

Cumbric

Springwell Community Hub, Lanchester Avenue, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE9 7AL

Inspection date

15 September 2021

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(2)(b), 2(2)(d)–2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 3(i), 3(j)

- The proprietors have created detailed long-term curriculum plans for each of the subjects they intend to deliver. These set out clearly the specific topics to be taught, and in what order, in each term of each school year. The plans ought to support teachers in helping pupils make good progress.
- Underpinning the subject plans is an overarching curriculum policy, which describes an ambition to support pupils in becoming responsible young people and active contributors to society. The proprietors expect to realise this ambition largely through the broad range of subjects taught.
- Draft timetables, policies and plans show that the proprietors have thought through how best to meet the needs of pupils from their starting points. This includes how to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The planned curriculums for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and for citizenship include many appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of fundamental British values. Additionally, they provide plentiful opportunities to learn about preparing for life in Britain, including learning about diversity in society.
- The proprietors intend to provide impartial professional careers advice through a contracted arrangement with the local authority's careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) service.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a)–3(h), 4

- The proprietors intend to appoint fully qualified teachers to the school. As such, it is expected that appropriate planning, teaching methods and resources will be used so that pupils make good progress.

- Leaders plan to use baseline assessments to ascertain what pupils know and can do when they first join the school. Other termly assessments will take place to check on pupils' learning, so that teachers can plan suitable lessons and activities to help pupils further. The proprietors' expectation is that the combination of experienced, qualified teachers and detailed curriculum plans will support pupils in becoming increasingly well-behaved, self-motivated and independent.
- Parents and carers will receive a termly report about their child's achievements, progress and targets.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 5, 5(a)–5(d)(iii)

- The proprietors' curriculum is built so that pupils have plentiful opportunities to learn about other cultures and world religions. This includes, for example, planned trips to local places of worship.
- Leaders have already established relationships with the local community, particularly the Syrian refugee community. Working with the local authority, the proprietors plan to create a relationship with any Afghan refugees placed in the proposed school's locality. They will use such relationships to develop pupils' understanding of, and tolerance and respect for, other cultures and traditions.
- The PSHE curriculum includes a wide range of topics and experiences based on British values, especially the rule of law and the role of government and the justice system.
- The proprietors have a secure understanding of their responsibilities in protecting pupils from partisan political views. Curriculum schemes of work do not advance any partisan political views. The proprietors will vet the proposed content of any visitors' presentations to pupils, and will be vigilant for inappropriate materials or speech when taking pupils out of school.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The proprietors have written comprehensive safeguarding policies and documents. These include processes for staff to follow, should they be concerned about a pupil. They also include instructions on how staff should report concerns about an adult.
- Safeguarding documentation makes extensive reference to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- Since the previous pre-registration inspection, one of the proprietors has undertaken training to be the designated safeguarding lead. He has also undertaken training in safer recruitment processes.
- These standards are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a)–9(c), 10, 13, 14

- The proprietors' behaviour policy sets out their expectations, rules and sanctions clearly. They expect staff to follow the policy with consistency, and that all staff will model respectful conduct. Provision is made within behaviour documentation for a record of sanctions for serious misbehaviour to be kept.
- An anti-bullying policy is in place, which makes appropriate reference to related guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).
- The proprietors have also written a suitable first-aid policy, with an accompanying policy for the administration of medicines.
- The supervision of pupils will be the responsibility of all staff. The proprietors are clear that pupils will be under appropriate supervision at all times, including social times. Certain parts of the premises will be out of bounds to pupils, to assist with supervision.
- It is likely that these standards will be met.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 16(a), 16(b)

- There is a written health and safety policy, with reference to associated legislation and guidance. The policy states with clarity what the roles are of the governing body, the headteacher and staff in maintaining a safe workplace.
- A linked risk assessment policy is unequivocal that the identification and management of risk are everyone's responsibility. The proprietors have identified several predictable areas of risk that may face their pupils and, through risk assessments, plan to mitigate those risks.
- The proprietors have a service level agreement with Gateshead Council that includes the checking and maintenance of fire safety equipment, fire safety practice and electrical and gas safety.
- It is likely that these standards will be met.

Paragraph 15

- Leaders have an attendance and admissions register in place that is compliant with the relevant legislation.
- It is likely that this standard will be met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2)–18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2)–19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(b)–21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b)–21(7)(b)

- The proprietors have a sound understanding of the required system to ensure that staff employed at the school, or working in the school, are suitable.
- The proprietors have created a single central record for recording the necessary information about staff working at the school. They outsource their employment checks, including checks made with the Disclosure and Barring Service, to Gateshead local authority.
- It is likely that these standards will be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)–23(1)(c), 24(1)–24(1)(b), 24(2), 28(1)–28(2)(b)

- There are separate toilets with washing facilities for boys and girls. Hot water is at a suitable temperature. A disabled toilet with washbasin is also on site.
- The premises contain a medical room with bed, sink and first-aid supplies. This room is close to the pupils' toilets. The room is intended to be for medical purposes only.
- The proprietors plan to provide physical education by taking pupils to use the facilities at a local leisure centre. Therefore, there are no showers or changing rooms on site.
- Pupils will be provided with bottled drinking water from a fridge located in the lobby area of the premises.
- It is likely that these standards will be met.

Paragraphs 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 29(1)–29(1)(b)

- The premises are bright, clean, welcoming and well maintained. Acoustic conditions and lighting in teaching spaces are appropriate.
- External lighting has fairly recently been fitted around the entire building.
- Outside, there is a fenced grassed area, where pupils will be able to socialise and play. There is also an attractive garden area for pupils to enjoy.
- It is likely that these standards will be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1)–32(1)(j), 32(2)–32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii)–32(4)(c)

- The proprietors have a website under construction, which will be completed and made live once the proposed school is registered as a school by the DfE. Leaders have a sound understanding of the various policies and items of information that must be made available to parents on the website and in the school prospectus.
- Leaders also plan to make all required information available to parents in hard copy on request. Part of the initial meeting with parents, prior to a placement being agreed, is to make parents aware of what information can be requested and how to do so.
- The school's safeguarding policy will be published on the website and made available as hard copy on request.
- The proprietors are aware of, and understand, the requirement for information to be provided regarding accounts of income and expenditure for pupils funded by a local authority.
- Since the previous pre-registration inspection, the proprietors have added information to be made available to parents regarding provision for pupils with SEND or for those who speak English as an additional language.
- It is likely that these standards will 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), 33(k)

- The proposed school's complaints policy is compliant with all required standards. It is available to parents. It includes information about how leaders will record the actions and recommendations made that arise from complaints.
- It is likely that these standards will be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietors have a clear vision for how they want their proposed school to operate. This vision is based on their collective experience of working with pupils with SEND and with challenging behaviours. Their vision is to be a force for good in supporting such particularly vulnerable pupils.
- Drawing on their professional experience, and on the previous pre-registration inspection, the proprietors have put in place a raft of comprehensive policies, plans and documentation to support them in achieving the independent school standards.
- They have continued to build a governing body in waiting. The chair of governors designate is experienced in using organisational information to hold leaders to account. He plans to draw on suitable external expertise to help the governing body in challenging and supporting the proprietors.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Since the previous pre-registration inspection, the proprietors have written an accessibility plan to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are met, both in their physical access to the premises, and in their educational access to the curriculum.
- It is likely that the proprietors will meet their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

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	148651
DfE registration number	390/6018
Inspection number	10205353

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	Cumbric (NE) Ltd
Chair	Eric Baker and John Gibson
Headteacher	Eric Baker
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,000 to £12,500
Telephone number	0191 487 0169
Website	Under construction
Email address	cumbric@outlook.com
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 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	12	12

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	12

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	4
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	4
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	4

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	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	2

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is situated in the Springwell Community Hub premises, which it shares with a hair salon. There is a locked entrance separating the school and the salon. The buildings are single storey, surrounded by a fenced, grassed area and garden.
- The proprietors intend to cater for pupils in key stages 3 and 4. Some are expected to have SEND, including autism spectrum disorder, moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils will be at risk of permanent exclusion, or will have been permanently excluded, from their previous school.
- The proprietors expect to receive commissioning for places from the local authority and from neighbouring local authorities, as well as from schools directly.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the DfE. It was the third pre-registration inspection that has been carried out. The previous inspection was on 22 June 2021.
- The inspector met with the two proprietors and the chair of governors designate.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documentation associated with the independent school standards, including schemes of work, school policies, safeguarding information, health and safety information, and the single central record.
- Together with the proprietors, the inspector made a tour of the proposed school's site.

Inspection team

Steve Shaw, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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