

Ashley Park School

47 Hersham Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 1LE

Inspection dates

22 June 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

Paragraph 2(1)–2(2)(b), 2(2)(d)–2(2)(i)

- Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They recognise that pupils who will attend the proposed school will have experienced significant disruption to their education in the primary years.
- The curriculum has been designed to cover both primary and secondary phases to suit each pupil's starting points. Pupils will learn a broad range of traditional subjects based on the national curriculum. A thematic pathway is planned for pupils working at pre-key stage standards. At key stage 4, pupils can study a range of GCSE and vocational subjects.
- A rigorous and well-sequenced phonics programme is in place for pupils who need to learn to read. Leaders will prioritise staff training and plan to make effective use of the programme's expert trainers to deliver this.
- The school's personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme focuses on pupils becoming responsible citizens who are aware of fundamental British values and their duties and rights. The school's 'immersive' room will support pupils' learning and preparation for going on trips and visits.
- The careers programme develops sequentially through key stages 3 and 4. Pupils will access impartial advice and leaders have planned opportunities for pupils to experience the world of work.

Paragraph 2A(1)–2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d)–2A(2)

- There is a comprehensive programme to deliver the statutory curriculum for relationships and sex education (RSE). It is age-appropriate and pupils will learn about healthy and nurturing relationships and sexual health.
- The RSE policy makes clear to parents what pupils will learn in sex education and parents' rights to withdraw their child if they so wish from some planned content.

Paragraph 3

- Classrooms are well designed to take into account pupils' sensory needs. Seating arrangements ensure that pupils can concentrate with minimal distraction. Leaders are in the process of ordering learning resources, including carefully chosen books to promote reading for pleasure.
- Leaders will use pertinent educational research such as working memory capacity to develop teachers' pedagogical knowledge. Leaders will appoint qualified, specialist teachers who possess strong subject knowledge.

Paragraph 4

- Pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans will inform leaders' assessments of pupils' strengths and curriculum priorities. Staff will carry out baseline assessments and use standardised testing to measure impact over a longer period of time.
- Leaders are clear how teachers will check what pupils know and remember. This includes a range of questioning and informal quizzing in lessons.
- Quality assurance activities will be carried out by leaders to check curriculum implementation and how well pupils are learning what has been planned.
- All of the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

Paragraph 5- 5(d)(iii)

- Pupils will learn about different faiths, religions and cultures. They will explore different religions and make comparisons which will develop their own personal knowledge.
- Assemblies will shape pupils' personal development. Pupils will learn about important character traits as well as developing spiritually and morally.
- Leaders will make frequent classroom visits to check the quality of the PSHE curriculum to assure themselves there is no promotion of partisan political views.
- All of the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy is compliant with the latest government guidance. Leaders are aware of the additional vulnerabilities that pupils with SEND may have.
- Leaders possess a strong understanding of creating a vigilant safeguarding culture. There is a comprehensive suite of staff training, which will ensure staff are alert to possible signs of abuse. Equally, a robust staff code of conduct will be in place to ensure everyone is clear about teachers' professional standards.
- There will be an appropriate electronic system for staff to record any safeguarding concerns and for leaders to take any action accordingly.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10

- Leaders have set out clear behaviour expectations for pupils. They will focus on these when pupils join the proposed school. The behaviour policy adheres to the latest government information. There will be no acceptance of any form of bullying.
- Staff will be rigorously trained in de-escalation strategies and how to use physical intervention as a last resort.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13

- Appropriate health and safety and first-aid policies are in place. During the inspection, leaders rectified concerns by fitting additional window restrictors on the top-floor windows.
- Knowledgeable leaders are ensuring compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. They are clear about the fire risk assessments in place. There are tight procedures and systems in place to regularly check on fire doors, extinguishers and escape lighting.
- Leaders bring expertise to fire safety and so there is detailed attention given to checking fire safety audits. Furthermore, fire extinguishers have been checked and serviced properly.

Paragraph 14

- The high staff-to-pupil ratio means that pupils will be closely supervised and always in line of sight.
- Security is of paramount importance for external and internal areas. Staff will need to use key fob access to enter rooms and corridors.

Paragraph 15

- Admissions and pupils' attendance will be recorded on an electronic system. This will allow leaders to look for patterns and trends of absence. Leaders are already working closely with parents and outside agencies in readiness for the proposed school opening.

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- Written risk assessments identify appropriate measures to be put in place to reduce risks. Leaders prioritise pupils' safety and considered potential risks to pupils on off-site trips and when using equipment.
- All of the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

Paragraphs 18(2)–18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2)–19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(7)(b)

- There is a rigorous approach to staff recruitment. Highly knowledgeable leaders ensure that no staff member slips through any vetting checks.
- The single central record follows all statutory requirements and is clearly organised.

- The screening of supply staff will be thorough. Leaders have well-thought-through policies and procedures for the use of temporary staff.
- All of the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)-23(1)(c), 28(1)- 28(2)(b)

- The school building used to be a former preparatory school. It has been extensively refurbished to a high specification. It is a welcoming and inviting school environment.
- Pupils and staff can access drinking water through bottled water coolers around the building.
- During the inspection, leaders rectified concerns to ensure that all bathroom areas were designated single sex only. Hot and cold running water and handwashing facilities are in place.
- There is currently one shower and leaders recognise they may need to install additional showers for pupils' use after sporting activities.

Paragraph 24(1)-24(2)

- The medical room is fully kitted out and suitable for purpose. It is near to a disabled toilet.

Paragraphs 25- 27(b)

- The school spans three floors and leaders have designed excellent facilities. Pupils will learn to cook in an impressive food preparation kitchen. The science laboratory and art studio offer specialist equipment and facilities.

Paragraph 29

- Leaders have exciting plans to further improve the large outdoor environment to support pupils' physical fitness and personal development. This includes installing an outdoor gym.
- All of the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)-32(1)(d), 32(1)(f)32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii)-32(4)(c)

- The school website is in development and will mirror what is used across the company's other schools.
- Leaders know all the relevant information that must be available to parents on the school's website. Currently, leaders are providing parents with paper copies of other policies and documents as the website is not yet live.
- All of the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33-33(k)

- The school's complaints policy meets statutory requirements. It outlines three stages within the process for a parent to follow. Leaders aim for most complaints to be resolved at the first 'informal' stage.
- Leaders will keep written records of any complaints received and any subsequent actions taken by the school.
- All of the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)-34(1)(c)

- Senior leaders demonstrate a strong understanding about the quality of education. They have significant experience of leading schools. They are aware of identifying and sequencing component knowledge in each subject and how to develop teachers' pedagogical knowledge to implement the curriculum.
- Leaders outline how they will gather evidence of how well pupils are learning the curriculum content through pupil discussions and work scrutiny.
- The proprietor body outlines clear lines of accountability within the school and robust quality assurance systems. There is a firm grasp of the three core functions of governance.
- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that the school is likely to meet all standards. Their accurate self-evaluation has identified where aspects of the curriculum and the building premises need refining to strengthen some standards.
- All of the independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The accessibility plan in place meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The proposed school considers and plans very well for the needs of pupils with SEND. This includes curriculum adaptations and the physical environment.

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	149714
DfE registration number	936/6067
Inspection number	10296129

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	P Bloom Ltd
Chair	Richard Power
Headteacher	Ciaran Walsh (regional director)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£60,000 to £90,000
Telephone number	01932 379 043
Website	www.ashleyparkschool.co.uk
Email address	info@ashleyparkschool.co.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	10 to 16	10 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	48	48

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	48
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	48
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	48
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	48

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	12
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- Ashley Hill School will be part of Outcomes First Group (OFG) who run over 50 special schools across the UK. The school is situated in Walton-on-Thames and will cater for pupils with SEND who have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. All pupils will have an EHC plan and be funded by their local authority. The school will provide clinical therapy alongside pupils' full-time education.
- The school has appointed a headteacher to start in September 2023. A governance model operates within OFG where a regional director is also the chair of governors.
- Leaders do not intend to use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to determine if the school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is given permission to open.
- This was the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspection focused on compliance with the regulatory requirements of the independent school standards, as well as safeguarding procedures and schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.
- The lead inspector held discussions with the regional director, headteacher designate, chair of the proprietor body, school business manager and senior facilities manager.
- The inspector visited all parts of the proposed school premises. He also looked at a wide range of documents and policies, including those relating to the curriculum, behaviour, health and safety, and safeguarding.

Inspection team

James Broadbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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