

Little Kinvaston School

Little Kinvaston House, Watling Street, Gailey, ST19 5PR

Inspection dates

18 September 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) to 3(i)

- The proprietor and leaders can clearly articulate their vision for the proposed school. The school will aim to support pupils with an identified need of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) who have been permanently excluded from a mainstream school or might be at risk of permanent exclusion. The proposed school will provide a core academic curriculum alongside a land-based offer, including forest school, animal care, outdoor adventure and other courses such as bike maintenance.
- The core academic curriculum is carefully identified with a clear rationale for selecting subjects that meet the independent school standards. English, mathematics, science, computing, art, and humanities, along with a carefully created learning-for-life personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, ensure that pupils will access a broad and balanced curriculum based on what they know and have remembered from previous placements and lessons. Reading has a high profile, and the school has already commissioned a phonics and reading approach for pupils needing additional help.
- The proposed curriculum covers the primary and secondary phases and is based on the national curriculum and examination syllabuses. It is likely to support pupils' reintegration into mainstream education where this is possible.
- There is a clear and well-articulated vision for how the school will meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). While the proprietor expects that needs will be primarily linked to SEMH needs, they also understand and have planned for associated needs such as speech, language and communication. The SEND policy is carefully constructed to ensure that there are a range of provisions to meet the needs of the pupils both at a universal level and at the more bespoke support stage. Leaders partner with external services to develop an awareness of identifying, assessing, and providing for different needs, including those with education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- The proprietor has ensured that these independent school standards (the standards) are likely to be met.

Paragraph 2 (2)(e) to 2(2)(e)(iii)

- Through the PSHE curriculum, leaders have developed a suitable plan to ensure that pupils will likely receive impartial career information, education, advice and guidance. It is intended that school staff will deliver much of this curriculum using a commissioned careers advisory service. Volunteering opportunities in the community are threaded through the proposed curriculum.
- The proprietor has ensured that these independent school standards (the standards) are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a) to 4

- In line with the school's nurturing ethos, leaders demonstrate the necessary knowledge and expertise to improve pupils' self-confidence, self-esteem and motivation. This is likely to help pupils to make good academic progress in different subjects.
- The leaders have a clear vision for making every moment count when pupils access land-based learning in the afternoon. Learning programmes and accreditation pathways have been developed, and further work is going on to ensure that the provision in the young years is as focused. Leaders at these afternoon sessions will also provide opportunities for mentoring and support for pupils' PSHE and personal development.
- The headteacher has teaching and leadership experience in schools. Leaders assert that English and mathematics teachers will have qualified teacher status and will be experts in their respective subjects. Other staff will be unqualified teachers.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraph 2A(1) to 2A(2)

- The relationships and sex education (RSE) policy sits alongside the PSHE policy. It outlines provisions for both primary-age and secondary-age pupils. Leaders intend to consult with parents and carers on an individual basis about the content of the policy. The RSE policy references the right of parents and carers to withdraw their child fully or partly from sex education lessons.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a) to 5(d)(iii)

- Careful consideration has been given to developing the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The land-based offer, alongside the school curriculum, will provide a sense of awe and wonder. The proposed Ewok village and pond with the canal barge will aim to provide a sense of excitement and a 'wow' factor. The school has secured quotes, plans, and start dates to build these. Mentoring, assemblies and visits to different communities and places of religious observance will develop a cultural understanding.
- The school's behaviour approach, which focuses on restorative and sympathetic intervention, should provide opportunities for moral development. Leaders have provided examples of visits already undertaken at the proprietor's other school to

theatres, theme parks, and the Houses of Parliament to develop social awareness. The intention is for these to be replicated at Little Kinvaston School.

- A well-planned programme of mentoring and pastoral care threads through the intended curriculum, underpinned by various social and emotional development approaches.
- There is no evidence in curriculum plans or wider documentation that suggests that fundamental British values will be undermined. Instead, leaders explain clearly how these values will be promoted through the curriculum and other activities, such as visiting different places of worship and celebrating various religious festivals. Leaders are keen to develop the pupils' voice, even in day-to-day arrangements, such as deciding how to develop the range of outdoor learning spaces further.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The proposed systems for safeguarding are clearly and well-articulated. The school intends to replicate the strong systems at the partner school, which means developing the profile and culture of safeguarding to a high standard. These systems match and should fulfil the expectations of current national statutory guidance from the secretary of state. Staff training will be through ongoing training, and regular updates will be made to raise staff awareness of systems and processes. Appointed leaders for safeguarding already have a strong knowledge of guidance from the Department for Education and have created systems, processes and policies to embrace these expectations.

Paragraphs 9 and 10

- The school's behaviour policy precisely articulates the profile of behaviour and the carefully considered approach needed to support pupils with complex and challenging prior school experiences or adverse childhood experiences. Systems to record and analyse behaviour systems are positive and should give leaders an understanding of behaviour patterns and necessary actions.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, and 16

- Detailed health and safety policies, related risk assessments and first aid policies are in place. The headteacher is first-aid trained, and it is proposed that new staff will be trained in first-aid when appointed. Systems and processes for first aid are robust, and there is a high profile of staff training so that all first aid trainers are also competent in food hygiene.
- A fire risk assessment of the building was carried out recently. Leaders have already responded to all the action points. Health and safety processes are thorough and indicate where all checks, including fire extinguisher and emergency lighting checks, will be recorded. The headteacher is trained as a fire marshal and fire safety is intended to be included in the staff induction process.
- Risk assessments support efforts to raise awareness of the complexities of managing the site and keeping pupils safe. A substantial section on the well-written health and safety policy underpins this.

Paragraphs 14 and 15

- There are currently no pupils attending the school. The information the proposed school plans to include on the admissions register aligns with the Department for Education's guidance.
- The staff-to-pupil ratio suggests that pupils will likely be suitably supervised throughout the school day. It is intended that pupils will work with different teachers, but each pupil will have a key worker to support their welfare.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 18 (2) to 25 (5) (c)

- Well-articulated and defined recruitment and staff selection systems mean that the independent school standards for part 4 will likely be met. A carefully considered and well-drilled recruitment process ensures that only those who share the school's high expectations to keep pupils safe are involved. Inspectors sampled outcomes of the recruitment process for current staff members, and it is clear from them that safeguarding is of a high profile.
- The single central record (SCR) template would appear compliant and in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) statutory guidance. For the already appointed staff, the necessary checks, as advocated by the current guidance from the Department for Education, are prevalent on the SCR.
- Processes for staff induction are robust and well-articulated through a checklist that ensures that all that is reasonably practicable is being done to ensure that staff are up to speed as soon as possible in their awareness of systems, policies, and processes.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23 (1) to 29 (1) (b)

- The proposed school is sited in what was originally a series of office spaces in a former farm. It is surrounded by countryside and has picturesque views. The premises have been refurbished and decorated to a high standard. All rooms are well-lit and have good acoustics. The main building has a series of offices, toilets, kitchens and space for medical provision. A refurbished former stable block will act as the classroom at the back of this building. This has its own kitchen and single toilet for staff and pupils.
- The school also uses a large paddock to the rear of the site where the land-based options, including forest school and animal care, will take place. The forest school and pig enclosure are already in place. These areas are included in the site-specific risk assessment, and the animal provision is registered with the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
- There is one shower in the proposed school. In addition, leaders intend to use a local leisure centre as part of the physical education curriculum. The facilities at the centre include a swimming pool and a sports hall. Showers are available in the leisure centre if pupils need to use them.

- Leaders are aware of the risk assessment process that will need to be carried out in line with their current health and safety arrangements when this takes place. Pupils can play and socialise in an outdoor area. Currently, this is a shared area with the other site users, but the proprietor has taken this into account with supervision from staff and appropriate risk assessments. There is also a grassed area that can be used for outdoor play.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32 (1) to 32(3)(f)

- All policies, documents and information required for the pre-registration inspection were provided promptly. Where relevant, policies reflect that the proposed school will cater to pupils with SEMH who have been or are at risk of permanent exclusion. Policies are clear, well presented, and often written in accessible language so that all can understand, raising expectations about what the provision should look like at the school.
- The school's temporary website contains much of the necessary information to meet the independent school standards. This includes curriculum information, admission guidance, behaviour and safeguarding policies, to name a few. The school has already commissioned a new website with all the remaining information, including examination outcomes.
- A great deal of thought has been given to how these policies will be shared amongst staff, including a policy reading day and accountability checklists to ensure staff feel they can work alongside the policy expectations. Evidence of reports to key stakeholders, including parents, governors, and local authorities, have proposed templates and a track record of these being used successfully at the proprietor's other school.
- Reports will inform parents and carers about their child's achievement in each subject taught. Proposed plans are that these reports will be shared face-to-face with parents at termly celebration days, where parents are invited into school to celebrate their child's achievements. They will also include information about their child's progress against the targets in their EHC plans. The report will include comments from the headteacher.
- Leaders who comprehensively understand how relevant staff will contribute to the annual review process for pupils with an EHC plan. In addition, it is intended that parents and pupils will play a vital role in this process.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- The complaints policy is clear and precise and outlines what needs to be done at different stages. The aim is to resolve complaints informally, but more formal steps are outlined in the policy, including a panel hearing. It sets out suitable timeframes for dealing with complaints. Leaders have articulated transparent systems and processes for learning from the complaints to reduce the chance of the complaint happening

again. The complaints policy is on the website and accessible to parents when needed.

- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- The proprietor has a clear rationale for why he wants to open the school: to support pupils who have been permanently excluded or at risk of permanent exclusion. The provision will aim to provide therapeutic and restorative intervention to develop pupils' emotional health and well-being and engagement in learning while accessing an ambitious curriculum both in the classroom and through an extensive land-based offer.
- During the pre-registration process, the proprietor, leaders, and governing body demonstrated the skills, knowledge, and experience linked to maintaining the independent school standards consistently over time. All are experienced independent schools or SEND specialists, and all were able to articulate the visit to the school carefully. The proprietor has established multi-layered monitoring systems to ensure the headteacher and other staff effectively fulfil their responsibilities.
- Leaders at all levels demonstrate a good understanding of the standards. They are keen to develop the proposed school even further, building on what they have already achieved in preparing for the registration process.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have ensured that they have a suitable accessibility plan in place that meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The proposed school considers and plans for the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Leaders are refining the accessibility plan to consider the broad range of needs of pupils coming into the school. The plan's template is positive, and already, there are some sharply focused actions to develop the site's inclusive nature. On this basis, the standards related to the accessibility plan and schedule 10 of the Equalities Act are likely to be met.

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	151140
DfE registration number	860/6099
Inspection number	10358039

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	Little Kinvaston School Ltd
Chair	David Kirby (Chair of governors)
Headteacher	Stuart Playford
Annual fees (day pupils)	£48,000
Telephone number	07801959280
Website	www.littlekinvastonschool.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@littlekinvastonschool.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	9 to 16	9 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	5	5

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	5
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	5
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	5
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	5

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	4

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school previously was a series of office spaces within a small business park. It sits on extensive land with the surrounding countryside.
- The proposed school will share a site with three other small businesses. The proprietor has ensured that suitable risk assessments have been written to manage the risk of a multi-use site.
- The proposed school will cater for boys and girls from nine to 16.
- The proposed school will cater for pupils, with a identified needs of SEMH, who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream schools. It is anticipated that all pupils will either have an EHC plan or be in the process of statutory assessment to gain an EHC plan. Local authorities, mainly Dudley and Staffordshire, will place pupils in the school.
- The proprietor runs another school, Priory Park Community School.
- The proposed school will not have a religious denomination.
- The proposed school does not intend to use alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

- The DfE commissioned the pre-registration inspection to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the standards if it is given permission to open. This is the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector reviewed many documents before the inspection. Additional documents, including the school's central record, were scrutinised on-site.
- As the inspection included a full-day, on-site visit, a tour of the premises was completed.
- The inspector met with the proprietor/headteacher, representatives of the proposed governing body and other members of the proposed leadership team.

Inspection team

Chris Pollitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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