

Inspire Academy

Cornlands Road, Acomb, York YO24 3WZ

Inspection dates

19 June 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), 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h) to 2(2)(i)

- The school has planned a broad and ambitious curriculum at key stage 3 and 4. The school intends to adapt the curriculum to meet individual pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It plans to check on and identify pupils' needs on entry through a range of assessments, including reading assessments. The school has identified the essential knowledge it wants pupils to know and remember. It has ordered this knowledge in a coherent manner. The school has designed the curriculum to prepare pupils for GCSE examinations in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science.
- The curriculum includes personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). Pupils will learn about fundamental British values and the protected characteristics. They will receive careers information, education and guidance and benefit from work experience and visits to post-16 providers.

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

- The school's approach to relationships and sex education (RSE) and the content of its proposed curriculum meets statutory guidance. The school plans to consult with parents and carers about the content of its RSE curriculum. The school's RSE policy includes appropriate information about parents' right to withdraw pupils from sex education.

Paragraphs 3 to 4

- The school plans to adopt a research-based approach to pedagogy. It intends to use the same research-based approach that is used in the proprietor's academy schools. A central focus of this approach is checking pupils' understanding and adapting teaching to both secure and extend pupils' knowledge.
- The curriculum will be implemented by trained secondary school teachers with an appropriate range of subject specialisms. The school has also appointed a teaching assistant who is trained to teach phonics. The school will benefit from the proprietor's

professional development programme in pedagogy and teachers will join the proprietor's subject networks.

- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The school plans to prioritise pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Pupils will learn about other faiths, beliefs and cultures. The school plans to enrich the curriculum through visits to places of cultural interest. The school's ethos, PSHE curriculum and enrichment programme should support pupils to develop into active citizens who understand and respect those who are different to themselves.
- The school understands its responsibility to ensure that pupils are free from the promotion of partisan political views, either through the teaching of the curriculum or through other school activities.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b)

- The school has established the foundations of a strong culture of safeguarding. It has a safeguarding policy in place that is informed by statutory guidance. It has also planned for the implementation of rigorous safeguarding systems and processes, including for reporting and recording concerns. The school's designated safeguarding leads have been appropriately trained and there are plans in place for an extensive cycle of annual staff safeguarding training. In addition, the school has already established a professional relationship with the local authority and intends to work with parents to raise their awareness of safeguarding risks.

Paragraphs 9 to 10

- The school has appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies in place. These policies should promote a culture in which derogatory and discriminatory behaviour and bullying are not tolerated. The school intends to make reasonable adjustments to its approach to behaviour, informed by pupils' needs.

Paragraphs 11 to 14

- The school's health and safety policy is compliant with relevant health and safety laws. Its first aid policy outlines staff responsibilities, including about the administration of first aid. The school has undertaken an appropriate fire risk assessment. Fire equipment has been tested and installed. The school's policies and intended practices should ensure a diligent approach to health and safety.

Paragraphs 15 to 16(b)

- The school has an appropriate admissions register and electronic attendance register in place. The school knows how to maintain these registers in accordance with statutory regulations.

- The school has a risk assessment policy in place. It has identified a range of risks and completed assessments to mitigate those risks. The school's rigorous approach to the identification and assessment of risk should protect pupils' health and welfare.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3)

- The school has completed all appropriate pre-employment checks on staff who have already been appointed to work at the school. The school takes a rigorous approach to these checks. Staff will not start employment at the school before all the relevant checks have been completed. The school understands its role in relation to supply agencies and pre-employment checks on supply staff. It knows that it must receive written confirmation that relevant checks have been made on supply staff. It also knows it must make its own check on the identity of supply staff.

Paragraphs 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(6)

- All relevant pre-employment checks on members of the proprietor body have been completed. The pre-employment checks and the dates of the checks are recorded on the school's single central record.

Paragraphs 21(1) to 21(3)(b)

- The proprietor maintains a single central record of all the pre-employment checks on staff. The school has recorded on the single central record all relevant checks and the dates of those checks on those staff who have started to work at the proposed school.

Paragraphs 21(5) to 21(5)(c)

- The school knows what information it must record on the single central record about pre-employment checks on supply staff. It has a pre-prepared section of its single central record for supply staff.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(c), 24(1) to 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25 to 28(2)(b)

- The school's premises provide a safe and healthy environment for pupils. The premises include appropriate medical care, shower, washing and toilet facilities. The facilities are sufficient for the numbers of pupils proposed by the school.

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

- The school's premises include appropriate outdoor space for pupils to play. The school will consider developing the outdoor space further, as it admits more pupils. The school's outdoor space is secure from the public. The school intends to use facilities at a local sports centre and at one of the proprietor's academy schools for the teaching of physical education. Both the sports centre and academy school are on the same site as the proposed school.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f) to 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii) to 32(4)(c)

- The school knows what information it has a duty to publish and/or provide for parents, the Department for Education (DfE) and other organisations, as required. The school has constructed a website for the publication of such information.
- The school understands its responsibilities regarding contributions to the annual review of pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. The school intends for relevant staff to attend pupils' annual review meetings. Also, the school knows that it must provide commissioning local authorities with financial information about spending on provision for pupils with EHC plans.
- The school has prepared a pupil report template for completion every term to report to parents about pupils' progress.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33 to 33(k)

- The school has a written complaints policy in place. This provides appropriate information about the complaints process, allowing for both informal and formal resolution of complaints. It also includes information about timescales, complainants' rights and the school's responsibilities, including about maintaining written records about complaints.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor has a clear vision to establish high-quality provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs and other SEND. The school has recruited leaders with relevant knowledge, skills and experience to lead and manage this proposed independent special school. School staff will get continuous professional development to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively. This professional development will include coaching and mentoring by executive leaders from the proprietor's multi-academy trust.
- The proprietor intends to employ a systematic, multi-levelled approach to quality assurance and school evaluation that is already established across its academy schools. This approach will be adapted to the context of the proposed school. It will include regular reviews of the different parts of the standards.
- Rigorous staff recruitment and selection processes, continuous professional development, systematic quality assurance and school evaluation should ensure that the proposed school meets the standards.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an accessibility plan in place. The plan details how the school proposes to ensure that all pupils can access the curriculum information and the physical environment.

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	151837
DfE registration number	816/6015
Inspection number	10403463

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	Excel Learning Trust
Chair	Ian Wiggins
Headteacher	Rickie Wilson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£20,000
Telephone number	07548915677
Website	www.inspireacademyyork.co.uk
Email address	r.wilson@inspire.elc.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	11 - 16	11 - 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	40	40

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	40
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	20
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	10

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	6
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	6

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is located in the city of York. It proposes to operate from premises at Cornlands Road, Acomb, York YO24 3WZ.
- The school proposes to cater for pupils with SEMH needs. It will cater for pupils whose primary needs are SEMH but who also have other SEND.

Information about this inspection

- The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned Ofsted to carry out this pre-registration inspection. The purpose of the inspection was to determine whether the proposed school was likely to meet the independent school standards should the DfE decide to allow the school to open.
- This was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the chief executive officer of the proprietor body, the chair of the proprietor body and with other executive leaders from the proprietor body.
- Inspectors discussed the proposed school's curriculum with school leaders and looked at curriculum plans and schemes of work for all proposed subjects.
- Inspectors met with the school's designated safeguarding lead. They looked at safeguarding documentation and record keeping, including the single central record.
- Inspectors toured the school site and scrutinised a wide range of documentary evidence to check on the statutory requirements of the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Ian Rawstorne, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Bernard Clark

Ofsted 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 2025