

Kingfisher School

Trimar House, Cromwell Road, Weymouth DT4 0JH

Inspection date

2 October 2024

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, 2(1) to 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 2A(1) to 2A(2), 2A,(3), 3,3(a) to 3(j), 4

- The proposed school will become part of Melrose Education Limited (Ltd). Should the school be registered, it will be the 11th School in the group. Melrose Education Ltd has a central team of directors who work across all schools within the company. It has developed consistent procedures to check the quality of education that is provided for the pupils in its schools. Directors at Melrose Education Ltd are convincing when explaining these systems and in explaining the comprehensive induction training that they intend to deliver to ensure that staff have the subject knowledge and skills they need to teach effectively.
- There is a curriculum policy in place. The proposed school has prepared detailed schemes of work that incorporate all the aspects of the curriculum required by the independent school standards (the standards). They have purchased a full range of teaching resources so that staff will be supported in teaching the intended schemes of work. The proposed school has draft timetables in place that confirm how the schemes of work will be implemented for pupils from age six to 16.
- The curriculum sets out how it will successfully take into account pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nonetheless, the proposed school is looking to continuously improve the curriculum. It knows that sharpening a minority of curriculum plans, for example to develop pupils' early language communication, for the youngest pupils they intend to admit, is a priority for completion. There is already a scheme of work in place to teach early reading and phonics.
- There is a detailed assessment framework in place. In addition, pupils' education, health and care plan (EHC) plan targets will inform the school's assessments of pupils' academic and personal progress.
- The intended curriculum will support secondary pupils to achieve a range of GCSE qualifications, functional skills at levels 1 and 2, entry level courses and BTEC qualifications.

- A relationship, sex education and health education policy is in place and is published on the school's website. The curriculum to implement this policy includes everything it should. The proprietor intends to hold staff to account for ensuring that all pupils access this age-appropriate curriculum and it meets pupils' individual needs.
- The proposed school has organised a well-thought-out personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. The curriculum teaches about protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. It will also teach pupils about risks such as criminal exploitation and online safety. Leaders intend that the content in the PSHE education curriculum will build pupils' self-confidence, self-esteem and independence over time.
- Appropriate plans are in place to provide impartial careers education and guidance from Year 7 onwards. As part of pupils' personal learning plans, it is proposed that pupils will undertake work experience.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 5

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development will be taught through the PSHE and relationship and sex education curriculums. The proposed school intends that the development of pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence sits at the heart of this curriculum. It stipulates explicitly how the school will promote fundamental British values. This includes learning about individual liberty, criminal law and democracy and learning to respect people, including those with protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
- There is a detailed policy that sets out clearly how the school will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent the promotion of partisan political views.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 16

- The safeguarding and child protection policy is detailed and up to date with current legislation. There are detailed systems in place to check the culture of safeguarding in the school and ensure that pupils' well-being sits at the centre of the school's work. The headteacher and central staff are well-informed about how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. The proprietor has purchased electronic systems to record safeguarding concerns and provide oversight by the central team, including if any restrictive intervention happens.
- There is a behaviour policy in place that sets out the school's approach to managing behaviour. The induction programme for staff includes training so that they can follow the school's methods for helping pupils to regulate their behaviour. The anti-bullying policy includes guidance that indicates that the school is likely to be effective in preventing bullying.

- The proprietor has ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 for the intended premises of the school. The premises of the proposed school has suitable signage and fire protective equipment in place.
- The first-aid policy is detailed. First-aid boxes and supplies are well stocked. There is a lockable cabinet for the safe storage of medicines should this be required.
- The proprietor has ensured that staff understand how to maintain admission and attendance registers. There is a clear admission process that considers the individual SEND of pupils through the EHC plan consultation process. The proprietor, central staff and the headteacher have a strong understanding of the legislative requirements set out in 'Working together to improve school attendance'. They intend to monitor and check pupils' attendance stringently. The proprietor understands links between non-attendance and safeguarding risks. The school intends to work closely with an education welfare officer.
- There is a risk assessment policy in place. Leaders have detailed risk assessments in place for the proposed school. Typically, these are specific to the context of the building or activity.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

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

- There is a single central record (SCR). This includes all staff working at the school and central Melrose Education Limited staff. The proprietor has ensured that staff responsible for undertaking staff vetting checks have a strong working knowledge of safer recruitment.
- A headteacher has been appointed. The proprietor is in the process of recruiting a qualified leader of SEND, teachers and support staff.
- The proposed school does not intend to use supply staff. However, staff responsible for safer recruitment speak knowledgeably about the checks they would need to apply if supply staff were used.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- There is a high perimeter fence and lockable gates to secure the site. Magnetic locks are fitted on doors and fire exits. The proprietor has ensured that there is a suitable plan in place for the safe entry and egress of school transportation at the beginning and end of the school day. Signage, including for CCTV is in place. The entry system into the school is secure.
- The building is in good order inside and out. The proprietor has completed a full refurbishment of the building, including a new roof. All windows are double glazed.

There are five classrooms for secondary-aged pupils and two classrooms for primary pupils. There are a range of therapy and breakout rooms, a cookery room, kitchen that will provide hot lunches, a spacious staff room and a school hall. Acoustics in all rooms are suitable. Emergency lighting is in place to ensure the safe passage of pupils and school users. Lighting in all classrooms and breakout rooms is appropriate.

- There is a suitable medical room with a sink and a toilet close by.
- There are ample toilets for primary and secondary pupils, which are lockable from the inside. There is a separate accessible toilet. There are also staff and visitors' toilets that are not accessible to pupils. All toilets have an adequate supply of cold and hot water. The hot water does not present a scalding risk.
- Drinking water is labelled and readily available from the mains supply.
- There is plenty of space outside for recreation. There is a large 'L' shaped playground and a newly built multi-use games area (MUGA). Pupils under 11 will receive physical education (PE) on site. The proprietor has secured locations for PE provision locally for pupils over 11, where showers and changing rooms are available. It is intended that the MUGA will only be used for PE for pupil over aged 11 when the work to repurpose an unused area to provide changing accommodation is complete. The proprietor is aware of the need to complete this to the appropriate standard set out in requirement 23(1)(c) and aims to complete this work imminently. Considering all other works are complete, this is not unreasonable.
- There is a well-equipped cookery classroom that has been designed with safety in mind. For example, there is a lockable box for the safe storage of knives, and ovens have safety locks to prevent pupils tampering with the controls.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(4)(c)

- The proprietor is at the final stages of building a website. It is accessible to prospective parents and easy to navigate. It includes all the relevant policies and documentation that it should. For example, it includes policies describing the school's approach to managing behaviour, reducing bullying and admission arrangements and the school's child protection policy.
- Contact details for the proprietor, headteacher and how to contact the chair of Melrose Education Ltd are on the website. Information about the advisory panel will be published on the website.
- The proprietor intends to work closely with appropriate external agencies to review pupils' EHC plans. It will provide information to local authorities about looked after children and pupils with an EHC plan, when requested.
- The proprietor intends to hold the school to account for providing parents with an annual report with information about their children's progress.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33 to 33(k)

- The complaints policy is published on the school's website. The policy outlines the timescales and the stages for handling complaints. This includes ensuring that complaints can be considered on an informal basis at the first stage.
- The complaints policy sets out how complaints can be considered on a formal basis. This includes a panel hearing if a parent is not satisfied. The proposed school knows that it is a requirement for one member of any panel hearing to be independent of the management of the school and that a parent can be accompanied at a hearing should they wish.
- Leaders know to store records of complaints and any actions taken securely. Records will be available for inspection.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1) to 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- Melrose Education Limited has a detailed education leadership structure in place to support the proposed school. Staff in the central team have full knowledge of the independent school standards and bring a wide range of skills and expertise to the school. They, alongside the new headteacher, have ensured that the school is likely to meet Parts 1 to 8 of the standards.
- Melrose Education Ltd has completed a detailed refurbishment of the proposed school. The proprietor is committed to provide an inclusive and nurturing education for the pupils the school aims to admit. It has appointed a headteacher with proven experience of leading a school and strong curriculum knowledge.
- The proposed school has ensured that there will be child protection arrangements in place that are in line with current legislation. Melrose Education Ltd is committed to the training of all staff to ensure that they meet the requirements set out in current legislation and there is a positive and open culture of safeguarding. For example, there is a detailed staff induction programme, which will be mandatory for all staff to complete.
- There is an advisory board being set up. A chair of the advisory board is in place. Recruitment for additional members is at an early stage but will follow the same structure as other schools in the group.
- There are well-defined accountability systems to ensure that Melrose Education central team maintain oversight and monitor the school's work. The staff in the central team intend to quality assure the educational offer and therapeutic care that pupils will access.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor is fully aware of the proposed school's duties under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. There is an accessibility plan, which is fit for purpose. The school is likely to fulfil its responsibilities under 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	150924
DfE registration number	838/6019
Inspection number	10348758

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 other
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Kingfisher School Limited
Chair	Tracey Storey
Headteacher	David Bennett
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,000 standard to £66,000 enhanced
Telephone number	01305 566146
Website	Kingfisherschoolltd.com
Email address	info@kingfisherschoolltd.com
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	0	6 to 16	6 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	0	70	50

Reason for inspector's recommendations

- The primary classrooms are smaller than the secondary classrooms. The two primary classrooms will accommodate 10 pupils in total. This reduces the overall capacity of the school.

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	70
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	0	70
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	0	70
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	70

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	1	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	15

Information about this proposed school

- This was the first pre-registration inspection.
- The proposed school is in a residential area in Weymouth. Over time, the building has been used for a variety of uses, including being a school in previous years.
- The school intends to admit pupils with a range of complex SEND, including pupils with autism and/or social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils will have an EHC plan.
- The proposed school is expected to operate with an advisory panel. A chair of the advisory panel has already been appointed.
- The proprietor of this proposed school is Kingfisher School Limited. It is part of Melrose Education Limited. There are 10 schools in this group. There is a central team of directors who work nationally to quality assure the work of their schools. The chief executive office of Melrose Education Ltd and chair of the board is Tracey Storey.
- The proposed school does not intend to use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to evaluate the provider's readiness to open as a school. The inspector checked all relevant independent school standards, including Parts 1 to 8.
- This is the first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector evaluated a range of evidence, including policies and plans relating to each part of the standards. The inspector scrutinised health and safety documentation, including the safeguarding and child protection policy. The inspector checked the school's staff recruitment and vetting processes, and the SCR.
- The inspector held conversations with the chair of Melrose Education Limited and the central team of directors. The headteacher and/or a proprietor's representative undertook all activities relating to Parts 1 to 8 alongside the inspector.
- The inspector undertook a tour of the proposed site to evaluate the suitability of the school's premises for the purposes of being an independent school.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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