

Emerge School

Elgin Chambers, 22-24 Cemetery Road, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 2DL

Inspection date

13 April 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

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), 2A(1), 2A(1)(a), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d), 2A(1)(e), 2A(1)(f), 2A(1)(g), 2A(2), 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j) and 4.

- The proprietor has developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. The written curriculum policy is now supported by detailed schemes of work. Across all subjects, these schemes reflect the aims and objectives of the national curriculum. Leaders have thought carefully about how the knowledge they expect pupils to learn builds over time. Leaders have identified the small steps pupils should take in order to be successful. They have also ensured that these plans make clear the potential adaptations that might be required to meet pupils' needs. Leaders have worked hard since the last pre-registration inspection to ensure the planned curriculum is now well developed.
- Leaders' plans to ensure that pupils receive up-to-date careers guidance are now well thought out. They recognise the importance of this work to the pupils who they aim to educate. They have thought carefully about the way in which pupils will be supported to make appropriate choices about their future careers. For example, leaders have developed links with several local employers, colleges and charities that can provide pupils with meaningful interactions with the world of work. These opportunities have been carefully integrated into the school's curriculum.
- The proprietor body has ensured that leaders and staff have benefited from a broad range of training and development opportunities. Leaders have used these to good effect to enhance the knowledge and skills of their staff. For example, teaching staff have recently received bespoke training focused on trauma-informed practice and curriculum development. Leaders have many more training sessions planned. Leaders have also recently employed an additional teacher with experience teaching across key stage 3, something their staff body was previously lacking. It is now likely that staff have the appropriate knowledge and skills to implement the curriculum suitably well.

- Leaders recognise that many of their pupils are likely to have large gaps in their reading skills. Leaders have detailed plans in place to help pupils who have gaps in their phonic knowledge, including those who speak English as an additional language, to catch up quickly to enable them to access the whole curriculum.
- The proposed school timetable indicates that pupils will receive full-time education that will provide them with experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring that pupils receive high-quality personal, social, health and economics (PSHE) teaching. The PSHE curriculum is broad, offering pupils a range of appropriate viewpoints on important issues within society. Leaders plan to use their knowledge of the pupils to shape the curriculum to meet their individual needs. Leaders' plans to support teachers to deliver this curriculum effectively are well developed.
- Leaders have designed classrooms that convey a calm and purposeful environment. They have made sure that all classrooms are well equipped with suitable resources to support teachers to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Additionally, each classroom has a small breakout space that leaders intend to use to support the management of pupils' behaviour.
- Leaders intend to make checks on pupils' starting points in literacy and numeracy when they join the school. They have appropriate frameworks in place with which to measure pupils' starting points. If implemented as intended, it is likely leaders will form an accurate view of pupils' academic ability upon entry.
- Leaders aim to check that pupils with SEND have their needs accurately identified and met. Leaders intend to work closely with therapeutic care teams to complete this work. Leaders also expect teachers to play an integral role in identifying and assessing pupils' individual needs. Leaders expect that teachers will use the information gathered about pupils' individual needs to adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs.
- Leaders have ensured that these independent school standards (the standards) 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)

- Leaders are committed to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. There is nothing to suggest that the curriculum would undermine fundamental British values or that pupils would be exposed to partisan political views. Leaders plan to ensure that pupils receive fair and balanced views through the curriculum.
- Leaders have clear systems in place to ensure that pupils learn to take responsibility for their own actions and behaviours. Leaders have ensured staff are well trained in these systems.
- Leaders have well-developed plans to promote British values. For example, leaders plan to enhance pupils' understanding of democracy by growing a student council.
- Leaders have forged links with the police and fire service, as well as a local church

and the local mosque. Leaders intend to use these links to enrich the curriculum on offer to pupils and to develop pupils' understanding of public institutions.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is a member of the school's senior leadership team. Leaders are knowledgeable about how to keep pupils as safe as possible. All staff at the proposed school have undertaken recent safeguarding training. Leaders have clear processes in place to ensure staff receive this training as part of their induction. Leaders also have processes in place to ensure that staff receive ongoing training and support with regard to safeguarding.
- There is a suitable behaviour and anti-bullying policy in place. The policy sets out the consequences of any poor behaviour. There is also a physical intervention policy in place, as well as an exclusions policy. Leaders have commissioned external support to train staff in the implementation of these policies.
- Leaders have a clear system in place to record any incidents of poor behaviour. They have made sure that staff have received training in the use of the system, as well as several training sessions focused on de-escalation and trauma-informed practice. As a result, it is likely that staff have the knowledge and skills to implement these policies well.
- Leaders are keen to identify the triggers for a pupil's behaviour, and plan to use this information gathered about pupils to identify trends and patterns in pupils' behaviour.
- There is an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. A review of a range of risk assessments, including for staff with medical conditions, and the off-site and educational visits risk assessment, confirms that staff adhere to the principles of the risk assessment policy.
- There is a system in place to record admissions and attendance. These arrangements, if implemented effectively, are likely to comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 2006. Leaders have also considered the supervision of pupils during lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes. If implemented as intended, it is likely that these supervision arrangements will be appropriate.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards 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), 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(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6)

- Staff who are currently employed have been subject to all the required safeguarding checks.
- Leaders have completed safer recruitment training and have robust systems in place

to ensure that any new staff appointed will be recruited in line with safer recruitment guidance.

- Full safeguarding checks have also been carried out on members of the proprietor body. All appropriate checks are recorded on the school's single central record.
- Leaders do not intend to use supply staff. However, they are clear about the checks to be undertaken and the procedures to be followed if supply staff are used. Leaders are equally clear about the steps to take should they appoint a member of staff from overseas.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a)

- Since the last pre-registration inspection, leaders have improved the areas of the premises further. There is now a suitable medical room that has a washing facility and is located close to a toilet. Leaders have taken care to ensure all medication is securely stored within a locked cupboard.
- Leaders have ensured the proposed school has a suitable shower facility. Leaders have also ensured all windows are fitted with appropriate security locks.
- Leaders have made sure that the building is accessible for all pupils. For example, they have developed a suitable outdoor walkway to ensure all rooms on the ground floor are accessible.
- While there is an appropriate place for pupils to play outside, the space is not suitable for physical education (PE). Leaders propose to use a local leisure facility to deliver the PE curriculum. These facilities are well maintained, and leaders have ensured suitable risk assessments are in place for these settings.
- Leaders have paid great care and attention to the internal space. Rooms in the building are suitable for teaching and learning. Rooms have high ceilings and good acoustics, and most are well lit by natural light. All rooms have plenty of working light fixtures and fittings. In addition to this, all classrooms are festooned with faux foliage which creates a calm and relaxing atmosphere.
- These standards are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g), 32(4)(a), 32(4)(b), 32(4)(c)

- At the time of the inspection, the school did not have a working website. Leaders are in the process of constructing the website. On request, leaders ensured that all the required documentation under part 6 of the standards was made available, including the school's safeguarding policy, admissions policy and exclusion policy.
- Leaders demonstrate a sound understanding of their duty to support the annual

reviews of pupils with an education, health and care plan. They have ensured the staff responsible for reviewing these plans are well trained.

- Leaders understand the requirement to publish any future inspection reports to parents.
- Leaders have ensured these standards 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 complaints policy is in writing and is made available on request. Leaders plan to ensure this is on the proposed school's website once this is live.
- The proprietor body has ensured that the policy and procedure are clear and contain information about timescales.
- This policy includes information about both informal and formal proceedings. The policy states that an appeals panel would include a member who is independent of the school. Leaders have taken action to ensure these individuals are suitably skilled. A member of staff has been designated as a complaints officer to handle any complaints.
- Leaders have ensured these standards 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)

- Since the last pre-registration inspection, the proprietor body has worked closely with the headteacher and deputy headteacher to rapidly improve the aspects that needed improvement. Changes to premises and the school curriculum have been put in place carefully to ensure that these standards are now likely to be met. Leaders have put a great deal of effort into developing the provision at the school in recent months.
- The proprietor body and co-headteacher have acted to ensure that pupils' welfare, health and safety are prioritised. For example, they have ensured that all areas of the proposed school site that pose a potential risk of harm have been suitably secured and access to these areas is restricted. They have also ensured that all staff have received suitable safeguarding training. Leaders have plans to check on the impact of this training periodically.
- Leaders and members of the proprietor body demonstrated a secure understanding of the standards. They also demonstrated that it is likely that they can ensure these standards are consistently met.
- Leaders have ensured these standards are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proposed school's accessibility plan is likely to meet the requirement 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	149668
DfE registration number	861/6038
Inspection number	10278426

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	Emerge Care and Therapeutic Solutions Limited
Chair	Ian Scragg
Headteacher	Danielle Clowes
Annual fees (day pupils)	£48,750 to £58,500
Telephone number	07412279122
Website	None
Email address	danniclowes@excelgrouppltd.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	5 to 13	5 to 13	5 to 13
Number of pupils on the school roll	0	40	40

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

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

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	6
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	3
Number of staff in the welfare provision	4	8

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school will be located within a large Victorian property close to the town centre of Stoke-on-Trent. The house is situated on a quiet road. The proprietor leases the property from a local landlord.
- The school proposes to cater for pupils with a range of SEND including pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school wishes to cater for 40 pupils aged five to 13. The proprietor intends that the local authority will place most pupils at the school.
- The school does not have a religious character.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet all the standards if it is registered. This is the school's third pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the premises with the headteacher. The inspector also took account of arrangements for pupils' welfare and safeguarding. This inspection work included scrutiny of the school's checks on the suitability of staff, the safeguarding policy, the health and safety policy and the latest fire risk assessment.
- The inspector checked documentary evidence relating to the curriculum, including the curriculum policy and schemes of work.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the DSL and members of the proprietor body.

Inspection team

Alexander Laney, 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