

Material change inspection report

23 January 2026

Demetae Academy

17a King Street
Newcastle under Lyme
ST5 1JF

Inspection outcome

The school has submitted a material change request to extend the age range of its pupils from 3 to 13 to 3 to 16.

The school is likely to meet the independent school Standards if the material change is implemented. It is recommended that the material change be approved.

Inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

ISSR paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4

1. Leaders have designed a curriculum which covers all the required areas of learning effectively. The curriculum for the younger pupils places an emphasis on constructive play. Pupils of all ages develop their practical and motor skills in weekly visits to the school's forest site. The curriculum is designed to enable pupils to make valuable connections in their learning across different subjects and deepen their understanding and skills.
2. In preparing for the proposed material change, leaders have planned a curriculum that will enable pupils to study a range of subjects at GCSE alongside qualifications in functional skills. The curriculum takes account of pupils' needs and prior attainment.
3. Leaders have planned staffing appropriately with subject-specialist teachers in mathematics, humanities, science and Spanish. Pupils have access to local college facilities for learning science. Leaders have planned the extension of the school's own resources to include a new laboratory and a design and technology space.
4. Teachers plan lessons effectively. They use a range of interesting resources and manage the learning environment suitably, such as in the provision of a range of seating types to allow pupils an appropriate degree of choice in how they approach a lesson. Staff enable pupils to make links between subjects so that pupils develop an awareness of the wider relevance of their learning. Teachers adapt their lessons appropriately to meet pupils' needs. Teachers are well informed about individual pupils' needs and their prior attainment.
5. Leaders implement suitable assessment systems. They use these to monitor pupils' progress effectively. Teachers with responsibility for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) use assessment and tracking to identify when pupils need additional support. Leaders have planned effectively for the use of assessment data to monitor pupils' progress in the examination years.
6. Pupils who have SEND make good progress. Teachers set them appropriate challenges and employ a range of supportive measures to develop their skills, from dictionary work to skills for physical manipulation of objects, as well as developing strategies to support their organisation.
7. Leaders ensure that pupils have access to an age-appropriate programme of careers education. This begins in the life skills programme in the younger primary years. Pupils develop early awareness of the world of work and start to understand that their learning connects to real futures. Visiting external speakers inform older pupils about a wide range of professions and personal journeys. Leaders have planned a suitable programme for pupils up to Year 11. This includes individual profiling and personalised guidance to support pupils' decision-making about subject options and future pathways, including college entrance and apprenticeships. Leaders review their careers

provision using the Gatsby benchmarks to ensure the careers programme is coherent, progressive, and suitable for the pupils' needs.

8. Leaders ensure that pupils receive effective teaching in economic education. Lessons on financial literacy and the annual enterprise project give pupils practical experience of budgeting, managing risk, teamwork, and problem-solving. By managing and investing real money, pupils develop an authentic understanding of enterprise, responsibility, and the consequences of decision-making.
9. Teaching in relationships and sex education is effective and age-appropriate. Pupils develop their understanding of topics such as consent and the basis of healthy relationships. Information about teaching content is shared on the school's website and discussed with parents in advance of sensitive topics. Teachers receive regular training from senior leaders and external providers to support and update their implementation of lessons in this programme.

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

ISSR paragraph 5

10. An effective programme for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) is structured so that pupils obtain an age-appropriate understanding of key themes and aspects of life beyond school. Teachers assess pupils' understanding during lessons. Teachers revisit discussion topics with pupils and reflect on pupils' developing knowledge and their discussions over time. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently flexible to respond to pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that staff are sensitive to the needs and concerns of vulnerable pupils. Assemblies and scheduled wellbeing days reinforce key messages beyond timetabled lessons and embed themes across the daily life of the school.
11. Leaders establish lessons and respect across the school. This is modelled by teachers and seen in the pupils' interactions with adults and with each other. Leaders and staff listen carefully to what pupils have to say. Pupils know that their ideas and opinions are valued.
12. Leaders have designed opportunities for pupils to contribute positively to the working of the school. Pupils undertake roles, including as prefects and reading ambassadors, which develop their social awareness and ability to work with pupils of different ages.
13. The celebration of a range of religious festivals, alongside visits to places of worship, promotes pupils' understanding of diversity and respect for different beliefs and traditions. The use of library texts to challenge stereotyping shows a commitment to equality in a community where pupils are known as individuals.
14. Pupils can articulate their understanding of the characteristics of identity because of effective lessons in PSHE and positive shared messages in assemblies. Leaders support pupils' developing awareness of identity through invitations for carefully selected outside speakers. Leaders are also rigorous in monitoring the content of any visitor's presentation, ensuring that pupils are not exposed to any undue bias.
15. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a) and (b)

16. Leaders establish a school culture which prioritises safeguarding and the wellbeing of pupils. Staff understand that safeguarding is a shared responsibility. Staff training is effective and up to date.

Staff know how to respond should there be a concern about a pupil's welfare. When a concern is raised, safeguarding leaders respond quickly and appropriately. Staff understand the importance of reporting low-level concerns.

17. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding have suitable high-level training for their roles. They have undertaken additional training in anticipation of the needs of older pupils if the material change is approved. Leaders and staff understand the contextual factors relating to safeguarding at the school. Leaders ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills they need to support vulnerable pupils.
18. Safeguarding leaders work effectively with external agencies, such as the Staffordshire early help service, in their support for pupils' wellbeing. They understand the thresholds for referring concerns.
19. The safeguarding policy is appropriately detailed and effectively implemented. It is reviewed at least annually, and when there are changes to the statutory guidance.
20. Safeguarding records are effectively maintained. Leaders make specific and detailed records of safeguarding concerns and how these are followed up.
21. Pupils learn how to stay safe online through the curriculum and assemblies. The school's internet filtering and monitoring system is effective and alerts the leadership team should a concern be raised about someone accessing inappropriate material. The systems are tested regularly to ensure that they are effective. Lessons in PSHE develop pupils' understanding of protective behaviours when using the internet. Leaders make effective links between the PSHE curriculum and the school's safeguarding practices.
22. Leaders have updated the school's attendance procedures in line with changes to government requirements. Leaders take a proactive approach to encouraging good attendance such as in the provision of a breakfast club.
23. Suitable risk assessments for safeguarding are in place. These include the response to the school's urban setting and procedures for movement between sites. Individual risk assessments are created to ensure appropriate support is in place for vulnerable pupils where needed.
24. The proprietor and members of the advisory board maintain effective oversight of safeguarding. Members of the board are well informed about leaders' work through regular reports from leaders and reviews of policies and documents, including the single central record of appointments. They visit the school regularly to meet with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), staff and pupils.
25. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

26. Policies which set out the school's procedures for safeguarding are published on the school's website.
27. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34

28. Leaders have the skills, knowledge and understanding to fulfil their roles and ensure that Standards are met. They exercise effective oversight of the school's provision and follow suitable processes for

self-evaluation, using consultations and surveys to ensure that they are well informed about the concerns and experiences of pupils, staff and parents.

29. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing in their decision-making, from the management of premises and the learning environment to policies that explain expectations of staff and pupils. Leaders ensure that the school's aims are well understood and embedded across the community.
30. Leaders have thoroughly planned the phased extension of the school's age range over an extended time period. Leaders are clear about the relevant developments in curriculum, staffing and facilities. Leaders have consulted with stakeholders about the proposed change to the school's provision.
31. Leaders have carefully considered the development of the school's provision. They have planned effectively to ensure that the educational and pastoral support is appropriate to meet the needs of older pupils if the material change is implemented.
32. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

School details

School	Demetae Academy
Department for Education number	860/6086
Address	Demetae Academy 17a King Street Newcastle under Lyme Staffordshire ST5 1JF
Phone number	01782 893079
Email address	office@demetaeacademy.org.uk
Website	https://demetaeacademy.org.uk
Proprietor	Demetae Academy Ltd.
Headteacher	Mr Matthew Davies
Chair	Mr Matthew Davies
Number of pupils	49
Date of previous inspection	20 to 22 May 2025

Information about the school

33. Demetae Academy is an independent co-educational day school for children aged 3 to 13. It is located in a residential area in Newcastle under Lyme. The school was founded in 2021. It is owned and governed by a sole proprietor who is also the headteacher. The proprietor is supported by an advisory board.
34. There are six children in the early years in one pre-school class and one Reception class.
35. Fifteen pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan. In addition, the school has identified six pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.
36. The school has identified four pupils for whom English is an additional language.
37. The school states that its aims are to provide the pupils with experiences that will spark imagination, ingenuity and academic exploration and to set them on a course for life that will create a love for learning and a hunger for success.

Purpose of the material change inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the Department for Education to make a material change to the school's provision. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards and Early Years Foundation Stage requirements if the material change is implemented.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

23 January 2026

38. Two reporting inspectors visited the school for one day.

39. Inspection activities included:

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- tour of the school site to assess facilities and observe lessons
- discussions with the proprietor
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils.

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