

IMPACT Northwest Schools

Unit 1, Tower House, Tower Road, Birkenhead CH41 1FF

Inspection dates

16 February and 17 May 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(2)(b), 2(2)(h)–2(2)(i)

- The proprietor body intends to provide pupils with a broad range of subjects. This includes a linguistic, scientific and creative education. There is a suitable curriculum policy in place. Leaders have established curriculum plans that show the intended knowledge that pupils will learn. The curriculum does not undermine fundamental British values. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is likely to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

Paragraph 2(2)(d)–2(2)(e)(iii)

- The scheme of work for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education reflects the proposed school's ethos. There is a suitable range of topics covered in the PSHE education curriculum. This includes plans for pupils to learn about managing their feelings, staying physically and mentally healthy, and about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.
- Leaders have established an appropriate careers policy. Leaders intend to provide all pupils with impartial careers advice and information. Furthermore, leaders' policy and plans intend for pupils to learn about a broad range of post-16 education, employment or training options.

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

- Leaders have a suitable policy in place for relationships and sex education (RSE). Leaders plan to consult with parents and carers about the policy and the RSE curriculum when the proposed school is open. Leaders intend to offer RSE to all pupils. However, leaders have suitable arrangements in place for parents to withdraw their children from sex education, should they wish to do so.

Paragraph 3–3(j)

- Leaders' plans for the proposed school are likely to allow pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to make progress. Leaders have purchased a number of resources, such as books, stationery, furniture and computers.

These resources are available to support pupils' learning. During the inspection, leaders demonstrated an effective understanding regarding how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet pupils' various SEND.

Paragraph 4

- Leaders have written a suitable assessment policy. This policy suggests that the proposed assessment strategies will enable pupils to identify their strengths and areas for development and will provide staff with the information that they need to adapt their approaches to help pupils succeed.
- Leaders have ensured that 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(d)(iii)

- Leaders have developed an appropriate policy for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Leaders intend to support pupils' SMSC development through a wide range of planned activities, visits and visitors. These include learning about different cultures, developing an appreciation for art and music, and developing an understanding of public institutions. Leaders plan to establish a student council to promote the fundamental British value of democracy.
- Leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7–7(b)

- Leaders have established an effective safeguarding policy. This is available on the school's website and pays due regard to the most recent government guidance. The policy clearly explains how leaders intend staff to identify and respond to any concerns of a safeguarding nature. Leaders have a suitable record-keeping system in place. They intend, when the school opens, to introduce an electronic record-keeping system to improve the efficiency with which concerns are reported.

Paragraphs 9–10

- Leaders' proposed behaviour policy is suitable. It considers the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. The policy outlines appropriate rewards and sanctions for pupils. Leaders have established a suitable standard form for recording any incidents of misbehaviour.
- Leaders have written a proposed anti-bullying policy that is appropriate. It explains the different types of bullying that pupils may face. This includes online bullying. Leaders explained clearly during the inspection how they expect incidents of bullying to be identified quickly and resolved effectively by staff. The record-keeping of incidents and staff's response to these are likely to be suitable.

Paragraph 11–13, 16–16(b)

- Leaders have produced suitable policies for fire safety, first aid, health and safety, and risk assessments. Leaders frequently check the safety of the school premises. Leaders have produced a range of suitable risk assessments to reduce the risks posed to pupils. The intended policies are likely to be compliant if the proposed school opens.
- Leaders ensure that a suitably qualified professional regularly checks the firefighting equipment and the fire alarm. Fire exits are clearly indicated and free from clutter. Leaders commissioned an audit from a competent person to assess compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. This identified a concern. At the time of the inspection, leaders could not assure the inspector that this concern had been addressed adequately.
- In May 2023, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned a desk-based inspection to consider additional evidence in relation to paragraph 12. This demonstrated that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Paragraph 14

- Leaders intend that there will be approximately three members of staff supporting each class. Proposed class sizes will typically have no more than six pupils. Leaders intend to only employ suitably qualified staff, including teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are likely to be supervised effectively throughout the school day.

Paragraph 15

- The intended admissions register will use the correct codes to indicate pupils' attendance at, and absence from, school. Leaders' current admissions register is suitable. They intend to enhance this further by investing in an electronic system.
- Leaders have not ensured that all the standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

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

- The proprietor body has ensured that all the required suitability checks have been completed on all members of staff who have already been appointed. These checks include establishing the medical fitness of employees and obtaining satisfactory professional references prior to employment. Leaders demonstrated a secure understanding of safer recruitment procedures during the inspection. They record this information on a clear and compliant single central record. Leaders intend to use the same checks and procedures on proposed future staff, including any supply staff.
- Leaders have ensured that all the standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1)–23(1)(c), 24(1)–24(1)(b), 24(2), 25–29(1)(b)

- Leaders ensure that the proposed school building is maintained to a high standard. The accommodation is likely to be suitable for the education of the proposed age range and number of pupils.
- There are suitable toilet facilities for pupils. These are individual toilet cubicles for both male and female pupils that are lockable from the inside. There is an adequate supply of cold and hot water for handwashing. The temperature of the hot water is unlikely to pose a scalding risk to pupils.
- There are no showering facilities on site. However, leaders intend to use off-site facilities to deliver the physical education curriculum. They have established an effective risk assessment that is likely to ensure that pupils use the off-site shower facilities safely.
- Staff will provide pupils with fresh drinking water from clearly labelled taps. This is likely to ensure that pupils will be able to access fresh drinking water throughout the day. Taps that do not provide fresh drinking water are also clearly labelled.
- The building has five classroom spaces, one of which is currently used as a sensory room. This room is suitable for the intended use. Leaders have furnished the other classrooms appropriately. This includes desks and educational equipment, such as attractive display boards. There are also rooms dedicated for staff, including kitchen spaces and offices. All rooms have suitable acoustic conditions and lighting.
- There is an appropriate room for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils. It contains suitable washing facilities. A toilet is close to this room.
- Leaders have sole use of a small, grassed area for pupils to use during breaktime. This is appropriate for the intended number of pupils. Fencing around the grounds helps to ensure pupils' safety. Leaders intend to check the site daily for any potential risks, such as litter or broken glass. External lighting is suitable for safe entry to, and exit from, the building in the dark.
- Leaders have ensured that all the standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)–32(1)(c), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(2)–32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(d)–32(3)(e)

- The proprietor body has set up a website for the proposed school. All the required information, including the safeguarding policy, is available on this website. Leaders intend to use the local authority's standard form, supplemented by their own information, for the purpose of the annual review of any pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- Leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 32(3)(f), 33–33(k)

- The proposed complaints policy is adequate. It is published on the school's website. The policy outlines each stage of the complaints process in detail, with suitable timescales. The policy explains the complainant's right to escalate their complaint at each stage and, if appropriate, how to refer their concerns to Ofsted or the Department for Education.
- Leaders have ensured that all the standards in this part are 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)

- At the time of the February 2023 inspection, leaders had not ensured that all the standards were likely to be met.
- The proprietor body did not ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- The DfE commissioned a desk-based inspection in May 2023. This inspection considered further evidence provided by the proprietor. Consequently, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 would likely be met if the proposed school opens.
- The proprietor body has established suitable systems to offer appropriate support and challenge to leaders with regard to the quality of education that pupils will receive. These are likely to ensure that the proprietor body maintains a clear oversight of pupils' progress and of leaders' impact in providing a high-quality education for pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have established an effective accessibility plan. This details how leaders intend to improve access to the curriculum and the school building and to information for anyone who requires reasonable adaptations. For example, leaders intend to provide information and resources in large print, if required.
- Leaders have ensured that this requirement is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	149573
DfE registration number	344/6013
Inspection number	10271309

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	Impact North West Schools Ltd
Chair	Holly Cottrell
Headteacher	Jayne Jones
Annual fees (day pupils)	From £23,750
Telephone number	07568 060086
Website	www.impactnorthwestschools.org.uk
Email address	schooloffice@impactnorthwestschools.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 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	30	30

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	30

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

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	13
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	As required
Number of staff in the welfare provision	4	10

Information about this proposed school

- IMPACT Northwest Schools is proposed to be an independent special school based in the town of Birkenhead. The school will mainly admit pupils from Wirral local authority. The proposed school will operate from premises at Unit 1, Tower House, Tower Road, Birkenhead CH41 1FF.
- The proprietor body intends to cater for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. It is expected that some pupils will have an EHC plan.
- The proprietor body intends to use alternative providers, where appropriate.
- It is not proposed that the school will cater for pupils with complex needs.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the DfE to consider the proprietor's application to open an independent special school registered for 30 pupils aged 11 to 16.
- The DfE commissioned a desk-based inspection to consider further evidence. This took place in May 2023.
- The inspection was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body and the headteacher. He also met with a representative of the local authority. The inspector considered a wide range of documents, including curriculum plans and documents relating to safeguarding and health and safety. He conducted a tour of the premises.

Inspection team

Adam Sproston, 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