

Beacon Independent School

15 Market Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 6JX

Inspection date

16 July 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)(d)(ii), 2(2)(h) to 2(2)(i)

- The proprietor body and school leaders have a clear and well-defined vision for the proposed school. They aim to create a nurturing and inclusive environment tailored to pupils with social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs. The school will prioritise personalised education, trauma-informed care and strong family engagement. It is anticipated that some pupils will also present with additional needs, including autism and moderate learning difficulties (MLD). To support these diverse needs, the school will offer tailored interventions, flexible curriculum delivery, enrichment activities and robust safeguarding practices to foster resilience, confidence and lifelong learning skills.
- Beacon Independent School's proposed curriculum is broad, balanced and inclusive. It encompasses core subjects such as English, mathematics and science, alongside creative arts, physical education, humanities, computing and personal, social, and health education (PSHE). The curriculum integrates cross-curricular themes, supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and promotes personal development and cultural awareness.
- At the last pre-registration inspection, the proprietor body had not ensured that in all subjects there was a clear enough identification of what pupils were expected to learn and when. This meant that some of these independent school standards (the standards) were not met. Since then, the school has ensured that, for all areas of the curriculum, there are clear, planned sequences of lessons that identify in detail what will be learned, when and in what order.
- Covering both primary and secondary phases, the curriculum is based on the national curriculum and relevant examination syllabuses. The school will identify pupils' SEND needs through a combination of initial paperwork reviews, baseline assessments and transition visits. Individual needs will be further assessed using student passports, termly targets and ongoing monitoring. Support strategies will include personalised interventions, collaboration with external agencies and bespoke approaches to ensure each pupil receives the care and education they need to thrive.

- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 2(2)(e) to 2(2)(e)(iii)

- The PSHE curriculum is designed to promote inclusivity, respect for diversity and personal development. It covers key topics such as health, relationships, online safety and citizenship, while also embedding important themes like democracy, anti-racism and cultural awareness. Through this approach, pupils are encouraged to think critically, develop strong social skills and become responsible, informed and empathetic citizens well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The careers curriculum complements this by offering vocational pathways and a focus on functional skills. It supports pupils in exploring their aspirations and career options through personalised guidance and enrichment opportunities. Emphasising ambition, self-awareness and practical preparation, the programme equips pupils for further education, employment or training, helping them navigate a range of future opportunities with confidence.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a) to 4

- In keeping with the school's nurturing ethos, leaders demonstrate the knowledge and expertise needed to support pupils' self-confidence, self-esteem and motivation. This supportive environment is expected to contribute positively to pupils' academic progress across a range of subjects.
- To enrich learning beyond the classroom, the school will offer a variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs tailored to pupils' interests, including chess, art, coding and sports. Additionally, the school plans to organise educational visits, utilise local amenities such as parks and sports centres and host cultural celebrations. These activities are designed to foster social development, broaden experiences and promote awareness and appreciation of diversity.
- School leaders have confirmed that teachers for English, mathematics and science will hold qualified teacher status and will be subject specialists. Other teaching staff will include a balanced mix of qualified and unqualified teachers, ensuring a blend of expertise and support across the curriculum.
- During the previous pre-registration inspection, the proprietor body had not placed sufficient emphasis on how the proposed curriculum would be adapted to meet the broad range of pupils' needs that the school aims to support. This meant that some of these standards were not met. Since then, they have dedicated significant time to refining their processes for identifying, assessing and providing for pupils with SEND. There is now a well-defined approach and shared understanding of how assessment and external services will be used to tailor the curriculum accordingly.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 2A(1) to 2A(2)

- The relationships and sex education (RSE) policy sits alongside the PSHE policy. It outlines provisions for both primary-age and secondary-age pupils. Leaders intend to consult with parents and carers on an individual basis about the content of the policy.

The RSE policy references the right of parents and carers to withdraw their child fully or partly from sex education lessons.

- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

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

Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is thoughtfully planned and wide-ranging. A detailed calendar of events includes observances such as World Mental Health Day, Anti-Bullying Week and cultural celebrations, for example Ramadan and Hanukkah. These themes are embedded across the curriculum to promote inclusivity, respect for diversity and a strong sense of community.
- Pupils' moral and social development will be supported through structured debates on current affairs, encouraging critical thinking and balanced perspectives. Enrichment activities, including clubs, group projects and educational trips, will nurture social skills such as teamwork, empathy and active citizenship. Cultural celebrations and visits to places of worship will further enhance pupils' understanding of different beliefs and traditions.
- There is no indication in the curriculum or wider documentation that fundamental British values will be undermined. On the contrary, school leaders clearly articulate how these values, such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, will be actively promoted. This includes curriculum content, cultural events and opportunities for pupil voice such as contributing to decisions about the development of outdoor learning spaces.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1)(c)

- The proposed safeguarding systems are clearly defined and well articulated. The school plans to replicate the robust safeguarding framework already in place at its partner school, aiming to establish a strong culture and high standards of safeguarding. These systems are designed to align with and meet the expectations set out in the current national statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Staff will receive ongoing safeguarding training, with regular updates to ensure they remain informed and confident in applying the school's procedures. School leaders already demonstrate a strong understanding of the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance and have implemented systems, processes and policies that reflect these requirements.
- During the last pre-registration inspection, the school's proposed safeguarding arrangements did not align with the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. At that time, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) was intended to be both the headteacher and the chair of the proprietor body, which compromised the

independence required for the role. This meant that this standard was not met. Since then, the school has identified a second member of staff to assume the DSL role, ensuring a greater separation of responsibilities. Additionally, a deputy DSL has recently been assigned, establishing a more transparent and robust safeguarding structure. These changes have introduced the necessary measures to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities can now be carried out with appropriate independence.

- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 9, 10

- The school's behaviour policy precisely articulates the carefully considered approach needed to support pupils with complex and challenging prior school experiences and additional needs. Systems to record and analyse behaviour systems are positive and should give leaders an understanding of behaviour patterns and necessary actions.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 16

- Detailed health and safety policies, related risk assessments and first aid policies are in place. All current proposed teaching staff are first-aid trained, and it is proposed that new staff will be trained in first aid when appointed. The headteacher is also trained in paediatric first aid. Systems and processes for first aid are robust. There is a high profile of staff training, which means that all first-aid trainers are also competent in food hygiene.
- A fire risk assessment of the building was carried out in June 2025. Leaders have already responded to all the action points. Health and safety processes are thorough and indicate where all checks, including those for fire extinguishers and emergency lighting, will be recorded. Fire safety is intended to be included in the staff induction process.
- Risk assessments support efforts to raise awareness of the complexities of managing the site and keeping pupils safe. A bespoke risk assessment policy clearly articulates expectations around detailed and accurate risk assessment.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 14, 15

- There are currently no pupils attending the school. The information the proposed school plans to include on the admissions register aligns with the Department for Education's guidance.
- The staff-to-pupil ratio suggests that pupils will likely be suitably supervised throughout the school day. It is intended that pupils will work with different teachers but be grouped by similar age classes.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards 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)(a) to 18(2)(e), 18(4) 19(2)(e), 19(3) to 25(5)(c)

- The school has established clear and well-defined recruitment and staff selection procedures, which are likely to meet the requirements of part 4 of the standards. The recruitment process is carefully structured and consistently applied, ensuring that only individuals who share the school's high expectations for safeguarding are appointed. Inspectors reviewed recruitment records for current staff and found robust evidence that safeguarding is a high priority throughout the process.
- The single central record (SCR) template appears compliant with the statutory guidance outlined in 'Keeping children safe in education' (2024). At the last pre-registration inspection, some of the necessary checks required to assess staff suitability were not completed or recorded on the SCR. These included prohibition checks for teachers, medical fitness checks for staff and section 128 checks for leaders. This meant that some of these standards were not met. However, since that inspection, this has been corrected. Currently, for staff already in post, all required checks, as set out by the Department for Education, are documented on the SCR.
- Staff induction processes are robust and well structured, supported by a comprehensive checklist. This ensures that all reasonable steps are taken to familiarise new staff with the school's systems, policies and procedures as quickly and effectively as possible.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards 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 29(1)(b)

- The proposed school is situated on one of the main pedestrian streets in Lichfield city centre, occupying the top two floors of a large Victorian building. As the premises are shared with other occupants, the proprietor body has implemented thoughtful security measures to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. For example, doors leading from communal areas are secured with keypads to prevent unauthorised access to classrooms and learning spaces. To further enhance security and minimise disruption, pupils will enter and exit the school via the rear of the building, rather than through the main high street entrance.
- The premises have been refurbished and decorated to a high standard. The building has offices, toilets, a kitchen and medical facilities, and all rooms are well lit and have good acoustics.
- Two classrooms are on the first floor of this building, along with a space for intervention and inclusion. On the third floor, there is an additional classroom. All these rooms are well lit and acoustically suitable for learning.
- At the last pre-registration inspection, the school had not provided separate washing facilities exclusively for pupils, and one tap lacked adequate temperature control, posing a scalding risk. This meant that some of these standards were not met. Since then, the school has consolidated on a single site and addressed both issues. There is

now one unisex toilet for pupils and a separate staff toilet, each equipped with hot and cold running water, handwashing facilities and regulated water temperatures.

- At the time of the last inspection, there was no designated outdoor space for pupils to play, and no showering facilities were available for those over the age of 11. Although the school had identified a local sports centre as a potential solution, no formal agreement was in place. This meant that some of these standards were not met. Since then, both matters have been resolved. A written agreement in principle now allows the school to use the sports centre for physical education and access to showers. The centre offers a wide range of amenities, including a swimming pool, gymnasium, squash and football courts, tennis courts and an exercise studio. Pupils will be transported to and from the centre by car, and showers will be available during these sessions.
- Although the school lacks a dedicated outdoor space for physical education or social activities, a large, grassed area is within 100 metres of the building. Leaders have appropriately assessed the risk of using this space, and plans are in place for staff to escort and supervise pupils during its use.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(1)(e), 32(1)(f) to 32(3)(f)

- All required policies, documents and information for the pre-registration inspection were provided promptly. Where appropriate, the policies reflect the school's intention to support pupils with SEMH needs and other additional needs. The documents are clear, well presented and often written in accessible language, helping to raise expectations about the quality and ethos of the provision.
- The school's temporary website contains much of the information necessary to meet the standards. This includes curriculum overviews, admissions guidance and key policies such as behaviour and safeguarding. The school plans to use its website as a central hub for essential information, including curriculum details, enrichment opportunities and celebratory content, shared with appropriate parental permissions. Additionally, social media platforms will be utilised to enhance communication with parents and carers, share updates and showcase school events, thereby promoting accessibility and engagement with the broader community.
- Leaders have given careful thought to how policies will be shared with staff. Daily briefings will not only provide updates on day-to-day matters but also serve as opportunities for staff to engage with and contribute to the development of policies, procedures and wider school improvement initiatives.
- Parents will receive regular reports detailing their child's achievement in each subject, as well as progress against the targets outlined in their education, health and care (EHC) plans. Leaders have a clear understanding of how relevant staff will contribute to the annual review process for pupils with EHC plans. Notably, the school intends for both parents and pupils to play an active and meaningful role in this process.

- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- At the time of the last inspection, the school's complaints policy outlined roles and responsibilities for a governing body, including a designated complaints governor. However, as the school intends to operate without a governing body, the proposed procedure could not be implemented as written. Since then, the policy has been revised to reflect the school's governance structure. It now outlines a process involving independent, nominated individuals who can serve as impartial members of complaints panels, thereby ensuring fairness and transparency.
- The complaints policy is clear and precise and outlines what needs to be done at different stages. The aim is to resolve complaints informally, but more formal steps are outlined in the policy, including a panel hearing. It outlines suitable timeframes for addressing complaints. Leaders have articulated transparent systems and processes for learning from complaints, thereby reducing the likelihood of the issue recurring. The complaints policy is on the website and accessible to parents when needed.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards 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

- At the last inspection, the proprietor body lacked a secure understanding of the standards and the statutory duties involved in running a school. Lines of accountability were unclear, and several policies referenced a governing body, despite the school not having one. Therefore, these policies were not suitable for their intended purpose. This meant that these standards were not met. Since then, the proprietor body has revised all policies to reflect the school's actual governance structure and has ensured that all current staff now have a clear and secure understanding of the standards.
- The proprietor body has a clear rationale for why it wants to open the school: to support pupils who have SEND linked to SEMH, autism and MLD needs. The provision aims to provide therapeutic and restorative interventions to develop pupils' emotional health and well-being, as well as their engagement in learning, while accessing an ambitious curriculum both in the classroom and through engagement in the local community.
- During the pre-registration process, the proprietor body demonstrated the skills, knowledge and experience linked to maintaining the standards consistently over time. All are experienced in running educational provisions and/or specialists in supporting pupils with the needs of the pupils at the proposed school. The proprietor body has established systems to ensure the quality of provision at the school. This, in turn, will support its work in consistently meeting the standards.

- Leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the standards. They are keen to further develop the proposed school, building on what they have already achieved in preparing for the registration process.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor body has ensured it has a suitable accessibility plan in place that meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The proposed school considers and plans for the needs of pupils with SEND.

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	151892
DfE registration number	860/6104
Inspection number	10406529

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 category	Independent special school
Proprietor	JLE Page Education Ltd
Chair	John Page
Headteacher	John Page
Annual fees (day pupils)	£50,000 to £62,000
Telephone number	01543253311
Website	www.beacon-school.uk
Email address	jlepageeducation@hotmail.com

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	9 to 16	9 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	18	18

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	18
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0

Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	18
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	18
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	18

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school is located on the first and second floors of 15 Market Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 6JX. This is located above one of the main shopping streets in Lichfield. However, the pupils' entrance to the school is located to the rear of the building.
- The three members of the teaching staff are also the proposed school's leaders and members of the proprietor body. The proposed school does not intend to operate with the oversight of a governing body.
- The proposed school does not intend to use any alternative provision.
- The proposed school does not have a religious character.
- The proposed school is designed to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with EHC plans, with a particular focus on those with autism, SEMH needs, MLD and specific learning difficulties.

Information about this inspection

- The DfE commissioned this pre-registration inspection to determine whether the proposed school would be likely to meet the standards if granted permission to open. This was the proposed school's second pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector carried out a range of activities to ascertain if the proposed school was likely to meet the standards. These activities included meeting with members of the proprietor body, reviewing a broad range of policies, reviewing curriculum aims and examples of schemes of work, as well as reviewing leaders' intended systems and procedures for managing the school.
- The inspector toured the proposed school's premises and visited the local play area that the school intends to use for outdoor play.
- The inspector met with the proprietor body, which consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and designated safeguarding lead, to discuss safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection team

Chris Pollitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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