Educate U

Unit 2, 58c Chapel Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 1BG

Unique reference number (URN): 147546

Material change inspection report:	2 July 2026

Overall outcome	The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented.

This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE), which is the registration authority for independent schools. The school has applied to the DfE to make a material change to its registration. The school proposes to change the age range of pupils, use additional buildings and change the maximum number of pupils attending.

The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

When we carry out material change inspections of independent schools, we report on the school's likely compliance with part 8 of the independent school standards first. Under part 8, the proprietor is required to ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards consistently. The standard in part 8 is intended to ensure that the quality of leadership and management at the school is sufficient for that purpose.

The proprietor has ensured that leaders and managers have the skills, knowledge and support they need so the independent school standards (the ISS) are likely to be met consistently over time. The proprietor has overseen the work on the 2 proposed additional school buildings with appropriate rigour. These new buildings will provide separate educational facilities for key stage 4 pupils and key stage 5 students, enabling them to learn in specialist buildings designed for the delivery of

the intended curriculum. The addition of these 2 sites accommodates the school's proposed increase in pupil numbers.

The proprietor has considered carefully how to increase pupil numbers in a way that is manageable and sustainable. The proprietor is responsible for the provision and premises of the proposed key stage 5 site, which currently operates as a separate unregistered alternative provision for young people aged 14 to 19. The proprietor has clear, detailed plans for the processes to bring this unregistered provision under the school's regulated oversight. They intend to transfer leaders and staff from the alternative provision into the proposed school, ensuring continuity of skilled staff to support pupils' needs and education.

The proprietor has established clear, detailed plans to support students up to the age of 19. Separate detailed policies and risk assessments set out the approaches that staff will use to promote these students' educational wellbeing and welfare. The school provides a clear rationale for the exceptional circumstances in which it could educate 19-year-old students.

The proprietor and leaders have developed detailed plans to ensure effective leadership oversight across all 3 proposed school sites and 2 additional therapeutic provisions. The school intends to appoint 3 dedicated heads of school, each with oversight of either key stage 1 to 3, key stage 4 or key stage 5. Each site will have a deputy designated safeguarding leader and staff trained in first aid. The current headteacher will become executive headteacher, providing oversight.

The 2 buildings that accommodate therapeutic provisions are suitably sized and staffed to meet the needs of the proposed number of pupils. A premises team is already in place to ensure that health and safety requirements are met across all sites, promoting the safety and welfare of pupils and staff.

The proprietor has developed shared systems that provide effective quality assurance across all aspects of the standards. They have commissioned external advisers to provide independent oversight and assure the proprietor about school effectiveness and compliance with the standards.

The proprietor has ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to grant the material change request.

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Curriculum

The school intends to expand its age range so that students up to the age of 19 years old can attend. It anticipates that these students will have special educational needs and/or disabilities and an education, health and care (EHC) plan.

The curriculum policy is appropriate. It reflects the ages, needs and starting points of the students included in the material change request. The proposed school intends to provide age-appropriate linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. Leaders plan to deliver this curriculum over 2 years, recognising that, in exceptional circumstances, some students may need an additional year to complete their programme of study. It is likely that these students will remain on roll when they are aged 19.

The provision's curriculum is supported by detailed schemes of work. These take account of students' starting points, aptitudes and ages. The curriculum ensures that students will be taught speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. Students who need additional support with reading will receive one-to-one sessions using age-appropriate resources.

The curriculum is designed appropriately to enable students to work towards ambitious, nationally recognised accreditations such as GCSE, BTEC National Diplomas and ASDAN.

The school intends for students to receive therapeutic support from the provider's team of specialist staff, such as speech and language therapists. Leaders plan for students to receive bespoke support to work towards the targets in their EHC plan in preparation for adulthood.

The school has extended its current careers curriculum so that it meets the needs and aspirations of key stage 5 students. Leaders have identified opportunities for students to work with external careers advisers to receive impartial guidance about their future.

The relationships and sex education curriculum is appropriate. It ensures that students receive education to develop their understanding of relationships and sex education at an age-appropriate level. Leaders have established suitable systems for notifying and consulting parents about planned taught content.

Teaching

The school proposes that staff from the proprietor's alternative provision will deliver the key stage 5 curriculum. These staff already have experience delivering the vocational curriculum successfully. All staff will receive training so they understand how to deliver the curriculum in line with the school's trauma-informed ethos.

The vocational curriculum will be taught by specialist staff in specialist classrooms. The key stage 5 site includes a fully functioning professional-standard kitchen, a hair and beauty salon, a woodworking shop and a garage. The school also has a café area where students can learn employability skills, including barista qualifications and customer service. Staff who teach English and mathematics will receive specialist training so they can support pupils to learn well.

Assessment

The school's assessment procedures are appropriate. Assessments in English and mathematics identify students' starting points and any gaps in their knowledge. Leaders will track progress routinely through reviews of students' individual education plans. They will use assessment information to plan specific interventions that help students to close gaps in their learning.

The proprietor has ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to grant the material change request.

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

The school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum for key stage 5 students takes an inclusive approach that prepares students for life in modern Britain. It extends beyond academic teaching to embed values, character development and real-world experiences. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum reflects the school's aim to prepare students for adult life. The curriculum will be adapted in response to any emerging concerns about students' understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

The curriculum design promotes students' ability to make independent and mature decisions, for example managing money and using transport independently. The curriculum has due regard to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Students will learn about the importance of tolerance and about their rights and responsibilities as British citizens, supported by visits from the police. Student voice is encouraged through leadership opportunities. Leaders will check the curriculum frequently to ensure staff do not promote partisan political views.

Leaders understand the needs of students across the proposed age range. The curriculum promotes independence, emotional understanding and respect for others. Students will receive therapeutic support and enrichment suited to the school's proposed increased age range.

The proprietor has ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to grant the material change request.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Safeguarding

The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest statutory guidance and appears on the school's website. The school has developed a separate policy that explains how it will safeguard students who are 18 and 19 years old. This policy outlines how the school will work with adult social care when concerns arise about the welfare of adult students.

Leaders create a clear safeguarding culture. They ensure staff receive well planned, responsive training that keeps them alert to any signs of risk. Staff use established reporting and recording systems effectively. Leaders understand contextual safeguarding risks, including the additional vulnerabilities of pupils and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They maintain effective working relationships with local authorities' children's services and safeguarding teams.

The proprietor ensures that safeguarding arrangements are appropriate and that staff responsible for safeguarding receive extensive training. The school has a robust strategy to ensure that there is a dedicated member of trained staff on every school site to ensure oversight of safeguarding. An overall designated safeguarding lead will work across all the school's proposed sites to ensure that leaders are taking appropriate action to keep pupils and students safe. Induction and ongoing training will ensure new staff understand and apply safeguarding expectations.

The school takes part in weekly safeguarding meetings. These meetings enhance leaders' knowledge and awareness of safeguarding issues and practices. They also provide the proprietor with regular oversight of the school's safeguarding strategy. If the material change is approved, this approach will include the designated safeguarding leads from each site. This will ensure the proprietor remains cognisant of the safeguarding culture across all school sites.

Health and safety, fire and first aid

Following the last standard inspection in March 2025, the proprietor and leaders have improved the precision with which they ensure that the school meets the standards related to health and safety.

Established processes are extremely robust, with many layers of checks to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of pupils is prioritised. A dedicated team is in place to ensure that the school responds swiftly to health and safety audits. An external company has completed a fire risk assessment. The premises team carries out daily, weekly and monthly fire safety checks. External contractors check fire safety equipment annually, and detection and alarm systems are covered by service and maintenance contracts. The provision complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

All mandatory checks of asbestos, water safety, gas and electric are complete and in date. Leaders act swiftly on any required actions and track completion of these tasks carefully. A detailed audit of each of the school sites ensures that leaders know when a health and safety or maintenance check is required. This ensures that all the school sites are maintained to a high standard.

A suitable first aid policy is in place. Staff are trained in first aid. First aid boxes are available across the site and are checked and restocked regularly.

Risk assessment

Leaders have an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. This policy identifies the potential areas that staff must consider. Staff who complete risk assessments undertake mandatory training on the school's reporting and recording system. Risk assessments are in place for premises, students, educational visits and outdoor learning. Individual students' risk assessments are well written and clearly identify needs, risks and control measures.

The proprietor has considered carefully how to adapt the school's risk assessment arrangements for students aged 18 and 19 years old. Leaders recognise that older students need greater opportunities to practise independence. Planned adjustments, such as allowing students to go off site, are suitably risk assessed. These adaptations remain proportionate and responsive to the developmental needs of adult learners.

The proprietor has ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to grant the material change request.

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

The recruitment checks made on staff, supply staff and the proprietor

The proprietor knows and understands their safer recruitment responsibilities. Leaders ensure that all relevant checks are undertaken before adults are permitted to work with pupils. This includes checks on members of the proprietor body. All recruitment systems are thorough and well organised. The school completes pre-employment checks on all staff with appropriate rigour.

The single central record of these recruitment checks

The school keeps a single central record of pre-employment checks. Leaders and members of the proprietor's executive team regularly check the single central record to ensure that it is maintained appropriately.

The school does not use supply staff but is aware of the checks that leaders would need to complete should it choose to in the future.

The proprietor has ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to grant the material change request.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Toilet and washing facilities, water supply, changing accommodation and showers

On each of the school sites, there are suitable, separate toilet and washing facilities that are provided for the sole use of pupils. There are separate facilities for adults and visitors. The toilets have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. The hot water does not pose a scalding risk. Drinking water is available in each of the school sites. It is clearly labelled. Taps in the toilets are clearly signed as not drinking water. Facilities will adequately cater to an increased number of pupils if the material change is to be implemented.

Physical education for all pupils will be provided in a local leisure centre. Pupils will have access to changing and showering facilities there. There is a suitable risk assessment in place for pupils to access these facilities.

Medical room and accommodation for pupils' therapy needs

On each of the school premises, there is a medical room which is appropriately equipped. It includes a medical bed and access to running water and is in close proximity to a toilet. There are well-stocked first aid boxes in suitable locations around the school site. The contents of these are checked and logged regularly.

Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils

Each of the school sites is well presented and tidy. All sites sit in very close proximity to one another, which enables staff to move easily between buildings when required.

The site proposed for teaching key stage 1 to key stage 3 is the school's current main site. Leaders have adapted their plans to ensure that there is sufficient space to accommodate the proposed increase in students. By separating the building into primary and secondary phases, each phase will have its own dedicated specialist teaching space. Equipment and furniture in these areas reflect the ages and needs of the students the school will accommodate. Leaders have considered the impact of accommodating additional students. They have planned carefully for social times and lunchtimes. Staffing levels are appropriate, and well-trained staff supervise students effectively throughout the day.

The proposed key stage 4 site is located in a building linked to one of the school's therapeutic provisions. This building provides sufficient teaching spaces for the proposed number of students. Class sizes will remain small so that students receive targeted support. The proposed new building has been refurbished to a high standard. It has ample natural light, and the acoustic conditions are suitable for a school environment. External lighting enables students and staff to enter and leave the building safely. The enclosed outdoor space at the rear of the building is suitable for socialising, although leaders recognise that it is too small for all students to play all at once. They have developed a detailed plan that sets out how students will rotate between this space, a local park and the outdoor areas at the other school sites. A conservatory provides a sheltered space for pupils to socialise in poor weather.

The proposed key stage 5 site was previously a shop with an adjoining garage on a main street. It currently accommodates the proprietor's alternative provision. The building is already designed for the teaching of the proposed key stage 5 curriculum. Specialist teaching facilities reflect industry standards to ensure that students experience realistic working environments. Additional teaching spaces provide students with the resources they need to access the entire curriculum.

In addition to the teaching spaces, the school comprises 2 separate buildings that provide therapeutic support, such as occupational therapy. These buildings are designed to meet the needs of students and are furnished to a very high standard. Access to therapeutic support is an entitlement for every pupil and student. Adults will accompany students when they move between sites to ensure their safety. Suitable risk assessments are in place to mitigate potential risks.

The proprietor has ensured that standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to grant the material change request.

The school's accessibility plan

The school has an appropriate accessibility policy and plan in place. The plan contains details about adaptations to the curriculum and the physical environment.

The proprietor has ensured that schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 is likely to be met.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, at the request of the registration authority for independent schools.

Inspectors checked the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

During the inspection, inspectors spoke with representatives of the proprietor body, EducateU West Sussex Ltd, as well as the headteacher and other senior leaders.

Inspectors also considered the school's safeguarding arrangements, including the single central record of pre-employment checks and whether the school's safeguarding policy is available to parents and carers. These requirements of the ISS are met.

At the time of this inspection, the school has 40 pupils on role aged 5 to 16 years.

The material change application is to increase the admission number to 110 pupils and change the age range to 5 to 19 years.

The school intends to continue to cater specifically for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs, learning difficulties and neurodevelopmental needs, including autism.

This is the third material change inspection the school has requested. The preceding material change inspection took place in August 2021. The inspection found at that time that the school was unlikely to meet the independent standards if the change was agreed.

The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provider.

The school operates at 2 additional sites at Station House, 2 Railway Approach, Worthing Central BN11 1UR and 19 Liverpool Gardens, Worthing, BN11 1RY. These 2 sites are the locations of the school's therapeutic provisions.

The school proposes to use a separate premises for key stage 4 pupils if the material change is approved. This is located in 17 Liverpool Gardens, Worthing, BN11 1RY. The school proposes to use a separate premises for key stage 5 pupils if the material change is approved. This is located in 52 Chapel Road Worthing BN11 1BE.

Lead inspector	
Michelle Payne	His Majesty's Inspector
Team inspector	
Laura James	His Majesty's Inspector

About this school

Proprietor	EducateU West Sussex Ltd
Chair of the proprietor body	Susan Evans
Headteacher	Sarah Paoletti
Type of school	Other independent school
Capacity	40
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll	40
Number of part-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll	0
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Annual fees for day pupils	£52,500
Email address	office@educateu.co.uk

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