

# Inspection of Abbey Rose School

Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 7DG

---

Inspection dates: 5–7 November 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

---

The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Sixth-form provision

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**No**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

For some pupils, this feels like an unsafe place to be. They feel threatened by the challenging behaviour of some of their peers. The quality of education is poor. Expectations are too low. Too few pupils make enough gains to prepare them well for life beyond school. Leaders have not met pupils' needs as set out in their education, health and care plans. As a result, some opt out of their lessons.

Less than a year after opening, some parents have a positive view of the school. However, there are systemic weaknesses. Leaders have not ensured that pupils are safe. The curriculum is not designed to meet the needs of pupils at the school. There is too little attention paid to pupils' personal development.

This new school opened with high hopes. Set in a grand building, overlooking large grounds, the school has been refurbished to a high standard. In the few months that the school has been open, it has already experienced a change of headteacher. The proprietor worked quickly to secure interim leadership, but leaders have failed to meet the basic expectations laid down in the Independent School Standards (ISS).

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Since the school opened, the proprietor has not ensured that the leadership of the school is effective. There is a lack of capacity in leadership and management to make sure that the school is well-managed and led. Leaders have not acted with integrity. They have not prioritised the welfare of pupils. Some records relating to fire safety have been falsified. There is insufficient rigour to check that the minimum requirements for an independent school are met or that agreed policies are implemented.

Leaders have not established a safe, secure environment in which pupils can thrive. Their oversight of safeguarding is weak. Leaders have put pupils at risk of harm.

Leaders do not check carefully enough that policies and procedures to protect pupils' welfare, health and safety are implemented. Some fire checks and drills have not been completed. Evacuation plans are in place for pupils, but the lack of fire drills mean that they have not been tested or checked to ensure that they are safe. This means that procedures to assure the health and safety of pupils are not effective.

The processes for the safe recruitment of staff are poor. Leaders do not ensure that staff at the school, including agency staff, have the right recruitment checks completed before they start at the school. The recording of staff recruitment checks is disorganised. Important information is missing, and leaders have not been vigilant to notice this. Representatives of the proprietor visit the school frequently, but they have failed in their responsibilities to check that these basic checks are in place.

Leaders do not meet their statutory duties under the SEN code of conduct. They do

not adapt learning and assessment in line with the needs of pupils as recorded in their education, health and care (EHC) plans. The prolonged periods of assessment when pupils arrive at the school mean that they do not receive the therapy support they need. As a result, pupils' needs are not met. Some pupils do not attend lessons at all and others refuse to respond to staff requests to engage with learning.

Sometimes, some pupils behave in a dangerous way. Leaders have not ensured that there are effective procedures in place to ensure that any dangerous behaviour is appropriately handled so that all pupils and staff feel safe and are safe. The behaviour policy sets out the positive approach that leaders intend staff to take when managing pupils' behaviour. However, it does not support staff to address pupils' challenging behaviour effectively. Work to keep records of behaviour and to identify strategies for each pupil has started. However, this system is not in place for all pupils and there is little evidence that it has improved pupils' attitudes or behaviour.

The curriculum does not meet the requirements for independent schools. Learning is not organised in a coherent way. The schemes of work have not been implemented in a way that pupils can access. Pupils do not benefit from a rich, broad, well-planned curriculum. Because of the lack of a sequenced whole-school curriculum plan, leaders do not ensure that pupils have a full range of learning experiences that match their needs, interests and aspirations.

The interim headteacher recognises that pupils' learning has not been relevant or interesting enough. She is determined to make improvements and is currently reviewing the curriculum on offer. Some pupils now take part in activities such as rock climbing and horse riding. This has helped encourage pupils to attend school more. But the curriculum is haphazard, with little clear rationale for what is taught and when. It does not meet pupils' specific needs.

The newly appointed teachers care for and want the best for pupils. They are already forming strong relationships with pupils. But they do not have the plans or the resources they need to support pupils so that they make progress and learn to apply themselves to their work. Work to plan learning that takes account of pupils' individual plans has started. However, this is not yet in place for all pupils.

There are too few high-quality resources to support learning. For example, the school does not have the resources to support the teaching of early reading. There is no system in place for the teaching of phonics. There is little practical equipment to help pupils develop an understanding of number.

In addition, many staff who support pupils' learning are temporary. They have not had training to ensure that they have the knowledge and understanding of how best to support pupils during lessons. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Too little has been done to ensure that pupils gain independence and learn skills to prepare them for later life. Leaders have plans to work with local partnerships and to

introduce work experience and careers guidance. However, this has not started. No provision is in place to ensure that pupils receive impartial careers guidance. This leaves pupils poorly equipped for their next steps.

A new approach to teaching personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) has been introduced recently. But leaders have not ensured that it is adapted to meet the needs of pupils at the school. They have not ensured that there is a coherent, sequenced plan in place to support pupils' personal development. Assemblies celebrate key events. But the curriculum does not pinpoint when and how pupils will discuss issues to help them to develop their understanding of British values, such as democracy or respect for others. It does not ensure that pupils will discuss, as appropriate to their understanding, how to tolerate and respect differences. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is not supported well. Pupils have few opportunities to engage with, or to support, the local community or charities nearby or wider.

Some information on the school's website is not kept up to date. For example, details about the headteacher are incorrect.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff, including the designated safeguarding lead, have not had the training they need to understand their responsibilities for safeguarding. Leaders have not ensured that staff are aware of their responsibilities under the 'Prevent' duty. The systems for reporting concerns about a pupil are not robust. There is not enough done to check that staff are vigilant in reporting concerns about safeguarding appropriately. Recruitment processes are poorly organised.

Leaders have ensured that there is an internet filtering system in place. However, until very recently, there was little in place to ensure that pupils receive guidance about how to keep themselves safe, including while using their personal devices.

Leaders have not made sure that safeguarding arrangements meet the latest guidance from the Secretary of State as in 'Keeping children safe in education'. During the inspection, the safeguarding policy needed to be updated with the latest government guidance.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The culture of safeguarding is weak. Leaders put pupils at risk of harm. The proprietor and other senior leaders should ensure that:
  - pupils feel safe and are safe
  - safeguarding training, including in the 'Prevent' duty, equips leaders and all

staff well for their roles in leading and promoting safeguarding so that a strong culture of safeguarding is secured

- there is leadership capacity to ensure that the school safeguarding policies and procedures are understood and followed by all members of staff
  - they, and all staff, have a solid knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the latest statutory guidance and how this relates to the safeguarding needs of pupils at the school
  - there are robust procedures for reporting and referring concerns about the safety and well-being of pupils
  - recruitment processes and the recording of recruitment checks meet the requirements set out in the latest government guidance
  - the newly introduced PSHE curriculum is effective in ensuring that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe.
- The procedures, particularly for fire safety, set out in the health and safety policy are not implemented well. This puts pupils' safety at risk. Leaders need to ensure that:
- health and safety policies, particularly related to fire safety, are rigorously implemented and that checks are completed and accurately recorded
  - fire evacuation practices happen often enough so that pupils and staff are aware of and confident about agreed procedures to evacuate the building safely.
- Some independent school standards relating to the quality of education are not met. Transition, induction and initial assessment procedures need to be improved so that pupils receive the therapies they need, so that they settle well into school and thrive. Expectations are too low. The curriculum is not planned well enough to take account of pupils' needs and ambitions or to the support they need to achieve well. There are too few resources to support pupils' learning. Pupils are not prepared well for their futures. They do not develop their understanding of values or how to support others in their local or wider community. Therefore, leaders need to ensure that:
- learning is coherently planned and sequenced so that it matches the individual needs, interests and aspirations of pupils
  - assessment procedures support an understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do, and promote future learning that is relevant to their needs
  - the requirements set out in pupils' EHC plans are better understood and information from them is used when planning pupils' learning and therapy needs
  - they develop local partnerships, secure impartial careers guidance and provide appropriate work or study opportunities to promote and support pupils' aspirations
  - the PSHE curriculum is sequenced well so that pupils encounter discussion about British values and the protected characteristics set out in the Equality

Act 2010, as appropriate to their understanding

- pupils' SMSC development is strongly supported and pupils contribute to society, locally and wider, in order to develop their understanding of the needs of others
  - resources to support reading, mathematics and other areas of the curriculum enhance and support pupils' learning.
- Leaders need to ensure that learning is effective so that pupils learn more and remember more. Staff, including support staff, need to have relevant professional development to equip them for their roles. Leaders need a rigorous approach to checking that the intended curriculum is taught well and that it matches leaders' intentions. Leaders need to consider more carefully how staff are deployed so that pupils receive consistent support whenever possible.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils' behaviour is managed well or that the behaviour policy supports staff to address pupils' challenging behaviour effectively. Some pupils have poor attendance, and some do not engage with learning. Leaders need to ensure that:
- all staff have appropriate training to support and manage pupils' behaviour well
  - behaviour strategies are evaluated and analysed so that lessons are learned and successes shared
  - pupils have the support and encouragement to attend well and expectations to attend school are raised.
- Leaders do not demonstrate the skills, knowledge and behaviours to lead a safe and successful school. They do not have robust systems in place to ensure that they monitor whether the school consistently meets the ISS. They do not promote pupils' well-being effectively. The proprietor should ensure that the school is well led and managed and that leaders have sufficient expertise. There needs to be a more rigorous approach to check that the school supports pupils' safety, health and welfare effectively. Leaders also need to assure themselves that the quality of education meets the needs and aspirations of pupils and that it prepares them well for their futures.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146524
<b>DfE registration number</b>	916/6023
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10107541
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	7
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	0
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Orbis Education and Care Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Currier
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Russell
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£70,000 to £95,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01684 217770
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.orbis-group.co.uk/abbey-rose-gloucester">www.orbis-group.co.uk/abbey-rose-gloucester</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:lucy.pottinger@orbis-group.co.uk">lucy.pottinger@orbis-group.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Abbey Rose School is operated by Orbis Education and Care Limited. The proprietor also operates four schools in Wales.
- The school was registered and opened on 14 March 2019. This is the first standard inspection of the school following the opening.
- The school does not use any alternative provision. It does not use any off-site unit.
- There are currently no pupils in the sixth-form provision.

- The school offers education for pupils with a formal diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder or associated needs. All have an education, health and care plan or are about to have one. All are placed at the school by their respective local authority.

## **Information about this inspection**

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We met with the proprietor and had several meetings with senior staff, including the director of education and care, the head of therapy and the interim headteacher.
- We considered the quality of education being provided by looking closely at reading, writing, mathematics and PSHE. This involved talking to leaders and teachers about the subjects as well as looking at curriculum plans and pupils' workbooks. We also talked with pupils about their experiences of the subjects. We visited lessons to see learning taking place.
- To inspect safeguarding, we met with the designated lead for safeguarding and spoke with staff across the school. We looked at the school's single central record and considered arrangements for recruiting staff.
- A range of school documents were considered, including school policies and documents related to safeguarding.
- We looked at the school's website, attendance information and examples of reports sent out to parents.
- We observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. We met with the school's therapy team.
- We considered the views of parents during meetings with parents on day one of the inspection and by considering the small number of views provided on Parent View. We gathered the views of staff through discussions with staff and an online staff survey.
- To discuss the curriculum, we met with a leader from another school in the Orbis group who is currently providing additional support to the school.
- We had a telephone conversation with a representative from the SEN team at Gloucestershire local authority and with the local authority designated officer.



## **Inspection team**

Tonwen Empson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Martin Bragg

Ofsted Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school failed to meet the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
  - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
  - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
    - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
  - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
  - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which–
    - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
    - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act[9]
  - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–
    - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner
    - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
    - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential
  - 2(2)(g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs
  - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
  - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
  - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
  - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves
  - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
  - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
  - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
  - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range
  - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

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

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor–
  - 5(a) actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which–
    - 5(b)(i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
    - 5(b)(ii) enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England
    - 5(b)(iii) encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely

- 5(b)(iv) enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
- 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and
- 5(b)(vii) encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England
- 5(c) precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school; and
- 5(d) takes such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils–
  - 5(d)(i) while they are in attendance at the school
  - 5(d)(ii) while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school, or
  - 5(d)(iii) in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere

they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

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

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
  - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
  - 9(a) a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour
  - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively; and

- 9(c) a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].

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

- 19(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
  - 19(2)(a) a person offered for supply by an employment business to the school only begins to work at the school if the proprietor has received–
    - 19(2)(a)(i) written notification from the employment business in relation to that person–
      - 19(2)(a)(i)(aa) that the checks referred to in paragraph 21(3)(a)(i) to (iv), (vii) and (b) have been made to the extent relevant to that person
      - 19(2)(a)(i)(bb) that, where relevant to that person, an enhanced criminal record check has been made and that it or another employment business has obtained an enhanced criminal record certificate in response to such a check
      - 19(2)(a)(i)(cc) if the employment business has obtained such a certificate before the person is due to begin work at the school, whether it disclosed any matter or information; and
      - 19(2)(a)(i)(dd) that, where that person is one for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person’s suitability to work in a school, it or another employment business has obtained such further checks as appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
    - 19(2)(a)(ii) a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by an employment business before the person is due to begin work at the school
  - 19(2)(b) a person offered for supply by an employment business only begins work at the school if the proprietor considers that the person is suitable for the work for which the person is supplied
  - 19(2)(c) before a person offered for supply by an employment business begins work at the school the person’s identity is checked by the proprietor of the school (irrespective of any such check carried out by the employment business before

the person was offered for supply)

- 19(2)(d) the proprietor, in the contract or other arrangements which the proprietor makes with any employment business, requires the employment business to provide–
- 19(2)(d)(i) the notification referred to in paragraph (a)(i); and
- 19(2)(d)(ii) a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate which the employment business obtains
- 19(3) Except in the case of a person to whom sub-paragraph (4) applies, the certificate referred to in sub-paragraph (2)(a)(i)(bb) must have been obtained not more than 3 months before the date on which the person is due to begin work at the school.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is–
  - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether–
    - 21(3)(a)(i) S's identity was checked
    - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act
    - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction
    - 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications
    - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S
    - 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d)
    - 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
    - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e)
  - 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

## Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1)(a) The information specified in sub-paragraph (2) is provided to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate;
- 32(2) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
  - 32(2)(a) the school’s address and telephone number and the name of the head teacher.

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

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
  - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2019