

OEA Education

1 Faulkner Lane, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 9AZ

Inspection date

12 September 2022

Overall outcome

The school is unlikely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1)–2(2)(b), 2(2)(d)–2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h)–2A(1), 2A(1)(b)–2A(2), 3–4

- The curriculum policy makes clear the school's aim of meeting the needs of pupils who have been unable to successfully access a mainstream provision. The intention is to create a 'nurturing' environment and give pupils opportunities to develop social, emotional and 'life' skills, as well as make academic progress. The proprietor sees all of these things as 'crucial' to pupils' future.
- The proprietor and head of school are knowledgeable about the different special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of the pupils likely to attend. They are able to draw on extensive experience from working across a range of settings. The proprietor is just about to start studying towards the special educational needs coordinator qualification.
- Leaders intend to make sure that the curriculum is personalised and flexible according to the particular needs of pupils. Documents to support this curriculum planning draw on a range of published schemes that align with the national curriculum, as well as programmes of study associated with specific accreditations. The curriculum is likely to provide pupils with the required breadth of experience.
- In all likelihood, pupils who join the school will have significant gaps in their learning. Leaders' proposals take full account of the importance of narrowing the probable gaps between where pupils are and age-appropriate standards, prioritising English and mathematics. Leaders recognise the need for a high-quality phonics and reading programme for those at the early stages of learning to read. The intention is to follow this rigorously on a daily basis, but leaders are yet to settle on a particular approach.
- The head of school and the teacher already recruited have mathematics and science specialisms. The proprietor intends to recruit an English and literacy specialist for the remaining vacancy. They will be charged with strengthening the proposed curriculum in phonics, early reading and English, which are not currently of the same quality as other subjects. For example, the proposed English curriculum lacks detail to reflect leaders' ambitions to take pupils beyond functional English.

- The proprietor has extensive experience in outdoor education, which will form the specialist part of the school's curriculum. Plans for these aspects are detailed and thorough. They break down clearly the component knowledge likely to lead to in-depth knowledge and understanding for pupils. Only suitably trained and insured/licensed teachers will teach and lead the specialist outdoor education curriculum and associated activities.
- In addition to English, mathematics and the specialist curriculum, the greatest priority in the proposed curriculum is given to personal, social and health education (PSHE). PSHE schemes of work include coverage of fundamental British Values and important content such as teaching about the protected characteristics and personal safety. A careers policy and pathway show this area of the school's work will likely meet requirements.
- In addition to assessing pupils' progress against the school's curriculum, leaders propose to use externally validated and standardised assessments to compare pupils' attainment with national norms.
- Notwithstanding that some elements could be further strengthened, it is likely that all the independent school standards (the standards) in this part will be met.

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

Paragraph 5–5(d)(iii)

- The personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils will likely be well promoted through the proposed curriculum.
- Leaders intend to thread 'Tolerance, Honesty, Initiative, Nurture, Knowledge (THINK)' targets through the school's work. For example, within lessons, teachers will be charged with highlighting relevant examples of these values and their application. Leaders plan to use reward systems where these targets are demonstrated or met.
- Policies and plans pay suitable attention to the protected characteristics. For instance, although the school's curriculum does not include religious education, leaders intend to raise pupils' about a range of religions through 'drop-down days'. They are convincing about arrangements to ensure that input from external speakers is suitable, and they have thought about how to respond should any issues arise.
- Leaders have already begun to develop links with local businesses and community groups for the benefit of pupils' learning and experiences.
- The head of school is an holistic integrated creative arts therapist and will take a therapeutic approach to the creative arts curriculum.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b), 9–16(b)

- The safeguarding policy is fit for purpose in many but not all respects. The policy names the proprietor as the designated safeguarding lead, contrary to the most recent guidance, which leaders had missed. Leaders have not made arrangements for internet filtering and monitoring. Accordingly, the safeguarding policy does not detail this provision.

- Leaders are realistic and well informed about the contextual safeguarding challenges, both in terms of the type of pupils for whom the school will provide and the locality. Plans prioritise training for staff. Leaders are clear about how they will know that this input is effective and that agreed policies and practices are being followed. Planned arrangements for record-keeping are likely to be fit for purpose.
- The behaviour and antibullying policies are grounded in the context that the school will operate. The policies set out clear aims and a positive approach and framework for meeting those aims. The sanctions listed for poor behaviour are all reasonable. Proposed ratios of staff and pupils, and supervision arrangements, are likely to be sufficient for the safety and welfare of pupils.
- There are suitable health and safety, first aid and risk assessment policies in place. Risk assessments carried out so far are fit for purpose. Suitable admissions and attendance registers are ready to be populated once the school is operating.
- The proprietor has sought and acted on advice from external fire safety experts who have visited the site. However, he has not written to the fire rescue service to notify them of the proposed school and ask if they wish to inspect the premises. The fire risk assessment had not been completed at the time of this inspection.
- Not all requirements in this part are likely to be met.

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

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

- The proprietor demonstrates a good understanding of the different types of checks required about the suitability of adults. The single central record makes provision to record all of the necessary information. Leaders have also chosen to record other relevant information, such as references, all together in one place on the record.
- All standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)–24(1)(b), 24(2)–29(1)(b)

- The proposed school is situated in a self-contained unit within a small industrial estate. The accommodation comprises a hallway, separate staff and pupil toilet facilities, an office, a large common or 'chill out' room, two classrooms and a large workshop. Pupil toilets are both single rooms, each with an internal sink. As such, they are assigned as mixed gender.
- There is sufficient electric lighting throughout the building, although most rooms have no natural light. The premises are clean, tidy and appointed according to their intended use.
- Outside space for breaktimes on site is very limited. Leaders plan to take pupils off site daily for outdoor education and enrichment. These opportunities are timetabled. The proprietor states that there is an agreement with a local leisure centre for use of shower facilities if necessary.

- The proprietor proposes to use the office for the temporary accommodation of sick or injured pupils. However, this is unlikely to meet requirements as it currently has no washing facility.
- Arrangements have been made that are likely to meet the other requirements of this part, such as access to clearly labelled drinking water.
- Not all requirements in this part are likely to be met

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)–32(1)(d), 32(1)(f)–32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(d)–32(4)(c)

- The proprietor has published or has available all information required by this part of the standards. Much of the information will be published on the school's website. Leaders are also well informed about the information that must be produced once the school is operational, such as reports to parents and carers about pupils' progress.
- All requirements in this part are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33–33(k)

- The school has a suitable written complaints policy and procedure. The thoroughness of this document indicates that concerns and complaints will be taken and treated seriously. Should the need arise, arrangements for an independent complaints panel are plausible and likely to be workable.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The proprietor and head of school offer a convincing account of their plans and proposed arrangements for the intended school. However, a small number of oversights and omissions mean that at this stage it would be unlikely that the independent school standards would be continually met.
- Leaders treat any oversight or omission with regard to the independent school standards and guidance seriously. They are determined to make sure these requirements are fulfilled properly as a minimum. More than this, they are keen to ensure that the provision for pupils is the best that it can possibly be. The proprietor and head of school intend to work together in a 'spirit of collaboration and mutual challenge'.
- In terms of sustainable leadership, the proprietor is in the process of securing expertise at trustee level. The aim is to strengthen the leadership of the school through some form of governance. Prospective trustees are already acting informally in a 'critical friend' role.
- Through his alternative provision work, the proprietor has established links with other professionals, for example a speech and language therapist and an educational psychologist. He is currently developing links with an occupational therapist. Leaders are committed to providing staff with any necessary specialist SEND training, for example around autism and sensory needs.

- The standard in this part is unlikely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- There is a suitable plan in place aimed at increasing accessibility to information, the curriculum and the premises.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements, as set out in the annex of this report.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	149381
DfE registration number	921/6004
Inspection number	10250614

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	Owen Burson
Headteacher	Nicola Peace (Head of School)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£52,650
Telephone number	01983 640630
Website	www.oeaprovision.org.uk/
Email address	nicola@oeaeducation.org.uk

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	11 to 14	11 to 14
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	12	8

Reason for inspector's recommendations

- At the start of the inspection, the proprietor expressed the wish to only register this premises for a maximum of eight pupils. He intends to expand the school's age range and capacity through a subsequent material change once he has secured additional premises. The proprietor will advise the Department for Education (DfE) of these proposals.

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	8
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	8
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	8
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	8

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	3.6
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	1

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is located in a suite of rooms on an industrial estate on the outskirts of Sandown.
- There are no plans at present to use alternative providers.
- The school will not have a religious character or denomination.
- The school proposes to cater for pupils with the following SEND:
 - social, emotional and mental health needs
 - cognitive learning needs
 - speech, language and communication needs
 - autism spectrum disorder.

Information about this inspection

- The purpose of this inspection was to check whether the school is likely to meet the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 if the DfE decides to register it. It was the school's first pre-registration inspection under this application. The proprietor previously applied to register another independent school, Freshwater Independent School, which received a pre-registration inspection on 5 May 2021.
- The inspector toured the premises and held extensive discussions with the proprietor and head of school. Before and during the inspection, the inspector scrutinised a wide range of policies, documents and plans.
- The proprietor also operates alternative provision, Outdoor Education and Adventure, at another location. This provision was visited by Ofsted's unregistered schools team in July 2021 and was found not to be operating as an independent school. The proprietor intends to keep his existing and proposed provisions entirely separate. While he will continue to oversee both, neither staff nor pupils will work across both provisions.

Inspection team

Clive Dunn, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including-
 - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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