

# Aspire AP School 2

240-244 Lozells Road, Lozells, Ntcg Handsworth, Birmingham, West Midlands B19 1NP

## Inspection dates

12 June 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 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraphs 7(a) and 7(b) and 32(1)(c) [Part 6 provision of information]*

- There is a safeguarding policy in place that adheres to current government guidance as issued by the Secretary of State. It is published on the school's website. Leaders are also likely to provide parents and carers with a copy of the policy on request.
- The headteacher is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and is suitably trained and knowledgeable in all safeguarding matters. The executive headteacher is also trained as a DSL. There are clear and appropriate protocols in place for staff recruitment and staff induction.
- Leaders have a good understanding of how to keep pupils safe. Staff record any concerns about a pupil in a timely manner. Records show that leaders respond swiftly when concerns are raised. They refer to external agencies when appropriate and liaise with them closely to ensure that pupils and their families are given appropriate support.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to approve the material changes.

*Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16(a) and 16(b)*

- A health and safety policy in place. It is suitable and fit for purpose. The school liaises well with external consultants to help them carry out the required checks. Fire risk assessment checks have also been completed for the new premises. Leaders have planned that all staff will receive training on the fire evacuation procedure before pupils arrive at the new premises.
- A written risk assessment policy is in place. Leaders have carried out several risk assessments to ensure that risks to pupils and staff are likely to be reduced. For example, a detailed risk assessment has been completed for all pupils attending the school.
- Appropriate supervision of all pupils has been arranged from the start of the school day to the end. This also includes the supervision of pupils during break and

lunchtimes. Most pupils arrive at school by taxi or private transport and will be greeted by staff as soon as they enter the school.

- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve the material changes.

#### 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)*

- The school completes the required pre-employment checks on all new staff. They make sure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Checks on leaders have been carried out to ensure that they have not been barred from running a school.
- Checks are completed on school leaders, proprietors and governors to ensure that they are not barred from taking up such positions.
- Leaders complete relevant overseas checks on any staff that have worked or lived outside of the United Kingdom.
- The school does not use any supply staff. However, leaders have a clear understanding of the documentation required and checks they must complete should they ever use supply teachers.
- These checks are all completed before an individual begins working at the school.

*Paragraph 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(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)*

- Leaders have created a single central register. The register meets the requirements of the independent school standards. It includes all staff, proprietors and governors and is checked by leaders regularly.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material changes.

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

All of the standards in this part were reviewed through an on-site visit to the proposed new premises. The building work at the new school site had not commenced at the time of the on-site visit. Therefore, the new school site although suitable was not completed.

*Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 25, 26, 27(a), 27(b)*

- Leaders plan to move the school to the new premises on the 4 September 2024, ready for the new academic year.
- The new premises are situated in a church building. They include a main teaching classroom, a second room available for break-out teaching space and social room where staff and pupils can also eat their lunch. There is also a fully fitted kitchen and an office space.

- The proprietor has plans in place to freshen up the decorations, such as painting walls, changing lighting and replacing curtains with blinds throughout the premises. Building work planned also includes replacing glass panes in doors with toughened safety glass, where these are below hip level.
- The proprietor plans to equip all fire escape doors with a fully automated release system that unlocks all doors in the case of a fire alarm.
- All teaching rooms have a source of natural light and suitable acoustics. There is also appropriate external lighting around the building.
- There are separate toilet facilities for boys and girls. The premises has suitable washing facilities with cold and hot running water for pupils.
- The proprietor plans to install a suitable changing and a shower facility for pupils situated within the current toilet facilities. Plans show the showers to be installed just outside of the area of the girls' toilets. This work has not yet begun.

*Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2)*

- The designated medical room is planned to be adjacent to the office. Plans shared show that the room will have running water. It is located close to a toilet facility. The proprietor's plans include a medical bed and appropriate first-aid equipment in the medical room.

*Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)*

- Leaders have ensured that pupils will have access to drinking water. This will be provided in the fully fitted kitchen. There is safe access to hot water that does not pose a risk of scalding.

*Paragraph 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)*

- There are suitable outdoor spaces, which are owned by the church, which are available for use by the school. The area is suitable for pupils to play together during break and lunchtimes. Leaders plan to erect fencing along the grassed area of the outside space and neighbouring properties.
- Pupils will also have access to a walled, separate and lockable courtyard garden. Leaders plan to use the garden for outdoor activities, such as gardening.
- Leaders have made arrangements with the church to make use of the parish sports hall, which is five minutes' walk away from the premises. Leaders plan to use it for their provision of physical education.
- Leaders are confident that all works on the building and outdoor spaces will be finished before the start of the new academic year in September 2024.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the material changes.

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

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

- Leaders have secured the use of appropriate new premises in a different part of the city. The new premises are in a good state of repair and provide suitable accommodation for the number of pupils the school wishes to admit. However, the

new premises are in need of updating and freshening up, as is planned by the proprietor before pupils move into the new premises. The proprietor has made assurances that these relatively small building works will be completed by the end of August at the latest.

- The proprietor, along with the executive headteacher and headteacher, demonstrate suitable knowledge, skills and expertise and high ambitions for the education they are planning to provide in the new premises. They are committed to providing high-quality education and pastoral care to vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have secure knowledge of the independent school standards and how to meet them consistently and continually over time. They are using their skills and knowledge to propose this expansion to increase the number of admitted pupils in the new school premises. Together, they have devised clear plans and policies for this expansion and plan to employ more staff as the school grows.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to actively promote pupils' well-being and welfare as well as their safety.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards in scope for this inspection are likely to be met if the DfE approves the implementation of the proposed material changes.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school meets 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	135608
DfE registration number	330/6129
Inspection number	10353649

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 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	Aspire AP Education CIC
Chair	Mr Michael Royal
Headteacher	Mr James Lawlor
Annual fees (day pupils)	£19,188
Telephone number	07943183021
Website	<a href="http://www.aspireapschool.org/school-two">www.aspireapschool.org/school-two</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:jlawlor@aspireapschool.bham.sch.uk">jlawlor@aspireapschool.bham.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	23 to 25 November 2021

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	7	15	15

## Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	7	N/A
Number of part-time pupils	0	N/A
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	2	N/A
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	2	N/A
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	2	N/A

## Staff

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

## Information about this school

- Aspire AP School 2 is an independent day school. It offers places to pupils who are at risk of or have experienced permanent exclusion and/or have social, emotional and mental health issues.
- The school is currently located in the Lozells area of Birmingham but proposes to move its provision to Sandwell in September 2024. The new premises is a church building with access to ample outside spaces.
- Pupils are referred to the school by local authorities, mainstream schools and other external agencies.
- The school was last inspected in November 2021, when it was judged to be good.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE to establish whether the school would be likely to meet all of the relevant independent school standards if the proposed material changes to move to new premises were to be implemented. This is the school's third material change.
- Leaders are also proposing to increase the number of pupils on roll at the new premises from 12 to 15.
- The inspection focused on some of the welfare, health and safety standards in part 3; all of the standards in part 4 for the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors; all of the standards in part 5 for premises and accommodation and the standards in part 8 for the quality of leadership in and management of schools.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the headteacher and the chair of the proprietor body from Aspire AP Education CIC.
- The inspector toured the new accommodation with the executive headteacher, headteacher and proprietor. She also visited the area identified as suitable outdoor space.
- The inspector scrutinised documents relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding documents.

## Inspection team

Bianka Zemke, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector



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