

# Kingsley Academy

2 Upper Zoar Street, Wolverhampton WV3 0LA

**Inspection date**

14 January 2026

## **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)(b), 2(2)h, 2(2)i*

- The proprietor and headteacher have shaped a vision for the proposed school that places relationships and bespoke learning at its heart. The approach ensures every pupil feels known, valued and supported to thrive academically and personally. Alongside strong academic foundations in English, mathematics and science, the curriculum is tailored to individual aspirations through flexible pathways and personalised support. Pupils will benefit from a rich blend of humanities, creative arts and technology, complemented by vocational options such as construction, mechanics, hair and beauty and music. This bespoke model will enable pupils to develop essential knowledge and practical skills while fostering positive relationships that underpin engagement, confidence and success.
- The proposed curriculum at Kingsley Academy is broad, coherently structured and reflects a clear intention to balance academic development with vocational and creative pathways. Pupils benefit from a planned offer that includes English, mathematics and science alongside humanities, art, photography, technology and a wide range of vocational subjects such as construction, mechanics, hair and beauty, and music. Curriculum plans show sequencing across subjects and demonstrate leaders' intention to build knowledge progressively and responsively to pupils' SEN profiles.
- Detailed curriculum plans demonstrate clear progression across subjects, with vocational and academic pathways carefully mapped to ensure breadth and coherence. For subjects such as English and mathematics, leaders have developed structured units that build knowledge step by step.
- Schemes of work for vocational qualifications provide equally detailed sequencing of learning. Pupils can study modules in subjects such as construction, motor vehicle maintenance, hair and beauty and music. These include practical skills development alongside theoretical understanding. Creative subjects such as art and photography offer pupils opportunities to explore techniques and develop portfolios.

- The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) and careers education are taught weekly. These support pupils' personal development and preparation for life beyond school.
- Assessment arrangements include baseline assessments, termly review points and ongoing monitoring of pupils' progress through structured schemes of work and planned assessment calendars.
- Leaders have identified a range of appropriate qualifications, including functional skills and vocational awards, that pupils will study towards. The school's assessment policies set out clear expectations for monitoring pupils' progress and attainment. If implemented effectively, these should ensure that pupils' achievements are systematically tracked.

#### *Paragraphs 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(d)(ii)*

- The curriculum is designed to actively promote the fundamental British values. Pupils will engage in discussions on current affairs, ethical dilemmas and historical contexts. These are intended to encourage critical thinking and respectful debate. Religious education and humanities will further explore diverse faiths and cultural practices. These will be supported by themed days, cultural festivals and visits to museums and art galleries. Tutor times will reinforce messages of tolerance, equality and respect, while anti-bullying initiatives will help pupils understand fairness and empathy.
- PSHE provision will further support these aims, covering rights and responsibilities, inclusion and the impact of prejudice and discrimination. Careers education is integrated into the curriculum, with a structured programme offering guidance tailored to individual pupil's aspirations. Planned partnerships with local businesses, colleges and apprenticeship providers will provide work experience, career talks and mentoring opportunities. Pupils will also access other support, including interview preparation and information on apprenticeships and higher education.

#### *Paragraphs 3 to 4*

- Kingsley Academy intends to ensure the curriculum is accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of its pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school will cater for pupils with specific learning difficulties (SpLD) and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Pupils will benefit from personalised learning plans and targeted support. Education, health and care (EHC) plans will be reviewed regularly by the special educational needs coordinator. The school will maintain ongoing communication with parents and carers to make sure that provision continues to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Small class sizes will aid staff to build strong relationships with pupils and provide them with tailored support. Staff will be trained to recognise and respond to pupils' emotional and behavioural needs. Enrichment activities, including trips to museums, historical sites and science centres, will complement classroom learning. Additionally, outdoor education and residential experiences will be used to promote pupils' resilience and teamwork. As the provider is already operating, inspectors observed teaching in 2 lessons, which showed an emerging consistency between the planned curriculum, the school's therapeutic ethos and the intended pedagogical approach.

*Paragraph 2A(1), 2A(1)(b) to 2A(2)*

- The school's relationships and sex education and health education policy sits alongside its PSHE framework and outlines provision for secondary-age pupils. Leaders intend to consult with parents on the content of the policy. Leaders respect parents' statutory right to withdraw pupils from sex education lessons. The approach is designed to ensure pupils receive age-appropriate, inclusive and safeguarding-focused information that prepares them for healthy relationships and responsible decision-making.
- The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) in this part 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 proprietor aims to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a range of purposeful strategies and practices. The school places a strong emphasis on inclusivity and personalised learning, ensuring that every pupil is supported in their individual growth. Leaders intend to create an environment where the individual pupil's voice is valued, tailoring provision to meet specific needs and fostering a culture of respect and trust.
- The behaviour policy incorporates restorative approaches, drawing on strong relationships between pupils and staff. It encourages pupils to reflect on their actions and understand the impact of these on others. This promotes compassion and constructive conflict resolution. Anti-bullying measures are designed to encourage open communication and fairness, helping pupils develop empathy and a sense of justice.
- The curriculum will embed cultural education across subjects, complemented by enrichment activities that celebrate diversity. Religious education, history and literature will explore global traditions and beliefs. Themed days, cultural festivals and visits to museums or art galleries will provide hands-on experiences that enhance this learning. Community projects will encourage pupils to contribute positively to society, preparing them to thrive in a multicultural world.
- Staff at Kingsley Academy will receive targeted training to understand and respond to pupils' emotional and behavioural needs. This training will focus on strategies for pupils with SEMH and SEND profiles, enabling staff to build strong relationships and promote positive engagement.
- Extra-curricular provision will be designed around pupils' interests and vocational pathways, reinforcing the school's commitment to inclusion and personal growth. Planned activities include creative music sessions to develop confidence and self-expression, as well as vocational modules in construction, mechanics and hair and beauty. In addition, carefully designed projects will provide opportunities for problem-solving and innovation, helping pupils to develop leadership skills and resilience while exploring practical applications in the workplace. These enrichment opportunities aim to complement the school's core curriculum, foster skills that prepare pupils for life beyond school and promote enjoyment and engagement in learning.

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

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

#### *Paragraph 7 to 7(b)*

- Kingsley Academy has established systems, training and processes designed to embed a strong safeguarding culture throughout the school. This includes using a secure digital platform to record and monitor concerns, ensuring that all safeguarding issues are documented accurately and tracked effectively. Staff will receive comprehensive safeguarding training during their induction and through ongoing professional learning. This should equip staff to identify and respond to concerns promptly and appropriately.
- The school aims to create an environment where pupils feel safe, supported and able to speak openly. The safeguarding policy meets statutory requirements and is a core part of staff induction. All staff will be required to read and understand the policy. The school is committed to ensuring that pupils' welfare remains a priority at all times. It is particularly conscious of the support that may be required by those pupils with complex needs.

#### *Paragraphs 9 and 10*

- The proprietor has introduced a detailed behaviour policy that sets clear expectations for pupils' conduct. It outlines the rewards and sanctions used to promote positive behaviour. The approach emphasises practices that help pupils understand the impact of their actions and that support them to make amends. Approaches are tailored to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This ensures that strategies to manage pupils' behaviour are both compassionate and constructive. The policy will be reviewed regularly to maintain relevance and effectiveness.
- An anti-bullying policy has been developed by leaders. This sets high standards for the prevention of bullying and the school's response when it does happen. Pupils are encouraged to share concerns openly. Staff follow clear procedures to address incidents promptly and sensitively. The school aims to resolve conflicts fairly. The policy reflects the school's commitment to fostering respect and understanding among pupils, helping to prevent bullying before it occurs.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, and 16*

- Kingsley Academy has established a comprehensive health and safety policy that will be actively monitored and reviewed. Regular risk assessments of the premises, equipment and activities will be undertaken to identify and mitigate hazards. Facilities are maintained to a high standard. The school has systems in place to monitor water temperature and environmental controls to ensure comfort and safety. Staff will receive training in health and safety protocols. The school promotes a culture of vigilance to uphold high standards.
- Fire safety arrangements include established evacuation procedures and the installation of fire extinguishers throughout the site. Professional validation of fire safety systems is scheduled, and interim measures are in place to ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 during final preparations. Fire

safety risk assessments are conducted regularly, and staff are trained to respond effectively in emergencies.

- The school has developed a detailed first-aid policy. It provides suitable facilities for medical examination and treatment of sick or injured pupils.
- Risk assessments extend across all aspects of school's operations, including activities, premises and pupil welfare. These assessments are reviewed periodically to address changes or emerging concerns. This reflects the school's commitment to continuous improvement.

#### *Paragraphs 14 and 15*

- Clear strategies have been outlined to ensure compliance with supervision and record-keeping requirements. Small class sizes will enable staff to build strong relationships with pupils and monitor their behaviour and wellbeing closely. Robust safeguarding measures, combined with thorough staff training, are likely to ensure effective supervision of pupils at all times.
- The school has implemented systems to maintain accurate admissions and attendance registers. Attendance will be monitored using both digital and written records, with data linked to safeguarding files for a comprehensive approach. Persistent absence will be tracked closely, and proactive steps will be taken to support pupils with low attendance to improve this. This may include additional work with families and local authorities, for example. The school's admissions register will record all required details and be updated promptly as needed.
- The proprietor has ensured that all standards within part 3 are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

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

##### *Paragraphs 18(1) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 20(6) to 21(3)(b), 21(6) to 21(7)(b)*

- Kingsley Academy has established clear and well-structured recruitment procedures. These meet the requirements of part 4 of the standards. These processes are systematic and consistently applied, ensuring that safeguarding remains central to every appointment. Recruitment records for current staff are thorough and reflect best practice in safer recruitment. The school completes full and appropriate checks on candidates, including confirming their identity and their right to work in the United Kingdom. These, along with others, such as those through the Disclosure and Barring Service and checks on prohibition orders and references, are documented accurately. The single central record is maintained in line with statutory guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).
- The proprietor has taken all necessary steps to ensure the standards in this part 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 24(1)(b), 24(2) to 29(1)(b)*

- The proposed school building has previously been used as a series of offices. It has undergone significant refurbishment to meet the needs of the new school. The

proprietor has invested heavily in upgrading the premises to reflect their vision for a high-quality, inclusive learning environment. Specialist areas have been created, including construction bays, mechanics workshops, hair and beauty salons, and a soundproofed music studio, alongside well-equipped classrooms and communal spaces. All work has been completed to a high standard.

- The premises have been thoughtfully designed to provide suitable teaching spaces, breakout areas and facilities for physical education. There are adequate toilets and washing facilities for pupils, including separate provision for boys and girls aged eight and over. A medical room is available for short-term care of sick or injured pupils. It contains washing facilities and is located close to toilet areas for convenience.
- Safety measures are prioritised throughout the site. Secure access controls are in place at the main entrance, supported by supervised gates and perimeter fencing to prevent unauthorised entry. Restricted areas, such as storage rooms and vocational workshops, are kept locked with access limited to authorised staff.
- Drinking water points are easily accessible, clearly labelled and separate from toilet facilities. Hot water systems are regulated to prevent scalding, and environmental controls ensure safe, comfortable conditions throughout the building.
- Outdoor spaces are provided for recreation and physical education, offering pupils safe and engaging areas for play and exercise. Additional specialist spaces, such as calm rooms equipped with sensory resources, support pupils' emotional regulation and wellbeing.
- Technology and security have been integrated into the design. Network and internet systems are ready for activation, with secure server rooms and electrical panels installed. Each classroom has an interactive whiteboard for supporting teaching and learning. CCTV cameras have been fitted for site security, supported by signage and policies to ensure compliance with data protection requirements.
- The proprietor has taken all necessary steps to ensure the standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

## Part 6. Provision of information

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

- The school has put in place a clear system for keeping parents informed about their child's progress. Families will receive three comprehensive reports each year, covering academic achievement, personal development and attendance. These reports will include grades, effort indicators, behaviour evaluations and termly targets. These will give parents a detailed picture of their child's progress and areas for improvement.
- Alongside formal reporting, the school prioritises active engagement with parents. Introductory meetings at the start of the year will outline expectations and practical arrangements. Traditional parents' evenings will be replaced by parent forums, creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue with subject teachers. Individual meetings can also be arranged on request, reflecting the school's open-door ethos and commitment to accessibility.

- For pupils with EHC plans, the school will ensure timely and accurate reviews led by the headteacher. Regular informal communication with families will complement formal reviews, reinforcing transparency and partnership in meeting pupils' needs.
- Administrative systems have been developed to ensure clarity and accuracy in documentation. Templates for local authority invoices and school reports have been created, providing detailed cost breakdowns and service descriptions. This approach promotes transparency in both financial and academic reporting.
- The proposed school has already established a website to share essential information with parents and pupils. This includes policies, updates and practical details that support accessibility and engagement once the school is approved to open.
- The proprietor has taken steps to ensure the standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

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

- The school has established a comprehensive complaints policy that sets out a clear, staged process for managing concerns. This begins with informal resolution wherever possible. This is followed by escalation to senior leaders if required and concludes with a formal panel hearing for any unresolved matters. This structured approach ensures complaints are addressed consistently, transparently and in line with statutory expectations.
- To underpin this process, the school will maintain a detailed complaints log designed to track and monitor all cases. The log records the nature of each complaint – such as curriculum, safeguarding or pastoral care. It also documents actions taken, communication with parents and final outcomes. This enables leaders to identify patterns and recurring issues, supporting proactive intervention and continuous improvement.
- Access to the complaints log is available to governors and the proprietor, ensuring appropriate oversight and accountability. The school adopts a sensitive and individualised approach to handling complaints, recognising the importance of fairness and respect in all interactions.
- The proprietor has taken steps to ensure the requirements in this part are likely to be met if the school is approved to open. This reflects a commitment to robust governance and high standards of practice.

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

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

- The leadership team has articulated a clear and ambitious vision for the new school, rooted in inclusivity, personalised learning and high standards. This vision is supported by a structured, phased approach to development and to increasing pupil numbers over time, ensuring the school is well prepared to deliver high-quality education and care from the outset.

- A strong governance framework has been established, with regular meetings and a standing agenda to monitor progress. The use of digital tools, including cloud-based systems, ensures that the proprietor and governors have access to key information and can maintain effective oversight of the school's provision.
- The school has integrated its self-evaluation and improvement planning processes, creating a focused approach to setting priorities and monitoring progress. This reflects a clear commitment to continuous improvement and accountability.
- Staff development and wellbeing are prioritised. New staff undergo a thorough induction process, including safeguarding training and policy reviews. The leadership team fosters an open-door ethos and has demonstrated responsiveness to the individual needs of staff.
- Communication with parents is a key focus. Parent handbooks and contracts are shared to set clear expectations and provide essential information. The school's website enhances transparency and accessibility for parents and pupils, hosting policies and communication updates.
- The leadership team places a strong emphasis on pupils' wellbeing, listening to the voice of the child and tailoring support to their individual needs. This approach ensures pupils feel valued and supported, contributing to their overall development and readiness for life beyond school.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the school is granted permission to open.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have ensured that they have 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.
- The accessibility plan currently focuses on providing equal access for those with disabilities. Leaders intend that the plan will continue to be refined to identify further appropriate timescales for completing the actions. The plan's template is positive and there are already some sharply focused actions in place to develop the site's inclusive nature.

## **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 | 152324   |
| DfE registration number | 336/6027 |
| Inspection number       | 10430263 |

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 special school   |
| Proprietor               | Kingsley Academy Ltd   |
| Chair                    | Ranjit Singh   |
| Headteacher              | Helen Darby  |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £46,800  |
| Telephone number         | 01902 539 565  |
| Website                  | <a href="http://www.kingsleyacademy.co.uk">www.kingsleyacademy.co.uk</a>               |
| Email address            | <a href="mailto:admissions@kingsleyacademy.co.uk">admissions@kingsleyacademy.co.uk</a> |

## Provider already operating

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Number of pupils of compulsory school age   | 6  |
| Number of pupils of compulsory school age who have an education, health and care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority | 6  |
| Total hours operating as a school per week  | 25 |
| Total hours of teaching provided per week   | 20 |

## 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 | 6                         | 60                | 60                         |

## Pupils

|  | School's current position | School's proposal |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Gender of pupils   | Mixed                     | Mixed             |
| Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age  | 0                         | 60                |
| Number of part-time pupils   | 6                         | 0                 |
| Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities                              | 6                         | 60                |
| Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan                               | 6                         | 60                |
| Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan | 6                         | 60                |

## Staff

|   | School's current position | School's proposal |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff | 7                         | 15                |
| Number of part-time teaching staff            | 0                         | 0                 |

## Information about this proposed school

- The proposed building is located at Libra House, 2 Upper Zoar Street, Wolverhampton WV3 0LA.
- The proposed school intends to cater for boys and girls aged 11 to 16 years.
- The school proposes to admit pupils with SEND, particularly those with SEMH needs and SpLD. All pupils are expected to have an EHC plan. Placements are expected to be commissioned and funded by local authorities. The school prioritises therapeutic approaches and personalised learning to re-engage pupils who have struggled in mainstream settings.
- The school will not have a religious character and will operate as a non-faith provision.

- The proposed school does not intend to use any form of alternative provision. All education will be delivered on site, supported by specialist staff and facilities.

## Information about this inspection

- The Department for Education commissioned this pre-registration inspection to determine whether the proposed school would be likely to meet the independent school standards if granted permission to open. This was the proposed schools first pre-registration inspection.
- The proposed school is currently operating for 6 part-time pupils. All of these pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The first pupil was admitted to the current provision on 1 September 2025.
- The inspector carried out a range of activities to ascertain if the proposed school was likely to meet the independent school standards. These activities included: meeting with the proprietor and the headteacher; 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. As part of the inspection, the inspector visited two lessons.
- The inspector toured the proposed school's premises to evaluate the likelihood of the school meeting the standards in part 5.
- The inspector met with the proprietor and designated safeguarding leads to discuss safeguarding arrangements.

## Inspection team

Chris Pollitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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