

Impact Independent School

102–104 Birmingham Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 4RF

Inspection dates

3 September 2021

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b) [and 32(1)(c)]

- A strong safeguarding culture exists in the school. Leaders and staff know pupils well. They are vigilant and watchful for any signs of concern. The designated safeguarding lead or their deputy follow up any reports that suggest a pupil is at risk. The proprietor and leaders know that should the material change be granted, additional training would be needed. They have considered this carefully and have robust plans in place to ensure that there is always a safeguarding leader on each of the school sites.
- Leaders make sure that all staff are appropriately trained, and this training is updated regularly. Leaders plan training that focuses on the right things. They provide regular bulletins for staff, in addition to routine discussions about all pupils. This means that staff's knowledge is broad and detailed. Staff take seriously their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe.
- Staff build positive professional relationships with pupils. Pupils value these and are confident that staff will listen to them and support them.
- Leaders work closely with local safeguarding partners. They have a good knowledge of the support that is available to pupils and their families. Leaders make timely and appropriate referrals.
- The written policy to safeguard and protect pupils is published on the school's website. Leaders review and update this policy regularly. However, it does not reflect the detailed approach taken by leaders and staff.
- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

Paragraph 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- The proprietor has drawn up an appropriate health and safety policy. Leaders are knowledgeable and well trained in respect of health and safety. They have considered,

and planned for, the specific health and safety training that staff will need to ensure that users of the building remain safe.

- Leaders have booked a qualified fire assessor to complete a full fire survey and risk assessment for the proposed school building. Leaders have contracted professionals to make appropriate changes following this survey so that the site is compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. This is in line with current practice on the existing site.
- Leaders have drawn up clear policies and procedures so that pupils are well supervised on the existing site. Leaders have considered the challenges of supervising pupils on the proposed site. They have begun to make suitable plans that consider the nature of the school building and outdoor areas.
- Leaders have put an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. Leaders have written detailed risk assessments and they review these regularly. Leaders involve teachers, other professionals and pupils when drawing up these risk assessments. For example, each teaching room has its own risk assessment based on the use of the room and its shape and size.
- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

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(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)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)

- The proprietor and leaders make the required checks when appointing staff. They record these checks on an electronic single central record. Leaders are thorough in maintaining this record. It is complete, accurate and up to date.
- Leaders rarely use supply or agency staff, but they are aware of the checks and safeguards that they should undertake if they do.
- Leaders have drawn up a robust recruitment process. Relevant staff have completed safer recruitment training, one of whom sits on any recruitment panel. Leaders obtain two written references before appointing a member of staff.
- It is likely that the requirements of this part will be met if the material change application is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 23(2), 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), 29(1), 29(1)(a) and 29(1)(b)

- The proposed school building was previously a police station and courthouse and has been vacant for several years. At the time of the inspection, the proprietor had only recently secured the lease and refurbishment work was yet to start. The proprietor and leaders have both the vision and detailed plans in place for the necessary refurbishment. Plans include the complete redecoration of every room and installation of new flooring as well as upgrading the fire safety system.
- Leaders plan to take steps to increase the amount of natural light, for instance by replacing frosted glass in some windows. They also plan to replace electrical lighting to ensure that all rooms are well lit. Rooms are of a suitable size for their intended purpose and the acoustics are good.
- Leaders have planned how each space will be used. They have identified a suitable safe entrance for pupils and spaces for a computer room and workshop area.
- The building contains suitable toilet and washing facilities for pupils and staff, as well as an accessible toilet. Pupil toilets will be separate from staff toilets. Toilets will have handwashing facilities with hot and cold water. Leaders know that the temperature of the hot water must be limited. They have plans in place to make sure that this is the case.
- Leaders have considered the best location for the medical room. The proposed location includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet and shower. The proposed room is an appropriate size and will be used solely for treatment of pupils.
- There is a single shower room on site. Leaders propose to continue to use local leisure facilities for physical education. Showers are available at these facilities for pupils to use.
- There is a large central indoor space that pupils will use for socialising and eating. In addition, leaders plan to use this space for assemblies, presentations and performances.
- Leaders have plans to provide all pupils with ready access to drinking water. Leaders know that cold water for drinking should be labelled as such.
- Leaders plan to tidy up the outdoor space so that it is a more inviting space for pupils. This will include the installation of additional fencing to ensure that the space is secure. Leaders plan to check and replace the external lighting where necessary.
- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor is ambitious for the school and its pupils. They are committed to the ethos of the school, with pupils' well-being and academic success at the heart of their plans. The proprietor is supported by an effective leadership team. Leaders have the skills, knowledge and experience needed to be successful in their roles. They recognise the importance of getting the detailed systems and structures in place before pupils attend the proposed new school building.

- The proprietor has restructured the leadership team in light of the material change application. New leaders are in place. As a result, this has created the additional leadership capacity needed. Leaders are motivated and outward-looking.
- Leaders have carefully planned for the increase in the number of pupils. They intend to increase pupil numbers gradually. They have thought about the impact on staff and current pupils.
- The proprietor and school leaders know the independent school standards well. However, some written policies, such as the safer recruitment policy, do not fully reflect leaders' strong practice. Leaders intend to revise these, updating information with sufficient detail.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an accessibility plan. It takes account of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. It is reviewed and updated regularly.
- Leaders have continued to ensure that this requirement is likely to be met.

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 that are relevant to the material change.

School details

Unique reference number	141560
DfE registration number	332/6010
Inspection number	10205280

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Impact Education and Training Ltd
Chair	N/A
Headteacher	Mr Terry Breen
Annual fees (day pupils)	£12,350 to £15,200
Telephone number	0121 5022645
Website	www.impactindependentschool.co.uk
Email address	terrybreen@impactededucation.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	30 April–2 May 2019

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	64	120	120

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	64	120
Number of part-time pupils	0	Not applicable
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	27	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	11	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	5	Not applicable

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	8	10
Number of part-time teaching staff	3	4
Number of staff in the welfare provision	9	12

Information about this school

- Impact Independent School offers alternative provision for up to 90 pupils. The school admits pupils in Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 who are at risk of permanent exclusion from their mainstream school. These pupils may be underachieving, or need social and emotional support, or find that a mainstream school is not an appropriate setting.
- The school last had a standard inspection in April 2019. It was given an overall effectiveness grade of good.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

- The school is used as alternative provision by secondary schools in the local area. Pupils remain on roll with their mainstream school but receive their full-time education at Impact Independent School.
- Admission to the school is usually via referrals from the relevant local authority. Pupils may also be referred by their existing school. Leaders propose that key stage 4 pupils would attend the new school building after an induction period at the current site in Dudley.
- The school does not have a religious denomination.
- Leaders make use of external specialist facilities, such as sports venues. Staff accompany pupils if they access these provisions. The school also uses an allotment for gardening and creative education.
- In September 2021, the leadership of the school was restructured. The sole proprietor is the executive headteacher. Three new leadership posts sit below this. These lead education, business services and pastoral provision respectively.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education because the proprietor has applied to increase the number of pupils on the school roll to 120. To do this, the proprietor wishes to use additional premises. This was the school's second material change inspection.
- The inspector visited the existing school and toured the proposed new site with the proprietor and senior leaders. He held a series of meetings with the proprietor, senior leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation during the inspection, including the single central record and safeguarding information. He also scrutinised health and safety policies and risk assessments.

Inspection team

Ian Tustian, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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