school.
- Although there are no pupils with significant special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in the initial proposed intake, leaders' planning shows that they intend to employ a special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) to support pupils with additional needs.
- The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education scheme of work is aligned to the school's aims and ethos, and is likely to prepare pupils effectively for life in British society. Leaders wish pupils to have a strong understanding of British values as well as an understanding of what it means to be a Muslim in modern Britain.

- The planned PSHE curriculum reflects this aim well. Planning also shows that the PSHE curriculum covers the requirements of the new relationships and sex education curriculum which comes into place in September 2020.

- These standards are likely to be met.

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

- Information provided by leaders shows that they are intending to buy in the services of an independent careers guidance company for secondary-age pupils. This, it is planned, will be augmented by role model visiting speakers and trips to careers fairs.
- Curriculum planning also shows that leaders intend to focus pupils on their future career aspirations from a young age. Primary classroom displays, already in place, show how staff are preparing pupils for the future.
- 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*

- School leaders have very high expectations for pupils' behaviour and recognise that good behaviour aids learning. A clear behaviour policy is to be put in place which has clear rewards and consequences.
- The school building is split into two sections, primary and secondary. It is planned that primary pupils will be educated on the second floor and secondary pupils on the third floor. Leaders' initial plans are for 12 pupils in each classroom and that breaks will be taken at different times to ensure pupils remain within their key stages. Leaders keep themselves updated regularly regarding COVID-19 (coronavirus) and are planning to adhere closely to the requirements of government guidance for schools.
- At the time of the inspection, the only staff who had been appointed were the prospective deputy headteachers and the prospective headteacher. Staff recruitment is under way and although it is likely that few staff will hold qualified teacher status most will have a degree or strong subject knowledge in their designated curriculum area. Discussions with the deputy headteachers show that they are knowledgeable about education and have put in place a clear training and mentoring programme for staff.
- Leaders have very high expectations for all prospective pupils, which underpin the ethos of the school.
- A framework is to be put in place to assess pupils' progress. Leaders also plan Saturday school for pupils who show extra promise, and for those who are in danger of falling behind.
- 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)*

- The school's vision and ethos, as described in the school prospectus, offer a guide to the attitudes that school leaders wish to engender in pupils. These are encapsulated in the acronym CARAT (Consideration for rights of others, Appreciation of difference,

Responsibility, Ambition and Tolerance). Delivered through religious education (RE) and the PSHE curriculum, these key values should ensure pupils develop a good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) values.

- Leaders are aware that aspects of the Muslim faith may pose a concern to pupils when developing respect for some groups protected by the Equality Act 2010. However, leaders' views are that prospective pupils are growing up in 21st century Britain and it is important that they understand the need to respect all members of society, including those within the protected groups. Leaders intend to ensure that respect for all is a key element of the PSHE curriculum. Curriculum plans evidence this well.
- Leaders have ensured that planned work in RE and PSHE will enable pupils to develop a strong understanding of each area of SMSC. Planned work includes enabling pupils to make comparisons between fundamental British values and Islamic values as well as looking at democracy through electing a school council.
- Through planned studies of other religions in RE and visits to a variety of different places in the locality, it is planned that pupils will learn respect for other cultures as well as their own.
- Standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

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

- Leaders and proprietors have made sure that there are effective arrangements in place to safeguard pupils. The school's safeguarding policy takes into account the most recent government guidance.
- The prospective designated safeguarding leader (DSL) is also the deputy headteacher of the secondary part of the school. She has recently completed training in safeguarding, which has built on the experience she has gained as a DSL in her previous school. The prospective deputy headteacher for the primary element of the school has also completed DSL training, as has the prospective headteacher.
- The prospective DSL has also recently completed updated training for the government's 'Prevent' duty. Prospective staff will be required to complete safeguarding training before taking up their post.
- The PSHE curriculum will enable pupils to learn how to stay safe in the local community as well as online.
- These standards are likely to be met.

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

- School leaders and proprietors have put in place a behaviour policy which makes clear to pupils and staff the expectations of pupils' behaviour both inside and outside the classroom.
- A sliding scale of sanctions is in place to address difficult behaviour. A reward scheme for both attendance and behaviour is also planned.

- Incidents of difficult behaviour are to be recorded in a bespoke system similar to popular commercial systems alongside safeguarding incidents. This, leaders feel, will enable them to gain a more accurate picture of pupils' behaviour. This, it is hoped, will enable staff to identify more accurately concerns relating to pupils.

- Standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

- Leaders have put in place a suitable health and safety policy and have identified the prospective DSL as being responsible for health and safety within the school. Her duties include taking responsibility for hazards, such as the safe storage of cleaning fluids, and carrying out regular health and safety checks on the school and grounds.
- Leaders have carried out recent paediatric first-aid training. Leaders plan to train three prospective staff members in paediatric first aid.
- The medical room is very well equipped with a range of bandages and dressings and professional examination table. It is planned that accidents will be recorded on the same system used to record behaviour and safeguarding incidents.
- The building in which the school is situated has been fire-risk assessed and leaders have contacted the fire and rescue service to ask them to carry out a fire assessment. All fire exits in the building are clearly signed and suitable emergency lighting is in place. Regular fire safety checks and drills are planned. Staff will receive fire safety training as part of the school's induction process.
- The school has in place a proforma for both attendance and admissions registers. Minor adjustments were made during the inspection to ensure the admissions register was compliant.
- A risk assessment policy has been put in place which identifies risks and hazards effectively. Examples of risk assessments carried out on the building demonstrate leaders' ability to competently measure risk.
- Standards in 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), 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 school has a single central register which details the full range of pre-employment checks to be carried out on all staff and the proprietorial body, such as fitness to work checks and checks on staff who have worked abroad.
- The headteacher and proprietors have completed safer recruitment training. They plan to follow this guidance carefully when appointing staff.

- School leaders have made the decision not to use supply teachers but are aware of the checks required to be carried out should they decide to employ supply teachers in the future.
- 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, 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 current school premises are regarded by the leadership team and proprietors as a temporary measure, after building work had to be halted on the school's original site due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The school is currently situated in a church building which has been converted for a variety of uses and is owned by the Association of Islamic Charitable Projects (AICP), an Islamic charity.
- The school is situated on three floors with a reception area on the first floor with staff offices. The primary section of the school is situated on the second floor and the secondary section on the third floor.
- Leaders have reduced their original requested number of pupils from 140 to 108. This will allow 12 pupils per class in line with the restricted size of the classrooms.
- The building is in acceptable decorative order. However, two patches of damp were noted. The proprietors intend to draw these concerns to the landlords' attention. Overall, the accommodation is maintained to a standard that does not compromise the health, safety and welfare of prospective pupils.
- There are sufficient toilets to accommodate the prospective number of pupils. The medical room is well appointed, with a sink and examination bed. It is located close to a toilet.
- There are sufficient washing facilities within the toilets and drinking water is freely available on each corridor.
- These standards are likely to be met.

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

- Several classrooms in the primary section of the building do not offer sufficiently good sound insulation to be fit for purpose. The walls between the rooms are insufficiently well insulated. At the time of the inspection a conversation between two adults could clearly be heard between classrooms and outside classrooms. It is likely that the noise generated by 12 pupils and staff in a classroom would impact adversely on learning in other adjacent classrooms.
- At the time of the inspection, two of the classrooms in the secondary section of the school were insufficiently well lit for pupils to work. Both classrooms lacked natural light and were lit by two low energy bulbs. This did not offer adequate light for pupils to undertake classroom activities such as reading and writing.
- The standards in this part are unlikely to be met.

## Part 6. Provision of information

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

- All of the school's policies and procedures are made available in paper form, including the safeguarding policy, should parents request them.
- The proprietorial body has a website under construction which contains the relevant and required information. Leaders are aware that they need to update the school's safeguarding policy on the website before September 2020 to reflect the changes in the government's guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2020.
- Leaders intend to provide parents with an annual report which provides information about the progress and attainment of each pupil in each subject area.
- The proprietors are aware of the need to provide information to local authorities for annual reviews. Leaders are proposing to employ a SENCo to carry out this role.
- The standards in 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 school's proposed complaints policy meets the requirements of these standards. The policy lays out clearly the stages required to investigate a complaint along a reasonable timeline and is intended to be accessible to parents through the website, or on application from the school office.
- The standards in 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)*

- Leaders and proprietors have carried out extensive research into the feasibility of the school in its current location. They aim to provide an education which prepares pupils for life in modern Britain while retaining their identity as Muslims.
- Leaders aim to offer an effective education for pupils, which raises pupils' expectations of their own abilities and engages families in educating their children, making the school the centre of the community.
- Leaders and proprietors believe that through offering pupils a balance of a high-quality curriculum while retaining an Islamic approach they will be successful at ensuring pupils succeed.
- The leadership team is made up of professional people who are keen to give back to their community. They are knowledgeable about education and have a clear vision for the future.
- However, leaders' knowledge of one or two aspects of the independent school standards is not yet as sharp as it could be. As a result, one or two aspects of the independent school standards could not be met on this inspection.

- Leaders have provided pictures of how they have already started to address these issues and have increased the amount of light in two of the secondary classrooms. They have also sought help to increase the insulation in the primary classrooms and improve the acoustic quality.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding practice and procedures are likely to be secure and that pupils' welfare requirements are likely to be met.
- The standards in this part are unlikely to be met.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has in place an effective accessibility plan which details how, over the next three years, leaders will improve accessibility for pupils with a disability.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school is unlikely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements, as set out in the annex of this report.



## Proposed school details

Unique reference number	147733
DfE registration number	381/6023
Inspection number	10146269

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	Beacon Lights Educational Trust
Chair	Abdul Nasir Taj
Headteacher	Prospective headteacher Yawar Mubarak
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,800 - £2,000
Telephone number	07825 611224
Website	Under construction
Email address	info@beaconschools.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable
Number of pupils of compulsory school age who have an education, health or care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority	Not applicable
Total hours operating as a school per week	Not applicable
Total hours of teaching provided per week	Not applicable

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 14	5 to 14
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	108	108

## 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	108
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	0
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	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	Not applicable	0

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	0	16
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	Not applicable

## Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school building is situated in the town of Halifax, close to the local college.
- The proposed school is currently housed in a Grade II listed church which the proprietors rent from the charity the Association of Islamic Charitable Projects.
- The proprietors are in the process of renovating a larger building, to which it is proposed the school will move.
- The proposed school is to have an Islamic religious denomination.
- The proposed school does not intend to use alternative education provision.
- The proposed school has a website which is under construction.

## Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is given permission to open. Some of the inspection was conducted remotely. This was due to the restrictions placed on non-essential travel during the COVID-19 outbreak. This is the proposed school's first inspection.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some documents were submitted electronically and were reviewed remotely by the lead inspector. Several additional documents, including schemes of work, were scrutinised on site. The lead inspector also looked at a range of safeguarding records, including the updated safeguarding policy.
- The lead inspector also held several telephone discussions with the proposed headteacher and met with two members of the proprietorial board.
- The lead inspector held discussions with the two proposed deputy headteachers, both in their roles as leaders of the secondary school and the primary school, as well as their roles as DSL and deputy DSL.
- Feedback took place on site with members of the proprietorial board.

## Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

**The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards**

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

- 26 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each room or other space are suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein.
- 27 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 27(a) the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein.

### **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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