

Arc Oakbridge School

Buckingham Street, Birmingham B19 3HU

Inspection date

18 September 2025

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

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1)(c)

- The school proposes to increase the number of pupils on roll from 70 to 90. The proprietor has considered the welfare, health and safety of pupils throughout this application.
- The school has a safeguarding policy that reflects the latest statutory guidance. It is published on the school's website. The policy states how the school intends to maintain a robust culture of safeguarding. All staff have safeguarding training. This means that staff respond to concerns in a timely way. The school has a clear understanding of contextual safeguarding risks, including the vulnerabilities of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Reporting and recording systems are established and effective. The school curriculum and pastoral support provided enables children to understand risk and act safely.

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

- The school's health and safety policy is comprehensive and is reviewed often. Leaders and the proprietor conduct frequent checks to ensure that it is implemented effectively. The required checks have been completed on both the existing and the proposed new premises.
- The proprietor has ensured that the proposed new premises complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The site has recently had a fire risk assessment, and there is appropriate equipment, lighting and signage in place. The fire logbook contains the fire risk assessment and actions log, fire drill record, location of fire equipment, location of fire alarm points, equipment inspection and service records, details of training and details of alarm activations.
- The current staffing structure ensures that pupils' needs are adequately met. The school plans that class sizes will remain small should the proposed increase to pupil

numbers be approved. The school has plans to recruit additional staff to accommodate the proposed increase.

- The proprietor has ensured that the school has a clear and comprehensive risk assessment policy. The school has identified and taken action to mitigate against any risks. The school has conducted risk assessments on all areas of the proposed new premises. Leaders have considered how to reduce risks to pupils, for example, by putting clear plans in place for managing the safe arrival of pupils at school each morning.
- It is likely that the independent school standards (the standards) checked in this part will be met if the proposed material changes are approved for implementation.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1) to 21(3)(b), 21(5) to 21(6)

- The school operates an electronic single central record, which records all the required background checks for adults responsible for and working at the school.
- The school completes all the required checks before staff, including supply staff, begin working at the school.
- The school checks that those with leadership and management responsibilities, including members of the proprietor body, are suitable to manage a school.
- It is likely that the standards checked in this part will be met if the proposed material changes are approved and implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- The proposed new premises were formerly a girl's secondary school and are ideally suited for use as an independent special school. There is ample space for the proposed increase in pupil numbers. The building and outdoor spaces have been refurbished to a very high standard. There is a large sports hall, spaces for dining and communal activity, a drama studio, immersive room and therapy rooms. Some classrooms have been designated as rooms for specific subjects, such as science, life skills or computing.
- The proprietor has organised the layout of the school to provide some quieter homely areas to meet the individual needs of some pupils.
- Indoor learning spaces are spacious and well-lit. There is adequate internal and external lighting. Acoustics are appropriate for a learning environment.
- There are plentiful toilet facilities provided for the sole use of pupils, and suitable changing and showering facilities. These have temperature controlled warm water for washing.
- There is a suitably equipped medical room. This is located close to toilet facilities.

- Drinking water is readily accessible to pupils and is labelled as such.
- There are several outdoor spaces for physical education, play and social times. These include areas for sports and ball games, climbing equipment, grassed areas and garden areas.
- It is likely that the standards checked in this part will be met if the proposed material changes are approved and implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor and leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the standards. They have the knowledge and skills they require to perform their respective roles and have extensive experience of running successful independent schools.
- Leaders have considered the needs of the pupils when planning the material changes. The proprietor and school leaders are committed to providing a high quality of education, well-being and pastoral care to pupils, which they intend to continue with increased numbers at the proposed new site.
- It is likely that the standards checked in this part will be met if the proposed material changes are approved and implemented.

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	145859
DfE registration number	330/6041
Inspection number	10389122

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 day school
Proprietor	Kedleston (OS Education) Limited
Chair	Paul Brosnan
Headteacher	Mick Simpson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£72,721
Telephone number	0121 222 5201
Website	www.kedlestongroup.com/arcoakbridge
Email address	arcoakbridge@kedlestongroup.com
Date of previous standard inspection	17 to 19 January 2023

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 17	7 to 17	7 to 17
Number of pupils on the school roll	64	90	90

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	64	90
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	64	90
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	64	90
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	64	90

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	11	15
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	2
Number of staff in the welfare provision	6	7

Information about this school

- Arc Oakbridge School is an independent special school. It is part of the Kedleston Group Ltd.
- The school intends to relocate its premises to Former Handsworth Girls School, Church Lane, Birmingham B20 2HL. The current school site is located at Buckingham Street, Birmingham B19 3HU.
- The school is registered to admit 70 pupils.
- The school caters for 64 pupils with autism. All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Many pupils have additional needs.
- Pupils are referred to the school by local authorities.
- The school's last standard inspection was in January 2023, when it was evaluated to be good. Since then, a material change inspection, commissioned by the Department

for Education, took place in October 2024 when the number of pupils on roll was increased from 65 to 70.

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 school standards if the proposed material changes to increase the number of pupils on roll from 70 to 90 and to change premises to Former Handsworth Girls School, Church Lane, Birmingham B20 2HL were to be implemented.
- This was the second material change inspection since the school's previous standard inspection. The first material change inspection took place in October 2024.
- 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 and management of schools.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the company's regional director and the chief operating officer of the proprietor body from Kedleston group.
- The inspector also met with the estates manager, the health and safety leader from Kedleston group and the school's designated safeguarding leader.
- The inspector toured the proposed premises with the headteacher and estates manager.
- The inspector scrutinised documents relating to welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Corinne Biddell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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