

Aspire Learning

Coombe Road, Croydon CR0 5SP

Inspection date

6 February 2023

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

- Leaders plan to implement suitable curriculum and assessment policies that are likely to meet the needs of pupils aged five to 19 years who have education, health and care (EHC) plans for their social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Pupils' starting points will be assessed on entry, and gaps in their knowledge identified. Leaders intend to develop a flexible approach to teaching the curriculum. Many pupils will receive a personalised programme and one-to-one support from a member of staff.
- Leaders have prepared sequenced curriculum plans that cover all the required areas of learning. For secondary-aged pupils and students of sixth-form age, these plans include accredited learning in English, mathematics, science, computing, physical education, food technology and art.
- The planned programme for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education includes suitable coverage of fundamental British values, healthy living, and equality and diversity.
- The relationships and sex education requirements are likely to be met. A suitable policy has been developed in consultation with parents and carers. All the required content is likely to be covered within the proposed school's PSHE education programme.
- Leaders have commissioned an external adviser to provide secondary-aged pupils with regular, impartial and up-to-date careers information, advice and guidance.
- The proprietors and leaders are working hard to remedy the concerns identified in this part at the previous inspection of Cressey College, of which this proposed new school is currently a part. Proprietors and leaders plan to recruit additional teachers, invest heavily in educational and therapeutic resources, and provide high-quality professional training to all staff to ensure that the provision is effective.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met.

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

All paragraphs

- The proposed school's curriculum includes a clear focus on developing pupils' social skills, emotional well-being and behaviour.
- A suitable programme of extracurricular clubs, therapies and educational outings is planned.
- Leaders intend to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. The PSHE education curriculum includes comprehensive coverage of fundamental British values. It also pays regard to the protected characteristics, as identified in the Equality Act 2010.
- The religious education curriculum is likely to ensure that pupils are taught about a range of different religions, faiths and cultures.
- The planned curriculum includes afternoon activities that support pupils' personal development on an individual basis. As examples, horse riding, bowling and driving lessons are offered.
- The proposed school's curriculum policy reflects the Department for Education's 'political impartiality in schools' guidance. It makes clear that teachers must always present a balanced picture of opposing points of view in the teaching of any political topic.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

All paragraphs

- The proposed school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest statutory guidance.
- Leaders understand the importance of creating and maintaining a strong safeguarding culture. They are committed to fulfilling their duties. Arrangements for training staff and for documenting concerns and actions taken are likely to be suitable. Leaders have a secure understanding of current national guidance and how it applies specifically to the many challenges faced by the proposed school's pupils.
- The proposed school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies are likely to be suitably implemented. Plans to record incidents of serious misbehaviour and any sanctions imposed are likely to be appropriate. Leaders have organised regular training to ensure that staff implement the behaviour policy consistently.
- The school's first-aid policy is likely to be implemented well. There are several trained first aiders. Processes for providing first aid and recording accidents are likely to be suitable.
- The proposed school's health and safety and risk assessment policies are likely to be suitably implemented. Written risk assessments appropriately consider how to minimise the possible risks to pupils. However, information relating to health and safety, such as water safety reports and asbestos risk assessments, is not suitably organised.

- Although fire-safety documentation could also be more organised than is currently the case, the proposed school is likely to be compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The recommendations made in the most recent external fire-risk assessments for both premises have been completed. All the required checks are up to date.
- Leaders' plans to ensure that pupils are safely supervised are likely to be appropriate.
- The admissions register is likely to be suitable, as is the online system used for recording pupil attendance.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

All paragraphs

- The proposed school's single central record includes all the required pre-employment checks on proprietors, leaders, employees and agency staff.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

All paragraphs

- The proposed school's two premises include a large, converted house for primary-aged pupils in Croydon (Coombe Road CR0 5SP), and smaller premises for secondary-phase pupils aged 11 to 19 in South Norwood (Denmark Road SE25 5RE). Both premises include suitable classrooms, dining rooms, kitchens and outdoor spaces for physical education and play.
- Both premises have suitable toilet and washing facilities for pupils and staff. The Denmark Road site in South Norwood includes changing and shower facilities.
- The medical room facilities are likely to meet all the requirements at both premises.
- The buildings' acoustics, lighting and hot-water supplies are all likely to be suitable. Labelled drinking-water supplies are readily available to pupils.
- Although the premises are clean and safe, they are in significant need of investment to make them more conducive to learning.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

All paragraphs

- Leaders are in the process of drafting the content for a prospectus and designing a website. When complete, these are likely to include all the required information, policies and contact details.
- Leaders' suitable report template will provide information to parents about their children's progress and attainment each term.

- Leaders are likely to ensure that EHC plans continue to be reviewed in line with the requirements.
- Leaders know that they must provide local authorities responsible for placing pupils at the school with annual statements of income and expenditure.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

All paragraphs

- The proposed school's policy and log for managing and recording formal complaints are likely to meet the requirements. After managing a formal complaint, leaders know to record the stage of resolution and any action taken as a result.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

All paragraphs

- Proprietors and leaders demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the independent school standards. They have worked effectively to open this new school.
- The proprietors' plans to invest in, support and hold leaders to account are likely to ensure that the failings identified in the May 2022 inspection of Cressey College are not repeated.
- Leaders have worked effectively to ensure that all the standards are likely to be met if Aspire Learning is registered as an independent school.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders plan to implement a suitable accessibility plan that proposes appropriate actions to increase the accessibility of the physical environment, curriculum and written information.
- The 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.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	149444
DfE registration number	306/6030
Inspection number	10260923

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	Day school for pupils with SEMH needs
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Cressey Oasis Education Limited
Chair	Amanda Cunningham
Headteacher	Aisha Lone
Annual fees (day pupils)	£52,431 to £105,000
Telephone number	0208 686 5840
Website	www.horizoncare.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@horizoncare.co.uk

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 19	5 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	60	56

Reason for inspector's recommendations

- Although the proprietors intend to extend the Denmark Road premises, these plans are yet to be realised. There are currently 11 one-to-one classrooms at this site. The maximum capacity at the Coombe Road site is 45 pupils. The inspection therefore recommends a maximum capacity of 56 pupils overall.

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	Up to 60
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	All pupils
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	All pupils
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	All pupils

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	51

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is currently operating as part of Cressey College. The proprietors, Horizon Care, are in the process of de-amalgamating Cressey College into four, new, separate independent day special schools. Leaders intend to open Aspire Learning as one of these proposed new schools as soon as registration is granted. The proposed school will cater for pupils with EHC plans for their SEMH needs.
- The proposed school will operate from the main site at Coombe Road, Croydon CR0 5SP for up to 45 primary-aged pupils. An additional 11 secondary-aged pupils, including those of sixth-form age, will attend the proposed school's additional premises at Denmark Road, South Norwood SE25 5RE.

- The proprietors intend to extend the Denmark Road premises and therefore increase capacity in the future.
- Leaders of the proposed school have no current plans to make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection. It was also the second of four pre-registration inspections to consider the de-amalgamation of Cressey College into four smaller new schools.
- The inspection was conducted with two days of notice.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, including the headteacher and an assistant headteacher. He spoke informally with primary-aged pupils as he toured the Coombe Road premises. The inspector also visited the Denmark Road premises. He spoke with the chair of the proprietor body by telephone.
- The inspector considered a range of evidence to check the likelihood of the proposed school meeting all the independent school standards and associated requirements.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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