

# Huntingdon House School

87 Market Street, Ashby-De-La-Zouch LE65 1AH

**Inspection date**

7 November 2025

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards. It is currently operating without registration**

## Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraphs 2(1) to 2(2)(i)*

- The school plans to deliver a curriculum that is as broad in its ambition as the national curriculum. The school will provide pupils with experiences in a range of subjects that cover linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- The school has a written curriculum policy and appropriate plans and schemes of work in place. These schemes reflect the age, needs and aptitudes of the pupils the school intends to admit, aligning with its intent to provide a flexible and inclusive curriculum. The school has considered the likely starting points and aptitudes of pupils, including those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The curriculum allows for pupils to fill any knowledge gaps they may have. Careful thought has been given to the curriculum offer for pupils who may be working in line with their age expectation and those who may achieve more highly.
- The school has identified a suitable phonics programme to support pupils who are at an early stage of learning to read. There will be plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- The school has a well planned and sequenced curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. It aims to promote pupils' understanding of protected characteristics and to encourage mutual respect. It reflects the school's ethos and its aim for pupils to be prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The school has planned for pupils to receive accurate, impartial 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. The school has made links with local employers and education providers to support this work.

*Paragraphs 2A(1) to 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d) to 2A(2)*

- The proprietor has ensured that the school has in place a policy for its provision for pupils' relationships education. This policy reflects the latest requirements, as set out by the Department for Education (DfE). The school intends to consult parents and carers, before making, or when revising the relationships education policy. It will ensure that the necessary information about relationships education is made available to parents via the school's website when it goes live.

*Paragraphs 3 to 3(j)*

- The proprietor has ensured that individual subject schemes of work set out the precise content that pupils will be expected to know and remember. The school has planned a thorough assessment and induction programme for new pupils. These assessments will determine which schemes of work pupils will access. These schemes take into account the needs and prior attainment of pupils and, if followed, will enable pupils to make good progress according to their ability.
- The currently employed staff, who will be the school leaders, are qualified teachers with significant experience of teaching pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A planned programme of induction and training aims to ensure that any future staff employed will have suitable subject knowledge and understanding of appropriate pedagogy. The school has planned a programme of quality assurance activities to monitor the quality of, and improve, teaching.
- Classrooms are well equipped and resources provided for pupils are of a good quality and range.
- The school intends for teaching to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions and actively promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values.

*Paragraph 4*

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a policy in place which states how the school will evaluate pupils' performance. The school plans to check on pupils' starting points using a formative assessment process during each pupil's six-week induction. Leaders plan to identify what pupils know and can do, as well as to begin to understand pupils' attitudes to learning. Weekly reviews and half termly assessments will contribute to the information parents receive about their child's 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)*

- Through the PSHE curriculum, the school intends for pupils to learn about right and wrong, and about civil and criminal law in England. They will learn about public institutions and services in England through contact with local providers of these services. They will learn about a wide range of cultures and beliefs through planned trips and visits, for example, to the 'golden mile' in Leicester.
- The school has strong links with several charities and local community organisations. They plan to use these contacts to provide opportunities for pupils to contribute positively to their local community and to the wider society.

- The school has planned a strong focus on developing pupils' confidence and character. The school council will give pupils the chance to discuss their views with others. Pupils will be encouraged to have the confidence to try new things, such as taking part in trips to the theatre and engaging with environments they may not always be comfortable with. Pupils will be encouraged through the PSHE curriculum to understand difference and be empathetic towards others.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school's policy directs staff and visitors to provide balanced points of view in their interactions with pupils.
- The school is likely to meet the standard in this part.

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

### Part 6. Provision of information

#### *Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), and 32(1)(c)*

- The school has a written safeguarding policy that reflects latest national guidance. It provides useful information about local safeguarding partners. It clearly sets out that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The policy is available to parents on request and will be published on the school's website when it is launched.
- Leaders have prioritised safeguarding. They are aware of the increased safeguarding vulnerabilities that pupils with SEND may face.
- Safeguarding leaders are suitably qualified. They have kept themselves updated with training from the local authorities they plan to work with. Leaders plan to meet weekly to oversee the school's safeguarding procedures and discuss any ongoing concerns about pupils. They are aware of their responsibilities should an allegation be made about inappropriate behaviour of an adult towards pupils.
- A thorough safeguarding induction programme will ensure that new staff understand their responsibilities. The school plans to deliver safeguarding training for all staff annually. It plans to supplement this with additional online training, weekly reminders and daily briefings. Posters displayed around the site ensure that pupils, visitors and staff will know who safeguarding leaders are.
- The school has a suitable system to record any safeguarding concerns and the subsequent actions that are taken. Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that safeguarding information is shared with relevant agencies.
- Pupils will be taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online, through PSHE and life skills lessons.
- Suitable web-filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
- The site is secure and clear processes are in place to check visitors.

#### *Paragraphs 9 to 10*

- Appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place. Staff will use the guidance in these policies to ensure good behaviour and appropriate routines. Leaders are aware that the pupils they plan to admit may present particular challenges and can become anxious and distressed. They have appropriate strategies in place to support these pupils to regulate.

- All staff will be trained in the school's behaviour management approach and in how to use de-escalation and intervention strategies appropriately. Some staff will be trained to use physical intervention strategies as a last resort.
- The school plans to record and analyse any serious incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying.
- Pupils will learn about different types of bullying through their PSHE lessons. They will know how to report any bullying they may experience. There are 'worry boxes' situated throughout the building that pupils can use to pass on any concerns they may have to trusted members of staff.

#### *Paragraphs 11 to 13*

- There are appropriate health and safety and first aid policies in place. The headteacher and the well-being lead will ensure the effective implementation of these policies, including by undertaking weekly checks. The proprietor will conduct termly and annual health and safety audits. Several leaders are first aid trained and other staff will receive appropriate first aid training.
- A fire risk assessment produced by an external company has been completed. The well-being lead will ensure weekly and monthly fire safety checks. The proposed school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

#### *Paragraph 14*

- Leaders will ensure that the pupils are appropriately supervised by staff during lessons, social times and when out on educational visits. The current proposal is that there will be a minimum ratio of two staff members to five pupils.

#### *Paragraph 15*

- Leaders will ensure that the admission register meets statutory requirements.
- The school has a written attendance policy. This shows the codes that staff will use to record attendance and the reasons for pupils' absence. Daily registers will be kept. Leaders will use these to identify any trends or patterns of absence.

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

- There is an appropriate risk assessment policy available. Risk assessments for the site and for activities contain clear control measures to mitigate any identified risks. Individual pupil risk assessments are detailed and contain possible behaviour triggers and appropriate support and de-escalation techniques for staff to employ.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

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

#### *Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3)*

- Senior leaders, including the proprietor, have undertaken training in safer recruitment. They understand their duty to carry out the necessary recruitment checks to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with pupils. They know they must complete these checks before staff begin to work at the school.

- The school does not intend to use supply staff as this may be unsettling for the pupils they plan to admit. However, leaders know the information they require if they choose to appoint supply staff through an agency.

*Paragraphs 21(1) to 21(3)(b)*

- Recruitment checks are appropriately recorded on the single central record.
- 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), 28(1), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(d)*

- There are suitable, separate toilet and washing facilities that are provided for the sole use of pupils. An accessible toilet is also available. The toilets have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. The hot water does not pose a scalding risk.
- There are no changing or showering facilities on the school site. However, pupils will be able to use the changing rooms and showers at a nearby leisure centre when they are in receipt of physical education (PE). The school has checked to ensure that these facilities are suitable. A written risk assessment and a plan of use are in place.

*Paragraphs 24(1) to 24(1)(b)*

- There is suitable accommodation for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils. It includes a washing facility and is close to the toilets.

*Paragraphs 25 to 27(b)*

- The building has been adapted to ensure that the accommodation is suitable for the proposed school. It is maintained to a good standard.
- Classrooms have suitable acoustics and are well ventilated.
- The interior lighting is appropriate. Many rooms also benefit from natural light. External lights have motion sensors to provide suitable lighting at entrances and exits.

*Paragraphs 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(c), 28(2) to 28(2)(b)*

- Drinking water is available from the school's kitchen. It is clearly labelled. The school plans to add drinking water facilities on each floor.

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

- There is a small area to the rear of the school where pupils can spend time playing outdoors. PE is planned to be delivered at the local leisure centre.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(1)(b), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f) to 32(2)(b), 32(b)(ii), 32(2)(d) to 32(3)(e), 32(3)(g)*

- The school does not yet have a website. Leaders are aware of the information that must be made available on the website once it is online, including the safeguarding policy, the RSE policy and copies of inspection reports.
- Parents will be able to request paper copies of other policies and documents that will not be available to download from the website.

- Leaders will work with local authorities to review pupils' EHC plans. They understand their responsibilities with regard to providing information to local authorities about looked after children and pupils with an EHC plan, when requested.
- Leaders will share information about pupils' academic performance on the school's website.
- Parents will receive an annual report with information about their children's progress and attainment.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements of the standard in this part.

#### Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

##### *Paragraphs 33 to 33(k)*

- The complaints policy outlines what parents should do if they have a concern about any aspect of the school's work. It outlines the process for both informal and formal complaints. Each stage that leaders follow for dealing with complaints is clearly explained and the timeframe for each step is provided.
- Parents who are not satisfied with the way leaders have handled their complaint can request a panel hearing that will be independently chaired.
- Leaders will retain a written record of all complaints and the actions they take in response.
- The school is likely to meet all the requirements of the standard in this part.

#### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor has a secure understanding of the standards. The proprietor has appointed leaders with extensive experience of working in a special school setting. Leaders that are currently in post understand well the needs of the pupils they are proposing to accept. They have designed a suitable learning environment and a curriculum to meet the pupils' needs. They have already demonstrated good knowledge and skills that will enable them to fulfil their roles.
- The school building is compliant with all the standards and provides high-quality accommodation for pupils. The employment of a well-being manager who has worked in a special school setting previously will ensure that the school is well maintained and that the health and safety of pupils is assured.
- The policies, planned curriculum, safeguarding arrangements and the quality of the school site provide confidence that the proprietor will actively promote pupils' well-being.
- The school is likely to meet the standard in this part.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proposed accessibility plan identifies how leaders will ensure that the site, the curriculum and any documentation 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	152172
DfE registration number	855/6066
Inspection number	10423727

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 school
Proprietor	Rebecca Lewis
Headteacher	Cheryl Power
Annual fees (day pupils)	£75,000 to £85,000
Telephone number	01530 564114
Website	To be confirmed
Email address	office@huntingdonhouse-school.co.uk

## Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	19
Number of pupils of compulsory school age who have an education, health and care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority	9
Total hours operating as a school per week	25
Total hours of teaching provided per week	Up to 15

### Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	10 to 16	10 to 16	10 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	19	30	30

### Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	30
Number of part-time pupils	19	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	9	30
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	9	30
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	30

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	1	6
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	2	6 minimum

## Information about this proposed school

- The school is located at 87 Market Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1AH.
- The proprietor currently runs an unregistered alternative provision on the same site as the proposed school. The two provisions would be run as separate businesses and the alternative provision would be based in a different building to the school. The proprietor now owns the full site so additional space can be made available to the school.
- The proposed school will provide full-time education for up to 30 pupils with SEND aged between 10 and 16 years.
- The school will provide for pupils who have social, emotional or mental health needs, cognitive and learning needs, or speech, language and communication needs. Some of the pupils are likely to have a diagnosis of autism. All of the pupils will be pupils with SEND and are likely to have an EHC plan.
- Most pupils are likely to be funded by local authorities.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE, to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the standards, if it is given permission to open.
- This was the proposed school's third pre-registration inspection.
- The inspectors met with the proprietor, the executive headteacher, the headteacher, the head of welfare and the business manager.
- The lead inspector conducted a tour of the proposed site to check the suitability of the premises.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including policies, curriculum plans and assessment information.
- The inspectors checked the arrangements for safeguarding and staff recruitment, including the single central record.

## Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Shaheen Hussain

His Majesty's Inspector

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