

Oaklands School

Norgate House, Tealgate, Charnham Park, Hungerford RG17 0YT

Inspection date

13 September 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

Paragraphs 2(1)–2(2)(b), 2(2)(d)–2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h)–2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d)–2A(2), 3–4

- Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum in preparation for the school opening. It is made up of several pathways, which pupils will be assigned to following an assessment of their ability. Pupils will study a broad range of subjects, either equivalent to or adapted from the national curriculum. Individual learning aims will also be guided by the information in pupils' education health and care (EHC) plans.
- The school has use of the nearby leisure centre, where they will deliver the physical education curriculum.
- Leaders intend make reading a priority. They have selected a phonics programme based on their experience of working with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have planned for training to take place as soon as teachers are formally appointed.
- The school's curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education has been chosen to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. In particular, there is a focus on relationships, communication and independence. Fundamental British values are also included in this curriculum as well as in the assembly and tutor programmes.
- There is a well-planned programme of careers information, education, advice and guidance. Leaders have thought about how to measure the effectiveness of this programme once they have secondary-age pupils attending the school.
- The PSHE curriculum incorporates age-appropriate teaching on relationships and sex education (RSE). The school's policy on RSE is suitable and leaders understand that they will need to consult on this with parents once pupils are admitted.
- There is a considered approach to how pupils will be assessed. This has been designed thoughtfully so that it is aligned with the curriculum that each pupil will follow.
- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards.

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

Paragraphs 5–5(d)(iii)

- Leaders are committed to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have considered this in relation to their curriculum as well as the culture and the ethos they hope to create.
- Leaders recognise the importance of ensuring that pupils understand different cultures and traditions. They have included this in their PSHE curriculum as well as in their plans for trips and getting visitors in to speak to pupils. More broadly, leaders intend to promote respect for others, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics.
- Pupils who attend the school will be encouraged to engage with current issues, for example through their PSHE lessons and assemblies. They will have the opportunity to learn about democracy and put this learning into action. For example, they will be able to participate in the pupil council and vote on important issues.
- The school timetable is planned to include opportunities for enrichment to support pupils' wider development. Leaders intend to follow pupils' interests, but the activities are likely to include outdoor learning, sports activities and visits to a local equine therapy provision.
- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b), 32(1)(c)

- Leaders have made appropriate arrangements for safeguarding pupils. This includes producing and publishing a suitable safeguarding policy. They have put in place systems to ensure that staff are trained in identifying and recording any concerns. The headteacher will act as the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and is experienced at carrying out this role previously. The arrangements made for safeguarding demonstrate that leaders and directors have an up-to-date and confident understanding of statutory guidance.

Paragraphs 9–16(b)

- There are written policies on behaviour and anti-bullying which set out the procedures that staff will follow. These policies make clear that bullying should not be tolerated in the school. Leaders have thought carefully about the use of sanctions alongside educating pupils to improve their behaviour over time. They have clear plans to train staff in how to manage pupils' behaviour.
- There is an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. Leaders understand how to use this policy appropriately to assess and manage risk. This was evident in several examples of completed risk assessments looked at and discussed during the inspection.
- There are systems and registers in place for admissions and attendance. Leaders intend to admit a smaller number of pupils in the first instance, increasing this over time. The provisional staffing in place for when the school opens is more than sufficient to ensure proper supervision. The local governing board have a clear

understanding of what the staffing structure will look like as the number of pupils increases.

- A fire risk assessment has been carried out by an external consultant now that building works are complete. There are no issues to be addressed. All staff will receive appropriate training in fire risk and safety.
- There is an appropriate first-aid policy. A number of staff have either completed the required training to administer first aid or are scheduled to complete this once formally appointed.
- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards.

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(3)(b), 21(5)–21(6)

- Leaders are knowledgeable about safer recruitment and the checks which must be carried out on adults working at the school. They have recruited staff on a provisional basis. Details of these appointments are recorded in a single central record, which shows that the necessary pre-appointment checks have been completed.
- Members of the local advisory board and leaders have been trained in safer recruitment.
- Leaders have put in place systems to ensure the suitability of supply teachers should they be needed.
- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)–23(1)(c), 24(1)–24(1)(b), 24(2), 25–29(1)(b)

- At the last pre-registration inspection, several standards in this part were judged unlikely to be met. Since then, work has been completed and the building is now refurbished to a high standard. Issues with lighting, heating and acoustics have been addressed.
- Since the last inspection, heating and hot water systems have been restored to working condition. Drinking water is available throughout the premises. There is sufficient access to toilets for pupils and staff.
- The school building is situated on an industrial estate alongside commercial premises. There is suitable external lighting around the building to ensure safe entry and exit. In the car park, space has been allocated to allow taxis to pick up and drop off pupils safely.
- There is a suitable medical room for the treatment of pupils who are sick and injured. This room contains its own sink and is near to pupil toilets. Since the last inspection, the medical room has been fully furnished and contains a bed, lockable cabinets and a sink providing hot and cold running water.
- There is a grassy area surrounding the school which provides enough space for pupils to learn and play outdoors. Leaders intend to allow older pupils to make use of the nearby leisure facilities and sports courts, with appropriate supervision.

- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1)–32(1)(b), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f)–32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii)–32(4)(c)

- Since the last inspection, the school has completed and published its website. All the necessary policies and information are now available and up to date in line with this part of the standards.
- Leaders intend to report to parents regularly in addition to the annual process of reviewing EHC plans. They view strong working relationships with parents as key to the school's success.
- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33–33(k)

- The school's complaints policy follows the relevant guidelines published by the Department for Education. It is published on the school's website. Leaders and members of the local advisory board have a clear understanding of how to enact this policy and escalate complaints if required. They demonstrate a commitment to listening to parents and working through any concerns in the first instance.
- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The local advisory board bring to their roles a wide range of knowledge and experience about the education sector. They have a broad skill set relevant to setting up and running a school for pupils with SEND. The directors have appointed an experienced headteacher with a background in special education.
- The local advisory board and the headteacher have a detailed knowledge of the independent school standards. Their actions since the previous inspection mean that all standards are likely to be met. They have plans and quality assurance processes in place to ensure that standards continue to be met.
- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an appropriate accessibility plan in place, which is reviewed regularly. Leaders are aware of their duties in relation to equalities. The school is likely to meet 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	150269
DfE registration number	869/6025
Inspection number	10309806

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 school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	P5E Limited
Chair	Julie Smith
Headteacher	Megan Stratton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,500 to £72,000
Telephone number	07713 255 531
Website	www.oaklands-school.co.uk
Email address	info@oaklands-school.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	5 to 16	5 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	40	40

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	40

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	40
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	40

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	6

Information about this proposed school

- Oaklands School has been proposed by P5E Limited as an independent special school for pupils with SEND. All pupils will have an EHC plan and their places will be funded by a local authority. Leaders have begun work with West Berkshire and Reading local authorities and intend to accept placements from these two areas.
- The proposed school will specialise in providing education for pupils with autism and associated conditions.
- Leaders do not intend to use an alternative provision. However, they plan to make use of facilities in the local area, such as the leisure centre and equine therapy, to add breadth to pupils' experiences.
- P5E Ltd is registered at Companies House and has two directors, who are also members of the local advisory board.

Information about this inspection

- The purpose of this inspection was to check whether the school is likely to meet the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 if the DfE decides to register it. This was the school's second pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector discussed and reviewed all relevant plans and documentation for the new school with the headteacher. He also met with the chair of the proprietor body and a representative of the local advisory board.
- The inspector looked around the school premises to check that it met the requirements of the independent school standards. He scrutinised a wide range of policies and records in relation to the health and safety of the premises.
- The inspector checked the school's arrangements for safeguarding by reviewing the policy and systems in place. He also discussed these arrangements with the school's headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Chris Ellison, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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