

Meadow School

Longhedge Lane, Carlton, North Yorkshire DN14 9NS

Unique reference number (URN): 152633

Pre-registration inspection report:

1 July 2026

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards if it is registered

The purpose of this inspection was to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the proposed school's likely compliance with the independent school standards and associated requirements that are required for registration as an independent school.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

When we carry out pre-registration inspections of proposed independent schools, we report on the provider's likely compliance with part 8 of the independent school standards first. Under part 8, the proprietor is required to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards (the standards) consistently. The standard in part 8 is intended to ensure that the quality of leadership and management at the school is sufficient for that purpose.

The proprietors have a clear vision for Meadow School. Through their development of a network of special schools across the country, they have developed extensive knowledge and experience of the sector. They are using this to great effect to ensure that they will provide quality education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have a comprehensive understanding of the standards. Their expertise has been well used to ensure that policies and practices are already securely in place at the proposed school, and will be met consistently over time.

The school is located on an extensive, purpose-built site. There is capacity for greater numbers of pupils than the proprietors are registering for. However, much thought has gone into the rationale for registering for a smaller number of pupils and also how they will admit pupils carefully over time. The leaders are passionate that they will focus on providing high-quality experiences and learning for a

smaller number of key stage 3 pupils initially. While the proprietors are clear about the school's potential for the future, only when these pupils are settled, will they extend to the proposed capacity of 100.

The proprietors have developed clear systems of oversight and accountability. They have appointed an experienced principal, a special educational needs coordinator, teachers and other staff to manage the day-to-day running of the school and support the pupils. Well established systems, already used in their other schools, are securely in place to enable them to monitor important aspects of practice, such as safeguarding, health and safety compliance and performance data remotely. This information will be explored further in planned weekly visits and meetings with the school leaders. Further accountability will be developed in the future, through the establishment of a school community board, who will assist and advise on future school development.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is approved to be registered.

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Curriculum

Leaders have developed a comprehensive and ambitious curriculum for key stage 3 and key stage 4 pupils. The schemes of work are detailed and follow a variety of pathways to various qualifications. Extensive thought has ensured that the learning is mapped progressively across all subjects. The curriculum has been effectively considered to provide ambitious starting points for teachers to design learning that will challenge and engage pupils.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the range of starting points the pupils may have when they join the proposed school. They have identified how learning can be tracked back for pupils working below age-related expectations, to ensure they develop the foundational knowledge they need in all subjects. Reading resources are in place to prioritise the teaching of early reading, using a structured phonics programme. Careful thought has been given to how this will be used to take into account the age of the pupils and any negative experiences with reading they may have had prior to starting at the school.

The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and relationships and sex education and health education curriculum is well developed. Leaders have considered the needs of the pupils with SEND and have created a 'life-skills' curriculum to ensure that learning promotes pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They have identified how careers education will be used to inspire and inform pupils of future opportunities. Pupils will be given opportunities to take on roles of leadership in the school to develop their self-confidence and independence. The aim is to ensure that pupils are well prepared for future experiences in the world of work or further education.

Teaching

The proprietors have extensive knowledge of the barriers to learning that pupils may have when they join the school. They are aware that the pupils joining the school are likely to have significant gaps in learning due to social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs or not having attended school for long periods of time.

They have appointed a principal, who has experience and understanding of pupils with barriers to learning, through their work at another of the proprietors' schools. A SENCo is also in place to support all staff to teach and support pupils effectively. They will ensure that important information, in pupils' education, health and care plans, is linked to pupils' individual learning experiences. Leaders have identified a comprehensive programme of training to ensure staff have the skills and knowledge they need to adapt the curriculum effectively to support all pupils to succeed.

Classrooms have been carefully designed to support pupils to learn. The well-equipped science laboratory, food technology kitchen, design technology and art rooms reflect the high ambition the proprietors have for pupils' learning. All rooms contain a wide range of teaching resources to promote engagement, alongside areas to relax and refocus. The needs of the pupils will determine how these rooms are developed further should the school be registered.

Assessment

The leaders have created a detailed assessment tool, which identifies the small steps in learning across all subjects. Teachers will use this to evaluate pupils' starting points, including their ability to read, when they join the school. It will then support them to set future targets and design activities, which address any gaps in learning the pupils may have. Pupils' progress will be monitored over time and reported to parents and carers termly.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is approved to be registered.

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

The school's personal development programme focuses on supporting pupils to develop life skills and independence. There are detailed policies, also used in the proprietors' network of schools, which highlight how pupils will be taught about fundamental British values and equality and diversity in society. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded through the curriculum. Pupils will have a range of opportunities to learn about different cultural events, or important celebrations, across a range of different faiths and religions.

The 'life skills' curriculum has been carefully planned to support pupils to build confidence. Leaders are clear about how it will be used to promote pupils' understanding of responsibility, for themselves and others, alongside respect.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is approved to be registered.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Safeguarding

The proposed school has a safeguarding policy that takes into account the latest statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).

Leaders have introduced robust procedures to monitor and report any safeguarding concerns. They have a secure understanding of their responsibilities, along with secure knowledge of the external agencies, who offer safeguarding advice and support.

Systems to train and inform staff are well established in the proprietors' other schools and will be utilised here. These include robust induction processes for new staff and regular safeguarding updates, regarding both local and national safeguarding concerns. Pupils will be taught about how to keep themselves safe through the PSHE curriculum. Systems to enable pupils to report concerns have also been identified.

Behaviour, anti-bullying and supervision of pupils

The proprietors have high expectations for the pupils' learning and behaviour. Leaders have utilised behaviour and anti-bullying policies from within their network of schools. These policies focus on communication, relationships and supporting

pupils to build self-esteem. Leaders plan to further personalise them in the future, with input from the pupils who may attend the school.

There is a positive understanding of how the needs of the pupils with SEMH may impact on behaviour initially. Therefore, all staff will have training on how to successfully utilise de-escalation strategies. There is a drive to ensure that pupils fully understand and have ownership of the policies and practices linked to positive behaviour support.

The school environment has been planned to support calm behaviour and focused learning. Alongside the classrooms, leaders have created quiet rooms for pupils to access, by choice, throughout the building. These rooms have exit release buttons to ensure that pupils are not secluded. Resources have been identified for these rooms, such as beanbags or trampolines, to support pupils to feel calm or to ease their anxiety.

Systems to report any incidents of dysregulation or unacceptable behaviour are established and will be analysed regularly by the proprietors. The anti-bullying policy outlines the way any bullying incidents will be managed and the protocol for reporting issues to parents.

The leaders have utilised the DfE's guidance regarding the use of restrictive interventions and have detailed induction and training planned to ensure that all staff understand and enact the policies as they intend.

Health and safety, fire and first aid

The proposed school is supported to implement effective health and safety systems by the proprietors' wider company. A designated health and safety compliance officer will be based at the school to ensure that the policies for health and safety, fire safety and first aid are followed.

The site has undergone extensive refurbishment in recent months. Evidence was seen, during the inspection, of how issues raised by the fire risk assessment, carried out prior to the refurbishment, have been addressed. Certification for checks on legionella, gas and electrical safety were all available for scrutiny during the inspection. Other regular checks, such as those on fire doors, fire alarms and emergency lighting have only recently been introduced following the completion of the refurbishments. However, while these records were limited, historical records showed that these checks did take place.

The school's first-aid policy is clear and thorough. There are clear guidelines in place for the storage and administration of medication and use of the first aid boxes around the school site. Staff, already in post, are suitably trained, with plans in place for the training of future staff.

Admissions and attendance

The proposed school's admission and attendance registers contain all the information required. This information is stored on the school's electronic system. Leaders are very clear about coding absence and about systems in place to promote regular attendance. Any issues arising around attendance will be quickly highlighted and support put in place for the families.

Pupils are expected to attend school regularly. This is clearly stated in the attendance policy, which is shared with pupils and their families prior to pupils being admitted to the school. Leaders are clear about what the school will do to support the pupils, especially those who have been out of school for long periods of time. They have high expectations for pupils' attendance in order to support them to learn.

Risk assessment

The proposed school has a clear risk assessment policy. Leaders have produced extensive risk assessments, which highlight actions to be taken to ensure pupils are safe within the building. For example, any risks involved in working within the food technology kitchen and design technology classrooms.

The building is designed to reduce risks. All doors are controlled with maglocks, which release when the fire alarm is activated. This will enable the staff to ensure that pupils can move freely around the classrooms, within a controlled area. The proprietors have also conducted a range of risk assessments linked to the external space around the school. These assessments consider the needs of the pupils, who may be admitted to the school. Where modifications to the site were required to remove risk and increase security, such as through the introduction of secure fencing to the nurture garden, appropriate actions have been taken.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is approved to be registered.

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

The recruitment checks made on staff, supply staff and the proprietor; The single central record of these recruitment checks

The proprietors have a clear understanding about the importance of robustly checking the suitability of all current and future staff in the school. They have clear systems in place to ensure that all relevant checks are completed in a timely manner, prior to staff commencing employment. Information about these checks is

securely recorded on the school's single central record. The proprietors check this record regularly to ensure it is maintained effectively and robustly.

There is secure understanding of safer recruitment practices. All relevant checks are made upon adults applying for employment at the school prior to them being offered a post.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is approved to be registered.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Toilet and washing facilities, water supply, changing accommodation and showers

The building is set over 2 floors, with a working lift to support accessibility. There are ample toilets, including accessible toilets, with a supply of hot and cold water at a suitable temperature, on both floors.

The school has its own vast sports hall with single sex changing rooms, toilets and single cubicle showers for pupils to use after sporting activities.

Many classrooms have a supply of appropriately labelled drinking water. Drinking water stations are also available throughout the building.

Medical room and accommodation for pupils' therapy needs

The school has a well-equipped medical room with suitable handwashing facilities and a toilet. There is a secure fridge and medical storage facilities, along with other necessary resources for administering first aid.

Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils

As the site is so large, the proprietor does not initially plan to use it all. Instead, pupils will learn in defined sections of the building. This has been purposely planned to ensure that they can settle in quickly and so that they feel safe. Many rooms have fobbed access to ensure that pupils can move freely and safely within their learning areas. The outside area is securely fenced with access controlled from the school office.

The premises have been refurbished to a high standard. Everything in the proposed school is new, except the design technology benches, which reflect purpose and engagement in the intended learning opportunities they offer.

Classrooms are large and spacious. Leaders have put careful thought into the designation of the rooms to ensure they meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

Nurture classrooms and quiet rooms are available for pupils to work in smaller groups or help them to manage their emotions. Rooms, such as the laboratory for science, the food technology kitchen, the design technology room and the art studio, are secure to ensure that pupils cannot enter unsupervised. Resources in these rooms are of a high standard.

Provision for the health and safety of pupils is appropriately in place. The proprietors have oversight of all checks and records to ensure that the site is maintained to an appropriate standard.

Lighting and acoustic conditions

Classrooms are bright and airy, while retaining a calm and focused environment for learning. Colour choices for soft furnishings in each room have been selected to help reduce stimulation and potential distractions. Resources to support pupils' additional needs are readily available, including a laptop computer for each pupil.

All areas, across the 2 floors of the building, are well-lit with natural and internal lighting. External lighting is suitably placed around the site, including the second-floor fire escape area. Acoustics are appropriate for the intended use. In areas such as the sports hall, where acoustics may be challenging for some pupils due to their sensory needs, the proprietors have identified a suitable smaller area for sports activities.

Outdoor space

The school site has extensive outside space. Areas have been designated for outside play and socialising. Pupils will benefit from the use of tennis courts, a football pitch and a nurture garden within the safe, secure and fenced environment. Within the school there is also a full-sized sports hall and an inside gym area.

The spaces are more than sufficient for the proposed number of pupils

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is approved to be registered.

Part 6. Provision of information

The proprietor has already launched a website for the school. This includes all the necessary information for this part of the standards. They are clear about what information and policies they must make available to parents.

Formats and systems to report pupil's achievements to parents are already in place. The proprietors have a secure understanding of the requirement to report income and expenditure regarding the commissioning of places to the relevant authorities. Systems to provide information to the local authorities, regarding annual review processes for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans are robust.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is approved to be registered.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The proprietor's complaints policy meets the relevant requirements of the standards and is published on the school's website. This policy includes reference to the need for informal and formal stages. There are clear timescales included. The proprietor is clear about how to report and record complaints.

The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is approved to be registered.

The school's accessibility plan

The school has a suitable accessibility plan that fulfils the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, at the request of the registration authority for independent schools.

Inspectors checked the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

The inspector discussed the proposed school with the chair of the proprietary board and the school's director, who also sits on the proprietary board. A further meeting was held with the education manager from the proprietary board's network of schools. The inspector also reviewed relevant documents and toured the school site.

The school proposes to admit pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and autism spectrum condition.

The school does not intend to use alternative provision.

Lead inspector

Andrea Batley

His Majesty's Inspector

About this proposed school

Proprietor

Meadow School Limited

Headteacher

Sarah Groves

Type of school

Other independent special school

Capacity

100

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll

Provider's proposal: 100

Number of part-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll

Provider's proposal: 0

Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities on roll	Provider's proposal: 100
Number of pupils on roll who have an education, health and care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority	Provider's proposal: 100
Age range of pupils	Provider's proposal: 11-16
Gender of pupils	Provider's proposal: mixed
Total hours operating as a school per week	Provider's proposal: 32.5
Total hours of teaching provided per week	Provider's proposal: 25
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Provider's proposal: 20
Number of part-time teaching staff	Provider's proposal: 0
Annual fees for day pupils	£46,300 - £76,300
Email address	info@meadowschoollimited.com

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