

Progress Schools - Thrapston

East Northamptonshire County Council, Cedar Drive, Thrapston,
Northamptonshire NN14 4LZ

Inspection date

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

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)(c), 2(2)(f), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(i), 3(j), 4

- Leaders have ensured that a curriculum policy is in place. The planned curriculum is aligned with the national curriculum. The schemes of work show how it is intended that pupils' knowledge will typically build over time. The planned curriculum shows breadth and ambition.
- Leaders demonstrate an effective understanding of the needs of the pupils who will be in their care. They identify that most pupils who attend the school will likely have had negative experiences of school. Many will be at different stages of learning. Schemes of work and 'progression maps' will provide a framework for a curriculum that will be matched well to pupils' personal and academic needs.
- Leaders are clear about the processes to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Leaders and the proprietorial body have plans in place to provide training to staff. They articulate the appraisal processes and staff training audits they will undertake to ensure that staff have the expertise they need.

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

- Leaders plan a framework to provide information and guidance to pupils relating to their future career choices. This is well thought out. Leaders are ambitious that pupils attain qualifications and experience to support their future careers or continuing education.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

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

Paragraphs 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 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), 5(d)(iii)

- Leaders have planned carefully for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders articulate and demonstrate their intent to promote a supportive and inclusive school culture. Leaders know that many pupils who join the school may have had limited experiences and they seek to widen pupils' understanding of the world. Many examples of planning suggest the school will offer a curriculum that will promote this aspect of pupils' development effectively.
- Leaders place clear emphasis on pupils' personal development and well-being. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme is well thought out. It aims to provide opportunities for pupils to build their knowledge and understanding of British values, equality and diversity. There are frequent references showing how leaders aim to promote pupils' age-appropriate understanding of the protected characteristics. Leaders' plans show how the school will promote equality of opportunity, meet the specific needs of the pupils to prepare them for life in wider society and help them to achieve their aspirations.
- Leaders detail appropriate procedures to ensure that necessary checks are made on visitors to the school.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32, 32(1)(c)

- Leaders have put a comprehensive safeguarding policy into place. It refers to the most recent statutory guidance. The Progress Schools' designated safeguarding leader will work closely with the leaders based in the school.
- Leaders plan to ensure staff receive regular updates about safeguarding and training on how to log concerns accurately. They have clear systems and procedures to ensure they maintain ongoing oversight of school practices and actions taken in response to concerns raised.

Paragraphs 3, 3(h), 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10

- Leaders have put appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies into place. Leaders are knowledgeable about the potential needs and vulnerabilities of the pupils who will attend the school. They plan to provide a framework and training for behaviour management which staff will adapt to meet pupils' individual needs. The policies indicate high expectations for pupils' behaviour and how staff will manage any concerns or incidents that occur.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13

- The health and safety policy sets out suitable systems and monitoring processes that will be in place to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. Leaders have a schedule of checks they plan to carry out.
- Leaders have acted to make sure the school is compliant with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) order 2005. A risk assessment has been carried out.

Leaders plan to train all staff as fire marshals. Fire evacuation procedures are appropriate for the school site.

Paragraph 14

- Leaders describe clearly their arrangements for the supervision of pupils at all times of the school day, including when pupils arrive and leave the school site. Staff-to-pupil ratios are high.

Paragraph 15

- Admission and attendance registers contain the necessary information.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- There is a written risk assessment policy. This policy supports staff to identify risks and put into place appropriate control measures. Leaders plan to check and sign off all risk assessments.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

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), 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)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)

- Leaders have ensured that a single central register of recruitment checks is in place. Some refinements were made during the inspection. The single central register details the required checks carried out before staff are employed, by whom and when. The register is completed accurately for currently employed staff and the proprietorial board.
- Discussion with Progress Schools' leaders show they have expertise, experience and relevant training to support and guide school staff. They demonstrate a secure understanding of recruitment requirements and describe with clarity the procedures and systems they intend to put into place.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 28(1), 28(1), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(d)

- There are suitable washing and toilet facilities for the sole use of pupils.

Paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2)

- A suitable medical and first-aid room is available for the care or examination of injured or ill pupils. Leaders are clear on the work that remains to be done to complete the room, including installing a first-aid cabinet.

- *Paragraphs 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b)*
- Classrooms and other areas are spacious and well lit, and of sizes appropriate for the proposed number of pupils and class sizes. No potential acoustic issues were identified. The premises are clean and in good condition.
- *Paragraphs 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(c), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)*
- Adequate running water is supplied to the school. Drinking water facilities are available throughout the school. The temperature of hot water is not consistent. Leaders have identified this as part of the facilities action plan.

Paragraphs 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- The premises does not allow for sufficient outdoor space for physical education (PE) lessons to take place. This is due to the limitations of the school site. However, the proposed school is located close to a leisure centre where timetabled PE lessons will take place. This facility includes showering and changing facilities. Leaders provided risk assessments for the use of the facilities. A shower facility is also available on the school premises. Leaders plan to develop the small outdoor space into a pleasant area for pupils to be able to socialise.
- The site is secure. Following recent redecoration, leaders record in their facilities action plan the remaining work that needs to be completed. This includes providing window restrictors for some windows, signage, ensuring the temperature of water is consistent, improving the condition of some carpets, replacing some missing ceiling panels and other minor tagging improvements. Leaders' timescales show that they intend all these works to be completed in advance of the intended opening date.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

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

- Leaders provide all relevant policies and information that they plan to make available to parents and carers. Much of this is available on the proposed school's website. Leaders are clear on the information they are required to provide and have a plan for how they will do this. They are in the process of developing the school's website, which links to the proprietorial body's website, and the parent and carer guide for the school.
- There are comprehensive policies in place. Some of these are somewhat general at this stage. Leaders plan to make these more specific to the school when the pupils are on roll and their needs are better known.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 32(3), 32(3)(f), 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), 33(k)

- The complaints policy which is published on the proposed school's website meets requirements. The policy clearly outlines the procedures that parents can follow should they have a complaint. Timescales are clearly stated.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- Leaders demonstrate their familiarity with the independent school standards and the actions that need to be taken to meet these consistently. They and the proprietorial body are aware of the remaining actions that are necessary to ensure the school is fully ready to open. Employed staff are appropriately qualified and will be supported by experienced senior leaders of the organisation.
- Leaders demonstrate ambition and enthusiasm for the provision they want the school to provide. They articulate a vision for a school that will help pupils who may have fallen behind to catch up and be successful in their lives.
- Leaders and the proprietorial body describe a clear strategy for how they will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school, including compliance with the independent school standards. Leaders understand their roles and responsibilities and speak with conviction about how they will support other leaders and staff to establish the proposed school.
- Leaders place safeguarding and promoting pupils' personal development and well-being at the centre of the school's work. The proposed school is likely to establish effective safeguarding procedures. Evidence from parts 3, 4 and 5 shows how leaders intend to do this and check their policies and procedures are effective.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have ensured that the planned curriculum is designed to be inclusive. They will adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND.
- There is a suitable plan in place to improve access to the school environment and curriculum. This will also be refined further as the needs of the pupils are better known.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

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	147697
DfE registration number	928/6011
Inspection number	10149143

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	Secondary
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Progress Schools Limited
Chair	James Madine
Headteacher	Mark Wright
Annual fees (day pupils)	£12,360 to £29,664
Telephone number	01832 777089
Website	progress-schools.co.uk/thrapston
Email address	thrapstonPS@progress-schools.co.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 and care plan or 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

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	60	60

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	60
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	Not known
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	Not known
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Not known
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Not known

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	6
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 open in September 2020. The school will cater for pupils who struggle in mainstream settings. It is likely the school will receive referrals from the local authority.
- The school premises extends the site of a previous school. As part of the application, the proprietor requests the proposed school to be deregistered from Progress School – Northamptonshire.
- The named headteacher is interim until the substantive headteacher returns to post.
- On opening, leaders anticipate that the school will have 10 pupils. Leaders expect the number of pupils to increase during the academic year and beyond, until the school eventually reaches capacity.
- It is likely that a proportion of pupils will have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic of 2020. Some of the inspection was conducted remotely. This was due to restrictions placed on non-essential travel during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The DfE commissioned the inspection to check the provision's suitability to operate as a school. This was the proposed school's first inspection.
- I met with the executive headteacher of the Progress Schools organisation, the business and resources executive and spoke with the chief executive officer of Progress Schools. The appointed headteacher of the school was not available during the inspection.
- I visited the site to check the suitability of the premises, as well as the school's risk assessment and health and safety policies. The on-site visit was limited by the need to observe social distancing during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- I scrutinised a range of documentation, including schemes of work, policies and procedures and the proprietor's website.
- I checked the school's single central register of employment checks and discussed with leaders the school's proposed approach to ensuring the safeguarding and health, safety and welfare of pupils.

Inspection team

John Lawson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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