

Forest Park School

Durham Way South, Newton Aycliffe Business Park,
Newton Aycliffe DL5 6XP

Inspection dates

23 November 2023

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

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2)–2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(g)–2(2)(i)

- The proprietor has prepared a curriculum policy which sets out a broad range of subjects for pupils to study. This policy explains leaders' aims for the curriculum. The policy describes how the curriculum will help pupils develop the knowledge, skills and social competences, so that they will be able to take a valuable, positive, and active place in society. This policy also outlines how the curriculum will contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Leaders have developed schemes of work for each subject that support the curriculum policy. These schemes of work reflect leaders' ambitious intent for what pupils should learn during their time at Forest Park. Leaders have shown clarity in the order in which pupils should learn important knowledge. They can demonstrate how the proposed school's curriculum will support pupils to build their learning securely. The curriculum takes account of the specific and individual needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders have placed appropriate importance on the teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and mathematics. Pupils will also study a range of other subjects that will provide them with experiences in scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education.
- There is an appropriate scheme of work in place that outlines pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). Leaders have focused the PSHE curriculum on preparing pupils for their future lives. Leaders intend to offer pupils impartial careers information, advice and guidance. This will be tailored to the individual needs and interests of pupils.

Paragraph 2A(1), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d)–2A(3)

- The PSHE curriculum will provide pupils with relationships and sex education and health education. Leaders' proposed policy complies with the relevant statutory

guidance. Leaders have considered how they will consult with parents and carers about the policy as they are admitted to the proposed school.

Paragraph 3(a)–3(g)

- Leaders intend that staff will receive advice and guidance to help them to deliver the curriculum effectively. For example, a rich programme of training to develop staff's subject knowledge in a range of subjects is planned for the proposed school. Leaders have planned a number of quality assurance activities to ensure continued quality across the curriculum.
- Leaders intend that teachers will carry out a number of baseline assessments to establish pupils' entry points. Leaders intend to carry out careful transition processes that will allow them to fully understand their pupils and their previous experiences. This will include detailed conversations with pupils' previous schools. They will use this information to help pupils to catch up on any knowledge that they may have missed. Teachers will check pupils' progress and attainment regularly. These checks will inform their teaching.
- Leaders have prepared an appropriate quantity and range of resources for pupils, such as stationery, books and online materials. Specialist materials and resources have already been purchased to support the teaching of subjects such as physical education, art and design technology. These resources are of good quality.

Paragraph 3(h)–3(j)

- There is a behaviour policy in place which sets out leaders' expectations for pupils' behaviour. The policy provides information about how leaders and staff will promote pupils' ownership of their behaviour and the importance of ensuring this is appropriate and responsible.
- Leaders have developed a purposeful counter-bullying policy. This policy states that bullying will not be tolerated in the proposed school. Leaders have set out their intended strategies for preventing and responding swiftly to any bullying.

Paragraph 4

- There is an assessment policy in place. The policy provides information about how leaders and staff will use assessment to understand and address pupils' learning needs.
- Pupils' progress will be shared regularly with parents and carers and with those responsible for governance.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a)–5(d)

- Leaders have given due consideration to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through the curriculum for PSHE, pupils will learn about a range of faiths and cultures. The curriculum will provide them with opportunities to learn about fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law. Leaders have considered how this learning will be integrated into the daily life of the school.

- Leaders intend that pupils will learn about the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships. Pupils will access talks from visiting speakers about the dangers of a range of risks that they may face. Leaders demonstrated how they will ensure that they are familiar with the likely risks that their pupils might face. Through these experiences, leaders intend that pupils will learn to make responsible choices in their future lives.
- The school's policies and curriculum include positive references to all of the protected characteristics as set out in The Equalities Act 2010.
- The standards in this part is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- Leaders have put in place all the necessary arrangements to safeguard pupils and to promote their welfare in the proposed school. The proprietor has followed current statutory guidance in the development of the arrangements to keep pupils safe.
- There is a suitable and up-to-date safeguarding policy. This policy will be published on the school's website if the proposed school opens.
- The proprietor has a clear plan to demonstrate how all staff will receive regular safeguarding training in the proposed school. Those staff new to the school will access a detailed safeguarding induction programme. The headteacher of the school will be the designated safeguarding lead.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a)–9(c), 10

- The proprietor has appropriate behaviour and counter-bullying policies in place. Leaders intend to keep detailed records of any incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders demonstrated how they would use these proposed records to assist them in forming a full picture of any individual pupil. The behaviour policy includes proportionate sanctions. The counter-bullying policy contains details of the actions that leaders will take to address any bullying incidents, including the support they will offer to both perpetrator and victim.

Paragraphs 11, 12

- The proprietor has a suitable health and safety policy, which is bespoke to the premises of the proposed school. This complies with relevant laws.
- The proprietor has put arrangements in place for the premises to be checked regularly in order to satisfy the requirements and time scales of the policy. For example, the water supply will be tested to ensure that there is no risk of legionella. Staff will receive health and safety training as part of their induction.
- Leaders have ensured that in the building where the proposed school will operate, there are a range of measures in place to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. For example, there are fire extinguishers which will be checked regularly. The building has smoke alarms. Leaders have made arrangements for regular fire drills for staff and pupils in the proposed school. There is signage around the building identifying fire doors and muster points to facilitate escape in the event of fire.

Paragraph 13

- The proprietor has drawn up a first-aid policy. This policy sets out how first aid will be administered should it be required by pupils or adults. Leaders have ensured that there will be a suitable number of staff qualified to administer first aid. The school has a well-appointed, private room for the administration of first aid.

Paragraph 14

- The proposed number of staff is well considered and will be sufficient to ensure that pupils will be supervised effectively throughout the school day. Leaders intend that pupils will be fully supervised, including at breaktimes and when undertaking visits off site.

Paragraph 15

- The school has an appropriate admissions policy. Leaders intend to establish systems to ensure that the school's admission and attendance registers will comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Leaders understand that before doing this, they must await final details from the department for education.
- Leaders have considered and will put appropriate systems in place to register pupils' attendance each day. These systems will enable leaders and staff to monitor any absences effectively. Before doing this, they must await final details from the department for education. Parents and carers will receive this information about pupils' attendance in their school reports.

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

- Leaders have put an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. Leaders have carried out a comprehensive range of risk assessments showing how they plan to take appropriate actions and thereby minimise risks to pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

Paragraphs 17, 18(2), 18(2)(a)–18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a)–19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c), 21(6)

- Leaders understand the checks that need to take place prior to staff working in the school. These include enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks, as well as identification checks on staff, including their right to work in the United Kingdom.
- Leaders understand the checks that they need to carry out in order to ensure that any agency staff that they employ are suitable to work with pupils.
- All the required checks for the proprietor and leaders for the proposed school have been completed.
- Leaders have established a single central record. This record meets the requirements for the information that it must contain, including that which relates to the leadership and management of the school.
- Leaders have completed safer recruitment training.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25

- The proposed school is located on the outskirts of Newton Aycliffe in the business and light industry district. The school is housed in a recently refurbished, double storey, well-appointed and spacious, former college premises. There are several classrooms, including those which will be used for subject specific teaching, such as art and science. There is a most pleasant dining area/ social space and well maintained, accessible activity zones, including a forest school space and multi-use games area, surrounding the school. Office and staff accommodation and storage areas are well placed throughout the school building. The proprietor has ensured that this accommodation is of an exceptionally high standard and is well maintained.

Paragraphs 23, 24, 28

- There are sufficient, separate toilet facilities for pupils, adults and visitors. All toilet cubicles can be locked from the inside to provide privacy. There is hot and cold running water; the hot water does not pose a scalding risk. There are shower facilities on the premises.
- There are facilities for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils. This includes washing facilities and a bed. A toilet, for any pupils using these facilities, is within a reasonable distance.
- Pupils attending the proposed school site will have access to drinking water throughout the day. Sources of drinking water, including water fountains, are in a separate area from the toilet facilities.

Paragraphs 26, 27–27(b), 29(1)–29(1)(b)

- The proposed school site has an attractive outdoor space for pupils to socialise when not in lessons. Formal physical education sessions will be regularly timetabled in accordance with the school's curriculum. Leaders have established impressive indoor and outdoor facilities for this.
- Classrooms are bright and spacious and include computer facilities to support pupils' learning. Acoustic and lighting conditions are suitable for the nature of the activities that will take place. A delightful outdoor classroom is in the final stages of construction. This will provide extra, additional space for pupils to thrive.
- Leaders have ensured that there is suitable external lighting. This is so that pupils, staff and visitors can enter and exit the building safely in the dark.
- It is likely that all the standards in this part will be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1)–32(1)(c), 32(1)(f)–32(1)(i), 32(1)(k), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3)–32(3)(g)

- The proprietor has set up a school website in readiness for when the proposed school opens. The proprietor is aware of the information that it must publish on its website.
- There is an appropriate range of information available for parents and pupils when they join the school. All the required policies are in place, such as those relating to admissions, curriculum, behaviour, counter bullying and safeguarding policies. All

documents will be made available for parents on request from the school, as well as available on the school's website.

- Leaders intend to provide the necessary information to the responsible local authority for pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), to enable the review of the plan.
- The proprietor has considered the information that parents will receive as part of their written reports on pupils' progress and attainment. Parents will also receive information on pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Leaders are aware that following any inspection, copies of the report must be provided to parents of all registered pupils and be published on the school's website.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33–33(k)

- The proprietor has written an appropriate complaints policy. This policy sets out the timescales for responding to complaints. The policy ensures that the procedure for making a complaint is transparent, including details of the retention of relevant information.
- This policy is published on the school's website which is due to go live following the pre-registration inspection. It is made available for prospective parents.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The proprietor and headteacher have much experience in running an alternative education provision. The proprietor has ensured that those with responsibilities for leadership and management have the appropriate knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.
- The proprietor and headteacher have ensured that all independent school standards for the proposed school are likely to be met when the school opens.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a suitable accessibility plan that meets the requirements of 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	150376
DfE registration number	840/6020
Inspection number	10318826

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	Independent special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Forest Park School Ltd
Chair	Jill Gray
Headteacher	Jacqueline Reynolds
Annual fees (day pupils)	From £76,500 for a full-time place
Telephone number	07949 903597
Website	www.forestparkschool.co.uk
Email address	j.reynolds@forestparkschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	N/A
Number of pupils of compulsory school age who have an education, health and care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority	N/A
Total hours operating as a school per week	N/A
Total hours of teaching provided per week	N/A

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	N/A	11-16	11-16
Number of pupils on the school roll	N/A	40	40

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	40
Number of part-time pupils	N/A	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	N/A	40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	N/A	40
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	N/A	40

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	N/A	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	N/A	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	N/A	12

Information about this proposed school

- The school is situated in the town of Newton Aycliffe, in County Durham.
- The school has been set up to meet the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and other associated special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The admission route for a place at the school will be via a referral from a local authority. Leaders propose to work closely with County Durham and Darlington in the first instance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to determine if the school is likely to meet the independent school standards prior to opening as a registered school.
- This is the first pre-registration inspection of the school.
- Leaders were given two days' notice of the inspection. The inspection lasted one day and was conducted by one inspector.
- The inspection was quality assured by a senior His Majesty's Inspector.
- The inspector met with the headteacher/designated safeguarding lead and the proprietor.
- The inspector undertook a tour of the school and visited the classrooms, social areas and other facilities at the proprietors' site.
- The inspector scrutinised school documents and the arrangements to safeguard future pupils. This included checking the school's safeguarding systems and the single central record. The inspector met with the school's designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Marcus Newby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2023