

Abbey View School

Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 5SW

Inspection dates

6–7 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The inspirational leadership of the principal has been fundamental to the transformation of this school. He has the full support of his team, who share his ambition for the school to provide the very best care and education for the pupils it serves.
- Relationships between staff and pupils in the school are impressive. This allows pupils to build trust with adults to help them feel safe and secure.
- Staff are fastidious in all aspects of safeguarding and work tirelessly to keep pupils safe.
- The school works effectively with a range of outside agencies to ensure that pupils are provided with the best possible emotional and academic development.
- Behaviour is good. The school provides pupils with high-quality therapeutic provision. This is making a positive contribution to pupils' well-being and self-esteem.
- Pupils enjoy the school and attend regularly.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Consequently, pupils typically make good progress from often low starting points. Sometimes, however, activities planned do not motivate pupils to achieve well.
- The new tracking system is not yet fully embedded across the school to check that pupils are making the best possible progress.
- Leaders' plans for improvement do not focus sharply enough on how planned actions will improve pupils' outcomes or how they will be checked.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of care and education their children receive.
- The curriculum is carefully tailored to meet the needs of pupils. It is complemented by a wide range of enrichment activities to which pupils have access.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - improvement plans indicate precisely when and how leaders and governors will check that actions taken are improving the learning, achievement and progress of pupils
 - the new tracking system is securely embedded to check that pupils are achieving well across the subjects they are studying
 - good practice is shared more widely with commissioning schools in order for pupils to be more successful in their mainstream school.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers provide pupils with feedback, in line with the agreed school policy, that enables them to understand fully how they can improve their learning
 - activities planned inspire pupils to work hard and achieve well.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal has been the driving force behind the rapid and significant improvements to this school. Governors describe the school as 'the one we envisaged', as a result of his pragmatic and determined leadership.
- The principal receives strong support from staff, who share his passion and resolve for the school to be the very best it can be. 'My boss is a delight to work for. He is very supportive and has the best interest of the staff and pupils at heart' and 'I am so proud to work at a school that puts pupil safety, well-being and happiness as its core' are typical of the many positive comments made by staff.
- Training and development for staff have ensured that the quality of teaching is good. Staff describe how the principal has empowered them to seek out development opportunities to improve their practice. They are appreciative of the opportunities to work with each other and with colleagues in other schools to share good practice and improve their performance.
- The curriculum is good. Pupils have access to a wide range of subjects which focus strongly on developing key skills in English and mathematics. Staff work tirelessly to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- The school provides pupils with plentiful enrichment opportunities. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the trips and visits afforded to them, which include skiing, kayaking and trampolining. They are also appreciative of trips to the theatre to see shows such as 'Mama Mia' and 'Blood Brothers'.
- Relationships between staff, pupils and parents are impressive and fundamental to the success of this school. Pupils feel safe and secure. Staff have a deep knowledge and understanding of the many challenges these vulnerable pupils face, which enables them to support pupils' development extremely well.
- School leaders use additional funding effectively to support the learning of the high number of disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, there is no difference between the achievement of these pupils and others in the school. Likewise, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well served with learning opportunities which carefully meet their needs and ensure they make strong progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The school's aim, 'to motivate, inspire and empower pupils to fulfil their potential to become citizens of which society can be proud', epitomises the work of the school. Staff show pupils, through their own actions and conduct, how to get along and work effectively together. Through this, pupils are strongly encouraged to play their part. While at the school, they develop social skills and the attributes they need to be tolerant and understanding of other people's differences. Pastoral support workers are crucial to this work, as they have the skills and time to spend with pupils to ensure their needs are met well.

- The school is outward looking and has welcomed the support of the Mulberry Bush School. This support has been effective in supporting leaders, affirming that priorities set were accurate, and actions taken appropriate to quickly improve the school.
- The school is proactive in seeking the views of parents. A recent survey undertaken shows parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of care and education their children receive. 'My child has a future and goals they didn't have before' and 'I am over the moon with the change in my child and feel this is down to the support the school has given', are two examples of the positive comments received.
- Leaders have clear procedures in place to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to hold teachers to account for the quality of education and care they provide for pupils. However, targets set for staff are not precise enough to enable leaders to check how actions taken improve pupil progress.
- Leaders have introduced effective systems to carefully track the progress and achievement of each pupil. However, they are fully aware that further work is needed to embed these practices to ensure pupils are making the best possible progress.
- The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate. Leaders carefully link school improvement to their evaluation. However, plans for improvement do not show how and by whom actions taken will be checked and evaluated to ensure pupils are making the best possible progress.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong. Governors have a wide range of skills and expertise to support leaders in the school.
- Governors closely monitor school finances to ensure the financial stability of the school. For example, they know how additional funding is spent to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are increasingly robust in monitoring and evaluating the success of the school and holding leaders to account. However, they are aware that improvement plans need greater precision to check that actions taken have the desired outcomes on pupil progress and achievement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed. Policies and procedures are kept up to date and are rigorously adhered to by all staff.
- Staff are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding, including child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, radicalisation and extremism. This high-quality training enables staff to quickly spot concerns and confidently take rapid action. Staff, irrespective of their role, know the pupils extremely well. There is a shared understanding of the need to protect these vulnerable pupils from all possible risks. Staff remain vigilant and keep a careful eye on each individual. Briefings held at the beginning and end of each school day provide the opportunity for staff to share

valuable information, minimising risk to pupils.

- Leaders, including governors, fully understand the importance of safer recruitment. They ensure all staff are carefully vetted prior to commencing employment in the school.
- Leaders work closely and effectively with other agencies and apply professional expertise to ensure pupils are kept safe. However, there are occasions when staff are frustrated at other professionals' slow response to their concerns for the safety and well-being of individual pupils. Nevertheless, leaders are steadfast in their determination to ensure pupils are safe.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe. They are extremely confident that staff in school will help and support them with their worries and concerns. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying in the school. They explain that when incidents such as arguments do occur, rapid action is taken by staff to successfully resolve the situation.
- Pupils are provided with extensive opportunities to develop their understanding of keeping safe, particularly when out of school. For example, they understand the dangers of providing personal information via the internet and mobile phones.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time across the school is good. When pupils arrive at the school, they are quickly assessed by teachers to establish what they know, can do, understand and feel about their learning. This assessment is used as a baseline to plan activities which engage, motivate and meet their needs. As a result, the progress pupils make accelerates as they become more secure and confident in their learning environment.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this knowledge to plan activities that will interest pupils and encourage them to engage in their learning. This is evident in some of the high-quality work seen, for example pupils' art and photography coursework. However, on occasion, teachers do not provide pupils with activities that inspire them. Consequently, they become bored and restless, which results in a decline in their behaviour and stalls their progress.
- Teachers question pupils effectively to check their understanding, and for the more able pupils, they challenge their thinking. This allows teachers to quickly identify gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers are then able to modify their teaching to ensure they tackle and close the gaps quickly. This was seen in the work that Year 9 and 10 pupils were completing in English. Following careful explanation by the teacher, they were able to use the apostrophe accurately in their writing.
- Teachers provide pupils with feedback on their work. However, the school's own feedback procedures are not consistently implemented. Consequently, pupils are unsure how to improve their work.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say 'the school is the best'. When pupils first join the school, they are not ready to learn. Pupils told the inspector how the staff demonstrate that they care deeply about each of them as an individual and pupils are being well supported by staff to turn their lives around. Erratic attendance, unsuccessful learning experiences and engagement in risk-taking activities are often a major barrier to pupils' ability to learn.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are impressive. Pupils describe how 'adults respect us so we respect them'. The pastoral support workers ensure that pupils receive high-quality care, guidance and support, which enables pupils to feel well cared for. Commissioning schools are highly appreciative of this work, commenting that 'the school goes beyond the call of duty to ensure pupils are safe and well cared for'. Leaders need to share their good practice more widely with their commissioning schools to more fully meet the emotional and behavioural needs of these pupils while they are in mainstream school.
- Staff work effectively with a wide range of agencies and youth support teams. Working together, they help reduce the number of pupils engaged in risk-taking activities, for example smoking tobacco and substance misuse.
- Pupils describe how they feel safe. This is as a result of staff providing them with opportunities to learn how to be safe. Pupils are confident that they can share any worries or concerns with adults. They describe how staff take the time to listen to them and support them in managing their emotions and levels of anxiety.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils that attend the school have challenging behaviour associated with their complex needs. The training provided by leaders, combined with the caring and nurturing ethos of the school, is supporting staff to manage pupils' behaviour well, using de-escalation techniques and therapy. As a result, the number of class refusals and fixed-term exclusions has declined rapidly since the last inspection and they are now extremely low.
- Teachers plan and deliver lessons that motivate pupils to learn. There is typically a calm and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Teachers have high expectations and expect pupils to work hard. For example, in a Year 10 art lesson, pupils were engrossed in completing GCSE coursework including preparing a PowerPoint presentation on 'Tokyo Ghoul'. They remained focused, with high levels of motivation and resilience, to ensure they completed what was expected of them to a high standard. In a Year 8 and 9 food technology lesson, pupils worked well together preparing the lunchtime meal, demonstrating their developing social skills.
- Staff keep careful records of any incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders carefully analyse these to identify triggers and patterns of behaviour. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how they should behave and are fully aware of the consequences

when they do not adhere to the school rules. Pupils recognise that at times some of them display extremely challenging behaviours. In conversation with the inspector, they confirmed that when this happens they are confident that staff work effectively with them to calm them and quickly resolve the situation.

- Pupils explained to the inspector that staff 'do not hold grudges' following a trauma, and they appreciate the approach staff take to help them improve their behaviour and return to their learning.
- Pupils are supervised well at all times as they move around the school and in lessons. Staff also place trust in pupils, helping to raise their self-esteem and morale. For example, Year 10 pupils were able to make themselves drinks after meeting the inspector, doing so carefully and with maturity.
- Pupils enjoy attending Abbey View School. This is reflected in their regular attendance, which is rapidly improving year on year.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils join and leave the school at different times throughout the year. The time they are on roll at the school is personalised to carefully meet their individual needs. All have experienced significant breakdown in their mainstream school and many have been out of education for long periods of time. This has contributed to pupils starting school with skills and knowledge which are typically below average for their age. Their confidence and self-esteem are particularly low.
- Initially, pupils exhibit extremely challenging and unsafe behaviours. These are intensified due to their complex needs and vulnerability. However, as pupils settle and receive high-quality support from staff, they begin to make progress and achieve good outcomes. In addition, as relationships with adults flourish and trust grows, pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem develop as they receive the support and guidance they need to build their social skills.
- A careful check of pupils' work across a range of subjects and year groups, carried out during the inspection, confirms that pupils successfully build their knowledge and skills over time. They are able to write for different purposes and can apply their developing grammar skills to their work. For example, in art, Year 10 pupils were able to record their views about their chosen artist with flair, and were able to use correct grammar and punctuation in their writing. In mathematics, pupils learn to calculate and successfully apply their knowledge and understanding to solve problems. For example, in Years 8 and 9, pupils are confident in tackling questions in their work on probability, using their reasoning skills to good effect. Most pupils are confident readers. This allows them to access texts across their chosen subjects and to achieve success in their assessments and examinations.
- The school's records and work in pupils' books confirm that as they settle in the school they make increasingly good progress in a range of subjects. This is the case for all groups of pupils. Pupils complete Year 11 having achieved accredited qualifications and GCSEs in a range of subjects, which include English, mathematics and science. This ensures that pupils are well prepared for their future education, training or employment. For example, coursework viewed in art and photography is of a high

quality. The gains in learning are impressive given their starting points at the time they joined the school. Consequently, this increases pupils' self-esteem and their future aspirations rise significantly.

- The more able pupils achieve strong outcomes in external examinations. They sit a number of GCSEs and achieve good grades. As a result, they have the necessary qualifications to follow their chosen career pathway.

School details

Unique reference number	139660
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10033149

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kim McQuail
Principal	Daniel Hartley
Telephone number	01684 292829
Website	www.abbeyviewschool.co.uk
Email address	office@abbey-view.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Abbey View School offers alternative provision for pupils who find the demands of a mainstream education challenging and for those who are at risk of permanent exclusion.
- The number of pupils on the school roll changes frequently, as some only stay at the school for a few weeks.
- All pupils are dual registered. They are on the school roll and on the roll of the mainstream school that commissioned a place at Abbey View.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

- There are a higher number of referrals for pupils in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- All pupils have an identified need related to personal trauma or turbulence in their past schooling.
- The percentage of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average. The funding for these pupils is built into the cost of the placement.
- There has been a new principal appointed since the previous inspection, starting in post in September 2015.
- The school receives support from the Mulberry Bush School, a non-maintained residential special school, national teaching school and national support school.
- At the time of the inspection, Year 11 pupils were on study leave.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited classrooms during the inspection to evaluate the quality of learning and assessment with the principal. The quality of pupils' work was scrutinised.
- Meetings were held with the principal, staff and governors. Telephone conversations were held with the school improvement partner and a leader from one of the commissioning schools. The inspector took into consideration the responses of 13 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils to listen to their views about the school. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes. A wide range of documentation was examined, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's improvement plan, and information relating to pupils' achievement and progress. Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also scrutinised.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. However, the inspector considered the 12 responses of parents from a school survey undertaken in May 2017.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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