

# Octavia House Schools, Essex

High Street, Great Baddow, Essex CM2 7HH

**Inspection date**

5 April 2022

**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)–(b), 2(2), 2(2)(a)–(i)*

- The school will accommodate up to 50 pupils. All of them will have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Pupils will be taught four lessons a day. Daily lessons will be complemented by regular breaks, therapy sessions and class assemblies. This will provide pupils with over 25 hours of on-site education each week.
- There is a written curriculum policy that reflects the school's aims. It is firmly based on the national curriculum and aims to meet fully pupils' academic and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- Pupils will follow a broad curriculum that gives them suitable experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. This includes lessons in English, mathematics, science, personal, social and health education (PSHE), relationships and sex education (RSE), health education, art, design technology, computing, geography, history, music and physical education (PE).
- The teaching of reading will be prioritised. The expectation is that all pupils will read confidently and fluently. Phonics will be taught daily to all pupils who are not at an age-related standard of reading. All staff will be trained to teach early reading using phonics.
- Careers education will be taught to pupils in key stage 3 as part of PSHE provision.
- Detailed planning is in place to teach RSE and health education to pupils of all ages. The policy is available on the school's website. Parents and carers of new pupils will be consulted and can choose to withdraw their child from RSE lessons.

#### *Paragraph 3, 3(a)–(j)*

- Curriculum planning shows that teaching will enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability. The curriculum is planned to foster

in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves.

- The curriculum has a therapeutic focus. The school will have its own lead therapist and an educational psychologist, and will also commission occupational and speech and language support from therapeutic staff employed in other settings operated by the proprietor.
- Teaching will take place in eight classrooms, one of which will become the library. There is a room for pupils to self-regulate their behaviour. Three other rooms will be used for therapeutic support. All rooms are bright, clean and suitably resourced.
- The requirements of the independent school standards for the quality of education are likely to be met by the proposed school.

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

### *Paragraph 5, 5(a)–(d)*

- The proposed curriculum identifies where aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education will be developed. The school's 'values' curriculum will encourage pupils to make the most of opportunities, develop and sustain relationships, develop self-respect and respect for others, aim high to achieve their goals, deal with conflict and manage change.
- A 'soft start' to the school day will enable staff to welcome pupils into school for breakfast, engage them in enrichment activities and check that they are ready to learn. Reflection time at the end of each day will enable pupils to consider what has gone well for them, and what they could do to improve.
- The enrichment programme will include daily clubs. Pupils will choose to engage in art and craft, sport, music, cooking and well-being activities. Leaders intend to make use of the local park and off-site visits to enhance learning. Links with the local school sports partnership have already been made. All pupils will be first-aid trained.

### *Paragraph 4*

- Assessment will be based on initial teacher assessments. Milestones set from Year 1 onwards will enable staff to measure the progress pupils make against the personal targets set for them each half-term. All pupils will have a personal progress plan that will include targets generated from their EHC plan.
- Annual reports will be sent to parents twice yearly. These will include information about pupils' attendance, punctuality, learning, progress and overall achievement.
- This independent school standard is likely to be met by the proposed school.

## Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

### *Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- An up-to-date safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.
- A team of suitably trained designated safeguarding leads is in place. All newly appointed staff will be trained in child protection and in using the school's electronic

procedures for managing safeguarding concerns. This will include training in the 'Prevent' duty and in managing the behaviour of pupils with SEMH needs.

- There is a policy in place for teaching pupils to remain safe when working online. Leaders intend to raise awareness among parents of internet safety and how to keep their children safe.

*Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 10*

- A written policy is in place for managing behaviour, including exclusions, preventing bullying and recording sanctions for poor behaviour.

*Paragraph 11, 12, 13, 15, 16(a), 16(b)*

- The school has a written health and safety policy. All of the policies and procedures for assessing and managing risks to pupils' safety on- and off site are firmly in place. A facilities manager oversees essential checks to the school buildings.
- There are written policies and procedures to administer first aid. Accidents requiring treatment will be recorded electronically.
- Pupils will be taught in classes of up to seven pupils. Leaders expect that the ratio of pupils to staff will generally be two to three pupils to one teacher or therapist. This is suitable to support the proposed provision.
- There are appropriate admission and attendance records in place. The proposed school already has a number of pupils included on the register who will attend once the school opens. Currently, no pupils are attending the provision.
- Access to and from the school site and movement around the corridors are carefully controlled using electronic fobs.
- The requirements of the independent school standards for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are likely to be met by the proposed school.

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

*Paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(a)–(f), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a)–(d), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a)–(c)*

- Senior leaders and proprietorial staff are suitably trained in safeguarding, including in safer recruitment training. A director is also the chair of the governing body and the senior designated safeguarding lead. He will receive a weekly report on any safeguarding matters arising to keep pupils safe.
- The school will not make use of supply staff.

*Paragraph 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a)–(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5), 21(5)(a)–(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a)–(b)*

- A single central record of employment checks is in place. This includes section 128 checks on proprietorial staff and governors. The record lists the checks made on the newly appointed assistant headteacher, lead therapist, teacher, two other therapists and an administrator. All of the necessary checks have been made to ensure that they have the qualifications and experience needed to teach in this specialist setting.
- The requirements of the independent school standards for the suitability of staff and proprietors are likely to be met by the proposed school.

## Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a)–(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a)–(c)*

- Toilets for boys and for girls are new and fit for purpose. Toilets have washing facilities. Hot-water temperature is controlled to avoid scalding. There are locks on toilet doors. Both sets of toilets can be used for changing and showering after PE.
- There is a disabled access toilet in the school's reception area.

*Paragraph 25, 26, 27, 27(a)–(b)*

- The accommodation is a converted building over two floors. Significant refurbishment and new building works have taken place. This is close to completion. Learning and social spaces are bright, safe and clean.
- The accommodation comprises a reception area, two leaders' offices, a staff room, a kitchen and dining hall, library, seven purpose-built, modern classrooms, one relaxation room and three therapy rooms. Classrooms will be used for all teaching, including specialist teaching of science, art and design technology, and music. These rooms feature desks, seating, storage, suitable flooring and two electronic whiteboards. There is a hall for assemblies, PE lessons and play activities.
- There is a purpose-built medical room with a bed and a sink. A toilet is available immediately opposite.
- Drinking water, available via cold-water dispenser, is labelled as drinking water.
- All lighting, acoustics and heating are newly installed and fit for purpose. Emergency lighting, smoke and fire alarms and extinguishers are all in place.
- There is a small outdoor multi-use games area for teaching PE and for play at breaktimes. This is ideal for small numbers of pupils. As the school grows, leaders intend to operate a rolling programme of break- and lunchtimes to ensure that all pupils can access this area safely.
- The accommodation is suitable to support the proposed curriculum, the number and age range of pupils proposed and pupils' particular SEMH needs.
- The requirements of the independent school standards for the premises and accommodation are likely to be met by the proposed school.

## Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraph 32(1)(a)–(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a)–(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a)–(g), 32(4)(a)–(c)*

- Leaders have a clear understanding of what information they are required to provide to different stakeholders, and how they will use the school's website and other means to provide all required information.
- The school's website is fully operational. Policies and procedures, including the school's safeguarding policy and prospectus, are all available to parents.
- The school will publish a termly newsletter for parents to show the work of pupils.
- Clear procedures are in place to report to local authorities the annual accounts of income and expenditure incurred by the school.

- Contact details for the proprietors and the chair of governors are listed on the school's website.
- This independent school standard is likely to be met by the proposed school.

#### Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

##### *Paragraph 33, 33(a)–(k)*

- A suitable complaints policy and procedures are shared with parents on the school's website. The policy meets all requirements, including providing clear guidance on procedures, timescales, panel arrangements, representation and confidentiality.
- This independent school standard is likely to be met by the proposed school.

#### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

##### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a)–(c)*

- The local authority has identified that there is strong demand for this type of specialist provision in the area. It supports the proprietor's application for registration as an independent school.
- The proprietor is Octavia House Schools Limited. It operates three similar settings in south London. It has two directors, one of whom is the chair of the proprietor body.
- The proprietor provides experienced, proven leadership, including a governing body that includes one proprietorial director. Leaders can articulate a clear rationale for the setting, and the purpose of the provision. They show a good understanding of the independent school standards.
- Senior leadership is already in place. A chief executive officer oversees the work of the executive headteacher. The executive headteacher oversees the work of the newly appointed assistant headteacher. All have experience of working in this type of setting.
- This independent school standard is likely to be met by the proposed school.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- There is an accessibility plan on the school's website.
- The plan provides details of how all pupils can access the curriculum, premises and information effectively.

## **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	148934
DfE registration number	881/6080
Inspection number	10221098

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 status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Octavia House Schools Ltd
Chair	Richard Leonard
Executive Headteacher	Patrik Foster
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000
Telephone number	02036514396
Website	<a href="http://www.ohs.uk">www.ohs.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:hello@ohs.uk">hello@ohs.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 14	5 to 14
Number of pupils on the school roll	0	50	50

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	50
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	0	50
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	0	50
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	50

## Staff

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	20
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	0



## Information about this proposed school

- The proprietor seeks registration with the Department for Education (DfE) as an independent special school to admit pupils with SEMH needs.
- The proposed proprietorial body is Octavia House Schools Ltd. There are two directors.
- The proposed accommodation is a converted building with a new second-floor extension. The premises are situated at High Street, Great Baddow, Essex CM2 7HH.
- The proprietor is seeking to establish the school for up to 50 pupils. Currently, it has seven pupils on roll.
- The proprietor proposes to admit pupils from Essex and the surrounding local authorities.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first pre-registration inspection of the proposed school.
- The proposed school is not yet operating.
- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. The inspection was carried out on site.
- The inspector who visited the school site met with one of the proprietors' directors, its chief executive officer and the executive headteacher. The inspector toured the premises and accommodation. The inspector also scrutinised the single central record and held an online discussion with two designated safeguarding leads responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including a wide range of policies and procedures, the school prospectus and other information provided by the proprietor.

## Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

### **Parent View**

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022

