

SEE (Oldham)

Argent House, Shaw Road, Oldham OL1 4AW

Inspection date

15 August 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(1)(b)(ii), 2(2)–2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h)–2(2)(i)

- The proprietor body has prepared an appropriate curriculum policy. This policy clearly explains leaders' aims for the curriculum. It also outlines a sufficiently broad range of subjects for pupils to study in key stages 3 and 4. The policy sets out leaders' intention for pupils to learn about wider social issues. For example, the policy outlines how the curriculum will contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education and how pupils will learn about fundamental British values.
- The curriculum policy is supported by appropriate schemes of work for each subject. Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should learn during their time in the school. The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the individual needs of pupils, all of whom will have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
- Leaders have ensured that sufficient importance is placed on the teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics. They have also ensured that subjects such as science and computing are given prominence. Pupils will also study a range of other subjects that will provide them with experiences in technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- Pupils will have access to a suitable range of academic and vocational qualifications according to their abilities, interests and needs.
- Pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education will be taught through timetabled lessons. There is an appropriate scheme of work for PSHE education which shows the important knowledge that pupils will acquire over time. There is a suitable emphasis on health and well-being, relationships and living in the community. Leaders have placed great importance on successfully preparing pupils for independent living and for developing skills for future life, such as finance and budgeting. The curriculum encourages pupils' respect for other people, including those with protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Leaders have put in place suitable arrangements for pupils in key stages 3 and 4 to receive careers education. They intend to provide impartial careers information, advice

and guidance through the PSHE curriculum, life skills lessons and with the support of an external agency. Leaders also intend to arrange work experience and work placements, visits to employers and local businesses and visits to colleges. These will be tailored to the individual needs and interests of pupils.

Paragraph 2A(1), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d)–2A(3)

- The PSHE curriculum will provide pupils with appropriate relationships and sex education. The proposed school's policy complies with the relevant statutory guidance. Leaders have considered how they will consult with parents and carers about the policy. They are also aware of their duty to ensure that the policy is placed on the proposed school's website.

Paragraph 3(a)–3(g)

- Leaders are committed to ensuring that teachers and other staff have the appropriate subject-specific knowledge, expertise and experience to teach the curriculum well. They have thought carefully about how they will recruit the calibre of staff that they are looking for to provide a good-quality education for pupils. Leaders intend that staff will also receive advice and guidance to help them to deliver the curriculum effectively.
- Leaders have prepared templates for short-term curriculum design. They expect teachers to develop these templates further and to adapt them in response to the needs and aptitudes of pupils. Leaders have ensured that classrooms are designated for specific subjects such as music and science. They have made arrangements for them to be further resourced with a range of appropriate equipment. Leaders have a wide range of experience and knowledge in education, and they understand what effective teaching looks like. Leaders have thought about the quality assurance activities that they will undertake to ensure that pupils increase and develop their understanding, knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- Leaders intend to carry out assessments to establish pupils' starting points when pupils join the proposed school. Leaders will use these initial assessments to inform how pupils are grouped and taught. Teachers will check what pupils know and can remember regularly. This information will be used to inform future teaching.

Paragraph 3(h)–3(j)

- There is an appropriate policy in place setting out leaders' expectations for pupils' behaviour. The policy is appropriate to the cohort of pupils and recognises the specific challenges that pupils may face with regard to their social, emotional and mental health needs. The policy outlines how pupils are expected to behave, and it sets out examples of unacceptable behaviour and how this will be addressed. It also outlines leaders' commitment to ensuring that all staff adopt a positive approach to improving pupils' behaviour.

Paragraph 4

- Leaders have ensured that there is a suitable assessment policy in place.
- The policy outlines how pupil performance will be monitored and shared with parents and carers.
- All of the independent school standards (the 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(a)–5(d)

- Leaders have given consideration to pupils' SMSC development through the PSHE curriculum, the wider curriculum and enrichment activities. Pupils will learn about other faiths and cultures. They will also learn about fundamental British values, such as the rule of law, individual liberty and democracy. Leaders have a wide range of links within the local area and beyond, for example with a local police force. They intend to use these links to provide further enrichment opportunities for pupils. These activities will include plentiful trips and visits and visitors to the school.
- The school's policies include positive references to all of the protected characteristics as set out in legislation. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to discuss local and national events and to give them a balance of opposing views. Pupils will learn how to keep themselves safe, and they will be taught about gang culture, radicalisation, substance abuse and knife crime. Leaders intend that this will help pupils to make responsible and safe choices in their future lives.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The proprietor body has put in place the necessary arrangements to safeguard pupils and to promote their welfare at the proposed school. There is a suitable and up-to-date policy in place which gives consideration to current statutory guidance.
- The headteacher will be the designated safeguarding leader (DSL) in the proposed school. Leaders who deputise for the DSL will be trained to the same level. Leaders who are responsible for safeguarding have a wealth of appropriate knowledge, expertise and experience in this area.
- Leaders have ensured that all new staff will receive an appropriate induction into the school, including suitable safeguarding training. Staff will receive regular updates on local and national safeguarding issues, such as radicalisation and extremism.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a)–9(c), 10

- The proprietor body has a detailed and appropriate behaviour policy in place. There is also a suitable anti-bullying policy. Both of these policies outline the actions that leaders will take to address any incidents of unacceptable behaviour or bullying, including appropriate and proportionate sanctions.
- Leaders have established a system for staff to record and report any incidents of poor behaviour and bullying. Leaders intend to use the same recording system for staff to report and record any safeguarding concerns that they may have. This is so that leaders can cross-reference these to build a bigger picture of each pupil and respond appropriately where concerns arise.

Paragraphs 11, 12

- The proprietor body has written a suitable health and safety policy. It complies with all relevant laws.

- Staff new to the school will complete health and safety training, such as manual handling, fire safety and risk assessment training, as part of the induction process. Leaders have made appropriate arrangements to ensure that the school's computer network has suitable monitoring and filtering systems in place. These will enable leaders to assure themselves that pupils are safe when they are working online.
- Leaders have ensured that in the building where the proposed school will operate, there are a range of measures in place to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. For example, there are fire extinguishers which will be checked regularly, all staff will be trained as fire wardens and there are planned regular fire drills. There is appropriate signage around the building identifying emergency routes and exits.

Paragraph 13

- The proprietor body has drafted a first-aid policy and has made arrangements to ensure that all staff will be suitably qualified to administer first aid. Leaders have ensured that there are a number of fully stocked first-aid kits.

Paragraph 14

- The proposed number of staff is sufficient to ensure that pupils will be appropriately supervised throughout the school day. Pupils will always be supervised, including at breaktimes, when arriving at school and when undertaking visits off site, for example to local sports facilities.

Paragraph 15

- Leaders have a suitable draft admissions policy, which they are developing in collaboration with the local authority. Leaders have established systems to ensure that the school's admission and attendance registers will comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Leaders have an appropriate system in place to register pupils' attendance each day. This system allows leaders to monitor any absences effectively and take swift and appropriate action when required. Leaders intend for a designated member of staff to work with pupils with low attendance to re-engage them in education. Parents will receive information about pupils' attendance in school reports.

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

- Leaders have a suitable risk assessment policy in place. The risk assessments that have already been completed show how leaders plan to take appropriate actions to minimise risks to pupils. These include risk assessments for trips and visits out of school and ensuring that the school building remains safe.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

Paragraphs 17, 18(2), 18(2)(a)–18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a)–19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c), 21(6)

- The single central record is in place and meets the requirements for the information it must contain. Leaders understand that the required checks on the suitability of staff must be completed before staff take up appointment. These include enhanced

Disclosure and Barring Service checks, identification checks, checks on staff's right to work in the UK and checks relating to the leadership and management of a school.

- All of the required checks for the proprietor body and the leaders for the proposed school have been completed. Plans for the recruitment of additional teachers and staff are in place. Leaders have a clear and thorough plan for the induction of new staff. This includes staff completing safeguarding and other appropriate training on appointment.
- Leaders are aware of the procedures that they should follow should they employ agency staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25

- The proposed school is housed in a former industrial unit on a small industrial estate. There are several classrooms, breakout spaces, a prayer room and a number of offices on the first floor. The proprietor body has refurbished the property to an appropriate standard. On the ground floor, there is a reception area, an independent living classroom and a medical room. There is a large, open space which the proprietor body intends to develop into three further classrooms for vocational courses such as construction, engineering and hair and beauty.

Paragraphs 23, 28

- There are separate toilet facilities for male and female pupils. Toilet cubicles can be locked from the inside to provide privacy. There is a supply of hot and cold running water. The hot water does not pose a scalding risk. There is a toilet on the ground floor for the use of disabled pupils and adults. The proprietor body has ensured that there is a shower cubicle available for pupils to use.
- The proprietor body has made arrangements to ensure that pupils will have access to drinking-water throughout the day. Leaders have arranged for two water dispensers to be installed in communal areas in the school.

Paragraph 24

- There is a designated room for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils. There is a sink in this room, as well as a bed and first-aid cabinet.

Paragraphs 26, 27–27(b), 29(1)–29(1)(b)

- Pupils will have access to a safe outdoor space. They will also have timetabled physical education lessons in accordance with the school's curriculum. Leaders plan to access facilities at the local youth centre and rugby club. They will have risk assessments in place to ensure the safety of pupils when travelling to and from this site, and when using these facilities.
- Teaching spaces have suitable lighting and acoustics. There is appropriate external lighting so that pupils, staff and visitors can enter or exit the building safely in the dark.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 6. Provision of information

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

- The proprietor body is near to completing the setting up of a school website that will contain all of the required information. Leaders are aware of all the information that they are required to publish on the proposed school’s website.
- There is a suitable range of information available for parents and pupils when they join the school. A wide range of policies are in place, and they are available on request. These include the curriculum, behaviour and safeguarding policies.
- Leaders intend to provide the necessary information to the responsible local authorities for those pupils with an EHC plan.
- Leaders intend to provide termly and annual reports on pupils’ progress, attainment, attendance and behaviour to parents. Leaders are aware that following any inspection, copies of the report must be provided to parents and published on the school’s website.
- The 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 proprietor body has a suitable complaints policy. It includes appropriate timescales for responding to complaints and includes information about the storage and sharing of written records. The policy ensures that the procedure for making a complaint is transparent.
- The standard in this part is 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)

- The proprietor body and senior leaders demonstrate the experience required to set up and run this independent school successfully. The proprietor body has ensured that those with responsibility for leadership and management have a wealth of knowledge and expertise to carry out their roles effectively. They are likely to fulfil their responsibilities to promote the well-being of pupils.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor body has ensured that there is a suitable accessibility plan that meets the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

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	149808
DfE registration number	353/6010
Inspection number	10293510

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	SEE (Oldham) CIC
Chair	Gregory Cookson
Headteacher	Leo Casey
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000 to £52,000
Telephone number	07810552139
Website	None
Email address	greg.cookson@outlook.com
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	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	25	25

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	25

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	None
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	25
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	25
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	25

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	5
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	None
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	17

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is located in a repurposed, former industrial unit on a small industrial estate at Argent House, Shaw Rd, Oldham, OL1 4AW.
- It is proposed that the school will provide full-time education for up to 25 mixed-gender pupils, aged between 11 and 16 years old. It is intended that the proposed school will cater for pupils who are struggling to cope in mainstream school and who require a small, nurturing environment.
- The proprietor body intends to cater for pupils with SEND. The school will provide for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. These pupils will have an EHC plan. They will be placed at the school by local authorities.
- The proprietor body does not intend to use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to determine if the school is likely to meet the standards if the DfE decides to approve the request to register this school.
- This was the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector held discussions with the chair of the proprietor body, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the pastoral leader. She also spoke to the DSL.
- The inspector completed a tour of the school to check the suitability of the proposed premises against the relevant standards. She also looked at a wide range of documents and policies, including those related to the curriculum, behaviour and health and safety. The inspector checked documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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