

Arco Academy

Camberwell Leisure Centre, Artichoke Place, Camberwell, London SE5 8TS

Inspection dates

25 to 26 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 proposed curriculum is detailed and well planned. Leaders' rationale for the curriculum is translated effectively into thorough schemes of work. They provide teachers with clear guidance about the what, when, how and why of teaching and learning, and the expectations for pupils' achievements.
- Leaders have ensured that there are suitable arrangements to adapt teaching and learning to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, staff assess pupils' knowledge and skills when they start at the school. They use this information to draw up individual education plans for each pupil, which identify clear achievement targets. These are shared with parents and/or carers.
- The curriculum is suitably broad. It covers all the areas of learning specified in independent school standards (ISS), including literacy, numeracy, personal, social and health education (PSHE), art, humanities, science and technology. Leaders place a strong emphasis on pupils' physical development as a way of building their confidence and self-esteem.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is matched to pupils' needs. For example, leaders have found that not all pupils are able to swim when they start school. As a result, there is a specific programme to teaching swimming. Where appropriate, pupils will have one-to-one teaching to help fill the gaps in their learning.
- British values are to be taught through the PSHE programme. Topics include diversity and prejudice, bullying, racism, religious and disability discrimination, rights and responsibilities, and careers. There is work on respecting others, British values, health and well-being, and relationships. The latter includes sex education. Appropriate emphasis is given to the protected characteristics set out in the Equalities Act 2010.
- Careers education is clearly documented. Leaders already use the local authority's careers service to give pupils unbiased information about their future. This has proved to be effective in helping pupils gain either an apprenticeship, a place in further

education or employment. Evidence provided during the inspection shows that the advice pupils receive is matched to their needs and aspirations.

- Leaders have well-founded procedures to ensure that pupils' achievements are assessed accurately. All pupils will have an individual education plan. Detailed reports to parents provide information about attendance, effort and behaviour as well as pupils' achievements.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

All paragraphs

- The policies for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development and the curriculum promote fundamental British values appropriately. These are supported by clear plans for PSHE, relationship and sex education. They outline how leaders intend to ensure that pupils respect people with protected characteristics. Planned visits, assemblies and teaching programmes are likely to support pupils' SMSC development appropriately.
- A good range of resources is available for promoting pupils' SMSC understanding. These include materials from professional associations and awarding organisations such as ASDAN.
- The policies for behaviour and anti-bullying are likely to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own conduct. The proposed curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to show initiative, develop self-esteem and confidence, and understand right from wrong.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

All paragraphs

- The revised safeguarding and child protection policy is suitably detailed. Leaders ensure that staff have comprehensive guidance about safeguarding arrangements, including how to recognise the signs of abuse. The policy takes account of the most recent government guidance, including 'Keeping children safe in education' (2020). The designated safeguarding lead and deputies are clearly identified, as is the 'Prevent' strategy lead.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a wide range of policies to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety. The health and safety policy is augmented by those for first aid, e-safety, data protection and physical restraint. Procedures are clear, and arrangements take account of relevant government guidance.
- Leaders ensure that fire risk assessments are carried out. Appropriate action is taken to tackle the hazards identified. For example, emergency exit doors are being replaced, exit signs are now in place and records are updated. During the on-site visit,

leaders produced evidence of correspondence with the building manager confirming that work is to be carried out shortly.

- The policy for behaviour and anti-bullying sets out appropriate expectations for staff and pupils. Leaders have established clear arrangements for recording sanctions for serious misbehaviour. The behaviour policy includes a dress code for pupils, the use of mobile phones and how staff should respond to misbehaviour. Leaders intend to search all pupils at the start of the day to ensure that no prohibited items are brought into school.
- Leaders have carried out a comprehensive series of risk assessments. These include for the car parks, classrooms, the gym, the swimming pool, the all-weather sports area, first aid and the control of infections. Where necessary, leaders are taking appropriate action to reduce the risks identified. For example, keypad door locks are being replaced by electronic locks.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

All paragraphs

- Arrangements for vetting the suitability of staff are secure. Leaders use commercial software to carry out the checks and this provides an appropriate single central record. All the required vetting checks are included and have been completed for staff currently employed. This is likely to ensure that statutory requirements will be met.
- Leaders have produced a thorough policy for the safe recruitment of staff. This includes the requirement to take up two references for applicants and ensure that staff are suitably qualified for their role.
- Members of the advisory board have been checked, including via a Disclosure and Barring Service check and a section 128 disqualification check.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

All paragraphs

- The proposed school is housed in part of a public leisure centre. Entry to the school's accommodation is via a reception where all pupils, staff and visitors are required to sign in using a secure system.
- Pupils will have use of all the leisure centre facilities, including the swimming pool, gym and dance studio. In addition, there are three classrooms, offices, a mentoring room and a kitchen area. The school intends to use the local public library for computing, and an all-weather sports pitch for physical education and outdoor play. These are both close to the leisure centre. This is likely to provide sufficient space for teaching and learning, based on the proposed curriculum and the number of pupils.
- Toilet, washing, shower and changing facilities are suitable. The premises are well maintained and well lit. Fire exit signage and emergency lighting are fully in place.

- Pupils have access to bottled drinking water throughout the school day. Leaders have ensured that there is now a dedicated medical room that houses a bed, first-aid cupboard and washing facilities. Male and female toilets are located close by. Hot and cold water is available. The hot water is at a suitable temperature.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

All paragraphs

- Many of the required policies and documents are available to parents via the school's website. Other, more specific, policies, such as risk assessments, are available from the school's administrative staff.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a policy that describes how they intend to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Similarly, there is now information for parents to explain how the school will meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL).
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

All paragraphs

- The complaints policy sets out the steps that complainants should take if they have a concern with the school. The policy identifies clearly the three stages for making a complaint, one informal and two formal. It makes clear that complainants have the right to request a formal hearing by a panel of three people. The policy meets the requirements for confidentiality and that findings and recommendations must be provided to the complainant.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

All paragraphs

- Leaders and managers have ensured that all the independent school standards are likely to be met. There is detailed information about the proposed curriculum and how it will be assessed. The range of policies and documents is comprehensive and provides robust guidance about how leaders intend to run the school, both day to day and long term. This includes the arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils, the provision for pupils with SEND and EAL, and ensuring that recruitment checks are rigorous.
- Leaders have paid a lot of attention to detail. They have produced a school improvement plan that identifies further actions and have carried out a thorough evaluation of the quality of the school's provision.

- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have ensured that there is an accessibility plan that identifies a range of strategies to improve the access to the school for all pupils, including those with SEND. This meets requirements.

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	147732
DfE registration number	210/6011
Inspection number	10155089

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	Lisa Miller
Chair	Ron St Louis
Headteacher	Lisa Miller
Annual fees (day pupils)	From £22,132
Telephone number	0203 189 1193
Website	www.arco.academy
Email address	pa@arco.academy
Date of previous standard inspection	6 December 2018

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable
Number of pupils of compulsory school age for whom a statement is maintained under section 324, or who is 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	40
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	20
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	40
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	10

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	12.5
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	5

Information about this proposed school

- Arco Academy is not currently operating as an independent school. At present, it provides alternative provision for part-time pupils and up to four full-time pupils.
- No pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The proposed school will make use of alternative provision, such as a motor mechanics project and a neighbouring independent alternative provision.
- The proprietor, who is also the headteacher, will lead the proposed school. She is supported by an advisory board.

Information about this inspection

- This is the school's second pre-registration inspection. The first inspection took place in December 2018.
- 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 inspector scrutinised a range of documents provided by the school, including policies on the curriculum, safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety, behaviour, personal development and risk assessments. The inspector also visited the proposed premises. He met with the proprietor to discuss the arrangements for the proposed school and had a tour of the building.
- Leaders have applied to the DfE to register the school. They are seeking to admit up to 60 pupils aged between 11 and 16 years. The inspection checked whether the school would be likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE approves the registration.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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