

# ADO River Valley

19A Poets Corner Centre, Keats Road, Welling DA16 3NB

**Inspection dates**

20 July 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

#### *All paragraphs*

- At the first pre-registration inspection in 2018, there were no proposed curriculum or assessment policies, schemes of work or teaching plans in place.
- This second inspection found leaders have produced detailed curriculum and assessment policies that are likely to meet the needs of pupils aged 14 to 19 with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), especially those pupils with social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- Leaders have prepared thorough, well-sequenced schemes of work that cover all the required areas of learning. These include curriculum plans in English, mathematics, science, physical education, geography, creative projects and computing. Pupils, including those of sixth-form age, will have a range of core pathway choices, for example in animal care, equine studies or countryside and environment studies.
- Pupils are likely to join the proposed school with disrupted educational histories. Leaders therefore intend to assess their starting points, identify gaps in their knowledge and skills, and flexibly adapt the curriculum as required. Leaders intend to work closely with placing authorities and other professionals to ensure that pupils' needs are understood well and catered for effectively.
- The planned programme for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, including for students in the sixth form, includes suitable coverage of fundamental British values, healthy relationships and all the protected characteristics, as identified in the Equality Act 2010. The requirements for relationships and sex education (RSE) are likely to be met. A suitable RSE policy has been drafted. Leaders plan to consult parents and carers on the policy when the school opens. They have drawn up clear guidance for parents regarding their right to withdraw their children from sex education.
- Leaders have an appropriate plan to ensure that pupils receive impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance. They have commissioned placing authorities to provide pupils with regular workshops, as well as personalised guidance sessions.

- The proposed school is already staffed for up to 15 pupils. Leaders have a credible plan to recruit staff in order to cater for up to 24 pupils by the end of the 2022–23 academic year. Staff include teachers, outdoor education instructors and therapists. Leaders plan to use systems for training, developing and monitoring quality that are likely to be suitable. These are likely to provide pupils with a high-quality education and therapeutic support.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

### *All paragraphs*

- The proposed school's 'calendar of culture' includes a range of opportunities to teach pupils about equality and diversity. A range of 'base-camp' assemblies, themed days, visitors and outings are planned.
- Provision for pupils will include daily mindfulness sessions, therapy, animal care and horticulture. A range of extra-curricular clubs will also be made available. These are likely to promote pupils' SMSC development.
- The PSHE education curriculum includes coverage of fundamental British values and all the protected characteristics. Pupils will be taught about a range of religions, faiths and cultures. They are likely to be encouraged to develop tolerance and respect, and to appreciate the diversity of modern British society.
- Leaders have written suitable guidance prohibiting the promotion of partisan views. The proposed school's curriculum and equality policies make clear that teachers must always present a balanced picture of opposing points of view in the teaching of any political topic.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

### *All paragraphs*

- At the previous pre-registration inspection, the proposed school's safeguarding policy did not reflect the most recent statutory guidance. Leaders responsible for safeguarding had not completed a suitable level of training. This inspection found leaders to have written a thorough safeguarding policy, with the new 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2022) guidance in mind. Leaders have completed an enhanced level of safeguarding training. Plans to induct, train and support staff are likely to be suitable. Leaders have invested in a suitable online system to record safeguarding concerns and any actions taken.
- The proposed school's behaviour policy is now likely to meet requirements, as it outlines clearly rewards and sanctions. Leaders have also written a suitable anti-bullying policy. An appropriate online system will be used to record incidents, including of serious misbehaviour and any sanctions imposed as a result.
- Leaders have now written an appropriate first aid policy. There are a number of trained first aiders and a fully equipped medical room facility. Suitable templates are

in place for recording provision of first aid, accidents and administration of medication.

- An external fire risk assessment was completed during the inspection. It identified some relatively minor actions which were resolved. The proposed school is likely to be compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Admission and attendance registers will be kept electronically. The admission register was amended during the inspection to meet the requirements outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Leaders have produced an acceptable health and safety policy. They have also now written a suitable risk assessment policy. Risk assessments of the premises, on- and off-site activities and for individual pupils are thorough in considering the minimisation of risk.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

##### *All paragraphs*

- At the previous inspection, the proposed single central record (SCR) of vetting checks was not fit for purpose, as it was little more than an overview of staff training.
- This inspection confirms that the proposed school's SCR is likely to meet all the requirements. It includes the dates of completion for all the required vetting checks.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

##### *All paragraphs*

- The proposed school will provide outdoor education on an extensive site covering six and a half acres.
- At the previous inspection, there were no school buildings, and two large marquees. At the time, leaders intended to build log cabins, but had not yet secured the relevant planning permissions to build them, and to use the leased site as a special school. There were no electrical lighting, heating or hot water supplies. There were no changing or shower facilities and no medical room facility.
- The premises have been transformed since the previous inspection. All the relevant planning permissions have now been granted. Wooden log-cabin classrooms and offices have been built. They are suitably heated.
- Appropriate indoor and outdoor lighting is now in place.
- Washing facilities now have hot- and cold-water supplies. The hot-water supplies were adjusted during the inspection to ensure they do not present a scalding risk.
- There are enough eco-toilets for both pupils and staff.
- There is now a medical room that meets all the requirements, as well as a changing room and shower facility.
- Plenty of labelled drinking water supplies are available.

- The acoustic features are likely to be suitable.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

## Part 6. Provision of information

### *All paragraphs*

- At the previous inspection, only some of the required policies and information were available on the proposed school's website. The report template for parents was not likely to meet requirements because it only outlined pupils' progress, and not their attainment.
- This inspection found the proposed school's new website includes all the required policies and information, as well as a detailed prospectus for parents. The report template for parents now reports both pupils' progress and their attainment in all subjects. Leaders remain clear about their responsibilities in relation to pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

### *All paragraphs*

- The proposed school's complaints policy has been written in line with the requirements in this part. The procedure includes clear timescales for making informal and formal complaints, including to a complaints panel. A formal complaints log has been prepared to record the stage of resolution and any action taken.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

### *All paragraphs*

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked hard to thoroughly prepare to open this outdoor special school. They have developed a sound working knowledge of the independent school standards.
- Arrangements for the proposed school's leadership, management and governance are likely to ensure that pupils, parents and placing authorities receive a high-quality provision and service.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met.
- All the independent school standards are likely to be met if ADO River Valley is registered as an independent special school.

### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- At the previous inspection, leaders had not developed an appropriate accessibility plan.
- This inspection found the proposed school's plan to be ambitious in its scope. The requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are therefore now 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.

## Proposed school details

Unique reference number	149157
DfE registration number	303/6004
Inspection number	10243610

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 special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	ADO Services CIC
Chair	Victoria McHolland-Pilcher
Headteacher	Katie Palmer
Annual fees (day pupils)	£54,150 to £64,980
Telephone number	020 8850 6779
Website	<a href="http://www.adorivervalley.co.uk">www.adorivervalley.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:education@adoservices.co.uk">education@adoservices.co.uk</a>

## Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	4
Number of pupils of compulsory school age who have an education, health and care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority	4
Total hours operating as a school per week	25
Total hours of teaching provided per week	20

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	14 to 19	14 to 19	14 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	4	24	24

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Mixed	No change
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	4	Up to 24
Number of part-time pupils	4	Up to 24
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	4	All pupils
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	4	All pupils
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	4	All pupils



## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	7
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	5	8

## Information about this proposed school

- The proposed proprietors intend to open ADO River Valley as an independent special school from September 2022. The school will cater for pupils with EHC plans for their SEND. Pupils are likely to predominantly have SEMH needs.
- The proprietors originally applied to open an independent special school named River Valley at the same address. The first pre-registration inspection was conducted in November 2018 (URN 146334). Registration was not recommended and the Department for Education rejected the school's application.
- The provision currently operates as a centre providing therapeutic support and outdoor pursuits during school holidays. It also provides some part-time alternative provision for a small number of pupils with EHC plans. These pupils are on a dual registration agreement with their main schools.
- Leaders do not intend to make any use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the proposed school's second pre-registration inspection, following the first pre-registration inspection in November 2018.
- Leaders were given two days' notice. The on-site inspection was subsequently delayed by one day because of the extremely hot weather.
- The inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body, the headteacher and the lead outdoor instructor.
- The inspector toured the buildings and some of the extensive outdoor areas. He spoke with the small number of pupils attending the alternative provision during their lunch break.
- The inspector considered a range of written evidence to check the likelihood of the proposed school meeting all the independent school standards.

## Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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