Wonder Star School

Young People's Community Centre, Chapel Lane, Rode Heath, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 3SD

Inspection date	5 February 2025
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) to 2(2)(d)(iii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 2A(1), 2A(1)(a), 2A(1)(d) to 2A(2), 3 to 3(j) and 4

- The proprietor intends that the school will provide full-time education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The proprietor expects that all pupils will have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Pupils will have a range of needs including social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs and moderate learning difficulties. The proprietor has suitable plans in place to ensure that these needs will inform how the planned curriculum is delivered, including additional support, adaptations to curriculum content and specialist resources.
- The proprietor intends to offer a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, which is in line with the national curriculum. There is a suitable curriculum policy in place which is supported by appropriate schemes of work in each subject. The proprietor intends that pupils will have physical education (PE) off-site on a Friday afternoon. The proprietor also intends that pupils will be able participate in forest school activities on a Monday afternoon.
- The proprietor has considered the range of needs and abilities that pupils are likely to have. All pupils will have individual learning plans, which will set out the smaller steps to support pupils' progress towards the high-level EHC plan targets. Pupils will also have personalised behaviour plans, based on their needs and aspirations. A range of equipment and resources have been purchased to ensure access to the curriculum for pupils.
- There are suitable plans are in place to secure the required level of expertise and capacity. For instance, teaching groups will consist of a maximum of five pupils. Each teaching group will have a qualified teacher with experience in SEND and a teaching assistant. The proprietor has identified appropriate specialist training that all staff will be required to complete.
- The proprietor has ensured that a suitable reading programme is in place for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning to read, including older pupils. Provision

has been made to ensure that reading will be an integral part of the daily routine of the proposed school.

- The proprietor has ensured that there is an age-appropriate policy for relationships education in place. The policy explains parents' right to withdraw pupils from sex education. It is intended that parents will be invited to offer their views of the policy and its implementation at regular review periods.
- There is a clear assessment policy in place which allows for regular checking of progress. Assessment information will inform reviews of ongoing learning and development, reporting to parents and contributing to annual reviews.
- The independent school standards (the standards) are likely to be met if the school's proposal to register is agreed.

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

Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The proprietor has thought carefully about how the proposed school will support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils. A calendar of events related to a wide range of local, national and international social and cultural events has been put in place. This is to ensure that pupils are able to develop their understanding of the world and their place in it.
- Visits to a range of places of worship to support learning about a range of different religions and beliefs have been planned. It is intended that pupils will learn about the protected characteristics, and fundamental British values through assemblies, visiting speakers and as part of the curriculum.
- The school's policy for SMSC identifies appropriate aims to develop pupils' ability to demonstrate respect and tolerance of others, and their understanding of democracy and the rule of law.
- These standards are likely to be met if the school's proposal to register is agreed.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), 9 to 9(c), 10 to 16(b) and 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor has ensured that the school's safeguarding and child protection policy meets all statutory requirements. The policy is up to date and on the proposed school's website.
- The proprietor is aware of the responsibility to keep pupils safe and to ensure that staff have appropriate training. Arrangements have been made to provide all staff with a wide range of safeguarding training, including 'Prevent' duty training, as soon as they are appointed. A member of staff will be trained as the designated safeguarding lead prior to the admittance of pupils. The proprietor has a good understanding of local contextual risks and has taken these into account.
- The proprietor intends to build pupil numbers over time. The number of staff will grow alongside this, but recruitment will also take into account the quality, experience and skills required to meet pupils' needs.
- Appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place. There is a strong focus on supporting pupils to understand how to express their feelings and to manage their

own behaviour over time. The proprietor has an appropriate recording system in place to ensure that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed quickly.

- The proprietor has ensured that suitable policies are in place for health and safety, fire safety, first aid and risk assessment. These meet all legislative requirements.
- The proprietor has planned regular checks of the building and its surroundings. The trustees of the building complete an annual fire safety audit. There is an up-to-date certificate in place to show compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- The proposed school is not yet operating. However, in readiness, the proprietor has set up an admissions register and an attendance register in accordance with Education (pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- The risk assessment policy sets out the checks that will be made and by whom for all activities on and off site. The proprietor intends that risk assessments will be a daily process. All pupils will have individual risk assessments linked to their learning, social and emotional needs.
- These standards are likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)€, 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 21(1) to 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c)

- The proprietor has prepared a single central record which includes all required pre-employment checks on staff. The proprietor understands the checks to be made for different groups of people, including for those who may be provided by an agency.
- All staff, including the proprietor and the proposed governing body, will be trained in safeguarding and child protection processes and procedures, including safer recruitment. The proprietor intends that new staff have safeguarding induction training before they carry out any work with pupils. There is a suitable electronic system in place to record all concerns, which staff will be trained to use.
- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(b), 24(1) to 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25 to 29(1)(b)

- The proposed school is situated in a community centre. The school will have sole use of the building during the designated hours of the school day. There is a temporary arrangement with the building's trustees currently in place. This allows for the centre to be used by another party for one afternoon a week. At this time, staff and pupils will be taking part in off-site planned curriculum activities.
- The building is well maintained, and the proprietor has organised the extensive space to provide a bright, well-lit and welcoming learning environment. The recent addition of sound-absorbing panels in the hall space has ensured that acoustics in the building are suitable for learning.
- Pupils will have access to drinking water throughout the day.
- The proprietor has ensured that there are suitable toilet and washing facilities for the sole use of pupils.

- The designated medical room is situated alongside a reflection space and will be available at all times. It has access to a wash basin and is in close proximity to the toilets.
- The proprietor has ensured that pupils will have access to suitable indoor and outdoor spaces for PE and play. Externally, the proprietor is making arrangements to replace a fence to ensure that the outdoor space is secure as part of its conversion from car park to playground. The proprietor has undertaken that this work will be completed before the school opens, if its registration is agreed.
- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(3)(f)

- The proprietor has established a website for the proposed school. All required information has been made available to those with an interest.
- The proprietor intends to report to parents on pupils' progress and attainment and social and emotional development three times a year. Reports will include progress towards EHC plan targets and will contribute to annual reviews.
- It is expected that all pupils will be placed by the local authority through their established commissioning process. The proprietor is aware of the responsibility to provide information for local authorities in relation to such children and has ensured that systems are in place to do so on an annual basis.
- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33 to 33(k)

- The proprietor has ensured that a suitable complaints policy is in place. This meets all the requirements of the independent school standards. It allows for complaints to be addressed informally where possible. Where informal responses are not satisfactory to the complainant, the policy sets out the process and timescales clearly.
- The proprietor is in the process of creating a secure office area within the premises of the proposed school. This will afford appropriate storage to ensure that confidential records of complaints can be kept securely.
- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor, who will also be the headteacher, has appropriate skills and knowledge for these roles to ascertain that the independent school standards will be met consistently.
- The proprietor understands her responsibilities and has the knowledge and capacity to discharge these effectively. There is a clear and aspirational vision for what pupils can achieve. Careful consideration of the potential needs of the pupils who will attend this school have informed the design of the curriculum, the learning environment and the resources needed.

- The proprietor intends to form a governing body and is in the process of inviting suitably experienced volunteers to become governors. The proprietor understands the skill sets required. She is keen to ensure that there is oversight and challenge in place through these arrangements.
- There are appropriate and detailed plans and systems in place to ensure that pupils' welfare is actively promoted. Arrangements to assure pupils' welfare have been put in place and these are supported by the high staff to pupil ratios. In addition, the proprietor has consulted with the local authority and other local agencies to ensure access to relevant services.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- There is a suitable accessibility plan in place that meets the 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.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	151438
DfE registration number	861/6045
Inspection number	10374291

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 special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Wonderstar Learning Ltd
Headteacher	Kirsty Woolridge
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000 to £65,000
Telephone number	07706 862061
Website	www.wonderstarschool.co.uk
Email address	office@wonderstarschool.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 11	5 to 11
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	20	20

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	20
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	0	20
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	0	20
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	20

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	1	10
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- The school is located in a large, well-maintained community centre in a semi-rural area, on the edge of a small town.
- The proprietor intends to provide full-time education for up to 20 pupils from Year 1 to Year 6.
- The school will offer places to pupils with SEMH needs; autism; speech, language and communication needs; multi-sensory impairment and a range of learning needs.
- All pupils are expected to have EHC plans and to be placed at the school by the local authority.
- The proposed school will not have a religious denomination.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is given permission to open.
- This was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector met with the proprietor.
- The inspector visited and reviewed all areas of the proposed school to check on health and safety procedures, fire safety and the suitability of the proposed premises.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the proposed curriculum arrangements for the intended pupils, and considered the school's compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements and schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Inspection team

Mel Ford, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
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