

Edison Pace School

Black Horse House, 3 Porthill Bank, Porthill, Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 0LS

Inspection dates

1 February 2024

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

Paragraph 1, 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a) and 2(2)(b)

- The proprietor currently provides full time education for up to 30 pupils, aged 13 to 16 years, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The proprietor proposes to increase this provision to offer full time education for up to 60 pupils aged 11 to 16 years. It is expected that all further pupils will have education, health and care (EHC) plans, as is currently the case.
- Curriculum plans have been carefully considered to ensure that they are adaptable to individual needs, aptitudes and abilities. Assessment has been designed to allow rapid identification of gaps in knowledge on entry and over time. The proprietor has recognised that some pupils need additional support to become fluent readers and has established a suitable phonics programme to facilitate this.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which includes the seven aspects of learning set out in the independent school standards. Teachers know their pupils well and ensure that the curriculum is adapted to focus on the gaps and/or misconceptions that assessment has identified. Constant reinforcement and reaffirmation of their achievements in lessons supports them to move on in their learning. Pupils are well-supported to prepare for their next steps into education, employment or training.

- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

Paragraph 1, 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) and 2(2)(h)(i)

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a comprehensive and well-considered programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education in place. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about other cultures, religions and beliefs and they are offered a broad range of experiences to help them develop their understanding of the wider world and what it can offer.

- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

Paragraph 2A(1), 2A(1)(a), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d), 2A(1)(e), 2A(1)(f), 2A(1)(g) and 2A(2)

- The proprietor has ensured that an age-appropriate policy for relationships and sex education (RSE) is in place. Prior to its implementation, parents were consulted and informed of their right to withdraw pupils from sex education.

- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

Paragraph 3, 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j) and 4

- Teachers and leaders place great store on ensuring that pupils have a high level of support to build their self-esteem and confidence and to become more resilient. Well-qualified teachers ensure that pupils' learning starts with what they know, addressing gaps and misunderstandings, so that pupils develop a positive view of their learning and progress.

- Assessment is frequent and designed to track small steps of progress across all areas of the curriculum. EHC plan targets are closely monitored and regularly reviewed with pupils and their parents/carers.

- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

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) and 5(d)(iii)

- Leaders have developed and implemented a carefully planned programme for pupils' social, moral, spiritual cultural development. Opportunities are identified across all areas of the taught curriculum and enhanced through the range of additional activities, visits and visitors to the school. Fundamental British values are actively promoted.

- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a)16(b) and 32(1)(c) [Part 6. Provision of information]

- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy meets all statutory guidance and is available on the school's website. The school makes suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils attending the school.

- The proprietor has drawn up an appropriate health and safety policy which is implemented effectively to ensure that the school complies with all relevant health and safety laws.

- Leaders have ensured that high levels of supervision are consistently in place. They have made suitable arrangements to increase the number of staff employed as the number of pupils rise over time.

- The school meets the requirements of the Fire Regulatory Reform Act 2005. Stringent measures are in place to manage the risk of fire.
- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

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)(c), 21(6), 21(7)(a) and 21(7)(b)

- The proprietor has ensured that a single central register is in place which meets all statutory requirements. Leaders are fully aware and compliant with the checks to be made when supply staff are employed through an agency.
- All staff are trained in safeguarding, including the proprietor. Staff are also trained in how to raise and record any concerns on the school's electronic system.
- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22, 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 23(2), 24(1), 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(2), 28(2)(A), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- The proposed new school building has recently been completely re-furbished and re-purposed to a very high standard and will comfortably accommodate the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- Classrooms offer excellent resources for learning, providing specialist equipment for technical and vocational education opportunities. They are bright and airy, with good ventilation. Acoustic conditions are good. The medical room is available for sole use when necessary and can be suitably supervised.
- The design of the new building has provided three attractive outdoor spaces where pupils can play or socialise. In addition, there is a large multi-use games area for physical education purposes.
- These standards are likely to be met if the material change application is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c), 34(2)

- The proprietor has made sure that school leaders demonstrate the knowledge and skills to ascertain that the independent schools standards are met consistently.
- The proprietor and school leaders have identified a significant need for the additional provision proposed, across the three local authority areas that they currently serve. They are clear that this proposal will be enable then to make a more rapid response to meeting the needs of younger pupils than is currently the case. They have been proactive in looking to the future to plan for recruitment in terms of numbers, but also for the quality, experience and skills required, as they increase pupil numbers over time.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an appropriate accessibility policy in place that meets all 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 that are relevant to the material change.

School details

Unique reference number	136245
DfE registration number	860/6443
Inspection number	10310321

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 special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Mr T Macdonald-Milner
Headteacher	Mrs Louise Riley
Annual fees (day pupils)	£60,000 to £98,000
Telephone number	01782616660
Website	www.pace-education.co.uk
Email address	info@pace-education.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	1–3 November 2022

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	13 to 16	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	22	60	60

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	22	60
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	22	60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	22	60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	22	60

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	14	18
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	0

Information about this school

- The school currently provides full time education for pupils aged 13 to 16 years. All have EHC plans.
- Leaders propose to admit up to 60 pupils aged of 11 to 16 if the material change application is approved.
- Leaders have requested approval of new premises at Wellesley Street, Shelton Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 4NF.
- Pupils are admitted to the school through local authorities including Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Cheshire East.
- The school does not have a religious denomination.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The material change inspection was commissioned by the DfE to determine whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the proposed material change is approved.
- The inspector met with the proprietor's representative, the executive headteacher, the head of school and deputy headteachers.
- The inspector also spoke to teachers and pupils and visited classrooms in the existing premises.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents and considered the school's compliance with safeguarding procedures and Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.
- The inspector visited the proposed premises to check on health and safety, fire safety and the suitability of the building against the relevant independent school standards.

Inspection team

Mel Ford, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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