

# V.A.S.E Academy

Oaklands Centre, Oaklands Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B21 0NA

**Inspection date**

5 October 2023

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

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

- The school caters for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A significant number of pupils have been diagnosed as having autism. All pupils have education, health and care plans.
- Leaders intend to extend the school's age range from 10 to 16 years old to 10 to 18 years old. This is because leaders have identified that some pupils who get to the end of Year 11 are not ready to move on to other mainstream education providers. Therefore, leaders have put in place appropriate plans to allow certain pupils to stay at the school for an additional two years.
- Leaders intend to offer pupils that stay on at post-16 the opportunity to resist or improve their English and mathematics qualifications and to gain a BTEC National Diploma qualification in their chosen pathway of animal care, horticulture or introductory sport. All pupils at post-16 will also gain a level 1 qualification in employability. Leaders have ensured that staff are suitably qualified and equipped to offer these qualifications.
- The curriculum documentation that leaders have developed provides staff with the information they need to plan and teach sequences of lessons in each subject. Learning resources are in place to teach the planned curriculum. Leaders will continue to develop the range of learning resources that are available to support individual pupils' needs.
- Leaders aim to provide pupils with impartial careers advice and guidance. This will enable pupils to learn about employability skills and about how to apply for future employment, education or training.
- Leaders have put in place a clear policy and programme for teaching personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and citizenship. The planned curriculum for

relationships and sex education follows the statutory guidance and considers the needs of the pupils.

- Leaders have ensured that these independent school standards (the standards) are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

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

*Paragraphs 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 school's PSHE curriculum ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is catered for effectively. As part of this curriculum, pupils learn about fundamental British values, such as tolerance and democracy. Leaders plan that older pupils will follow a similar programme to deepen their knowledge of these values further.
- Leaders will promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the planned curriculum. Visitors and enrichment activities will be used to supplement the taught curriculum with a range of experiences. Leaders intend to continue to use the 'theme of the week' and the 'value of the month' to consider and discuss a range of topics and themes.
- Leaders intend to provide a wide range of activities to enrich pupils' learning and to support personal development for pupils in key stage 5. Activities such as caring for the wide range of animals on the school site and trips to the local allotment will be a regular part of school life.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

## Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy reflects the most recent statutory guidance and is available on request. It is published on the school's website.
- All staff have completed appropriate safeguarding training. Leaders are aware of their duties and the importance of establishing and maintaining a strong safeguarding culture. All staff understand the needs and challenges their pupils are likely to present.
- Leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

*Paragraph 11*

- Leaders have a detailed and fully comprehensive health and safety policy. They work with specialist advisers to ensure that all relevant checks are undertaken and that the premises are maintained to a high standard. This policy and practice are likely to ensure that pupils are kept safe in the new building.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

*Paragraph 12*

- Leaders have the appropriate certification to demonstrate that regular fire safety checks are carried out by the relevant authority. Leaders carry out regular fire

evacuation practices.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

*Paragraph 14*

- Leaders have carefully considered the supervision of pupils and have set in place an appropriate staffing structure in readiness for an increase in pupil numbers. Leaders take account of the number of pupils on roll and pupils' individual needs when planning the levels of supervision required to keep pupils safe. Staffing ratios are high to ensure that individual pupils get the support they need.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

*Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- Leaders have established a rigorous and robust approach to assessing risk that supports the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils. Risk assessments are carried out by suitably experienced and knowledgeable staff. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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

*Paragraphs 18(1), 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(2)(f), 18(3), 20(6), 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(6)*

- The single central record contains the full range of pre-employment checks. It is stored centrally in an electronic format. The school has appropriate recruitment procedures in place. This includes obtaining two references and carrying out a medical check prior to appointment.
- Leaders do not use supply staff to cover staff absence.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

**Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

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

- Leaders have invested significant time and money into developing the new premises. They have carefully considered how they will meet the needs of the pupils, seeking specialist advice where appropriate.
- The new building is spread over three floors. On the ground floor, there is the reception and waiting area, a nurture space, offices and multiple-use rooms. On the first floor, which key stage 3 pupils mainly use, there are classrooms, reflection rooms and offices. There is also an animal management room which houses an impressive range of vivarium containing a wide range of animals. On the second floor, which is designed to cater for key stage 4 and post-16 pupils, there is more of a college feel with a social space, classrooms and intervention areas.

- The school premises have been developed to a high standard and are very welcoming for pupils. Classrooms, stairs and corridors are well lit, ventilated and carpeted where appropriate to ensure good acoustics. The central stairs have bannisters and railings to enable pupils to access the upstairs rooms safely. All classrooms display emergency evacuation procedures in the event of a fire. External lighting is provided to keep pupils and staff safe during hours of darkness.
- Drinking-water is freely available to pupils. There are suitable toilet facilities available on each floor of the building. Shower and changing facilities are also available on the school premises.
- The school has appropriate outside space for pupils to use to spend time with their friends. This space would accommodate an increase in pupil numbers if agreed.
- The school has an appropriate medical room. This room contains a bed, first-aid equipment and handwashing facilities and is opposite a toilet.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements for this part of the standards if the material change is approved.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)*

- Leaders are thoroughly committed to meeting the needs of the pupils, and they have invested significantly in the new building to support this.
- Leaders demonstrate a secure knowledge of how to cater for the wide and varied needs of pupils with SEND.
- Leaders have already developed the school site and educational provision to accommodate the proposed increase in pupil numbers. At the time of the material change inspection, there were 28 full-time pupils on roll. Leaders propose to eventually increase this number to a maximum of 60 full-time pupils. Leaders have demonstrated their commitment to maintaining the quality of education for all pupils while increasing the number of pupils on roll.
- Leaders have ensured that the school is likely to continue to meet the standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material changes.

## **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 that are relevant to the material change.

## School details

Unique reference number	147702
DfE registration number	330/6134
Inspection number	10302192

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Muhammad Majid
Headteacher	Muhammed Majid
Annual fees (day pupils)	£30,000 to £80,000
Telephone number	01215514882
Website	<a href="http://www.vaseacademy.co.uk">www.vaseacademy.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:contactus@vaseacademy.co.uk">contactus@vaseacademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	14 to 16 March 2023

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	11 to 18	11 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	28	60	60

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	28	60

Number of part-time pupils	None	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	28	60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	28	60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	28	60

### Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	8	16
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	12	24

### Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils who have SEND. A significant number of pupils have been diagnosed as having autism. All pupils have education, health and care plans.
- The school's last standard inspection was in March 2023 when it was judged to be good overall.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider for part-time provision for individual pupils to provide vocational training.
- The school does not have a religious ethos.

## Information about this inspection

- The material change inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to determine whether the school could change premises, expand its age range from 10 to 16 to 10 to 18 years of age and its maximum numbers on roll from 48 to 60.
- A range of documents were submitted electronically and were reviewed remotely by the inspector prior to the inspection. This included documents relating to the school's curriculum. The inspector also looked at the school's website.
- The inspector spoke with the proprietor, who is also the headteacher, and the deputy headteacher about safeguarding arrangements. The school's single central record was checked, as well as a sample of a personnel file.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the school site.

## Inspection team

Emma Gater, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector



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