

Odyssey House School – Bloomsbury

45 Russell Square, London WC1B 4JP

Inspection date

27 March 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

All paragraphs

- Leaders have developed ambitious curriculum and assessment policies that thoroughly consider the needs of pupils with education, health and care plans (EHC plan) for their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They specifically take into account the various complex needs of pupils with emotionally based school avoidance and autism spectrum disorder.
- The proposed curriculum thinking for pupils of compulsory school age covers all the subjects of the national curriculum. All the required areas of learning are covered for pupils aged seven to 16. The subject curriculums are sequenced thoughtfully and logically. They are likely to take account of pupils' different ages, interests and abilities.
- For post-16 students, leaders have designed an appropriate curriculum. It comprises a core curriculum offer that focuses on students' social and emotional development. Students also have a choice between a vocational or academic pathway, both of which include study of a range of relevant qualifications.
- The planned programme for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is likely to be suitable. The curriculum focuses on developing pupils' confidence and skills for life. It includes coverage of fundamental British values and equality.
- Leaders have made suitable plans to commission an external careers service. This will likely ensure pupils of secondary age access regular impartial and up-to-date careers information, advice and guidance.
- The school's proposed relationships and sex education programme covers all the required areas of statutory guidance. Leaders plan to consult with parents and carers about the programme's content and their draft policy. The policy provides clear guidance to parents about the possibility of withdrawing their children from sex education.
- The proposed school is likely to be very well resourced. Leaders' arrangements to recruit and train specialist teachers, and maintain a consistent quality of education,

are likely to be suitable.

- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards ('the standards') in this part are likely to be met.

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

All paragraphs

- Pupils are likely to be well supported to develop their social and communication skills in particular. They will be taught about British values, the diversity of modern society, and how to be a good citizen. They will be taught about and encouraged to respect differences, including in relation to the range of protected characteristics. Pupils will be taught about a range of religions, faiths and cultures.
- The proposed PSHE education curriculum includes coverage of physical and mental well-being, keeping safe and healthy relationships. It will be complemented by a wide-ranging programme of outings, visitors and enrichment activities.
- Leaders are fully aware of the Department for Education's 'Political impartiality in schools (2022)' guidance. The proposed school's staff code of conduct makes it clear that no member of staff may promote partisan political views. Teachers are likely to ensure that balanced points of view are always presented in the teaching of any political topic.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

All paragraphs

- The executive headteacher, who will have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding, has completed enhanced-level safeguarding training. All staff have been, or will be, suitably trained in advance of the school's opening. Leaders are aware of their duties. They demonstrate secure understanding of the importance of creating a strong safeguarding culture when the school opens. The proposed school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest statutory guidance and will be available online.
- The proposed school's behaviour and countering bullying policies are likely to be suitable. They have been created with the needs of pupils with complex SEND in mind. Leaders have created a suitable system for the recording of any incidents of serious misbehaviour and any sanctions imposed as a result.
- The proposed school's first-aid policy is likely to be suitable. Several staff are trained in paediatric first aid. Leaders have put in place suitable processes for logging accidents, providing first aid and managing medication.
- When implemented, the proposed school's health and safety and risk assessment policies are likely to be suitable for maintaining the premises and reducing identified risks. Leaders have prepared suitable templates for the risk assessment of the premises, individual pupils, visiting speakers and trips.
- An external fire risk assessment report confirms that the proposed school is likely to be compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Extinguishers, fire alarm and smoke detection systems are new. Leaders have prepared reliable systems to ensure that fire safety checks will be completed and logged in line with the

requirements.

- Admission and attendance registers are likely to be suitable.
- Plans to supervise pupils are likely to be appropriate. Class sizes will be up to six pupils, supported by two adults.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

All paragraphs

- The proposed school's safer recruitment process is likely to be thorough and compliant with national safeguarding guidance.
- All the required recruitment checks, including for agency staff, are understood and are likely to be carried out and recorded accurately on a single central record.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

All paragraphs

- The proposed school occupies a listed building overlooking Russell Square in central London. The premises have been refurbished throughout to an exceptionally high standard. They are likely to be kept safe, clean and well maintained.
- The premises include 10 classrooms, suitable outdoor spaces and an indoor open-plan area for reading and relaxation. There are specialist classrooms for the teaching of science, art and design and food technology. There are suitable toilets and washing facilities and an appropriately equipped medical room.
- Although there is a shower and changing facility, physical education will be taught at local leisure facilities which include exclusive use of changing rooms and showers.
- The lighting, acoustics, hot water and drinking water supplies are all likely to be suitable.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

All paragraphs

- Leaders are prepared to ensure that all the required policies and information will be made available on the proposed school's website.
- The termly and annual report templates for parents are likely to meet requirements as they include detailed information about pupils' progress and their attainment in all subjects.
- Leaders have prepared a suitable template to provide funding authorities with annual statements of income and expenditure for pupils with EHC plans.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

All paragraphs

- The proposed school's complaints policy sets out clearly how leaders intend to deal with complaints informally and formally. The formal complaints log includes the stage of resolution and any action taken as a result.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

All paragraphs

- The proprietor and leaders have paid significant attention to detail in planning the opening of this proposed special school. They demonstrate a thorough working knowledge and understanding of the independent school standards.
- The proprietor's and leaders' plans for leadership, management and governance are likely to ensure that all the standards, including the standard in this part, are met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proposed school's accessibility plan is likely to meet this requirement as it includes suitable actions to improve accessibility to the premises, curriculum and written information.

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	149566
DfE registration number	202/6008
Inspection number	10277406

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	All-through day school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Odyssey Education Services Limited
Chair	Charu Kashyap
Headteacher	Gary Hawkins (Executive Headteacher)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£75,000 to £112,000
Telephone number	020 8348 8009
Website	www.odysseyeducationgroup.co.uk
Email address	info@odysseyeducation.org.uk

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	7 to 19	7 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	60	45

Reason for inspector's recommendations

- Although the building can comfortably accommodate up to 60 pupils with SEND, leaders' plans for staffing during the school's first year of operation are likely to be suitable in meeting the needs of up to a maximum of 45 pupils.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time	Not applicable	Up to 60

pupils of compulsory school age		
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	All pupils
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Up to 60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Up to 60

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	13
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	13

Information about this proposed school

- Odyssey House School – Bloomsbury is seeking to register as an independent special day school in the London Borough of Camden.
- The school intends to open on 17 April 2023.
- Placements at the proposed school will predominantly be for pupils with EHC plans for a range of SEND.
- Leaders do not intend to make any use of alternative provision.
- The proposed school's proprietors also run Odyssey House School – Highgate, which is inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. They are also in the process of applying to open a third school, Odyssey House School – Wokingham.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to assess whether the proposed school is likely to meet all of the independent school standards if registered as an independent school.
- This was the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspection was conducted with two days of notice.
- The inspector met with the proposed school's executive headteacher, the chief operating officer and the chair of the proprietor body.
- The inspector toured the premises and considered a range of evidence to check the likelihood of the proposed school meeting the standards and associated requirements.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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