

Anson House School

Anson House, Lammascote Road, Stafford, Staffordshire ST16 3TA

Inspection date

14 December 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)(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)(h), 2(2)(i), 2A(1), 2A(1)(a), 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 proprietors intend for the proposed school to provide education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They intend for pupils' primary SEND to be related to social, emotional and mental health. Leaders expect that pupils will usually have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Leaders have a wealth of experience in working with pupils with SEND.
- The proprietors intend for the curriculum to be broad and balanced, with a strong focus on pupils' personal development. They intend that the curriculum will be enhanced with a range of interventions and therapies designed to meet the needs of individual pupils. These include anger management and music therapy. Some of these therapies will be provided by external experts.
- Leaders intend that pupils will follow a core academic curriculum comprising English, mathematics, science, physical education, art and design, humanities, and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- The proprietors have developed a broad curriculum across key stage 2. Here, the written curriculum policy is now supported by detailed schemes of work for subjects at key stage 2. Across all subjects, these schemes reflect the aims and objectives of the National Curriculum. Across the key stage 2 curriculum, leaders have given thought to how the knowledge they expect pupils to learn builds over time. Leaders have also ensured that these plans make clear the potential adaptations that might be required to meet pupils' needs. Leaders have worked hard since the last pre-registration inspection to ensure that the planned curriculum in key stage 2 is now well developed.
- The curriculum is less well developed at key stage 3. Here the proprietors have not identified the knowledge pupils need, or the small steps pupils should take to be successful. They have not given enough thought to the way in which they will check on the learning of pupils in key stage 3. Consequently, across key stage 3, not all

subjects that are proposed to be taught have suitable schemes of work or have adequate resources to deliver the curriculum well. For this reason, a recommended alteration to the age range of pupils who can attend the school has been made.

- While the proprietors have the subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum at key stage 2, they do not have the knowledge and skills needed to teach the curriculum in all the planned subjects across all key stages. There are no clear plans in place to ensure that teachers develop the knowledge they need to teach the subjects within the curriculum beyond key stage 2. This means that teachers are unlikely to deliver well-planned lessons in all subjects and key stages. For this reason, a recommended alteration to the age range of pupils who can attend the school has been made.
- At present, the proprietors have not employed additional teaching staff. As a result, the current staffing structure does not support leaders' aims of welcoming 16 pupils into the school. Because of this, a recommended alteration to the maximum number of pupils to be admitted into the school has been made. Leaders intend to employ further staff once the school is open.
- The programme for PSHE education includes suitable coverage of equality, fundamental British values and relationships.
- The proprietors have appropriate plans in place to provide impartial careers guidance. This includes working with a range of external providers to ensure that pupils are fully informed and supported to make appropriate choices for the next stage of their education.
- The proprietors intend to make checks on pupils' starting points in literacy and numeracy when they join the school. Leaders also aim to check that pupils with SEND have their needs accurately identified and met. Leaders plan to work closely with a range of external providers, as well as parents, to check on pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Leaders recognise the importance of developing pupils' ability to read, and they recognise that many of their pupils are likely to have large gaps in their reading skills. Leaders have suitable plans in place to help pupils to learn to read fluently and quickly, to enable them to access the whole curriculum. The proprietors have recently undertaken training to develop their expertise in delivering this aspect of their curriculum.
- The proprietors have made sure that these independent school standards (the standards) are likely 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 personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education plans reflect the proposed school's aims and ethos. The proprietors intend to use a commercial PSHE education curriculum. Leaders plan to use the information they gather about pupils, and the contextual issues pupils are likely to encounter to adapt the curriculum and supplement it to meet pupils' emerging needs.

- Through the proposed curriculum, pupils will be taught about a range of religions and cultures. The PSHE education curriculum includes coverage of fundamental British values and the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Leaders have forged links with the police and other local community groups. Leaders intend to use these links to enrich the curriculum on offer to pupils and to develop pupils' understanding of public institutions.
- Leaders are committed to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and have taken appropriate steps to ensure that the curriculum will not undermine fundamental British values.
- Leaders have made sure that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is currently a proprietor of the proposed school. The only staff currently employed by the school are both members of the proprietor body. To ensure that there is a properly open culture of safeguarding, the proprietors have taken steps to secure a governing body. Members of the governing body are in place ready to take up post when the school opens. Additionally, the safeguarding policy and complaints policy make clear the steps that pupils, parents and staff ought to take should they have concerns about the proprietors.
- Leaders intend to employ additional staff in the near future. They propose that at this point the proprietor will no longer be the DSL.
- Leaders are knowledgeable about how to keep pupils as safe as possible. The DSL has undertaken recent safeguarding training. Leaders have clear process in place to ensure that staff receive this training as part of their induction. Leaders also have processes in place to ensure that staff receive ongoing training and support with regards to safeguarding.
- Since the previous pre-registration inspection, leaders have updated their written health and safety policy. This now accurately reflects the actual site and the responsibilities of the proprietors. The policy identifies the relevant checks that need to be made and their frequency. The proprietor has ensured that these checks are now carried out systematically.
- There is a suitable behaviour and anti-bullying policy in place. The policy sets out the consequences of any poor behaviour. There is also a physical intervention policy in place, as well as an exclusions policy. Leaders have a wealth of experience in managing the behaviours of pupils who struggle to regulate their own behaviour well. They understand how and when to use restraint, and plan to monitor any physical interventions that do take place carefully.
- Leaders have a clear system in place to record any incidents of poor behaviour. They intend to ensure that any staff appointed receive training focused on de-escalation techniques. Leaders are keen to identify the triggers for a pupil's behaviour, and plan to use this information to identify trends and patterns in pupils' behaviour. They intend to share this information with staff and use this to shape the training that staff

receive. As a result, it is likely that staff will have the knowledge and skills to implement the behaviour policy well.

- The premises have had a fire risk assessment carried out by an external company. The proprietors have ensured that the recommendations from this assessment have been actioned. The firefighting equipment has been renewed, and recent checks on the fire detection system have taken place. Logs have been set up for the regular checking of all equipment. The proprietors have ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- There is an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. A review of a range of risk assessments, including the off-site and educational visits risk assessment, confirms that the risk assessments currently in place adhere to the principles of the risk assessment policy.
- There are currently no pupils attending the school. There is a system in place to record admissions and attendance once pupils begin to attend. These arrangements, if implemented effectively, are likely to comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 2006.
- Leaders have considered the supervision of pupils during lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. To implement these arrangements effectively and as intended, it is likely that a greater number of staff would be required. However, with current staffing, if leaders were to limit the number of pupils to six, this would be suitable.
- The number of staff will increase gradually as the numbers of pupils gradually increase.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 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(3), 19(1), 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), 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)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6)

- Staff who are currently employed have been subject to all the required safeguarding checks. All appropriate checks are recorded on the school's single central register.
- One of the proprietors has completed safer recruitment training. They have a clear system in place to ensure that any new staff appointed will be recruited in line with safer recruitment guidance.
- Leaders do not intend to use supply staff. However, they are clear about the checks to be undertaken and the procedures to be followed if supply staff are used. Leaders are equally clear about the steps to take should they appoint a member of staff from overseas.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 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)

- The proprietors have secured the lease of suitable premises for the proposed school. The building is two storeys, and the proposed school is located on the first storey, which is used solely by the proprietors. It comprises of several classrooms, a meeting room, an office, a kitchen area and some additional rooms for the delivery of therapeutic interventions, such as music therapy. There is suitable space for the proposed number of pupils.
- The building is well maintained and suitable for use as a school. Rooms in the building, including classrooms, have adequate natural and artificial lighting. Rooms also benefit from good acoustic conditions.
- There is a unisex toilet available for pupils to use one at a time. The cubicle is lockable from the inside. It has hot and cold running water and handwashing facilities. The temperature of the water does not pose a risk of scalding. There is also a shower facility and a separate area for changing. These facilities are lockable from the inside.
- The proprietors have made sure that pupils will always have access to drinking water. This is located in an area separate from the toilets. These are clearly marked for pupils. There is also adequate external lighting that covers the entrance to the school building and the playground.
- There is a room suitable for use as a medical room that has appropriate first-aid supplies and a washing facility. It is located close to the toilet. This room is used for other purposes during the day but is always available.
- There is a suitably sized outdoor space for pupils to play outside. This consists of a large, paved area that is secure. The proprietors have written permission to use a local authority's secure playing field located a short walk from the school. There is an appropriate risk assessment in place for the journey to this playing field and for the use of it.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1) to 32(3)(g)

- At the time of the inspection, the proposed school did not have a working website. On request, leaders ensured that all the required documentation under part 6 of the independent school standards was made available. Leaders do intend to have a working website prior to opening the school. They are clear about the documentation that is required to be housed on the school's website.
- Leaders have set out the school's safeguarding policy. This was made available on request.
- Leaders have clear systems in place to monitor the progress of pupils with SEND and to support the annual reviews of pupils with an education, health and care (EHC)

plan. Leaders plan to work closely with parents, as well the school staff, to ensure the information in these reports is as accurate and as helpful as possible.

- Leaders understand the requirement to publish any future inspection reports to parents.
- A regular written report will be provided to parents and carers. This will contain a range of relevant information about pupils academic, therapeutic and social development.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33 to 33(k)

- The complaints policy is in writing and is to be made available on request. The proprietor body have ensured that the policy is clear and contains information about how to raise a complaint, as well as the timescales associated with each stage of the complaints process.
- Leaders have made sure that processes are in place to ensure that all formal complaints, including those made against the headteacher, will be recorded.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 31(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The proprietors have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. Leaders bring with them a wealth of experience from working with pupils with SEND. They are knowledgeable about the needs of the pupils they intend to cater for and intend that all staff working at the proposed school are equally well skilled.
- Leaders demonstrated a secure understanding of the independent school standards. They also demonstrated that it is likely that they can ensure that these standards are consistently met.
- The proprietors have acted to ensure that pupils' welfare, health and safety are prioritised. For example, they have acted to resolve issues identified at the previous pre-registration inspection relating to electronic testing, and procedures related to legionella testing.
- They have also ensured that they have received suitable safeguarding training. Leaders have plans to make sure that all staff receive ongoing safeguarding training specifically related to the contextual issues pupils are likely to face. Leaders intend to check on the impact of this training periodically.
- The proprietors have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have ensured that the school is likely to meet the requirements 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	150442
DfE registration number	860/6096
Inspection number	10323956

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	Anson House School Ltd
Chair(s)	Tyrell Simpson & Adam Price
Headteacher	Adam Price
Annual fees (day pupils)	£39,960 to £70,570
Telephone number	07701 007 708
Website	No website
Email address	ansonhouseschool@gmail.com
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable
Number of pupils of compulsory school age who have an education, health and care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority	Not applicable
Total hours operating as a school per week	Not applicable
Total hours of teaching provided per week	Not applicable

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	9 to 14	9-11

Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	16	6
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Reason for inspector's recommendations

- Currently, there are only two staff employed by the proposed school. The structure of the school curriculum means that at present these staff do not have the capacity to deliver the intended curriculum to a greater number of pupils than six.
- The two members of staff have a wealth of expertise in supporting pupils with their social, emotional, and mental health needs. However, while they have sufficient knowledge of the content they intend to deliver at key stage 2, they have limited subject knowledge of subjects within the broad curriculum they intend to offer at key stage 3. Additionally, while curriculum plans in key stage 2 are well developed, those in key stage 3 do not identify the precise knowledge that pupils will learn. Plans in key stage 3 are not all well resourced. As a result, it is unlikely that pupils would benefit from a rich and broad curriculum in key stage 3 at present. It is therefore unlikely that pupils in key stage 3 would make sound progress.

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	16
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	16
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	16
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	16

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	2	2

Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	0

Information about this proposed school

- Anson House School intends to cater for up to 16 pupils, irrespective of gender, between the ages of nine and 14.
- The school will cater for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- It is expected that all pupils will have an EHC plan and will be placed in the school by local authorities.

Information about this inspection

- This was the proposed school's second pre-registration inspection. It was commissioned by the DfE to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is given permission to open.
- 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.
- An inspector conducted a tour of the premises with the headteacher. Inspectors also took account of arrangements for pupils' welfare and safeguarding. This inspection work included scrutiny of the school's checks on the suitability of staff, the safeguarding policy, the health and safety policy and the latest fire risk assessment.
- The inspector checked documentary evidence relating to the curriculum, including the curriculum policy and schemes of work.
- The inspectors met with both proprietors, one of whom is also the headteacher.

Inspection team

Alexander Laney, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Forrest	His Majesty's Inspector

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