

Armley Grange School

Armley Grange, Armley Grange Drive, Armley, Leeds LS12 3QH

Inspection date

13 August 2020

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), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- The proprietor has ensured there is a curriculum policy in place. This policy is easily accessed from the school's website. The policy describes an ambitious curriculum with a pathway to publicly recognised qualifications for pupils.
- The headteacher has developed schemes of work for all subjects in the school's curriculum and for the full age range of pupils that the school intends to admit. The subjects on offer are English, mathematics, science, religious education (RE), art, design technology, computing, history, geography and physical education (PE). The plans for science, PE and art are not yet matched by practical materials and equipment. However, the proprietor explained that these orders had been processed and were near completion.
- The headteacher has produced a policy and a scheme of work for personal, social and health education (PSHE). The PSHE curriculum is supported by a policy for the teaching of relationships and sex education (RSE).
- The headteacher is an experienced teacher of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). He has written a policy which explains how the school will meet the needs of pupils with SEND. The proprietor group has a qualified co-ordinator for SEND (SENCo) who will support the headteacher by providing enhanced training and resources for teaching pupils with specific needs.
- The headteacher has developed lessons that will help pupils plan for future employment and training. He has also made a link to the local authority careers provision to ensure pupils have access to independent careers guidance.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4

- The headteacher has produced an assessment policy which explains what information will be gathered about pupils when they join the school and how ongoing assessment will be done in each subject.

- The headteacher has developed a range of screening tests for pupils. These tests are aimed at identifying any specific needs pupils have and what additional literacy or numeracy support may be required.
- The proprietor has plans in place to maintain a staff-to-pupil ratio which reflects the needs of the pupils likely to be referred to the school. The proprietor's staffing plan includes the recruitment of subject specialists. The headteacher will also have access to a network of subject leaders from across the other schools in the proprietor group.
- The proprietor employs a director of education who works across all the schools in the proprietor group. The director of education will meet with the headteacher monthly to provide support and direction. The director of education will provide reports to the proprietor on the quality of teaching and learning in the school and on pupil outcomes.
- The standards in Part 1 are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)

- The headteacher has produced a policy covering the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils. This policy is clear about the school's commitment to developing pupils' understanding of themselves and their world. The policy also explains how fundamental British values will be taught.
- The headteacher was able to show how the SMSC development of pupils is supported by topics that are in the schemes of work for RE, art, history and PSHE.
- The headteacher has plans for visits out into the local community. He is keen to show pupils a range of civic organisations to help them understand how they can play a part in their community.
- The headteacher also intends to invite representatives of the local community into the school. He has thought carefully about how to ensure visiting speakers are aware of what is expected of them in terms of keeping their contributions balanced and appropriate for pupils.
- The standards in Part 2 are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The proprietor has ensured there is a safeguarding policy in place. This policy is published on the school's website and follows government guidance.
- The proprietor provides training for staff in child protection. This training is part of the induction programme that all staff follow when they join the school and is refreshed annually. The headteacher has received enhanced training as appropriate for the designated safeguarding lead for the school.

- The headteacher has systems in place for making referrals to the local authority and external agencies. He is aware of how to get help for pupils when they need it.
- The headteacher has developed lessons aimed at helping pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. These lessons are taught to all pupils as part of the PSHE curriculum.

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

- The headteacher has produced an anti-bullying policy. This policy explains what the school will do to prevent bullying as well as how they will respond to any bullying that may occur.
- The headteacher has written a detailed and informative behaviour policy. The policy is available from the school website and is extremely clear about what is expected of staff, pupils and parents. The policy describes the support that pupils will get to develop positive behaviours, but also explains the range of sanctions that the headteacher may use if behaviour is dangerous or disruptive.
- The proprietor has appointed a lead for therapeutic services who will support the headteacher in meeting the complex social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils who may be referred to the school.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

- The proprietor has ensured there is a relevant and up-to-date health and safety policy in place. The headteacher is identified as the lead person for health and safety in the school. However, the headteacher is also well supported by the proprietor group's facilities director and a specialist health and safety adviser.
- The proprietor has bought in a specialist agency to complete a detailed fire strategy and check all fire safety equipment. The fire strategy report includes information on how to reduce the risk of fire and how to evacuate the building safely. The proprietor is aware of the need to review the school's fire risk assessment on a regular basis. The headteacher is aware that some pupils may need a personalised emergency evacuation plan.
- The proprietor ensures that appropriate checks of the school's alarm system, fire safety equipment and emergency lighting take place regularly. The headteacher has plans for half-termly drills so that pupils and staff know what to do in an emergency.
- The proprietor has developed a comprehensive first-aid policy. The policy is clear about what all staff must do in the case of an accident. The proprietor provides staff with emergency first-aid training. The first-aid boxes checked during the inspection in were in place and well equipped.
- The headteacher is an experienced school leader who knows how to supervise pupils. The proprietor plans to enrol a small number of pupils in the first instance and is clear about the staff-to-pupil ratio that will be in place if the school expands over time.
- The proprietor has an admission register in place. The headteacher is aware of the information that must be recorded when a pupil joins and leaves the school. The headteacher has written an attendance policy and has a system ready to record pupil attendance. The headteacher is clear about how he plans to follow up pupil absence daily and what he will do if a pupil's attendance is causing concern.

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

- The proprietor has ensured there is a clear risk assessment policy for staff to follow. There are a range of risk assessments in place, including how to store and use hazardous substances, for school trips and use of equipment. The headteacher intends that PE lessons will take place at the local sports centre. He has a risk assessment planned for this activity.
- The headteacher has plans to complete individual risk assessments for all pupils when they join the school.
- The standards in Part 3 are likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c)

- The proprietor has ensured that pre-employment checks are completed for all staff and volunteers in line with current government guidance.
- The proprietor has a safer recruitment policy in place. School leaders have attended training in safer recruitment and are clear about their responsibilities when recruiting staff.
- The headteacher does not anticipate using supply staff. However, he knows how to carry out all the necessary checks on supply staff if he does have to use staff from an employment agency.
- The proprietor has ensured that all required checks are completed for trustees of the proprietor group.

Paragraphs 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii) 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6)

- The proprietor has a single central register (SCR) that shows all the pre-employment checks. The headteacher was able to explain how this information was gathered.
- The proprietor has a human resources adviser who visits the school to check staff files and the SCR on a routine basis.
- The standards in Part 4 are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c)

- There are two toilets for the sole use of pupils. Each toilet is in its own separate room with washbasin and full-length door. The toilets are newly refurbished and well presented. Both toilets offer disabled access and there are separate toilets for adults and visitors.

- There is no shower room, as the proprietor plans for PE to be taught at a local sports centre, where there are changing facilities and showers.

Paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2)

- There is a medical room with a washbasin. The medical room is located next to the pupil toilets. There was no bed in the room at the time of the inspection but the proprietor was able to show evidence of the order having been processed and delivery expected.

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

- The school is located on a large, secure site with well-marked drop-off zones for pupil transport. There is ample staff and visitor car parking.
- The school is in a self-contained single-storey building. This building has been recently refurbished and newly decorated throughout. The school has a large social area off the kitchen, five classrooms, several offices and a meeting room. All rooms have a lot of natural light and suitable acoustics. Fire doors are in place and emergency evacuation routes are clearly marked.
- The headteacher has made plans for the secure storage of medicines. There is a separate, lockable room for storage of cleaning equipment and hazardous substances.
- The rooms and corridors are well lit. There is emergency lighting in each corridor to show the way to the fire exits. There is external lighting around the whole building under the roof eaves.

Paragraphs 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- The headteacher is aware of the need for pupils to have access to water at all times. At the time of the inspection a water cooler was being plumbed in near to the kitchen. The headteacher explained that he also plans for pupils to have water bottles in their classrooms.
- The washbasins in the toilets are fitted with regulators so that the water temperature is not able to exceed 40 degrees.
- Taps around the school are labelled to show whether the water is suitable for drinking or not.

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

- There is an outside area for games which has a surrounding fence and rubber crumb flooring. There is also a small wooded and grassy area which is open to pupils at social times.
- The headteacher has plans to use a local sports centre for PE lessons. There is a risk assessment planned for this activity.
- The standards in Part 5 are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(e), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g)

- The school has a website which is easy to access. The proprietor has ensured that all required policies and information are published on the website.
- The admissions policy is clear and available from the school's website. There is a direct contact number, for local authorities who may wish to refer a pupil to the school. The proprietor has a document which explains the charges for provision and this is available on request.
- The headteacher has designed a template for an annual report for parents and referrers. There are policies in place that explain how pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language will be supported. These policies are available from the school website.
- The proprietor intends to publish inspection reports on the school website.
- There is no information about pupils' academic performance as the school is not open. However, the proprietor intends to put this information on the school's website when appropriate in the future. The proprietor is aware of the need to be careful about publishing information that could identify pupils.

Paragraph 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d)

- The contact information for the headteacher and the proprietor group is on the school website.
- The school's mission and the ethos of the proprietor group is explained on the school website.
- The standards in Part 6 are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii), 33(k)

- The proprietor has ensured there is a complaints policy which is accessible from the school's website.
- The policy explains each stage of the complaints procedure and the timescales when school leaders will respond to any complaint.
- The standards in Part 7 are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The headteacher is an experienced school leader. He has worked in mainstream and special schools. He has a strong understanding of how to meet the needs of the pupils who are likely to be referred to the school.

- The proprietor employs managers with knowledge of corporate leadership, finance, health and safety, and school improvement. These managers bring additional leadership capacity to the school.
- The proprietor understands the importance of ensuring that the school meets the independent school standards consistently. The proprietor has a senior executive team that meets termly. This senior executive team has systems in place to monitor the school and provide support and challenge to school leaders.
- The standards in Part 8 are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The headteacher has explained in policy documents how he plans to help pupils understand the world around them and to foster tolerance and understanding of people with a wide range of lifestyles, beliefs and needs.
- The proprietor has ensured there is a relevant plan in place to improve access to the curriculum and school activities for pupils with additional needs.
- This standard is 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	148052
DfE registration number	383/6013
Inspection number	10154932

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	Horizon Care and Education Group Ltd
Chair	Paul Callander
Headteacher	Sean Whitehead
Annual fees (day pupils)	£58,500
Telephone number	01543570304
Website	www.horizoncare.co.uk
Email address	Louise.De-Hayes@horizoncare.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	n/a	7 to 16	7 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	n/a	25	25

Pupils

	School' s current position	School' s proposal
Gender of pupils	n/a	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	n/a	25
Number of part-time pupils	n/a	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	n/a	25
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	n/a	25
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	n/a	Up to 25

Staff

	School' s current position	School' s proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	1	6
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	1	6

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is located on a spacious, private site in a residential area of Leeds. The proposed school is in a modern, single-storey building. There is a large, period building next to the school. This second building was not part of this pre-registration inspection, but the proprietor is hoping to develop it for school use in future.
- The proposed school intends to cater for pupils with a wide range of SEND. In line with the proprietor's application to the DfE, the pupils admitted to the proposed school may have cognitive and learning needs, specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social development needs, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, a diagnosis of autism, communication and interaction needs and speech and language and communication needs. Most pupils are likely to have education, health and care plans.
- The proposed school will be staffed by a headteacher, five subject teachers, six teaching assistants, an administrator and site manager.
- The proposed school expects to take referrals from local authorities.
- The proposed school does not expect to use any alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

- This first pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic of 2020. Some of the inspection was conducted remotely. This was due to restrictions placed on non-essential travel during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The inspection was carried out with two days' notice.
- I held online meetings with the proprietor, headteacher and other school leaders.
- I visited the site to check the school premises against the independent school standards.
- I reviewed a range of policies and documents associated with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Patricia Head, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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