

# Becker School

Ruby Street, Batley WF17 8HL

**Inspection date**

18 June 2024

**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

*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)(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 proposed school has a curriculum policy in place. It is supported by coherently sequenced schemes of work for different subjects. The curriculum takes into account the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of pupils. It is ambitious and in line with the national curriculum.
- Leaders have identified that most pupils who will attend the school will have had previous negative experiences of education. Some will have had significant periods of absence. Many will be at different stages in their learning. Leaders plan to ensure pupils follow a curriculum that is matched well to their academic and personal development needs.
- Leaders, including members of the proprietor body, demonstrate a strong level of understanding of the needs of the pupils who will be in their care. There are suitable transition arrangements planned to ensure that pupils can make a positive start to their learning.
- Leaders are clear about the process to ensure pupils who have education, health and care plans (EHC plan), including children looked after, receive timely reviews of their personal targets and provision. Individual 'All about Me' booklets will be created for pupils. These will detail pupils' learning and personal development targets and identify the best way to support pupils and help them achieve their best.
- The proprietor body proposes that the school will work closely with external professionals, including those who care for children looked after. Support such as from speech and language therapists will help staff to meet pupils' needs appropriately.
- Leaders plan to ensure a regular cycle of assessment of pupils' overall well-being and academic progress. Staff will be able to use this information to plan pupils' next steps.
- A programme to support information and guidance for pupils relating to their future career choices is well thought out. The school will provide life skills and careers lessons to

secondary-age pupils.

- The independent school standards (the standards) for this part are likely to be met.

## 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 personal, social, health and economic curriculum is appropriate. It is supported by a suitable scheme of work. The school aims for the curriculum to develop pupils' character 'emphasising emotional literacy and nurturing physical and mental health'. Pupils will develop their knowledge and understanding of healthy relationships, fundamental British values, diversity, human rights and responsibilities. They will learn about potential risks to their safety and how to manage them.
- The proprietor aims for the school to be a caring and supportive environment where pupils can make a fresh start to their education. Staff will aim to inspire pupils and help them to re-engage in learning, achieve their best and be well prepared for their next steps. For example, the school intends to place a high priority on the importance of reading. Trained staff will teach phonics to pupils in the early stages of learning to read.
- Policies and procedures place emphasis on supporting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Leaders see this as the essence of the ethos of the school. These themes will be threaded throughout the school day and through formal teaching. It will form a central part of what leaders see as the incidental 'unwritten' curriculum.
- The school proposes to teach pupils about relationships and sex education (RSE). Leaders plan to consult with parents about the content of this curriculum. The school has developed a policy which details the school's approach to RSE for primary- and secondary-age pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

*Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10, 15*

- The proprietor has a secure grasp of the requirements for an effective culture of safeguarding. There is a suitable policy. It is up to date with current statutory guidance. It will be published on the school's website.
- Staff will receive pertinent training to safeguard pupils. The proprietor is acutely aware of the vulnerability of pupils with SEND. The school will work closely with external professionals when needed to keep pupils safe.
- The school's policies for managing pupils' behaviour and incidents of bullying are well considered. The proprietor has ensured that these policies support pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. Staff will be trained to use positive, trauma-informed strategies to help pupils to manage their behaviour and emotions.
- Admission and attendance registers meet the requirements. Leaders intend to promote

the importance of regular attendance and monitor any absences closely.

- The proprietor has extensive experience of working with different local authorities and health and social care professionals. The proposed school's ethos and environment have been carefully planned to ensure that pupils feel safe and nurtured.

*Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- The proprietor has implemented an appropriate health and safety policy. There are suitable systems in place to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. The proprietor intends to conduct regular health and safety checks.
- The first-aid policy outlines how staff will care for pupils who may need first aid or basic medical care while at school. Staff will have relevant qualifications to administer first aid. Medication will be stored securely.
- The school has a suitable risk assessment policy. Leaders will complete comprehensive risk assessments to keep pupils safe. Risk assessments show the risks and the actions staff should take to mitigate them.
- The proprietor understands the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. A fire risk assessment has been completed. This will be updated on a regular basis. Fire safety equipment is installed. Evacuation procedures are to be practised with pupils at least every term.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### 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(3), 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), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)*

- A single central record is in place. This specifies the necessary checks which will be carried out before staff are employed, by whom and when.
- The proprietor has in place secure systems which follow safer recruitment procedures. Leaders know what safeguarding checks to carry out on all staff. They know what to do if the school employs supply staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### 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(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 school is located at premises which formerly operated as a school. The proprietor has carried out significant refurbishment of the building. The school's environment is

welcoming and equipped with suitable furniture and resources.

- The school has washing and toilet facilities which are appropriate for pupils. An accessible toilet is provided. All toilets are lockable from the inside. A medical room and first-aid area are available for the care or examination of ill or injured pupils.
- There is hot and cold running water. The hot water does not pose a risk of scalding. Water that is suitable for drinking is clearly labelled. Pupils will have access to showering facilities if needed.
- There are suitable indoor and outdoor spaces for physical education (PE) lessons to take place. The site is secure. The school will also utilise local sports facilities for PE and sports enrichment activities.
- The school has several classrooms and some calm spaces have been created. All rooms have suitable lighting and acoustics. External lighting is appropriate.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g)*

- The school has a website. It contains the necessary policies and procedures. These include the SEND policy and a policy which details how pupils who speak English as an additional language will be supported.
- Leaders have a framework in place to track the progress of pupils across the different aspects of the curriculum. Parents and carers will be provided with termly and annual written reports of their child's progress.
- Leaders intend to provide the necessary information to the responsible local authorities to outline the allocation of funding for pupils with an EHC plan.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

*Paragraphs 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii), 33(k)*

- The school has a comprehensive complaints policy in place. The policy will be published on the school's website.
- The different stages of the complaints procedure and the timescales involved are clearly stated.
- The standards for this part are likely to be met.

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

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

- The proprietor is aspirational for the quality of education that it wants to provide for pupils. The school will have leaders and staff who have relevant experience working with pupils with SEND.
- The proprietor has established purposeful relationships with the range of local authorities that will place pupils at the school. Leaders will work with local area partners to support pupils and their families.
- Leaders and staff for the school will be able to collaborate with colleagues from the proprietor's other schools to develop staff expertise and to share effective practice.
- The proprietor has a secure understanding of the standards. There is an internal advisory body which will provide additional challenge and support to the school. Members of the advisory body are skilled. They intend to assist the proprietor in carrying out regular checks to ensure that pupils are safe, well cared for and make progress with their learning and personal development.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has created a suitable accessibility plan for the school. It outlines how leaders will ensure that the school's building is accessible for pupils. The plan provides appropriate detail about how reasonable adjustments will be made to help pupils access the curriculum.

## **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	150896
DfE registration number	382/6034
Inspection number	10348905

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	Polaris Children's Services Limited
Chair	Jo August
Headteacher	To be confirmed
Annual fees (day pupils)	£65,000
Telephone number	01924 929551
Website	<a href="http://www.beckerschool.co.uk">www.beckerschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:schooloffice@beckerschool.co.uk">schooloffice@beckerschool.co.uk</a>

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 13	5 to 13
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	40	40

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	40
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0

Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	40
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	40

### Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	17
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0

### Information about this proposed school

- The school is located in Batley. The proprietor proposes that the school will provide specialist education for up to 40 pupils with autism and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school intends to open on 1 September 2024. The proprietor will start by admitting a small number of pupils initially and then gradually build the number on roll over three years.
- The school is not likely to use the services of alternative provisions.



## Information about this inspection

- The Department for Education commissioned the inspection to check whether the proposed school is likely to meet the standards if it is given permission to open.
- This was the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector met with two members of the proprietor body who are also members of the local governing advisory body and the executive headteacher.
- The inspector toured the school site to check the suitability of the premises.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including schemes of work, policies and procedures related to safeguarding, health and safety, risk assessment, administration of first aid, complaints and fire safety.
- The inspector checked the arrangements for staff recruitment, scrutinised various risk assessments, viewed the single central record and discussed the school's proposed arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils.

## Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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