

Ivy Lane School

Ivy Lane, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 4AZ

Inspection date

10 November 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

Paragraph 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)(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)(f), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- The group that owns the school also oversees two other independent special schools. The proposed school's headteacher and the directors of the proprietor group have used the experiences gained from their oversight of similar provisions to write a carefully considered curriculum policy. They have also developed more detailed learning plans for a range of subjects.
- The curriculum policy outlines how the school's mission to 'enable people with complex needs to achieve their full potential' will be put into action. The policy details how leaders plan to organise the curriculum into two pathways, 'aspire' and 'ignite', so as to cater better for the wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) anticipated. Leaders are committed to ensuring that all pupils benefit from a curriculum that meets their needs.
- The curriculum policy, and accompanying plans, indicate how pupils on both pathways will develop reading, writing and numeracy skills. They show how pupils will be able to deepen their knowledge across a broad range of other subjects, including humanities subjects, creative subjects and physical education.
- The curriculum overview shows that there will be an over-arching theme each term to support pupils in making connections between their learning in different subjects. Plans detail how pupils will also learn appropriate subject-specific content.
- There is a written overview of the topics proposed for each subject, as well as more general guidance about teaching methods that should be used. The choice of topics and suggested approaches to teaching them take into account the complex and diverse needs of the prospective pupils. For example, they include approaches to support pupils who struggle to communicate.
- Leaders have carefully considered what they will include in the programme for personal, social and emotional education. Leaders have ensured that the programme emphasises communication, life skills and employability skills, as well as information

about how to stay safe. They have made detailed plans for teaching relationship and sex education. Leaders see this as a crucial dimension of the curriculum because it can support pupils who struggle with relationships.

- Careers education is given a strong focus within the proposed curriculum. To provide independent advice to individual pupils, the school has enlisted a private company. The school has a well-established relationship with this provider. Leaders are confident that this careers provider has expertise in supporting pupils with SEND in planning for the next stages of their life.

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

- Teaching plans indicate that pupils are likely to develop new knowledge and skills in many different areas of learning.
- A range of suitable methods of assessment will be used to establish pupils' starting points and gauge their progress. The school plans to measure pupils' sense of well-being and confidence. Leaders are clear how teachers will make use of information from assessments to identify knowledge and skills that need to be emphasised.
- Leaders have thought carefully about how they intend to involve pupils in assessment so that they understand any next steps they need to take.
- Plans show that a raft of additional therapies will be used to develop pupils' well-being, communication skills and speech and language skills. Leaders have considered how to ensure pupils can benefit from additional therapies without missing out on their learning.
- Senior leaders have developed a detailed package of induction training, written guidance and support. The package is designed to support teachers to gain the specific expertise they need to work with pupils who have complex needs.
- The school is likely to meet all of the standards in this part.

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

Paragraph 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)

- The school's policies and proposals prioritise pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Written policies outline how these individual elements will be taught across the curriculum and promoted through a range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school places great emphasis on pupils learning how to develop social skills so that they can play an active role in society. Leaders have considered how pupils might safely use amenities within the community to achieve this, for example going on educational visits to the local shops.
- Leaders have also considered mechanisms that will enable pupils to have a say in the way in which the school is run. They have made plans to introduce a school council, to which pupils will be elected.
- There are written policies that show how fundamental British values will be promoted through subjects and through additional activities. The school is keenly aware of how important it is to equip pupils with the knowledge they need to be law-abiding citizens. A unit of work on justice and the law is included in the curriculum plan for

personal, social, health and economic education. To ensure that pupils are aware of issues relating to inequality, leaders have also included a unit of work on global issues.

- The school is likely to meet the requirements in this part.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 8, 8(a), 8(b)

- The school has an up-to-date safeguarding policy which references the most recent statutory guidance. This policy is referred to in the school's prospectus, which outlines how a copy of the school's safeguarding policy can be obtained.
- The policy is not available on the school's website because the website is not yet operational. However, more general safeguarding information relating to Hesley Group is available on the group's website.
- The school's safeguarding policy is accompanied by a number of guidance documents which support staff in applying the policy in a special school context.
- Leaders have clearly considered the context of the pupils they expect to attend the school in their policy and proposed practices. They are particularly aware that there might be pupils who attend who are anxious and feel isolated for a number of reasons, including the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Documentation emphasises the importance of keeping children safe when they are working online.
- Discussion with the school's headteacher and company directors show that leaders are alert to pupils' potential vulnerabilities and the signs that might indicate abuse.
- Representatives of the board of directors explained how they took great care when appointing staff. Discussions indicated that the proprietor body understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including the need to report concerns about adults to the local authority designated officer and disclosure and barring service (DBS).

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

- There is a written behaviour policy in place. This policy is detailed and outlines the group's approach to behaviour which leaders plan to implement in this school. This approach is holistic, incorporating leadership and management training. It specifies methods for managing incidents of concerning behaviour. The policy outlines how behaviour concerns will be recorded. The policy shows that supervision meetings with line managers will focus on how well staff have responded to behaviour incidents.
- Leaders know from their experiences at other schools within the group that occasionally physical interventions may need to be used as a last resort. They have considered how to ensure that this is done safely, and have plans in place for staff to receive appropriate training.
- The school has a bullying policy in place. Leaders feel that planned approaches to make sure that pupils feel safe and well cared for, including high pupil-to-staff ratios, will mean bullying is exceptionally rare.

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

- The school's leaders have carefully considered the health and safety of pupils with SEND relating to interaction and communication. The written health and safety policy

outlines how any concerns and near misses will be reviewed and scrutinised by directors.

- The building is brand new and complies with the most recent building regulations. A great deal of thought has been given to how to mitigate risk through the design of the building. The vast majority of the building is ground floor, with easy access to emergency exits. The school has a fire risk assessment scheduled to take place before the end of November 2020.
- The school has a written first-aid policy. As part of induction training for all new staff, they receive a whole day's training on first aid.
- Plans indicate that pupils will be supervised on a ratio of one pupil to one adult or one pupil to two adults depending on the anticipated complexity of pupils' needs. Leaders feel that these high staff ratios will support pupils in feeling safe and secure and learning well.
- Systems are in place to register attendance and admissions online. These are based on group-wide systems that are overseen by directors.
- The school has a detailed risk assessment policy which leaders plan to use to inform individual pupils' risk assessments.
- The school is likely to meet all standards in this part.

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(2)(f), 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(2)(e), 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)(3), 20(6)(c)

- Although leaders plan that any staff absences will be covered internally, they recognise that on occasion supply staff maybe be required. There are protocols in place to ensure that supply staff have the necessary checks in place and receive safeguarding briefings when they arrive at the school.
- Leaders are aware of the necessary checks that are required for adults working in the school, including teaching staff, support staff, supply staff, central staff from Hesley Group, directors and contractors.

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

- There is a single central register (SCR) for this school that shows that the required employment checks have been made on the very small number of staff currently employed at the school. It shows that the right to work in the United Kingdom and relevant qualifications have been checked. The SCR also indicates that the required additional checks have been made on all staff with leadership roles.
- Staff do not commence work at the school until all checks are complete. Documentation indicates that employment references are followed up carefully.

- The SCR and associated staff files are kept securely. Files are well maintained and orderly. Each file contains a useful checklist to ensure all necessary documentation has been included in the file. It is the group's policy that all staff renew their DBS certificate every three years.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this part.

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, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- The school is newly built and situated within a residential area, close to some open-access playing fields. Great consideration has been given to making sure that the site is safe and secure and also meets the bespoke requirements of the pupils anticipated to attend the school.
- Teaching areas are spacious, with lots of natural lighting. They include a larger room which has hot and cold running water available and a smaller room for interventions and therapy work. All teaching spaces have access to a secure outdoor learning area.
- There are suitable washing and toilet facilities with hot and cold water marked using clear symbols. Facilities for boys and girls are separate, as are toilet facilities for disabled pupils.
- The premises are brand new, and most fixtures and fittings are now in place. Leaders have carefully considered classroom lighting and acoustics so that they meet the sensory needs of the pupils they anticipate will join the school. There are panels in place to reduce echoes and the school is painted in a neutral shade that is restful to the eye.
- There is dedicated accommodation for medical treatment and examination, which is suitable for pupils with complex needs. The accommodation consists of two rooms, one of which contains steel, lockable wall cabinets so medication can be stored securely. Leaders plan to situate a bed in the larger room, which also has a capacious sink. The accommodation is very close to toilet facilities.

Paragraphs 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b), 30

- The school has several spaces for physical development and exercise, including an outdoor, multi-use games area and a sports hall. There are separate changing rooms for boys and girls next to the sports hall. They are spacious and have showering facilities.
- The school site also incorporates an outdoor social space for pupils to use, which has raised flower beds and benches. This creates a pleasant environment in which pupils can socialise with each other or have peaceful reflection time. Outdoor areas are very well-lit, including lighting marking out paths from one area of the school to another.
- Requirements for all parts in this standard are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(e), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(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), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g), 32(4), 32(4)(a), 32(4)(b), 32(4)(c)

- The school's website is not yet up and running. The proposed school has a detailed prospectus available on request. Leaders have plans to place this prospectus on the school's website when it is fully operational.
- The prospectus contains the required information and policies, including information about how a copy of the school's safeguarding policy can be obtained.
- The headteacher is aware of the need to provide information to parents in paper form on request. The school plans to inform parents and carers of pupils' attainment and progress regularly. The information that is provided on reports will meet the requirements for annual reviews of pupils' education, health and care plans.
- Leaders understand that they have a duty to publish on the website any specific information required by the government, such as Ofsted reports.
- The school is likely to meet all the paragraphs in this part.

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), 33(k)

- There is a written complaints policy in place, which is separate from the staff grievance policy. This is so that directors can more easily check that complaints from service users are followed up properly.
- The prospectus for the school refers to the complaints policy and outlines how a copy can be obtained. It also specifies the number of formal complaints over the last 12 months that have been investigated at schools owned by Hesley Group.
- All standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The headteacher and the chief operating officer of the proprietor group demonstrated during the inspection that they have a secure knowledge of the independent school standards.
- Committed to the group's ethos of treating every pupil as an individual, they are not complacent about the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead. They have thought carefully about how the group's aims and ethos can best be implemented.
- The group's directors have rigorous policies in place outlining how they will monitor and quality assure the school's work. The chair of the board of directors and the chief executive officer are crystal clear about the important role of the proprietor board in holding senior leaders to account.

- Leaders have a strong understanding of their role in promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety. They have expertise in providing education for pupils with complex communication and interaction needs. Leaders are determined to provide an environment in which all pupils can flourish emotionally, physically and intellectually.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- There is a written equalities policy in place. A separate accessibility plan sets out appropriate requirements for access to information, the curriculum and physical access to the buildings.
- Being sensitive to the cultural needs of pupils and service users is a strong theme running through the school's policies, procedures and guidance, as well as curriculum plans.

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	148241
DfE registration number	384/6011
Inspection number	10170196

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 special school
Proprietor	Hesley Group
Chair	Mr Graham Smith
Headteacher	Mr Michael Walsh
Annual fees (day pupils)	£79,686
Telephone number	01302 866906
Website	www.hesleygroup.co.uk
Email address	ilsadmin@hesleygroup.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 to 19	11 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	24	24

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	20

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	24
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	24
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	24

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	4
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is for 24 pupils with complex SEND. Typically, pupils' primary needs will relate to autism spectrum disorder and associated learning difficulties. It is expected that all pupils will have an education, health and care plan.
- The school proposes to cater for pupils aged between 11 and 19 years of age, which is slightly different from information submitted to the Department for Education (DfE).
- The school aims to open in April 2021. This is later than the date that was originally planned, which was January 2021.
- The owner of the proposed school is Hesley Group. The group was established in 1975. The group also provides residential and other services for adults. Hesley Group oversees two other independent special schools in Doncaster, Fullerton House School and Wilsic Hall School.
- The headteacher of the proposed school was previously the headteacher of Fullerton House School.
- The school has been newly built. The site is located in a residential area about one mile from Wakefield city centre.

Information about this inspection

- The purpose of this inspection was to check whether the school is likely to meet the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, if the Department for Education decides to register it. It was the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.
- The inspector held face-to-face discussions with the headteacher of the proposed school and the chief operating officer of Hesley Group. An online video meeting was held with the chief executive officer of the group and the chair of the board of directors.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of policies, documents and records presented by leaders as evidence towards the school's likelihood to meet the independent school standards. The inspector also reviewed the proposed school's prospectus and the proprietor group's website.
- To inspect standards related to safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the SCR, which details the checks made on staff already appointed to work at the proposed school. The inspector scrutinised safeguarding policies and procedures, and spoke with the headteacher of the proposed school and representatives from the board of directors of Hesley group, about the safeguarding culture in the group.

Inspection team

Sarah Hubbard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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