

Demetae Academy

17a King Street, Newcastle under Lyme ST5 1JF

Inspection date

15 November 2023

Overall outcome

The school is unlikely 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) to 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(f), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- The proprietor body intends that the material change will enable school leaders to provide full-time education for three-year-old children in a pre-school class that is proposed to initially be within the Reception class. Leaders have ensured that staff are suitably qualified and equipped to meet the needs of these young children.
- The proprietor body has put in place an appropriate curriculum policy that sets out a sufficiently broad range of subjects for children to study in the early years. The policy explains clearly leaders' aims for the curriculum. Leaders also intend that the curriculum will contribute appropriately to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education.
- The curriculum policy is supported by suitable plans and schemes of work for each area within the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS). These plans and schemes of work reflect leaders' ambitious intent for what children should learn during their time in the pre-school and Reception class. Leaders have developed their plans and schemes of work so that they meet the needs of children aged from three to five. This means that the curriculum is likely to meet the needs of children in the early years.
- Due consideration has been given to the order in which children in the early years will learn essential knowledge. The school plans to ensure that children's knowledge builds securely in this phase. Leaders have also ensured that the curriculum takes into account the specific and individual needs of children in the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Appropriate importance has been placed on the teaching of reading. Children at the early stage of reading develop their oral and aural knowledge through stories, songs and nursery rhymes to enable them to be ready for learning phonics as they move to Reception. It is planned that this will extend to three-year-olds. The proprietor body has ensured that there is a wide range of suitable books for pupils of all ages to read.

- The school has ensured that staff have the appropriate knowledge and understanding of child development and the requirements of the EYFS. The planned timetables, rhythms and routines of the day show that leaders have considered how the needs of the three-year-olds differ and complement the current children in the Reception class.
- There is a scheme of work for children's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. This aligns with the personal, social and development requirements of the statutory framework for the EYFS. There is an appropriate emphasis on ensuring that children are ready for life beyond school. The topics covered in PSHE are extensive. These include topics that encourage children to recognise and respect difference and diversity. The PSHE scheme has been suitably adapted for children aged three years old. It plans to use many opportunities within the daily, weekly and seasonal routines to support children to become caring and responsible citizens.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Paragraphs 3 to 3(j) and 4

- The school has ensured that the staff who currently work with the Reception children have the appropriate early years qualifications and experience. The school intends that these staff will also work with the pre-school children. This is appropriate.
- The school carries out suitable assessments to establish children's starting points when they join the school in Reception. Leaders have ensured that these assessments will also be appropriate for children joining the pre-school. There are regular checks on children's progress and attainment. The findings from these assessments are used to inform the teaching that children receive.
- Leaders have considered how they will ascertain that the child has had, if relevant, the progress at age two and the Healthy Child Programme health and development review. Leaders have put a key worker policy and a home visits and 'settling in' policy in place.
- Children benefit from an appropriate quantity and range of resources. These resources are of good quality. Suitable resources are in place to support the learning of children in the early years. Appropriate furniture, suitable for smaller pupils, is in place. The classroom and outdoor environment are set out to maximise learning across all seven areas of the EYFS.
- The school has a vision and an ethos that is clearly based on respect, routine and responsibility. Children and staff have positive relationships. The school understands the importance of establishing effective parental partnerships. There are systems in place for sharing children's learning experiences on a regular basis.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed material change is approved.

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

Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The proprietor body has ensured that appropriate consideration has been given to children's SMSC development, including for those in the early years. Leaders understand the requirements within the 'understanding the world' educational

programme for the EYFS. Through religious studies, PSHE and visits, visitors and experiences, children learn about a range of different faiths and cultures. This learning is intended to begin in pre-school.

- Children learn about fundamental British values, including the rule of law and democracy. For example, children vote for their choice of story to hear at the end of the day. The school's policies and curriculum include positive references to the protected characteristics as set out in legislation.
- The school provides plentiful and regular opportunities for children's wider development. For example, children experience trips and visits to museums and places of worship. There is a range of clubs and activities to develop children's talents and interests. Children learn to take care of their environment through their outdoor woodland activities. Leaders intend that such activities will be tailored to the needs of children in pre-school.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed material change is approved.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b) 11, 12, 16 and 32(1)(c)

- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy is suitable, 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 children are likely to present.
- The school has a detailed and comprehensive health and safety policy. They work with specialist advisers to ensure that all relevant checks are undertaken and that the current premises are maintained to a high standard. This policy and practice are likely to ensure that children are kept safe in both the current and the new building. Staff have paediatric first-aid training that meets the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements.
- The school has appropriate certification to demonstrate that regular fire safety checks are carried out by the relevant authority. Leaders carry out regular fire evacuation practices and checks on all fire equipment. Leaders demonstrate their understanding of current practices being extended to the new building. Leaders demonstrate how some practices will be amended to meet the needs of the younger age range.
- The risk assessment policy is comprehensive and ensures that the range of assessments carried out identify both the risks and the actions taken to reduce risks. Leaders demonstrate secure understanding of the characteristics of effective learning for children and the educational programmes in the early years. Curriculum plans and daily routines are likely to support children to learn to manage risk and learn how to keep safe in a range of situations if the material change is approved.
- Contrary to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education, the chair of the proprietor body, who is also the headteacher, was the named designated safeguarding

lead (DSL). By the end of the inspection, the school had ensured that the chair of the proprietor body was no longer the DSL. The deputy headteacher had been assigned to this role. They had the appropriate level of training required. The school has an effective safeguarding culture.

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

Paragraph 14

- The school has carefully considered the supervision of children and has set in place an appropriate staffing structure to meet the needs and staffing ratios required for three-year-olds. The staffing is also sufficient for the proposed increase in numbers across the school. Leaders take account of the number of children on roll and children's individual needs when planning the levels of supervision required to keep children safe.
- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3) to 21(3)(b), 21(6)

- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy is available on the website and it is also available on request in written form. It outlines the course of action to take when there are concerns about a child.
- 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.
- The school is aware of the additional checks needed for staff who work in the early years. They make the relevant checks required to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018.
- The school does 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) to 23 (1)(c), 24(1) to 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25, 27, 28 to 28(2)(b)

- The current 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 banisters 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.
- The equipment, resources and classroom organisation for Reception children is inviting and purposeful. It should fully meet the needs of three-year-old children.
- The school has ensured that resources in the current building are provided to help younger children reach the toilet and washing facilities. An intimate care policy is in

place. The school has thought through how they would provide nappy changing facilities and intimate care provision.

- At present, the new building is not suitable. The proprietor body has recently negotiated the lease to bring the new building under their responsibility. If the proposed increase in pupil numbers were approved, the intention is to base some classrooms within this building.
- At the time of the inspection, there were several issues with the new building. The water was not running. It was not possible to ascertain if the toilets worked or flushed nor whether the water was the correct temperature. Some bulbs were not functioning in the lights. The medical room for the new site was not identified or set up. The school has not ensured that the accommodation and facilities in the new premises are fit for the intended purpose.
- The standards in this part are unlikely to be met if the material change is approved.

Paragraphs 26, 29(1) to 29(1)(b)

- There is sufficient space for the proposed increase in the number of pupils for them to play outside.
- The current site is secure with an outside area suitable for pupils to play outside. Equipment is maintained to a high standard and checked regularly.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1) to 34(1)(c)

- Leaders demonstrate a secure knowledge of how to cater for the needs of children within the early years. The current provision in place for children in Reception, coupled with the experience and expertise of staff, indicate that the school should meet both the learning and safeguarding and welfare requirements for the EYFS.
- Leaders are committed to the growth and development of the school and the success and well-being of the pupils. They have a strong knowledge and understanding of the independent school standards. However, at the time of the inspection, they had not ensured that the new building, where the proposed increase in pupil numbers would be based, is likely to meet the standards.
- Leaders promote the well-being of pupils through the lesson content within the curriculum, the PSHE programme and their safeguarding procedures. There is a high staff-to-pupil ratio in place; this would meet the needs of the proposed increase in numbers.
- The standards in this part are unlikely to be met if the material change is approved.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school makes appropriate arrangements to meet the statutory requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- The school currently meets the requirements for the EYFS for its children in Reception. The school has demonstrated that they know what is required of them to develop provision for three-year-olds. They have the appropriate plans, policies and provision in place to allow them to begin a pre-school provision should the material change be approved. Staff have the relevant qualifications, experience and expertise to bring learning to life in a safe and accessible manner for children in the early years.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely 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, as set out in the annex of this report.

School details

Unique reference number	148598
DfE registration number	860/6086
Inspection number	10313477

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	Independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Demetae Academy Ltd
Chair	Matthew Davies
Headteacher	Matthew Davies
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,400 to £10,500
Telephone number	01782 893079
Website	www.demetaeacademy.org.uk
Email address	office@demetaeacademy.org.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	10 to 12 May 2022

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	4 to 13	3 to 13	3 to 13
Number of pupils on the school roll	33	55	40

Reason for inspector's recommendations

The school's proposal for the change of age range of pupils is recommended. This is because the current building where they would be based is suitable. The curriculum is carefully planned and set out. Staff have the relevant knowledge and experience to deliver the seven areas of learning as set out in the early years foundation stage.

The school's proposal for an increase in the number of pupils is not recommended. This is because the school has recently taken on the lease of a building adjacent to its current site. The required work to bring it up to the condition to meet the standards has not begun. Therefore, it is not possible to say whether the new building will meet the standards.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	40	55
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	6	6
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	6	6
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	0

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	8	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	2	2

Information about this school

- Demetae Academy is a small, independent day school, located in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire. It offers places to pupils aged 4 to 13 years old, although,

currently, there are pupils up to 11 years old on roll. It does not have a religious character.

- A small number of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in May 2022, when it was judged to be good overall. The school had a material change inspection in January 2023.
- The proprietor's proposal to increase the number of pupils at the school was not recommended at this time owing to a delay in securing the necessary additional accommodation.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This material change inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education because the proprietor body requested a change to the age range of pupils and the number of pupils that the school admits.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders to discuss the curriculum for children in the early years. The inspector scrutinised a range of policies and documents relating to the curriculum and visited a lesson.
- The inspector toured both the current and the new premises and checked the suitability of the premises against the relevant standards.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Kirsty Foulkes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 23(1)(a) suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils;
 - 23(1)(b) separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged 8 years or over are provided except where the toilet facility is provided in a room that can be secured from the inside and that is intended for use by one pupil at a time; and
 - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.
- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including-
 - 24(1)(a) accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils;
 - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility; and
- 24(2) The accommodation provided under sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b) may be used for other purposes (apart from teaching) provided it is always readily available to be used for the purposes set out in sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b).
- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 27 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 27(a) the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein; and
 - 27(b) external lighting is provided in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises.
- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 28(1)(a) suitable drinking water facilities are provided;
 - 28(1)(b) toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water;
 - 28(1)(c) cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such; and
 - 28(1)(d) the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.

- 28(2) The facilities provided under sub-paragraph (1)(a) will be suitable only if-
 - 28(2)(a) they are readily accessible at all times when the premises are in use; and
 - 28(2)(b) they are in a separate area from the toilet facilities.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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