

Abbey Rose School

Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 7DG

Inspection date

25 February 2019

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2

- Leaders have comprehensive curriculum plans in place for pupils across the intended age range. The curriculum is designed to support pupils' academic and personal development, provide them with vocational experience and prepare them for adult life. Leaders intend to combine academic teaching with different types of therapy, depending on pupils' needs. Curriculum plans are suited to the age and special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of the pupils who will join the school. The curriculum consists of engaging topics which will teach pupils knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. For example, key stage 2 pupils will study the 'Misty Mountain Sierra' topic, which is planned to develop their understanding in areas such as geography, nature and art.
- The curriculum will support pupils' personal, social and health education effectively. Opportunities are threaded through the curriculum to ensure that pupils will learn to manage their behaviour, develop positive relationships and make healthy choices.
- Curriculum plans make provision for pupils to receive suitable, impartial careers advice. Schemes of work for older pupils focus more upon the world of work. For example, older pupils will be taught about mini-enterprise. They will be encouraged to participate in their own mini-enterprise projects, such as making and selling items at a Christmas fair.
- Leaders will make use of transition plans to help pupils leaving the school become settled in the next stage of their lives. These plans anticipate the barriers pupils might face. Plans are designed to utilise the expertise and knowledge of different members of the school community, including parents and carers, to support pupils' transition.

Paragraph 3

- Schemes of work and teachers' planning indicate that the curriculum will be taught in an engaging, stimulating way. Proposed activities will take account of pupils' needs and are planned in such a way that pupils will acquire appropriate knowledge and skills.

- Each pupil will be supported by at least one member of staff. On some occasions, individual pupils will be supported by two members of staff, according to need.
- Classrooms are well equipped with different resources to aid learning, including up-to-date information technology equipment. Outside, the school site provides many opportunities for enhancing teaching and learning. For example, leaders are developing a forest school area. There are also raised beds in a gardening area to encourage pupils to develop horticultural understanding. Furthermore, leaders intend to keep animals, such as goats, in a fenced-off area of the site.
- The school's comprehensive behaviour policy is positive in its approach. It prompts staff to reward good behaviour and apply prevention strategies, rather than focus on negative behaviour in a reactive way. The policy supports a collaborative and healthy approach to managing relationships between pupils and adults.

Paragraph 4

- Leaders have systems in place to assess and monitor pupils' progress. These systems have been used effectively in other schools owned by the proprietor. Prior to pupils starting at the school, staff will form a comprehensive understanding of what they already know and can do. Initial assessments will provide a baseline of pupils' abilities, and provision will be adapted to meet their needs. Staff will work closely with other schools owned by the proprietor to moderate their assessments and ensure that judgements are accurate. Staff will also work with other local special schools to improve their practice. Staff will assess pupils on an ongoing basis and keep parents informed.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 5

- Leaders have planned a curriculum that will develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Leaders are aware of the rich array of potential opportunities afforded by the local area. Consequently, the headteacher is fostering various links with local businesses, such as surrounding shops. Links have also been made with the leisure centre and other facilities that will help support pupils' healthy living.
- The school's policies, curriculum plans and schemes of work show how leaders intend to create an inclusive, supportive school ethos. Assuming these are implemented as intended, pupils' experience of school will support them to become tolerant and respectful young people. They will learn to understand the value of being part of a diverse community and the impact their behaviour has on others.
- Schemes of work indicate that there will be opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of different points of view. Pupils will be encouraged to consider different arguments and express balanced opinions.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- A detailed and up-to-date safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. It is written in conjunction with the latest statutory guidance and provides necessary information for staff.
- Designated safeguarding leads understand their roles and responsibilities well. They have ensured that plans for effective staff induction and safeguarding training are in place. Leaders are aware of the key safeguarding issues in the local area. They have ensured that a referral system is in place, should staff have concerns about pupils, which records necessary information. The referral system enables leaders to monitor events as they unfold, note which staff have been involved and ensure that appropriate action is taken.

Paragraphs 9 and 10

- The behaviour policy is published on the school website and is fit for purpose, as explained above under paragraph 3.
- The school's approach to bullying is allied to the principles outlined in the behaviour policy. Leaders aim to work with pupils to ensure that they understand what bullying is. They have clear plans in place to prevent and overcome bullying.

Paragraphs 11 to 12

- At the time of the previous pre-registration inspection, leaders did not have a site-specific health and safety policy in place. Neither had they conducted a fire risk assessment, so the premises did not comply with fire regulations. Leaders have now taken appropriate action so that a specific health and safety policy is in place and the building is compliant with fire regulations.

Paragraph 13

- As was noted during the previous pre-registration inspection, a suitable first-aid policy is in place. If properly implemented, it should ensure that first aid is correctly administered.

Paragraph 14

- Leaders have carefully considered the number of pupils they will, at first, be able to cater for. They have taken pupils' potential needs into account and the level of staffing required. As indicated above under paragraph 3, the intended ratios of staff to pupils will ensure that pupils are properly supervised.

Paragraph 15

- An effective system for completing and monitoring attendance and admission registers is in place.

Paragraph 16

- Leaders now have a risk assessment policy in place that explains the rationale informing all risk assessments. At the time of the previous inspection, risk assessments were not specific to Abbey Rose. Leaders have now conducted specific assessments and put control measures in place to minimise identified risks.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 18, 19 and 21

- Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with pupils are detailed and up to date. There are no omissions in the single central record. Checks meet statutory requirements and establish, for example, identity, right to work in the United Kingdom and qualification.
- At the time of the previous pre-registration inspection, steps had not been taken to establish whether leaders had been subject to a direction under Section 128 of the Education Act 2008. These checks have now taken place.
- There are no supply staff currently employed at the school and leaders do not intend to use them.

Paragraph 20

- The checks that are applicable to staff are also undertaken, where appropriate, for members of the board of Orbis Education and Care Limited, the company which owns the school. This record is complete. All omissions identified at the previous inspection have been rectified.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22

- The large school building is being finished to a high standard. Despite a few minor cosmetic issues that are currently being dealt with, the premises and accommodation are ready and will provide pupils with a high-quality learning environment.

Paragraphs 23 and 28

- Toilets are clean, hygienic and in full working order and include washing facilities with water at an appropriate temperature. Separate toilets are available throughout the school and will provide pupils with privacy.
- Spacious changing rooms, separate for boys and girls, are provided so that pupils can shower after physical exercise.
- Drinking water fountains are distributed around the school and are clearly labelled.

Paragraph 24

- A well-equipped and spacious medical room is in place for pupils who need medical attention. It is located in a suitable space for ease of access. Leaders have replaced clear glass in a window in the door with opaque glass for greater privacy. Medicine cupboards are lockable, and the room also has facilities providing hot and cold water.

Paragraph 25

- The building and wider school site are safe for pupils. Fire doors are in place and are clearly marked. Fire extinguishers are distributed around the building at suitable points. The school site is appropriately fenced to restrict access and keep pupils safe. Upper-floor windows have restrictors that prevent them from opening too far.

Paragraph 26

- Spaces are acoustically fit for purpose, as far as it is possible to establish. For example, classrooms and corridors are carpeted to reduce noise.

Paragraph 27

- The school building is well lit internally. Teaching spaces benefit from a high degree of natural light, and rooms are lit in such a way as to make spaces warm and inviting. External lighting is in place to ensure that the site is safe.

Paragraph 29

- The school has beautiful surroundings that will benefit pupils' sense of well-being. The site is large and provides different environments for learning and recreational purposes. There are dedicated spaces, such as a basketball court, where pupils can participate in physical education and play.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32

- The school now has its own website, which it did not have at the time of the previous pre-registration inspection. The website contains all the statutory information required to be published for parents. For example, contact details for the headteacher and proprietor are provided in full.
- The website publishes admission arrangements and necessary policies. These are all easily accessible and written in 'parent-friendly' language.
- On the website homepage, the headteacher outlines the school's vision and values. This introduction is a useful, informative gateway for parents, because it provides a brief insight into the school's offer, curriculum and facilities.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in this part.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- A comprehensive and informative complaints policy is published on the school's website. In its tone and language, the policy recognises that complainants have the right to a fair hearing. It makes it clear that complaints should be dealt with in a professional and dispassionate way.
- At the time of the previous pre-registration inspection, there were various unmet standards in relation to how the school intended to handle complaints. Leaders have taken the appropriate action and amended the policy accordingly to rectify this.
- The policy clearly outlines the process to be followed in the event of a complaint, detailing what will happen at each stage, who will be involved and what the timescales are. It states that complaints will be handled confidentially and with sensitivity.

- The policy makes clear that if a complaint progresses to Stage 3, it will be heard by a panel of three people who have not been involved with the complaint, including one person who is not involved with the school. The policy now states that all parties will receive a copy of the panel's findings and that written records will be kept. Written records will note at which stage the complaint is resolved.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- Leaders have acted swiftly to overcome the weaknesses identified at the previous pre-registration inspection in respect of the independent school standards. Leaders now have an effective understanding of the statutory requirements placed on proprietors for independent schools in England.
- Leaders have a clear vision for the school and know what they want for their pupils. Leaders' curriculum planning, resourcing and development of the school site show how they intend to provide pupils with a stimulating, appropriate experience. In their planning, leaders have taken account of pupils' potential vulnerability and complex needs.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school publishes a suitable accessibility policy on its website. This policy is written in conjunction with the 2010 Equality Act and the 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice.
- The school site and buildings have been designed and adapted to ensure that all pupils have full and equal access. For example, disabled toilets and lifts have been installed within the main building.
- Curriculum planning is inclusive. It makes clear how the different needs of pupils will be met so that they can take full advantage of teaching and learning opportunities.

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	146524
DfE registration number	916/6023
Inspection number	10087238

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 special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Orbis Education and Care Ltd
Director of Education	Lucy Pottinger
Headteacher	Lillith Osborne
Annual fees (day pupils)	£70,000 to £95,000
Telephone number	07539 123080
Website	www.orbis-group.co.uk/abbey-rose-gloucester
Email address	lucy.pottinger@orbis-group.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	N/A	8–19	8–19
Number of pupils on the school roll	N/A	10	10

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	N/A	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	N/A	10
Number of part-time pupils	N/A	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	N/A	10
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	N/A	10
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	N/A	10

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	N/A	2
Number of part-time teaching staff	N/A	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	N/A	0

Information about this proposed school

- Abbey Rose School is operated by Orbis Education and Care Limited and will be an independent special day school, located in Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire. The school intends to open in March 2019.
- The proprietor currently operates four schools. These are all located in Wales.
- Initially, Abbey Rose School will offer specialist education services for up to 10 pupils. These will have a formal diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder or associated needs. It is anticipated that all pupils will have an education, health and care plan and be placed by their respective local authority.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to assess the school's readiness to open. This was done by checking whether it is likely to meet the independent school standards, should it be registered.
- This was the school's second pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and the director of education for Orbis Education and Care Ltd. Accompanied by both leaders, the inspector toured the school site to evaluate whether the premises complied with the independent school standards.
- The inspector evaluated documentation, including curriculum plans, schemes of work and teachers' planning. He also scrutinised records relating to health and safety, such as risk assessments.
- The inspector reviewed the school's single central record.

Inspection team

Steve Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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