

EdStart Schools Wigan

Harrow Road, Marsh Green, Pemberton, Wigan, Greater Manchester WN5 0QL

Inspection date

31 March 2025

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16 to 16(b)

- The school has a suitable safeguarding policy in place which is supported by a rigorous approach to managing safeguarding issues. This policy is published on the school's website.
- The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy in place. The proprietor has ensured that there are regular checks to ensure compliance with all aspects of this policy. For example, it ensures the maintenance of the school's premises and firefighting equipment.
- The proprietor has a relevant fire risk assessment in place and has taken effective action to ensure that any hazards identified are addressed. For example, fire evacuation routes are clearly signed, and the emergency lighting system is maintained regularly.
- The proprietor has considered the staffing ratios that will be needed if the material change is approved. It has a clear and robust recruitment strategy in place to ensure that there will be adequate supervision of pupils if the material change is approved.
- The school has a range of risk assessments in place that clearly identify potential hazards and control measures to mitigate these. For example, any hazardous substances are kept in locked storage cabinets.
- The proprietor has ensured that these independent school standards (the standards) are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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

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

- The proprietor has demonstrated that all of the required safeguarding checks are carried out on staff prior to them starting work at the school. Leaders are knowledgeable about the required checks.

- The school ensures that all checks, including those for qualifications, medical checks, prohibition from teaching, section 128 and checks on staff returning from overseas, are in place. These checks are completed where relevant prior to a proprietor, governor or member of staff undertaking their role.
- The single central record is kept securely in electronic form.
- The school has arrangements in place to ensure that any supply agency staff have the appropriate checks completed through their agency. The school ensures that it receives assurances these checks have been carried out from the agencies they use. The proprietor also ensures that the school checks the identity of any member of supply staff prior to their arrival at the school.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22 to 23(1)(c), 24(1) to 24(2), 25 to 29(1)(b)

- There are separate toilet facilities for boys and girls which are designed for individual use with doors that can be locked from the inside. These are accessible for all pupils.
- The school uses the local leisure centre for physical education, and pupils access the on-site showers. Appropriate risk assessments have been undertaken for pupils using these facilities.
- The proprietor has ensured that there are suitable medical facilities for the care of pupils who are injured or unwell. The school has two medical rooms to ensure equal access across the site. There are washing facilities available in these rooms.
- The proprietor has acquired and refurbished additional premises which will be used for the delivery of vocational qualifications. This site is maintained to the same high standard as the rest of the school and is proposed for use should the increase in pupil numbers be approved.
- The site is well maintained, safe and secure. Classrooms are well lit, and acoustics are suitable. External lighting is fitted so pupils and staff can enter and leave the premises safely. Drinking-water is appropriately labelled.
- The outdoor space is appropriate for pupils to access during breaktimes. The proprietor proposes to stagger breaktimes for different groups of pupils so that they do not all access the space at the same time.
- The premises allows adequate space for the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1) to 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor demonstrates a strong understanding of the standards. It has systems and processes in place to ensure that the standards are reviewed periodically by

experienced and knowledgeable staff. These checks are carried out with rigour to ensure the standards are met consistently.

- The proprietor has brought the condition of the premises up to a high standard. It has strong arrangements to continually reflect, check and improve on the aspects of provision that were in scope for this inspection.
- The proprietor ensures that staff know pupils well. There are effective arrangements in place to ensure that the school promotes pupils' well-being. For example, for present pupils, there has been a demonstrable improvement in their attendance at the school.
- The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. For example, the school's accessibility plan is available on its website.
- The proprietor has ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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 that are relevant to the material change.

School details

Unique reference number	149591
DfE registration number	359/6007
Inspection number	10375591

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent day school
Proprietor	EdStart Schools Wigan Ltd
Chair	Peter Irwin
Headteacher	Stuart Howarth
Annual fees (day pupils)	£18,500 to £65,000
Telephone number	01942 410529
Website	www.edstartschools.com
Email address	admin.wigan@edstartschools.com
Date of previous standard inspection	18 to 20 June 2024

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	25	70	70

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	25	70
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	25	70
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	13	35
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	13	35

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	3	7
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0

Information about this school

- The school is located at Harrow Road, Marsh Green, Pemberton, Wigan, Greater Manchester WN5 0QL.
- The school's previous standard inspection was on 18 to 20 June 2024.
- The school provides full-time education for pupils aged between 11 and 16 years. The school caters mainly for pupils who have been excluded from or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools.
- The school caters for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school provides for pupils with communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health; and sensory needs. Some of these pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils are placed at the school by local authorities and mainstream schools.
- The school currently uses two registered and two unregistered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in response to the proprietor's request to make a material change to the school.
- The proposed change involves an extension of the school to two different sites and an increase in capacity from 25 to 70 pupils across both sites. The location of the proposed site is Harlor House, Grove Lane, Standish, Wigan, WN6 0ES.
- It is proposed that the school will offer some vocational qualifications, such as construction, at the proposed site to add to their present academic offer. There is no intended change to the school's SEND offer under the proposed material change.
- This was the first material change inspection that has taken place at the school.
- In evaluating whether the school would meet the relevant standards should the material change be approved, the inspector undertook a tour of the school's premises, considered a range of documentation and discussed the proposed changes with leaders, including the school's headteacher, the proprietor and the chair of the governing body.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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