

Aspiration House School

Church Road, Boston PE22 0NX

Inspection date

9 December 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)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(d), 3(g), 3(j), 4

- The curriculum will enable all pupils, including those who are above compulsory school age, to experience learning across the full range of subjects. Pupils will study these subjects both discretely and as part of project-based and practical work, including that which they will complete outdoors and in the school's polytunnel.
- Senior leaders have identified the knowledge that they expect pupils to acquire across the different subjects, appropriate to their stage of education. Teachers will ensure that pupils' learning matches these expectations.
- Teachers will use information about pupils' abilities and additional needs to ensure that they set pupils appropriate work. Teachers will plan each pupil's learning individually. This will ensure that the learning they plan matches pupils' abilities, additional needs and interests.
- Teaching assistants will support teachers in lessons by working closely with pupils on at least a one-to-one basis. This will further enable teachers to tailor the learning to the individual pupil's needs and make sure that pupils receive the support they need.
- At the end of each lesson, teachers and teaching assistants will check what pupils have learned, to plan future learning. When they identify that pupils' understanding is weak, they will revisit learning or provide further support.
- Teachers will ask pupils to assess their own learning, including by identifying what they feel they have done well in, what they found difficult, and what they feel they need to do next. Through this, teachers will be able to encourage pupils to engage in their work and become motivated to learn more.
- All pupils will receive opportunities to develop their communication, language and numeracy skills.

- When it is appropriate, pupils will study towards formal qualifications. Pupils above the compulsory school age may attend other provisions, including mainstream colleges, on a part-time basis in order to gain qualifications.

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

- Senior leaders will ensure that pupils who are of secondary school age receive opportunities to learn about the world of work. Pupils will learn about the skills they must have and the behaviours they will need to demonstrate to be successful in the workplace.
- Pupils will be able to undertake work experience placements, both on and off the school site. Such experiences will allow pupils to explore their career interests and gain an insight into employment.
- Senior leaders have engaged with a professional external to the school who will provide impartial careers advice and guidance to older pupils, including pupils who are above the compulsory school age.

Paragraph 3, 3(c), 3(e), 3(f)

- Senior leaders are committed to providing the necessary resources to support pupils in their learning. For example, there is an outdoor area, including a garden and greenhouse, where pupils will complete project-based work.
- Pupils will receive daily opportunities to read. Leaders will ensure that the books available to pupils match their reading ability.
- Senior leaders will undertake regular checks on the quality of teaching by visiting lessons and looking at pupils' work. When they identify teaching that is not of a high-enough quality, leaders will provide support.
- Teachers and teaching assistants will receive regular training opportunities to develop their own knowledge of the different subjects they teach. They will also be able to share good classroom practice, including by watching others teach and work with pupils.
- The school is likely to meet all 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), 3, (3)(i), 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)

- Through personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, pupils will have regular opportunities to consider their own health and well-being. They will learn about the dangers of risky behaviours and making unhealthy choices.
- At the daily 'group table' discussions, pupils will consider current topics. These discussions will enable pupils to explore their own ideas. They will also learn to listen to others and accept that people may have views different to their own.
- Pupils will learn about the diverse nature of society, through PSHE, their subject studies, and off-site visits, including to Boston. They will study different beliefs, cultures and values. This will help pupils to understand the need to respect people who are different to them, including those whose differences meet the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

- Visits to the local community, including the post office and the local shop, will enable pupils to learn about people who live near the school. In undertaking these visits, pupils will learn how to keep safe and how to behave appropriately.
- Pupils will learn about how the country is governed, and how government is elected. They will learn about the law, and the difference between right and wrong.
- By working closely with their pupils and celebrating their successes, senior leaders, teachers and teaching assistants will encourage pupils to engage with their learning and grow in confidence.
- Senior leaders will ensure that teachers provide balanced points of view in their teaching and through other activities.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The school's safeguarding policy, which is available on the school's website, reflects the latest national guidance.
- Safeguarding leaders have undertaken the necessary training to ensure that they understand their role and the responsibilities and duties that come with it.
- All staff will receive regular safeguarding training. They will be taught how to be vigilant about pupils' welfare, and how to report any concerns they may have about a pupil.
- Leaders have planned further training to ensure that staff's and leaders' knowledge is kept up to date prior to the school opening and that all staff fully understand their roles in keeping children safe.
- Senior leaders are aware of the additional safeguarding risks that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) may face. They understand the need to consider carefully how to support these pupils, particularly when the pupils may find it difficult to communicate any worries that they may have.
- Safeguarding leaders will record any actions that they take to support pupils about whom they have a concern. They will meet with each other regularly, both formally and informally, to check on the effectiveness and timeliness of the actions that they are each taking to support pupils and respond to safeguarding concerns.
- Daily morning meetings will provide all staff with an opportunity to discuss any pupils about whom they may have a concern.
- Through their lessons, including in PSHE, and through their discussions with staff, pupils will learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

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

- The school's behaviour policy promotes pupils' positive behaviour, including through the use of rewards. Senior leaders are committed to staff exploring the reasons behind any misbehaviour in which pupils may engage. Through this, pupils will receive support to assist them in regulating their own behaviour.

- Senior leaders will regularly check the effectiveness with which staff implement the school's behaviour policy, both during lessons and social times.

Paragraph 10

- The school's anti-bullying policy defines what constitutes bullying and the different types of bullying. There are clear procedures identified for responding to any incidents of bullying. Senior leaders will check on staff's effective implementation of this policy.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 25

- Senior leaders have put in place appropriate policies in relation to health and safety, managing fire risk, and first aid. They undertake regular health and safety checks and fire safety checks. They keep appropriate records of these checks.
- The premises are maintained to an appropriate health and safety standard.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils will have at least one-to-one support from staff. This will ensure that there is adequate supervision of pupils at all times.

Paragraph 15

- The school's procedures for recording attendance are appropriate. The school has an admissions register that records the necessary information.

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- Senior leaders have drawn up a policy that provides staff with guidance on how to complete risk assessments, including for any educational visits. Staff will consider each pupil's individual risk assessment when completing any risk assessments for school-based or off-site activities.
- Staff will receive training so that they understand the types of risks to look for when completing risk assessments and how to reduce any risks that they may identify.
- The school is likely to meet all 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)

- Senior leaders know the checks that they must undertake when recruiting new staff. They know to complete these checks before staff begin to work at the school.
- Senior leaders will check that any supply staff are suitably experienced and that it is appropriate for them to work with pupils.
- All recruitment checks are recorded on the single central register.
- The school is likely to meet all 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)(b), 28(1)(d)

- There are appropriate toilet facilities for both boys and girls that are for the sole use of pupils.
- These facilities have suitable supplies of water, including hot and cold water for pupils to wash their hands.
- The accessible toilet includes a shower for pupils to use.

Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b)

- There is a medical room available for the short-term care of pupils. It has its own washbasin and is located next to a toilet.

Paragraphs 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b)

- There is suitable lighting both inside the building and outside.
- The acoustics of the classrooms and communal areas are acceptable.

Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(c), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- Pupils have access to drinking water from a clearly marked, designated water cooler.

Paragraph 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- There is suitable outdoor space for pupils to use during their social time. The space is also appropriate for some physical education (PE) activities. Additionally, pupils will engage in PE away from the school site, for example at a local swimming pool.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

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

- Senior leaders have ensured that all necessary policies and information about the school are available to parents and prospective parents, including through the school's website.
- The school is likely to meet all 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 provides appropriate information about how parents can make a complaint to the school.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- Senior leaders have demonstrated a secure understanding of the independent school standards. They have taken effective action since the last pre-registration inspection

to ensure that the school is now likely to meet all the standards, including those related to safeguarding.

- The chair of the proprietor body has engaged an educational professional external to the school to check on the school's compliance with the standards.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school's accessibility plan identifies how leaders will adapt the school's premises, curriculum and published documentation for any pupils with SEND.
- The school is likely to meet the regulation 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	148189
DfE registration number	925/6058
Inspection number	10172486

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 special school
Proprietor	Aspiration House Limited
Chair	William Crosby
Headteacher	Lee Robinson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£62,400–£82,400
Telephone number	01205 875587
Website	www.valscommunity.co.uk/aspiration-house
Email address	Lee.robinson@aspirationhouse.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	7 to 18	7 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	10	4

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	10

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	Up to 10
Of which, number of pupils with or an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Up to 10
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority or 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	5
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	10
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- The proprietor of the school is Aspiration House Limited. The school is part of a group of schools and children's homes operated by VAL's Community.
- The school is located in Freiston, Boston.
- The school will provide full-time education for up to 10 pupils with SEND, aged between seven and 18 years.
- Pupils will have a range of learning difficulties. They may have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Pupils may have physical disabilities.
- It is most likely that all pupils will have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- The Department for Education commissioned the inspection to check the provision's suitability to operate as a school.
- This was the proposed school's second pre-registration inspection.
- I undertook a tour of the school site, to check the premises against part 5 of the independent school standards.
- I met with the headteacher, the chair of the proprietor body, and the educational professional external to the school, who will act as a consultant to the school.
- I looked at a range of school policies and documentation, including those which related to curriculum, teaching, safeguarding, health and safety and complaints.
- I checked the school's single central register.
- Following concerns received by Ofsted, an inspector held further discussions with the headteacher and the proprietor on 7 January 2020 to gather additional evidence.

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deirdre Duignan, team inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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