

Kings Park School

Field View, Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent TN23 3NZ

Inspection date

20 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)(b), 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h) to 2(A)(2)

- The proprietor has ensured that a suitable curriculum policy, schemes of work and curriculum plans are in place. The content of the curriculum will be consistent with the national curriculum, sequenced appropriately and designed to ensure that pupils will know more and remember more.
- Pupils will learn an appropriately broad range of subjects. Older pupils will access nationally accredited qualification courses, such as functional skills, BTEC National Diplomas and GCSEs. Physical education will be delivered on site and at local leisure facilities.
- The school understands how important it will be to adjust the curriculum to support pupils' individual special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) once pupils have been admitted. The school has high expectations for pupils. It is committed to helping pupils to work towards their ambitions and to supporting them to achieve well.
- The school will use a range of assessments to evaluate pupils' contexts and starting points. Pupils will be placed on one of four curriculum pathways when they join the school. Ongoing assessments will be used to check that pupils are on the most appropriate pathway and to move pupils between pathways where appropriate.
- The teaching of reading skills will be prioritised in the curriculum. The school knows that pupils may have missed learning key reading skills in the past due to extended periods of time outside formal education. Assessments completed as part of the school's induction procedures will be used to evaluate pupils' prior knowledge in reading.
- A suitable phonics programme has been selected which includes support for older pupils. Staff will be trained in delivering the phonics programme and an external consultant will be commissioned to provide specialist support. An attractive and well-resourced library is located at the heart of the school building. The school intends to seek pupils' views about further texts they would like to see in the library.

- The school has a well-sequenced programme to support pupils' personal, social and health education. The programme includes age-appropriate relationships and sex education (RSE). The RSE policy is published on the school's website. The proprietor has identified a suitable process for consulting parents about the content of the RSE curriculum.
- The school will provide regular independent careers advice, including modules with a focus on employability skills. The older pupils will have opportunities to participate in work experience.

Paragraphs 3 to 3(j), 4

- The school has given suitable thought to procedures for checking pupils' progress over time. Ongoing assessments will be used to inform target-setting for individual pupils and curriculum planning.
- The proprietor has already appointed several experienced members of staff, including the headteacher, a deputy headteacher, who will also be the special educational needs coordinator in the first instance, a teacher and an office manager.
- The proprietor is in the process of appointing additional staff with SEND expertise. The intention is to make further staff appointments as the school grows. The school will provide a programme of staff training, starting with training delivered during the initial staff induction process. Staff training will include consideration of pupils' different needs, such as those associated with autism, as well as strategies for behaviour management which are consistent with the school's behaviour policy.
- It is likely that the independent school standards (the standards) in this part will be met.

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

Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The school intends to equip pupils with some of the key knowledge, skills and attitudes to support them in future adult life. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum includes an appropriate range of themes and topics, including safety education. The curriculum will be adapted according to pupils' contexts and needs and taught sequentially over time.
- School life will be underpinned by three rules: 'Be ready, be respectful and be safe.' The establishment of positive relationships will form the bedrock of the school's behaviour policy and of its community. Pupils will be encouraged to consider their own emotions and to be aware of the impact of their actions on others. They will learn strategies to help them to manage their responses and behaviour when anxious or stressed.
- Pupils will have regular opportunities to discuss and consider topical issues, and current affairs will be explored in class and during assemblies. Learning will be enhanced and supplemented with a range of special activities, such as a trip to the Houses of Parliament and visits by the police, and opportunities for pupils to serve as school councillors.
- Themed assemblies will be used to develop pupils' knowledge of and respect for different backgrounds and beliefs. The school's planned curriculum includes lessons in

religious education. The Equality Act 2010 and teaching about the protected characteristics will be embedded in the curriculum.

- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b)

- Policies, written guidance and procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are appropriate. The school's safeguarding and child protection policy complies with statutory guidance and is published on its website. Building strong, trusting relationships between staff and pupils will be a key focus in ensuring pupils' safety.
- The designated safeguarding lead and her deputy have already completed suitable training to enable them to carry out their roles. They are knowledgeable about safeguarding matters and have experience in managing and overseeing safeguarding in special education. The school's safeguarding leads have established constructive links with the local authority.
- All staff will complete safeguarding training when they are appointed. The school intends to use regular briefings to keep staff up to date with safeguarding issues. Any concerns about pupils' safety will be recorded on the school's centralised electronic system and monitored by the school's safeguarding leads.

Paragraphs 9 and 10

- The school has appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies which are published on its website. Staff training will include input about how to support pupils with different behavioural needs. The focus of the school's behaviour management approach will be on identifying the causes of poor behaviour and on providing therapeutic support.
- Positive handling will be used rarely and only as a last resort. Any incidents will be recorded and reported to parents promptly.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13 and 16

- The proprietor has ensured the completion of suitable premises and safety checks, such as gas installation reports and water checks.
- Arrangements are in place to ensure that the school conforms to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. An independent fire survey has been carried out and relevant actions taken. The building is supplied with firefighting equipment, fire safety signage and an alarm system which is designed for pupils with sensory issues.
- Suitable policies and procedures have been formulated to ensure that first aid arrangements are followed. All current staff have completed paediatric first aid training.

Paragraph 14

- The school has given careful thought to supervision arrangements throughout the school day. Clear procedures have been identified to ensure smooth and safe transitions at the start and end of the school day.

Paragraph 15

- Appropriate arrangements are in place to record and monitor pupils' admissions and attendance.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

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(7)(b)

- The proprietor is knowledgeable about the requirements of part 4. The school's safer recruitment policy will be followed during staff appointment procedures.
- The proprietor has established an appropriate single central record. The correct recruitment and suitability checks have been completed for staff already appointed.
- The school may use supply staff from time to time. The proprietor understands the confirmations and assurances that relevant agencies would need to provide to confirm that appropriate vetting has taken place.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- The proposed school will occupy a modern building located in a residential area. The building was used originally as a children's nursery. It has been refurbished to a high standard and is bright, airy and well maintained, with plenty of natural light.
- The classrooms are spacious and well equipped. However, there is insufficient space to accommodate the proposed capacity. This is due, in part, to the proprietor's sensible decision to re-purpose one of the classrooms for use as a sensory room.
- Pupils will eat lunch in the classrooms, which are suitably furnished for the purpose. Pupils in each classroom will have access to a toilet and drinking water, which is clearly labelled as such. Water supplied for handwashing is a suitable temperature. A newly fitted kitchen will be used to teach pupils cooking skills to support the development of independence.
- Pupils will have access to designated outdoor areas which are suitably fenced and equipped to enable pupils to play, socialise and relax safely. Equipment and resources already provided include opportunities for physical activity, such as a trim trail and a mini football pitch.
- The medical room is well equipped. Resources include a sink with a drinking water supply, a medical fridge and a suitable medical bed, with a toilet nearby. First-aid kits are located at different points throughout the building, as well as in the medical room.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f) to 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii) to 32(4)(c)

- The proposed school's website is already available. Information published on the website complies with the requirements of part 6, including safeguarding information and the school's complaints policy.
- The school will provide parents and carers with regular updates and written reports about pupils' progress and well-being, including information to support the annual review process for pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- The school's complaints policy meets the requirements of part 7. It sets out clear timescales for the management of any complaints. Leaders are clear about the policy and about how it will be implemented.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor demonstrates a clear and appropriate rationale for establishing the proposed school. The proprietor has already appointed a number of staff, including the headteacher. Leaders present at the time of this inspection have relevant experience of special education and demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements relating to the independent school standards. The headteacher has previous experience of working in a school for pupils with special educational needs.
- Processes and procedures are in place to ensure the proprietor maintains close oversight of the school's work, including safeguarding and the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff. For instance, the directors will meet with the headteacher and with each other regularly to receive and discuss reports of the school's work and to maintain oversight of the school's compliance with the standards.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has a suitable accessibility plan in place. The proprietor intends to update the plan at appropriate intervals to take account the school's pupils and staff. The school is likely to meet paragraph 3 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	151493
DfE registration number	886/6187
Inspection number	10382851

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	Kings Park School Limited
Chair	Amy Saunders
Headteacher	Alison Hatch
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,000
Telephone number	01233 553 053
Website	www.kingsparkschool.co.uk
Email address	office@kingsparkschool.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	7 to 16	7 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	70	40

Reason for inspector's recommendations

- There is insufficient classroom space to accommodate the number of pupils proposed.

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	70
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	70
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	70
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	70

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	15
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- The school intends to cater wholly for pupils with SEND. All pupils will have an EHC plan, with places funded by a local authority.
- Leaders intend to specialise in providing education for pupils with autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Pupils may also have a range of associated conditions, such as: oppositional defiant disorder; speech, language and communication needs; mild learning difficulties; and social, emotional and behavioural needs.
- The school will be housed in a single-storey building which was formerly used as a children's nursery. It is located in a residential area in Ashford, Kent.

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 Department for Education (DfE) decides to register it. This was the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspectors discussed and reviewed all relevant proposals and plans for the new school with the proprietor, the headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide range of policies, documents and records presented by the proprietor as evidence of the school's likelihood to meet the independent school standards. They also checked the single central record.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michelle Payne

His Majesty's Inspector

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