

Bluebank School

Peter Webster Centre, Sheffield Road, Whittington Moor, Chesterfield
S41 8LQ

Inspection date

3 December 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)

- The school anticipates that most pupils who join the proposed school will have experienced disruption to their education. The curriculum that it has prepared takes this into account. The curriculum is well organised. Those responsible for the school have the knowledge and skills needed to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The proposed curriculum aims to provide pupils with experiences in a wide range of subjects, qualifications and accreditations. Pupils will be taught a broad range of subjects that provide experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education.
- The school has prepared a curriculum policy. It sets out how subjects in the curriculum will be organised and taught. This will be published on the school's website and made available to parents and carers when pupils join the school.
- Across all subjects and key stages, the school's curriculum is supported by detailed schemes of work. These make clear what pupils will be expected to learn and the order in which content will be taught. These take into account pupils' starting points, aptitudes and ages.
- The school has prepared a suitable reading curriculum. Any pupils who join the school at the earliest stage of learning to read will be taught phonics. A suitably experienced teacher has been appointed to facilitate this. Further staff will be trained to teach phonics as the number on roll increases.
- Pupils' attainment will be checked as they start at the school. These assessments will be used to inform pupils' starting points and 'flightpaths' through the curriculum.

Paragraphs 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h) to 2(2)(i)

- The school has adopted a personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum that introduces pupils to a wide range of topics that prepare them well for life in modern Britain.

- The PSHE curriculum promotes an understanding of difference, and pupils will learn about protected characteristics in an age-appropriate way. Pupils will learn how to stay safe in a range of contexts. They will learn how to look after their mental and physical health.
- The school intends to provide pupils with impartial careers information. It has prepared detailed schemes of work. It intends to draw on the support and expertise of an external careers adviser. The school intends that pupils' careers advice and guidance will be tailored to their individual interests and aspirations.

Paragraphs 2A(1), 2A1(b), 2A(1)(d) to 2A(2)

- The school has prepared a policy regarding its provision for pupils' relationships and sex education (RSE). The policy reflects the requirements set out by the Department for Education (DfE).
- The school has prepared well-planned schemes of work for RSE that are age-appropriate. It is clear about which parts of this curriculum pupils may and may not be withdrawn from.
- The school intends to consult parents about any changes it may make to its RSE policy.

Paragraphs 3 and 4

- The school has prepared a suitable curriculum policy that sets out its approach to teaching. Subject schemes of work also set out the types of learning activities that will be used to help pupils gain knowledge and understanding of new content and how they will develop skills. These are detailed and well organised.
- The school has planned a programme of quality assurance activities to check on the quality of teaching. It will ensure that teachers adopt effective teaching methods and plan appropriate sequences of lessons. The school has planned a training programme to ensure that teachers understand and adopt appropriate teaching methods and have suitable subject knowledge.
- The school intends that teaching will actively promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values.
- The school intends to train staff to understand the impact of trauma and to know how to manage this. This will form part of the staff induction programme. It will be revisited regularly. Staff will be supported by clinicians to develop their practice in this area.
- The school intends that teachers will use a range of strategies to engage pupils in their learning. It is intended that lessons will enable pupils to be successful and develop confidence and independence.
- The school has purchased an appropriate range of resources to support the delivery of the curriculum. Additional resources will be purchased if the school is granted permission to open.
- Pupils will be assessed through a variety of methods. They will be assessed when they join the school to identify their starting points and any gaps that they may have in their knowledge. The school has an appropriate framework in place to assess pupils' learning and progress.

- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to meet all the independent school standards (the standards) in this part.

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

Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The school has prepared a suitable curriculum for PSHE. This promotes understanding of fundamental British values, including democracy and protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Through the PSHE curriculum, the school intends pupils to learn about right and wrong, and about civil and criminal law in England. They will learn about public institutions and services in England and a wide range of cultures and beliefs.
- Pupils will be given opportunities to work with and support the local community, for example through working with the local football club, visiting the elderly and undertaking a variety of charity work.
- The school has prepared a well-organised and extensive events calendar that sets out the events and occasions that pupils will learn about and/or celebrate. These include World First-Aid Day, the International Day of Democracy, World Gratitude Day and the International Day of Sign Languages, to mention a few.
- The school's 'immersion room' will be used to provide pupils with interactive, multimedia experiences that enable them to explore new places, which will contribute to their cultural capital development.
- The curriculum is designed to ensure pupils learn that most views have an opposing one. The school intends to monitor the information any visitors plan to share with pupils. The school will check its provision to ensure that pupils are not exposed to partisan political views. Where needed, teachers will be expected to provide a balanced opposing view.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7(a) to 7(b)

- The proposed school has a comprehensive safeguarding policy. The policy makes clear the actions that staff will be expected to take if they have a safeguarding concern or worry about a child or an adult. The school will record concerns on an electronic system. The policy has due regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- The school has identified and trained safeguarding leaders. These leaders demonstrate secure knowledge and skills suitable to their roles. The school plans to appoint and train further staff to help lead safeguarding.
- The school has prepared a programme of safeguarding induction and training to ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge. Content will be revisited over time to ensure that it is understood and applied consistently. Robust processes are in place to

facilitate daily communication with staff.

- The school has made suitable arrangements to filter pupils' access to online materials. Leaders will be promptly alerted to any inappropriate online activity.
- The proprietor has robust procedures in place to check that the school executes its safeguarding duties effectively.

Paragraphs 9 and 10

- The school has established clear expectations for pupils' behaviour based on their aims and values. Pupils will be expected to 'do the right thing, in the right place, at the right time'. Positive behaviour will be recognised through the use of 'Sleuth Points' that pupils can accumulate and 'cash in' in the school's 'Sleuth Shop'.
- Staff will ensure that positive relationships are prioritised. Pupils' behavioural needs will be assessed as they start at the school. Each pupil will have an individual behaviour support plan that sets out how their behaviour will be managed. These will be updated regularly.
- Staff will be trained to de-escalate situations when pupils become anxious or distressed. Staff will be trained in the use of appropriate physical restraint. The schools' physical intervention policy makes clear that this will only be used as a last resort.
- The school has a system in place to record and monitor pupils' behaviour. This will be used to identify any trends or patterns of behaviour over time. Sanctions imposed on pupils for serious misbehaviour will also be recorded.
- Suitable policies are in place for behaviour, exclusions and anti-bullying.

Paragraphs 11 to 13

- The school has prepared an appropriate health and safety policy. It has put in place arrangements, systems and monitoring processes to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. The school has created a systemised schedule of the checks that it plans to carry out.
- Staff will be trained in health and safety as part of their induction. The proprietor has appointed a range of appropriate persons to routinely check on health and safety compliance.
- The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. A fire risk assessment is in place, carried out by suitably qualified persons. The school has clear procedures for fire egress. It has planned a robust series of regular checks to ensure continued compliance.

Paragraph 14

- The school intends to employ a suitable number of staff. It will ensure that there are appropriate levels of pupil supervision.

Paragraph 15

- The school has ensured that the necessary information is included on its admission register.
- The proposed attendance register will use the appropriate codes for absence in line

with recent DfE guidance.

Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)

- There is a suitable risk assessment policy in place. The school has prepared a comprehensive suite of risk assessments. These calculate the nature of risks and set out how these will be mitigated.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3) to 18(4)(c), 19(1) to 19 (2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1) to 21(3)(b), 21(5) to 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c), 21(6)

- The proprietor knows and understands its safer recruitment responsibilities. The school will ensure that all relevant checks are undertaken before adults are permitted to work with pupils. These checks will be recorded in the single central record. The single central record contains all the required information for staff in post so far.
- The school may make use of supply staff. The single central record sets out the checks that it would carry out should this be the case.
- New members of staff and supply staff will not be allowed to start work at the school until the relevant pre-appointment checks have been undertaken.
- There are clear systems in place at both the proprietor and school levels to check the single central record on a regular basis. Leaders clearly articulate the importance of the recruitment processes as a crucial element of providing a safe school culture.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(c), 25 to 28(2)(b)

- The proposed school's building is newly refurbished. It is prepared to a good standard and conducive to learning. There are suitable, separate toilet and washing facilities that are provided for the sole use of pupils. The washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. Thermostatic mixer valves have been installed to ensure the hot water does not pose a scalding risk.
- There is suitable provision for changing and shower facilities. Pupils will also use the facilities at a local leisure centre. The school has carried out the necessary checks and risk assessments to ensure that this is suitable.

Paragraphs 24(1) to 24(1)(b)

- A room has been allocated for the care of pupils who are sick or injured. It is suitably equipped and near a toilet.

Paragraphs 25, 26, 27 to 27(b)

- The school's premises are maintained to a good standard. Classrooms have suitable acoustics and are well ventilated. Internal and external lighting are fit for purpose. Windows are fitted with anti-glare coatings.
- The school is developing an indoor gymnasium area. This work is not yet complete. The area is fully segregated. The processes in place for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff while works takes place are robust. This work does not compromise the school's ability to meet the standards relating to premises and accommodation.

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

- Drinking water is readily available. It is suitably identified and is separate from toilet facilities. Water from handwashing facilities is labelled as unsuitable for drinking.

Paragraphs 29(1) to 29(1)(b)

- There is suitable space for pupils to spend time outdoors and to participate in physical education. The school's multi-use games area and outdoor gymnasium have been prepared to a good standard. There is a smaller area to the rear of the property that the school plans to develop into a garden area with pupils.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f) to 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(d) to 32(5)

- The school has prepared a website that will go live if the school is granted permission to open. The website contains the key information required, including the school's safeguarding policy and details about how the school will manage complaints. Parents will also be provided with the full range of required information as part of pupils' induction process. The school understands the requirement to publish any future inspection reports, details of pupils' academic performance and information about any restrictions that the DfE may impose in the future.
- The school has devised a suitable format for reporting to parents about pupils' achievements while at the school.
- There are suitable arrangements in place to work with local authorities to review pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. The school understands its responsibilities regarding providing information to local authorities about children in care and pupils with an EHC plan.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33 to 33(k)

- The school's complaints policy will be made available on the school's website and to parents as part of pupils' induction process. It will also be made available on request.

- The policy sets out the procedures to follow should a parent wish to make a complaint. It sets out what parents should do if they are not satisfied with the response to, or outcome of, a complaint. The policy identifies informal and formal processes with appropriate timescales. It includes how records of any complaints received, and subsequent actions taken by the school, will be recorded and retained.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor demonstrates strong skills and knowledge appropriate to its role. It has extensive experience and a successful track record in running special schools across the country. The proprietor has established clear lines of accountability. It is well placed to provide the school with the necessary balance of challenge and support. The proprietor has ensured that appointed senior leaders have the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil the vision for the school.
- Leaders at all levels are committed to providing a quality, bespoke curriculum, matched to the needs of pupils with SEND. There is a strong focus on providing for pupils' welfare and wellbeing.
- The proprietor has put in place robust quality assurance measures to ensure the school's continued compliance with the standards. Leaders demonstrate the understanding necessary to ensure the standards will be met securely and consistently over time.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school's accessibility plan provides details of how all pupils, including those with SEND, will be enabled to access the curriculum, premises and information.
- The school is likely to meet the regulation in this part.

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	152187
DfE registration number	830/6069
Inspection number	10423725

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 category	Independent day school
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education Ltd
Chair	Richard Power
Headteacher	Kam Banga
Annual fees (day pupils)	£57,680 to £87,680
Telephone number	01246 961532
Website	www.bluebankschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@bluebankschool.co.uk

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	60	60

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	60
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0

Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	60

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	1	35
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0

Information about this proposed school

- This proposed school intends to provide full-time education for up to 60 pupils with SEND from 11 to 16 years old. It is anticipated that all pupils will have an EHC plan.
- The school proposes to provide for pupils who have cognitive and learning needs, speech language and communication needs, social, emotional or mental health needs, specific learning difficulties and pupils who have a diagnosis of autism.
- The school is located at The Peter Webster Centre, Sheffield Rd, Whittington Moor, Chesterfield, S41 8LQ.
- Some pupils who attend the school may be in the care of the local authority.
- The school does not intend to use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the standards if it is given permission to open.
- This was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the chair of governors and the chair of the proprietor body to consider all relevant aspects of the standards.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the proposed site to check the suitability of the premises.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including policies, curriculum plans and assessment information. The inspector considered a wide range of documentation relating to health and safety, including a sample of the school's risk assessments.
- The inspector checked the arrangements for safeguarding and staff recruitment, including the single central record.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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