

The Valiant School

C/o Moorpark Junior School, Park Road, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 1EL

Inspection date

19 April 2023

Overall outcome

The school is unlikely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(i), 2A(1), 2A(1)(c), 2A(1)(d), 2A(1)(e), 2A(1)(f), 2A(1)(g), 2A(2), 3(a), 3(b), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a written curriculum policy in place. Leaders intend for pupils to study a range of subjects. These subjects include linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- The proprietor has arranged a timetable that places emphasis on pupils learning literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is supported by detailed schemes of work in a number of subjects such as English, mathematics, science and physical education (PE). These schemes of work set out the component knowledge that leaders expect pupils to know and remember to make progress through the curriculum.
- Where plans exist, they promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- The proprietor has carefully considered the approach staff will use to teach pupils how to read. They have adopted a phonics programme that is validated by the Department for Education and invested in resources to facilitate implementation of this programme. For instance, the school has purchased decodable books so that pupils practise reading in books that are well matched to their phonic knowledge.
- Leaders are experienced educators and understand features of effective teaching. They have recruited staff that have experience teaching primary-age pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Some staff are qualified teachers. The proprietor has arranged training and development opportunities for staff to work and collaborate with professionals in other local schools.
- Leaders have arranged a process to check what pupils know and remember when they first start at the school. They intend to use this information to identify curriculum start points for each pupil. Staff will use an assessment framework to check how well

pupils learn the planned curriculum. This framework emphasises staff using formative assessment strategies.

- The proprietor has adopted a programme of study so that pupils receive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). The PSHE curriculum promotes the school's ethos and is likely to develop pupils' respect for others. For example, a series of lessons include promoting pupils' awareness of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Leaders have paid due regard to statutory guidance when developing the school's relationships education curriculum. They have integrated this curriculum with the PSHE programme of study. The relationships education policy sets out an intention to consult with parents once pupils begin to attend the school.
- These independent school standards (the standards) are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(f), 2(2)(h), 3, 3(c)

- The proprietor intends to educate Reception-age children at the school. However, they have not yet fully considered how the school's curriculum will meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage. They have not set out a coherent programme of activities to ensure that children in Reception Year are well prepared to learn the curriculum in Years 1 and 2.
- Leaders intend for children in Reception Year to learn in the same class as pupils in Years 1 and 2. However, they have not yet considered how they expect staff to take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of pupils when implementing schemes of work. They are not yet clear about how staff will organise lessons and manage time to cater for the needs of children and pupils within a mixed-phase class.
- In some of the subjects that proprietors intend pupils to study within 'topic' lessons, such as history and geography, plans and schemes of work do not identify the precise information that leaders expect pupils to know and remember.
- These standards are unlikely to be met.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)

- The proprietor has made deliberate choices through policy and curriculum design to actively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders know that pupils who attend the school will be particularly vulnerable. They place pupils' social development at the heart of all school provision. They intend to prioritise the development of pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem across all features of school life.
- Leaders intend for pupils to have four PSHE sessions each week. The PSHE curriculum includes many opportunities for pupils to build their understanding of British values. Units of study include a broad range of topics such as safe use of the internet, maintaining positive friendships and the features of healthy lifestyles.
- The proprietor has planned a range of experiences, visitors, trips and educational visits to help pupils develop their spiritual and cultural understanding. They are able to demonstrate how the school's curriculum will build pupils' knowledge of faiths and

cultures that might be different to their own.

- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The school has a safeguarding policy which is informed by the government's most recent guidance. The policy sets out clear roles and responsibilities for leaders and staff. The policy includes robust procedures for staff to follow if they have concerns about children or adults.
- The school has a designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The DSL is experienced in managing safeguarding matters and understands what to do if concerns are raised about a pupil. The DSL will work closely with the member of the proprietor board who has responsibility for safeguarding.
- The proprietor has ensured that appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place. Leaders have a deep understanding of the potential needs of pupils who will attend the school and used this information when considering the behaviour strategies that staff will use. These strategies emphasise de-escalation of any negative behaviours and the use of restorative processes to help pupils put things right.
- The proprietor has ensured that comprehensive health and safety and risk assessment policies are in place, along with a premises management plan. These documents identify potential risks and appropriate control measures. For example, the proprietor has ensured that checks have been made on the quality of water and asbestos management.
- An appropriate first-aid policy is in place. This sets out clear procedures for managing and recording incidents that require the use of first aid. Leaders have made arrangements for all staff to be qualified in the administration of first aid.
- Leaders ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Escape routes are clearly marked and regular checks are carried out on fire safety equipment.
- These standards are likely to be met.

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(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)(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)(c), 21(6)

- The proprietor understands their responsibilities regarding safer recruitment. They have ensured that necessary checks are made on the suitability of adults before they start work at the school. These checks are recorded on the school's single central record.
- The proprietor is clear about the checks and procedures to be followed if using supply

staff or volunteers.

- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)(a), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25, 26, 27(a), 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), 29(1)(b)

- The proposed school is situated within the grounds of an existing junior school. The premises were previously used as a community youth centre. The premises are conducive to educating children, and the proprietor has ensured that the proposed school is safe and well-maintained.
- There is a suitable washing and toilet facility for the sole use of pupils. A separate medical and first-aid room includes a washing facility and is located close to the toilet.
- Leaders have made arrangements with the neighbouring junior school to access suitable outdoor space for pupils to play and socialise. These arrangements also include access to space and facilities for PE lessons to take place.
- The school has an adequate supply of running water. Suitable signage indicates the availability of drinking water. Pupils have access to a water fountain when required.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(b), 27, 27(b),

- The proprietor has not ensured that external lighting is provided to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises.
- The proprietor intends boys and girls to access a toilet that is to be used by one pupil at a time. However, this toilet can not be secured from the inside.
- These standards are unlikely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g)

- The proprietor has produced policies that reflect the latest government guidance. Leaders made the required documentation under part 6 of the standards available during the inspection. They have ensured that relevant policies are available on the school's website and also make them available to parents and carers on request if necessary.
- The headteacher demonstrates an understanding of his duty to provide information to the local authority to support annual review processes for pupils with education, health and care plans.
- Leaders are aware of the requirement to provide annual written reports to parents. They are able to demonstrate the format in which such reports will be provided.
- Leaders understand the requirement to publish future inspection reports and intend to do this on the school's website.
- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 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)

- Leaders have established procedures for managing complaints and set these procedures out in a suitable policy. The policy details the arrangements for how leaders will address informal and formal complaints. This includes providing information about the timelines for the completion of investigations.
- Leaders understand the need to maintain written records of complaints and any resulting actions.
- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)(c)

- Leaders are committed to improving the life chances of pupils who have previously struggled to be successful at school. They have made suitable arrangements to safeguard pupils and promote their emotional well-being. The school's ethos actively promotes the well-being of pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They have the relevant knowledge and experience to carry out their duties effectively. However, they are not yet able to demonstrate that all elements of the independent school standards are likely to be met.
- These standards are unlikely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- There is an accessibility plan in place in accordance with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The proprietor has put in place measures to make the school accessible to all pupils and adults, including those with a disability.
- This standard is likely to be met.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

- The proprietor has identified a need in the local area to provide education for children with social, emotional and mental health needs from the age of four upwards. They have drawn on the expertise of early years professionals and guidance when planning provision. They understand the requirements for safeguarding and the welfare of children in the early years. However, they have not yet fully considered how the early years curriculum will ensure that children in the Reception Year learn and develop well.
- This standard is not likely to be met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements, as set out in the annex of this report.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	149667
DfE registration number	861/6037
Inspection number	10281967

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
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	The Valiant School CIC
Chair	Jon Lovatt
Headteacher	Peter Hogg
Annual fees (day pupils)	£23,750 to £28,500
Telephone number	07807 230 303
Website	https://thevaliantschool.org.uk
Email address	office@thevaliantschool.org.uk
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	4 to 11	4 to 11
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	20	20

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	20

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

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	6
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- The proprietor body consists of three members who have considerable experience in leadership and management of schools and academy trusts.
- A headteacher and four additional members of staff have been recruited to work at the school when it first opens.
- The proposed school is located within the site of Moorpark Junior School. Moorpark Junior School is part of a multi-academy trust.
- The proposed school plans to cater for pupils aged four to 11 years. It is expected that most pupils will have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils may have been permanently excluded or on the verge of exclusion. The proposed school intends to offer both long-term and short-term educational provision depending on the needs of each pupil and commissioning body.
- The school does not have a religious character.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector carried out a range of activities to ascertain if the school is likely to meet the standards. These activities included meeting with members of the proprietor body and school leaders, reviewing a broad range of policies, reviewing curriculum aims and examples of schemes of work, as well as reviewing leaders' intended systems and procedures for managing the school.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the premises, including the outdoor space.
- The inspector discussed safeguarding arrangements with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work-
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(f) where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 23(1)(b) separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged 8 years or over are provided except where the toilet facility is provided in a room that can be secured from the inside and that is intended for use by one pupil at a time.
- 27 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 27(b) external lighting is provided in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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