

Maple House School

Maple House, Maple Road, Bournville, Birmingham B30 2AE

Inspection date

27 November 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(1) to 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h) to 2A(1), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d) to 2A(2), 3 to 4.

- The proprietor intends for the proposed school to provide education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They intend for pupils' primary SEND to be related to autism. However, leaders recognise that pupils are likely to have a broad range of overlapping SEND, including those related to pupils' social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Leaders expect that pupils will have an education, health, and care (EHC) plan. Leaders have a wealth of experience of working with pupils with the types of SEND they are seeking to cater for.
- Leaders have systems already in place to ensure that pupils' SEND are accurately identified and assessed when they join the school. For example, leaders plan to work closely with those who know the pupils best, as well as a range of therapeutic experts, including speech and language therapists, clinical psychologists and occupational health therapists to better understand pupils' needs when they join the school.
- Leaders intend to use the information that they gather about pupils to build bespoke curriculum pathways. They aim that each pathway will support pupils to make strong progress toward both their academic and their personal health goals.
- Leaders intend to work alongside the therapeutic staff at the school to ensure that the curriculum is delivered in a suitable way, taking account of pupils' individual needs and vulnerabilities. To support this work, 'pupil passports' will outline pupils' individual needs as well as the tools and strategies that should be used to support pupils.
- Leaders have given much consideration to the individual needs of the pupils they are likely to cater for. They have prioritised pupils' emotional and wider personal development within the curriculum to account for pupils' needs. Leaders understand the challenges that many pupils are likely to have faced in their social lives and their education in the past. To overcome these challenges, leaders have developed a broad and well-considered personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum that

offers pupils a range of appropriate opportunities to learn about important issues such as consent, personal safety and mental health.

- Leaders intend to offer pupils ample opportunity to develop their independence and confidence in a range of social settings. They intend that pupils will work closely with the local community to achieve this.
- The proprietor has taken the most up-to-date statutory guidance into account to design the content for the school's relationships education and its relationships and sex education (RSE) programmes. The proprietor intends to consult with parents and carers about the content of the RSE curriculum. This will likely give parents the information that they need to make an informed choice about their right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory aspects.
- Leaders are passionate about developing pupils' love of reading. This is central to their ambitions for the school's curriculum thinking. They recognise that many pupils are likely to have large gaps in their reading skills. To address this, leaders have appropriate plans in place to check on pupils' reading ability when they join and to help pupils catch up quickly where necessary.
- The proprietor has committed considerable resources to developing the reading provision. This includes the creation of a well-resourced school library and reading boxes in each classroom. Leaders intend that pupils will play a key role in the future curation of these resources.
- The proprietor has developed a broad curriculum across key stages 1 and 2. Here, the written curriculum policy is supported by detailed schemes of work for each subject. Across all subjects, these schemes reflect the aims and objectives of the national curriculum. Leaders have also given careful thought to how the knowledge they expect pupils to learn builds over time.
- The curriculum is less well developed across key stages 3 and 4. While the proprietor has applied to open the school for pupils between the ages of 5 to 15, leaders do not intend to admit pupils into each of these key stages until later in the academic year. In preparation for this, leaders have begun to outline the precise knowledge that pupils will learn across each subject in key stages 3 and 4. Across some subjects, for example, English and mathematics, these plans are well developed. However, this is not the case for all subjects. The proprietor intends to develop the curriculum further once they have employed specialist subject teachers in these areas. Leaders have clear and appropriate plans to develop the expertise of staff and the curriculum before admitting pupils into these key stages.
- Leaders' strategy to ensure that pupils receive up-to-date careers guidance are well considered. They have thought carefully about the way pupils will be supported to make appropriate choices about their future careers. For example, leaders have well established links with several local and national employers who can provide pupils with meaningful interactions with the world of work.
- Leaders have ensured that these independent school standards (the standards) are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- Leaders are committed to developing pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) understanding. They have carefully crafted a wide range of opportunities to ensure pupils play a central role in supporting both the proposed school community and the local community in which the school is situated. For example, leaders have made strong links to local charities, community groups and places of worship. They have given thought to how these interactions will add to pupils’ wider development. It is likely these opportunities will support pupils to develop as confident individuals with an appreciation of the fundamental British values, as well as their social and moral responsibility.
- Leaders have taken appropriate steps to ensure that the curriculum will not undermine fundamental British values. They intend to make sure that pupils will not be exposed to partisan political views.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is also a member of the proposed school’s senior leadership team. The DSL brings a wealth of experience to the role and is knowledgeable about how to keep pupils safe and build a culture of safeguarding.
- Leaders know well the likely vulnerabilities that pupils may have. Leaders have developed systems to ensure that all adults working with pupils understand how to mitigate these risks. For example, leaders have clear systems ready to record and report any concerns about pupils’ safety and welfare. They also have appropriate systems in place to deal with any allegations made against members of staff.
- Leaders have high expectations of all staff regarding their participation in safeguarding training. All staff currently employed at the school benefit from a suite of safeguarding training modules that focus on the risks most pertinent to the school’s context as part of their induction.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a) to 9(c), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a) to 16(b)

- There is a suitable behaviour policy in place. This sets out the consequences of any poor behaviour. There is also a physical intervention policy in place, as well as an appropriate exclusions policy.
- Leaders have a wealth of experience in managing the behaviour of pupils who struggle to regulate their emotions. They understand how and when to use restraint should they need to. Leaders plan to monitor carefully any physical interventions that do take place and use this information to provide additional support to staff and pupils as necessary.
- Leaders recognise the importance of positive working relationships between pupils and staff. To support this, leaders plan for all staff to receive de-escalation training as part of their induction training.
- Leaders are keen to identify the triggers for a pupil’s behaviour and intend to use this information to identify trends and patterns in pupils’ behaviour. They intend to share this information with staff and use it to shape the future training that staff receive. As

a result, it is likely that staff will have the knowledge and skills to implement the behaviour policy well.

- The anti-bullying policy includes reference to the protected characteristics, as well as how concerns about bullying will be addressed.
- The school has comprehensive policies in place for health and safety, and first aid. The proprietor has provided support and guidance to ensure these policies are likely to be implemented effectively.
- The fire risk assessment confirms that the school is compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. There are appropriate measures in place for fire evacuation and the maintenance of fire equipment.
- The proprietor has actively employed staff who have a range of previous experiences and expertise in supporting pupils with SEND. There will be a suitable number of skilled staff to supervise pupils safely, including during break and lunchtimes.
- Leaders plan to maintain an admissions register that will include all of the required detail as set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- The risk assessment policy details how assessments will be carried out and how the risks identified will be minimised. There are well thought out systems in place to ensure that any incidents or near misses are thoroughly investigated, and lessons learned.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

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

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

- The proprietor makes sure that the right safeguarding checks take place during recruitment. Staff who are currently employed have been subject to all the required safeguarding checks. These checks are recorded with accuracy on the single central record (SCR).
- Leaders do not intend to use supply staff. However, they are clear about the checks to be made and the procedures to be followed if supply staff are used.
- Leaders are clear about the steps to take should they appoint a member of staff from overseas. To support this, the SCR contains space to record any required overseas background checks.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

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 29(1)(b)

- The proposed school is set in a large two-story building that was previously used as study and office space for a university. The accommodation is maintained to a high standard. Leaders have worked diligently to achieve this. All entry and exit doors to

the building have newly-fitted magnetic locks. These are in good working order and ensure the building is secure.

- Throughout the building, the lighting and acoustics make for a suitable learning environment. For example, leaders have invested in specialised carpet tiles in classrooms to reduce any excess echo in these spaces.
- There is a purpose-built area for the teaching of physical education (PE). Leaders intend to use this space, as well a secure playing field and park, located a short walk from the school. There is a risk assessment in place for the journey to this space and for the use of it.
- The proprietor has made sure that pupils will always have access to drinking water. There is adequate external lighting around the school site.
- There is a small, temporary medical room. The room has a portable sink, a suitable bed and is situated next door to a toilet facility. Leaders are currently fitting a larger medical room with all the required equipment.
- Leaders have given due consideration to the accessibility of the building. They have made arrangements to ensure the site is accessible for all pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1) to 32(1)(g), 32(1)(j) to 32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(c) to 32(3)(d), 32(3)(f) to 32(4)(c)

- The proposed school's website contains the relevant policies as set out in the standards. Contact details for the proprietor and the chair of the governing body are made available on the website.
- The school intends to provide regular communication to parents and carers about their child's progress and attainment.
- The proprietor understands the requirement to publish inspection reports on the school's website once they are available.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33 to 33(k)

- The complaints policy is in writing and is made available on the proposed school's website.
- The proprietor has ensured that the policy is clear and contains information about how to raise a complaint, as well as the timescales associated with each stage of the complaints process.
- Leaders have taken steps to create a culture of openness. The school has a dedicated whistle-blowing policy that outlines to staff the steps they should take should they wish to raise an anonymous concern about the school.

- Leaders demonstrate a willingness to learn from any complaint they receive to adjust and adapt their practice as necessary.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1) to 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor has a clear and ambitious vision for the proposed school. Leaders bring with them a wealth of experience from working with pupils with SEND. They are knowledgeable about the needs of the pupils they intend to cater for and intend that all staff working at the proposed school are equally well skilled.
- Leaders, governors and the proprietor have developed a secure system of quality assurance. The proprietor has learned lessons from previous schools that they have opened and attempted to open. They employ a range of staff to monitor and evaluate the work of the intended school, and to monitor compliance with the standards.
- Leaders intend to use their systems of quality assurance to identify and respond to emerging needs within the school, as they arise.
- Leaders and members of the proprietor body demonstrated a secure understanding of the independent school standards. They also demonstrated that it is likely that they can ensure these standards will be consistently met.
- The headteacher has already appointed several staff who have a secure understanding of the needs of pupils who are likely to attend the school. The headteacher's plans to appoint additional staff are carefully considered to ensure that all aspects of the quality of education and pupils' welfare are supported.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school's accessibility plan fully reflects the statutory requirements. Leaders have ensured that the school is likely to meet the requirements of 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	151203
DfE registration number	330/6144
Inspection number	10360343

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	Maple House School Ltd
Chair	Jawad Sheikh
Headteacher	Jayson Rawlings
Annual fees (day pupils)	£59,000
Telephone number	0121 850 1222
Website	www.maplehouseschool.com
Email address	jayson.rawlings@maplehouseschool.com

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	5 to 15	5 to 15
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	72	72

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	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	9	16
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	5	15

Information about this proposed school

- This proposed independent special school is located in a large property close to the centre of Bournville village in Birmingham. The proprietor owns the property and the surrounding green space.
- The school proposes to cater for pupils with a range of SEND.
- The school wishes to cater for 72 pupils aged five to 15. It is the proprietor's intention that local authorities will place most pupils at the school.
- The school does not have a religious character.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to determine if the school is likely to meet the standards if the DfE decides to approve the request to register this school.
- This is the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector held discussions with the proprietor, the headteacher, the executive headteacher as well as other school leaders.
- The inspector made a tour of the school to check the suitability of the proposed premises against the relevant standards. He also looked at a wide range of documents and policies, including those relating to the curriculum, behaviour, health and safety and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Alexander Laney, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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