

The Lodge AP

Sandbach House, 36 Crewe Road, Sandbach CW11 4NE

Inspection date

24 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), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h) to 2(2)(i)

- The proprietor has prepared an appropriate curriculum policy. This policy explains leaders' aims for the curriculum. It also outlines a sufficiently broad range of subjects for pupils to study in key stages 3, 4 and 5. The policy outlines how the curriculum will contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education and how pupils will learn about fundamental British values.
- The curriculum policy is underpinned by suitable schemes of work for each subject. The proposed school's curriculum planning contains the necessary details about what pupils will learn and when they will learn this knowledge.
- The proposed school has placed appropriate importance on the teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics. Pupils will also study a range of other subjects that will provide them with experiences in scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education. For example, pupils will study subjects including science, food technology, religious education (RE), art and design and physical education (PE).
- The curriculum is well designed to meet the individual needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The proposed school aims to develop a curriculum that can be adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who may join during the school year. Leaders are committed to ensuring that pupils are well prepared for their future and are equipped to develop positive relationships within the school community and outside of it.
- Pupils will have access to a range of academic and vocational qualifications according to their abilities, interests and needs. For example, pupils will be able to study GCSEs and BTEC National Diplomas. Leaders have also prioritised developing pupils' skills for future life, by offering lessons in budgeting, safe travel and mental health and well-being.
- The proposed school has given careful thought to how personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education will be taught. The scheme of work sets out clearly what

pupils will learn. The intended curriculum covers a wide range of topics that pay regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

- The school has developed a policy to ensure that pupils receive appropriate careers education. It intends to provide impartial careers information, advice and guidance with the support of an external agency. Leaders also intend to arrange work experience and work placements, visits to employers and local businesses, visits to colleges and mock interviews. They are committed to ensuring that pupils who transition to college are supported effectively to do so. The school has secure plans in place to ensure that careers education will be tailored to the individual needs and interests of pupils.

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

- The proposed school's PSHE curriculum will provide pupils with suitable relationships and sex education. The proposed school's policy complies with the relevant statutory guidance. Leaders have thought about how they will consult with parents and carers about the policy. They are also aware of their duty to ensure that the policy is placed on the proposed school's website.

Paragraph 3(a) to 3(j)

- There is a package of training for staff to ensure that the curriculum is taught in line with the proprietor's high expectations. This includes regular training and guidance for behaviour for learning, early reading and identifying and addressing gaps in pupils' learning. Leaders also intend to work with local schools and alternative provisions to share good practice and to allow staff to access additional professional development.
- There are suitable resources in place to support the delivery of each subject curriculum. The proposed school has ensured that classrooms are designated for specific subjects, such as science and art and design.
- The proprietor will second experienced staff from another school. Leaders have thought carefully about the calibre of staff that the school will require to provide a high-quality education for pupils. They have made careful recruitment choices to ensure that staff have the expertise they need to meet the needs of pupils. For example, the proposed school has ensured that appointed staff have knowledge of how to support pupils with SEND to learn the curriculum well.
- The proprietor, executive headteacher and headteacher have the knowledge, skills and experience to check that the curriculum is supporting pupils to learn well. They have a wide range of experience and expertise in education. They understand what effective teaching looks like. The proprietor has robust quality assurance systems in place. There are clear lines of accountability.
- There is a suitable policy in place setting out the proposed school's expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. The policy clearly outlines how pupils are expected to behave and sets out how negative behaviour will be addressed. There is a focus on supporting pupils to recognise their own emotions and to manage their own behaviour in preparation for future life.
- The proposed school has ensured that there is suitable staff induction training in place regarding managing pupils' behaviour that is aligned to the school's behaviour policy.

Paragraph 4

- The school has ensured that there is a suitable assessment policy in place.
- The school will carry out assessments to establish pupils' starting points when pupils join the proposed school. They will use these initial checks to inform how pupils are grouped and taught. Pupils will also be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that the support that they receive helps them to learn well. This information will be shared with pupils and parents.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a) to 5(d)

- The proposed curriculum shows clear consideration for pupils' SMSC development. Pupils will learn about other faiths and cultures through the RE and PSHE curriculums. This work will be supported by a range of educational trips and visitors to the school. Pupils will also learn about fundamental British values such as the rule of law, democracy, respect and tolerance. The proposed school is committed to ensuring that all pupils feel part of the school community and that all pupils feel welcome and safe.
- Policies demonstrate the proposed school's intentions for pupils to learn the importance of mutual respect and tolerance. They make appropriate references to all of the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The proposed curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to discuss pertinent issues and learn about opposing views in a balanced and impartial way.
- Pupils will learn how to make responsible and safe choices in their future lives. For example, they will learn about the risks and dangers associated with county lines, knife crime and substance abuse.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The proprietor has set out clear procedures and necessary arrangements to safeguard pupils and to promote their welfare at the proposed school. Systems and procedures to keep pupils safe are in place. Appointed staff have the safeguarding knowledge that they need to keep pupils safe from harm. The headteacher will be the designated safeguarding lead and a further member of staff will be the deputy designated safeguarding lead. Both have the necessary training to fulfil these roles.
- The proposed school will ensure that staff receive regular safeguarding training and regular updates on local and national safeguarding issues, such as radicalisation and extremism and online safety. The proposed school will also provide a counsellor to provide additional support for pupils' well-being.
- The safeguarding policy reflects the most recent government guidance and is published on the proposed school's website. The policy sets out the expectations for staff, including how to raise concerns about other adults who work in the school.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a) to 9(c), 10

- There is a suitable behaviour policy in place, as well as an anti-bullying policy. These policies set out with clarity how any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying will be dealt with. There is an appropriate system in place to record any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 16, 16(a) to 16(b)

- The proprietor has a suitable health and safety policy in place. It has ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. For example, the proprietor contracts an external specialist to check firefighting equipment and emergency systems and to carry out fire risk assessments. Clear signage is visible for all emergency exit routes. In addition to this, maps of the emergency exit routes are displayed throughout the building.
- The proprietor has put in place a suitable first-aid policy. There will be an appropriate number of staff with relevant first-aid qualifications. Furthermore, the proprietor has paid due regard to the safe storage of medication and recording systems for the administration of first aid and medication.
- The proprietor has ensured that the proposed school identifies, and has systems to monitor, risks as set out in the risk assessment policy. There are suitable risk assessments in place. Samples of these risk assessments show that the proposed school suitably identifies risks and draws up appropriate plans to mitigate them, for example when pupils will make use of local sports facilities for PE lessons.
- The proprietor has made appropriate arrangements to ensure that the proposed school's computer network has appropriate monitoring and filtering in place to assure itself that pupils are safe when they are working online.
- There will be a sufficient number of staff deployed to supervise pupils on the school site, including during social times. Additional appropriate consideration has been given to the supervision of pupils at the start and end of the school day and when undertaking visits off site.

Paragraph 15

- There is a suitable admissions policy in place. The proposed school has systems in place to register pupils' attendance. The proposed school's systems enable senior leaders to monitor any periods of pupil absence. These systems and policies pay due regard to the requirements set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

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

Paragraphs 17, 18(2), 18(2)(a) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a) to 20(6)(c), 21(1) to 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c), 21(6)

- An electronic single central record is in place. It meets the requirements for the information that it must contain.
- The required checks for members of the proprietor body, leaders and staff for the proposed school have been completed. The proposed school makes sure that the checks are completed satisfactorily before staff commence employment. These checks

include enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks, identification checks and checks on staff's right to work in the UK. The school does not intend to use agency staff. They are clear about their responsibilities to check the suitability of such staff if this is required in the future. Leaders have completed safer recruitment training.

- The planned induction for any new staff includes staff completing safeguarding training as well as ensuring that staff understand the potential contextual risks to pupils' welfare and safety.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25

- The proposed school is set in a two-storey building. If opened, the school would operate over two floors. There are several classrooms, a kitchen, offices, a well-resourced communal recreational room and a secure outdoor area to the rear. The proprietor has ensured that the accommodation is of a good standard and is well maintained.
- There is a secure main entrance at the front of the school which includes the designated area where pupils will be dropped off and collected.

Paragraphs 23, 28

- There are adequate toilet and washing facilities, including an accessible toilet. Toilet cubicles can be locked from the inside.
- The proprietor has made arrangements to ensure that pupils will have access to drinking-water throughout the day. There are water dispensers on both floors and drinking-water is labelled clearly.

Paragraphs 14 (1)(b), 24(1), 24(1)(a) to 24(1)(c)

- There is a medical room that is located near to a toilet. There is a sink and shower in this room. This accommodation would sufficiently cater for any pupils with complex needs. There are adequate first aid supplies as well as safe storage for medication.

Paragraphs 26, 27 to 27(b), 29(1) to 29(1)(b)

- There is a secure external area to the rear of the proposed school that pupils will use during breaktimes. They will also have timetabled PE lessons in accordance with the school's curriculum. Leaders intend for pupils to access local sports facilities for PE activities. They have risk assessments in place to ensure the safety of pupils when travelling to and from the sports facilities, and when using these facilities.
- Teaching spaces have suitable lighting and acoustics. Many rooms are filled with natural light. Leaders are cognisant of the need to reduce any barriers to learning for pupils. Leaders have considered this in the design of teaching and learning spaces. For example, low level seating and subdued lighting have been included in classrooms and social spaces. There is suitable external lighting so that pupils, staff and visitors can enter or exit the building safely in the dark.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1) to 32(1)(c), 32(1)(f) to 32(1)(i), 32(1)(k), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b) to 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3) to 32(3)(g)

- The website for the proposed school contains the policies that parents may need. The contact details for the headteacher and the chair of the proprietor body are made available. Leaders are fully aware of the information that it is required to publish on the proposed school's website.
- The proposed school intends to provide the necessary information to the responsible local authorities for those pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The proposed school intends to provide regular reports on pupils' progress, attainment, attendance and behaviour to parents.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(a) to 33(k)

- The proposed school's complaints policy meets the requirements of the standards. It sets out the process for making a complaint, both at an informal and formal stage. The policy sets out appropriate timescales and what complainants can expect regarding ongoing communication.
- A copy of the complaints policy is available on the proposed school's website. It is also available from the school on request.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor has ensured that those with responsibility for leadership and management have sufficient knowledge and expertise to carry out their roles effectively. Leaders demonstrate the expertise required to set up and run this independent school successfully. They have experience in running an alternative education provision. They also have knowledge and expertise in mainstream education and in the provision of education for pupils with SEND. They are likely to fulfil their responsibilities to promote the well-being of pupils.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met if the proposed school opens.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has a suitable accessibility plan which meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.
- 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	151776
DfE registration number	895/6044
Inspection number	10402492

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 school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	The Lodge AP Limited
Chair	John Cargill
Headteacher	David Evans
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,000 to £50,000
Telephone number	01270 758870
Website	www.thelodgeap.org
Email address	enquiries@thelodgeap.org

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	13 to 18	13 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	32	32

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	32
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	Unknown
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Unknown
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	Unknown

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	11
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	3

Information about this proposed school

- This proposed independent school is located at Sandbach House, 36 Crewe Road, Sandbach CW11 4NE. It is housed in a refurbished two-storey building. The proposed school site is leased from Sandbach School.
- It is proposed that the school will provide full-time education for up to 32 mixed-gender pupils, aged between 13 and 18 years.
- It is intended that the proposed school will cater for pupils who are struggling to cope in mainstream school and have been excluded from, or are at risk of exclusion from, a mainstream school. The school will also cater for pupils who have missed education due to medical needs. Some of these pupils may have an EHC plan, including pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. They will be placed at the school by local authorities and mainstream schools.
- The proprietor is The Lodge AP Ltd. This company is registered at Companies House. There are eight directors. One of the directors is the chair of the proprietor body.
- The proprietor intends that there will be a governing body. The proposed chair of the governing body is currently the chair of the proprietor body.
- The headteacher, a deputy headteacher and further members of staff for the proposed school are to be seconded to post from Sandbach School.
- The proprietor does not intend to use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to determine if the school is likely to meet the independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the request to register this school.
- This was the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector held discussions with the chair of the proprietor body and two other members of the proprietor body.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher and the headteacher. She also spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and their deputy.
- The inspector completed a tour of the school to check the suitability of the proposed premises against the relevant standards. She also looked at a wide range of documents and policies, including those related to the curriculum, behaviour and welfare, health and safety. The inspector checked documents relating to safeguarding, including the single central record.

Inspection team

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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