

# Aurora Ryefields School

80 Parker Street, Derby DE1 3HF

**Inspection date**

4 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)(i)*

- The school intends to provide linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. The school has prepared a broad curriculum that aims to provide pupils with experiences in a range of subjects. The curriculum is well tailored to the pupils that it intends to admit. The school has a written curriculum policy that sets out how subjects within these areas will be organised and taught. The school intends for pupils to have opportunities to learn and make progress in all areas of learning.
- Across all subjects, the school's curriculum is supported by detailed schemes of work. These take into account pupils' starting points, aptitudes and ages. Pupils' attainment will be checked as they start at the school. Assessments will be used to inform pupils' starting points in the curriculum.
- Pupils will be taught speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Those that are at an early stage of learning to read will be taught phonics. Pupils will study a range of books, authors and genres.
- The school has prepared a well-organised curriculum for pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and citizenship. It is well planned and sequenced and reflects the school's ethos and aims. The curriculum aims to encourage mutual respect and to promote pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics. The school intends for pupils to be prepared well for their life in modern Britain.
- Pupils will receive accurate and up-to-date careers advice and guidance. This information will help pupils to make an informed choice about their future employment and enable them to reach their full potential.

#### *Paragraphs 2A(1) to 2A(2)*

- The school has prepared a policy statement related to its provision for pupils' relationships and sex education. This policy reflects the latest requirements, as set out by the Department for Education (DfE). The school's scheme of work for relationships

and sex education is detailed and includes the required curriculum content as set out by the DfE.

- The school intends to consult parents and carers before revising the relationships education policy. It has ensured that the necessary information about relationships education is made available to parents via the school's website.

#### *Paragraphs 3 to 4*

- The school has a curriculum policy that sets out its approach to teaching. Subject schemes of work also set out the types of learning activities that will be used to help pupils gain knowledge and understanding of new content, and how they will develop skills. These are appropriate.
- The school has planned a programme of quality assurance activities to check on the quality of teaching. It will ensure that teachers adopt effective teaching methods and plan appropriate sequences of lessons. The school has planned a programme of training to ensure that teachers understand and adopt appropriate pedagogy and have suitable subject knowledge. The school intends that teaching will actively promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values.
- Pupils will be assessed when they join the school to identify their prior learning and any gaps that they may have in their knowledge. The school has an appropriate framework in place to assess pupils' learning and progress.
- The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards (the standards) in this part.

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

#### *Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)*

- The proposed scheme of work for pupils' PSHE and citizenship pays regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. It is comprehensively planned to enable pupils to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils will learn about different cultures and traditions. Leaders propose that pupils will benefit from visits to different, local places of worship.
- Proposed tutor time and assemblies will give pupils opportunities to discuss and debate various issues and key questions. These activities will help to ensure that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils will learn about democracy through the elected school council. They will learn about restorative justice and an approach that teaches pupils to be accepting, curious and empathetic. Pupils will contribute to the lives of those locally and more widely by supporting different charities.
- Leaders will make frequent classroom visits and check the quality of the PSHE curriculum to assure themselves that staff do not promote partisan political views. The school's 'visiting speakers' policy sets out the checks that the school will carry out on the information that visitors share with pupils.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraphs 7 to 7(b)*

- The proposed school has a comprehensive safeguarding policy which incorporates the most recent statutory guidance. The policy sets out the procedures staff will follow should there be a safeguarding concern about a pupil or a member of staff.
- The school has identified and trained several designated safeguarding leaders. They have well-thought-out plans for the systems and procedures they will put in place to ensure pupils' safety.
- The school has planned for staff induction and ongoing safeguarding training. The proposed quality assurance of safeguarding practices will ensure that those responsible for the school have effective oversight.

#### *Paragraphs 9 to 10*

- There are appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies in place. These make explicit references to the likely needs and potential vulnerabilities of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The school will keep a record of serious misbehaviour and bullying incidents. These records will include the actions leaders take in response to such incidents. Policies indicate that leaders will have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. A well-planned programme of training will support staff to manage behaviour.

#### *Paragraphs 11 to 13*

- There is an appropriate health and safety policy in place. The school has put in place arrangements, systems and monitoring processes to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. The school has created a systemised schedule of the checks that it plans to carry out.
- There is an appropriate first-aid policy. There are plentiful first-aid boxes. There is a well-planned system in place to record any incidents.
- The school has ensured that it is compliant with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) order 2005. A detailed risk assessment has been completed by competent persons. There is an appropriate emergency evacuation plan. The school will ensure that fire extinguishers are checked regularly.

#### *Paragraph 14*

- The school intends to employ a suitable number of staff to ensure that there are enough staff to supervise pupils properly throughout the school day.

#### *Paragraph 15*

- The school's proposed admission and attendance registers contain the necessary information.
- Pupils' attendance will be recorded on an electronic system. This shows the codes that staff will use to record the reasons for pupils' absence. The school will use this to identify any trends or patterns of absence.
- The school has a written attendance policy.

### *Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)*

- There is a written risk assessment policy. This contains information about how leaders and staff will identify risks and put into place appropriate control measures. The school has developed a range of risk assessments in preparation for the proposed school to open. All staff will be trained to assess risk.
- The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

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

### *Paragraphs 18(2) to 21(7)(b)*

- The school knows the checks to make on staff before they can be permitted to work with pupils. They will ensure that only suitable adults work with pupils.
- The school has carried out the necessary checks on the proprietor body and the members of the governing body. These are recorded on the single central record.
- The school will record the necessary recruitment checks on the single central record. It knows what information is required should it choose to appoint supply staff through an agency.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

## Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

### *Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(c)*

- Premises and accommodation have been prepared well to cater for pupils. They are fit for purpose and well maintained.
- There are suitable, separate toilet and washing facilities that are provided for the sole use of pupils.
- The school has changing rooms and showers for pupils to use when they are in receipt of physical education (PE).

### *Paragraphs 24(1) to 24(1)(c)*

- A room has been set aside for the care of pupils who are sick or injured. It is suitably equipped and near a toilet.

### *Paragraphs 25 to 27(b)*

- The building has been adapted to ensure that the accommodation is suitable and safe for the proposed school.
- Classrooms have suitable acoustics and are well ventilated.
- Internal and external lighting are appropriate.

### *Paragraphs 28(1) to 28(2)(b)*

- Drinking water is suitably identified, readily available and is separate from toilet facilities.
- Toilets have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. The hot water does not pose a scalding risk.

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

- The premises has sufficient outdoor space for pupils to socialise and for PE lessons to take place.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

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

- The school has a live website. This includes key information as required, including publication of the school's safeguarding policy and details about how the school will manage complaints.
- The school will ensure that parents have access to all the information and policies required via its website. These include the admissions, behaviour, curriculum, safeguarding and relationships education policies.
- The school has a suitable format for reporting to parents about pupils' achievements while at school.
- The school intends to provide information to local authorities regarding pupils who are looked after and pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, when requested. Leaders will work with local authorities to facilitate this.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

*Paragraphs 33 to 33(k)*

- The school has a suitable complaints policy. The policy sets out the procedures to follow should a parent wish to make a complaint. It sets out what parents should do if they are not satisfied with the response to, or outcome of, a complaint. The policy identifies informal and formal processes, with appropriate timescales. It includes how records of any complaints received, and subsequent actions taken by the school, will be recorded and retained.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor body, local governance, and school leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles. They know and understand the standards.
- The proprietor body is committed to providing a quality, bespoke curriculum, matched to the needs of pupils with SEND. There is a strong focus on providing for pupils' welfare and well-being.
- The proprietor body has established robust quality assurance procedures to ensure that the school continues to meet the standards over time. It demonstrates the understanding necessary to ensure that the standards will be met securely and consistently over time.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school's accessibility plan identifies how leaders will make sure that its curriculum, documentation and premises are accessible for pupils with SEND.
- The school is likely to meet the regulation in this part.

## **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	151750
DfE registration number	831/6019
Inspection number	10396827

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 school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Beechkeys Limited
Chair	Sharon Pearson
Headteacher	Paul Foxton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£67,500
Telephone number	01332 985333
Website	<a href="http://www.theauroragroup.co.uk">www.theauroragroup.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:paul.foxton@the-aurora-group.com">paul.foxton@the-aurora-group.com</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

### Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 19	5 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	72	72

### Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	72
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	72
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	72
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	72

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	15
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	20

## Information about this proposed school

- This proposed school is located in the City of Derby. It intends to provide full-time education for up to 72 pupils with SEND from five to 19 years old. Pupils will have a diagnosis of autism and/or social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- Some pupils who attend the school may be in the care of the local authority.
- Leaders do not intend to use the services of any alternative provisions.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection. It was commissioned by the DfE to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the standards if it is given permission to open.
- The inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body, the chair of the governing body, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the school's business manager and the designated leaders for safeguarding.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the proposed site.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including policies, curriculum plans and assessment.
- The inspector checked the arrangements for safeguarding and staff recruitment.

## Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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