

Ormston School

Alma Road, Headingley, Leeds LS6 2AH

Inspection date

24 July 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, 2(1)-2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a)-2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- The proprietor has produced a curriculum policy which sets out how different subjects will be overseen by subject and senior leaders.
- The proposed curriculum for the school matches the ambition of the National Curriculum. The proprietor has developed curriculum plans that outline a broad range of subjects for pupils to learn.
- The proposed school will admit pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have considered how the curriculum will be adapted to meet the needs of pupils.
- The proprietor has developed well-thought-out schemes of work for all subjects that will be taught. These include long-term and medium-term plans for English, mathematics and science, as well as wider curriculum subjects such as personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- The school has devised a calendar which will ensure that pupils develop respect for others, paying regard to the protected characteristics. The calendar includes marking significant events, such as Disability Awareness Week and International Women's Day.
- The proprietor has commissioned the services of an external provider for careers education. There is also a clear programme in place through which pupils will learn life skills.

Paragraphs 2A(1), 2A(1)(a), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d)-2A(1)(g), 2A(2)

- The school has considered the statutory guidance when deciding what pupils will learn in the sex, relationships and health education curriculum. Leaders have thought about how they will inform parents and carers of the content of the curriculum.
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) will be taught through discrete lessons. Aspects of the curriculum for RSE will also be woven into the wider curriculum.
- Leaders have thought carefully about how the RSE curriculum will be taught to pupils who are working at an academic level below their chronological age.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a)-3(j)

- The proposed curriculum will use a thematic approach. This will ensure that pupils who are working in mixed ability classes access the same theme or topic, but at a level that matches their ability.
- The proprietor has invested in a range of resources to support pupils to learn effectively. For example, sensory resources and enclosed spaces are all available to pupils should they need them.
- Pupils will have opportunities to revisit prior learning to consolidate knowledge and skills. This will support them to build their knowledge incrementally over time.
- The proposed curriculum will support pupils' personal and emotional development alongside academic learning. This will contribute to pupils achieving the targets outlined on their education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- The proprietor has developed a robust induction process for new staff. This includes training staff on the proposed school's curriculum as well as the implementation of the behaviour policy.
- Leaders intend to use consistent procedures to monitor the quality of education that pupils receive. They have developed a self-evaluation reporting system to be used by subject leaders. School leaders and directors will monitor these reports in weekly and monthly cycles.

Paragraph 4

- Leaders can confidently articulate the proposed school's assessment procedures. These take the form of key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs set out what pupils will learn and the skills that they will develop. They will be used to check what pupils know and remember in each subject.
- Staff will use pupils' EHC plan targets to inform their assessment of pupils' academic and personal progress.

The independent school standards ('the standards') in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

Paragraphs 5, 5(a)-5(d)

- The school has thought carefully about the proposed curriculum for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Curriculum plans for a range of subjects make links with aspects of SMSC development.
- Fundamental British values will be actively promoted through the curriculums for PSHE and RSE as well as through assemblies and themed weeks of learning.
- Leaders have developed a programme of study which aims to support pupils in developing their self-esteem and confidence. This will also support pupils to meet the targets set out on their EHC plans.
- The school has developed a calendar of key days and celebrations that will be marked in school. These will contribute to pupils' SMSC development and understanding of fundamental British values.

- Educational visits within the local area will be used to support pupils' SMSC development. For example, the school is proposing to take pupils to the local supermarket and urban farm.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a)-7(b)

- The proprietor body has the appropriate knowledge of safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that pupils are kept safe. The proposed curriculum will teach pupils how to lead safe, healthy lives. Appropriate recruitment processes are in place to ensure that the right staff are recruited to the school. An induction process is in place for new staff, which includes completing safeguarding training.
- Leaders recognise their moral and statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. They have developed procedures to report, record and monitor any concerns about pupils' welfare. These records will be analysed termly.
- The new headteacher of the proposed school and one other member of staff will be trained designated safeguarding leads. Within the central team, there is a head of safeguarding.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a)-9(c), 10

- The school has a suitable, written behaviour policy that considers the needs of pupils. This is supported by a separate exclusions policy. The school has also produced an anti-bullying policy. Training on these policies will form part of the staff induction process. Leaders assert that they will monitor the implementation of the behaviour policy through regular discussions with staff.
- The school intends to keep written records of all behaviour incidents. These records will be analysed to identify patterns and trends in behaviour. Appropriate support will then be put in place.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15

- The school has produced a health and safety policy. This sets out how the school will comply with relevant health and safety laws.
- The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The proprietor has acted swiftly to address the recommendations from a recent fire risk assessment. This includes, for example, the installation of additional fire signage.
- The proprietor intends that there will always be a minimum of two staff on site who are trained in first aid. Leaders have agreed a system for the recording of accidents and injuries. There is a suitable first-aid policy in place. Leaders have identified staff who will be responsible for the maintenance of first-aid kits.
- The proposed staffing structure will ensure that pupils are adequately supervised at all times. Pupils will be taught in classes of no more than six. Each class will have one teacher and at least one teaching assistant.
- Effective systems are in place for admissions and monitoring attendance. The template for the admissions register shows that statutory information will be held

about each pupil. Attendance registers will be taken twice each day. The school will use the Department for Education's register codes.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The school has a risk assessment policy. This takes account of a wide range of risks that pupils and staff may encounter and how these risks will be addressed. There are several individual risk assessments that sit beneath the over-arching policy. These include, for example, risk assessments for educational visits within the local area.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

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

- The school has an electronic single central record. At present, this contains details of the proprietor body and the staff who have already been appointed. It shows that all appropriate checks have been made on them.
- Leaders understand the required checks that must be made on new staff, volunteers, contractors and members of the proprietor body. They know that these checks must be completed before staff are appointed.
- The school is not intending to use any supply staff.
- The single central record includes a section where overseas checks can be recorded should this be required.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a)-(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a)-(b), 24(2), 28(1)(a)-(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a)-(b)

- The premises have suitable toilet and washing facilities that are adequate for the proposed number of pupils. There are separate facilities for boys and girls. Two showers are installed as well as a disabled toilet.
- Leaders are intending to use local sports facilities for the teaching of physical education (PE). However, there is adequate space in the school to provide changing spaces for pupils should this be required.
- Leaders have created a medical room for short-term use by pupils. The room is located near to the toilets and contains a range of first-aid kits and a bed. There is also a sink in the room.
- The proprietor has installed two drinking water dispensers for use by pupils and staff.

Paragraphs 25, 26, 27, 27(a)-(b)

- The premises are completed to a high standard.
- Classrooms are flooded with natural light and have appropriate acoustics. Each classroom has its own 'breakout' space attached. Pupils will have access to a food technology room and a practical room which will be used for activities such as science experiments. Leaders have installed a well-resourced library.

- The premises are surrounded by secure perimeter fencing and electronic gates. There is adequate external lighting to ensure that people can safely access the premises.

Paragraphs 29(1), 29(1)(a)-(b)

- There is a reasonably large area of outside space attached to the proposed premises. This is divided into three secure zones. Two of these zones are grassed and one is laid with bark and has play equipment. There is adequate space for both outside play and the teaching of PE.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a)-(d), 32(1)(f)-(i), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c)-(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a)-(f)

- The website for the proposed school contains links to the required range of policies mandated in 'the standards'. These include the proposed school's safeguarding and child protection policy, behaviour policy, health and safety policy and admissions policy. In addition, there are links to curriculum documentation.
- The school has created a template for reporting to parents. This will be distributed to parents each term. This formal reporting is in addition to three parent consultation evenings and open days during the academic year.
- Leaders are aware of the requirement to publish inspection reports and examination results on the school website once they are available.
- Leaders can demonstrate how they will account for the funding they receive for pupils to relevant local authorities.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33, 33(a)-(k)

- The school has produced a complaints policy which clearly sets out how complaints will be handled, including timescales for investigation. This includes the option of a panel hearing for parents.
- Leaders are aware of the requirement to record and store complaints. A member of the central team will collate complaints and analyse them to identify any learning points to be fed back to the school.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a)-(c)

- The proprietor has a proven track record in the leadership and management of independent special schools. The existing schools within the group have all been judged to be good or outstanding at their most recent Ofsted inspection.
- The proprietor has developed systems and processes to check that the independent school standards are met consistently by schools.

- The chair of the proprietor board has a secure knowledge of the proposed school. She has been actively involved in the recruitment of the new headteacher.
- School leaders demonstrate significant skills and experience in the leadership of independent special schools. Staff in the proposed school will be supported by a central team of staff within the group.
- Leaders demonstrate that they will actively promote the well-being of pupils. This is evident through the work done around safeguarding, SMSC development, the curriculum for RSE and the careers guidance that will be offered.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have written an accessibility policy and action plan. The accessibility policy fully reflects how the proposed school will fulfil its statutory responsibilities under 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	150968
DfE registration number	383/6020
Inspection number	10354442

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	Joanne August
Headteacher	James Brown
Annual fees (day pupils)	£60,000
Telephone number	01135 655210
Website	www.ormstonschool.co.uk
Email address	schooloffice@ormstonschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 18	5 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	40	40

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	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	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	1

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed independent school is located in Leeds. The school building comprises a building dating from the Victorian period and a more modern extension. Some parts of the premises are currently undergoing renovations, but this will not affect the operation of the proposed new school. The proposed school is located at Alma Road, Headingley, Leeds LS6 2AH.
- The proposed school will be an independent special school for pupils with a range of needs, including social, emotional and mental health needs and autism. All pupils will have an EHC plan. Places will be commissioned by the local authority in which a pupil lives.
- It is proposed that the school will provide full-time education for up to 40 pupils aged between 5 and 18 years.

- The proposed school is intending to admit fifteen pupils initially and will increase to forty pupils over time.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to determine whether the school is likely to meet the standards should the DfE decide to register the proposed school.
- This was the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspectors held discussions with the chair of the proprietor body, the executive headteacher and the headteacher of the proposed school.
- The inspectors made a tour of the school site to check the suitability and safety of the premises.
- The inspectors scrutinised and evaluated a wide range of documents provided by the school. This included safeguarding documents, the school's single central record, statutory policies and the proposed school curriculum.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Mills

His Majesty's Inspector

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