

# Abbot's Way School

St. Marys Road, Meare, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9SR

**Inspection date**

10 December 2020

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens. It is currently operating without registration**

## Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraphs 2, 3, 4*

- The school's leaders have a clear vision for the school. They share a commitment to provide a school which is likely to meet the requirements of pupils with specific learning needs, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia.
- Leaders understand the needs of the pupils who will attend the school. Leaders recognise that most pupils who attend the school will have had negative experiences in school. Many will have missed stages of learning.
- Arrangements are in place to support each pupil with an individual education plan. The plans will link to the curriculum and support pupils in overcoming barriers to learning.
- A curriculum policy is in place. The planned curriculum follows the national curriculum, and shows suitable breadth and ambition.
- Detailed schemes of work are in place. These schemes of work provide a framework for teaching matched to pupils' academic needs. These plans demonstrate how teachers will deliver the curriculum to each year group.
- Since the first pre-registration inspection, leaders have refined the detail in key stage 2 subject planning. The learning in this key stage is now sequential, with clear progression planned across the year groups.
- Leaders have appropriate plans in place to assess pupils' progress and attainment. Since the last inspection, leaders have considered how they will use assessment to adapt learning to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Leaders' strategy involves staff working in teams to support pupils' learning. These teams will include qualified teachers, teaching assistants, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists. These teams will work together to adapt the curriculum to pupils' needs. Leaders propose to teach pupils in small classes.

- Leaders have a personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum in place. This curriculum covers four areas: 'my future', 'well-being', 'social skills' and 'our world'. Pupils will learn about staying safe, both online and in the community. The curriculum also covers relationships and sex education.
- The school site provides plenty of outdoor learning spaces. In the school building, there is a well-resourced therapy room, a sensory area, a food technology room and a science room.
- These standards are likely to be met.

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

### *Paragraph 5*

- Leaders have planned carefully for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The PSHE curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to broaden their understanding of the world, learn about healthy lifestyles and appreciate views that are different from their own. It aims to provide opportunities for pupils to build their knowledge and understanding of British values, equality and diversity.
- Leaders intend to embed planning for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development into all lessons. Teachers' planning will include a reference to aspects of SMSC taught in each class.
- Leaders will monitor the delivery of all aspects of SMSC through analysis of lesson plans, lesson observations and topics covered in off-site trips, in assemblies and by external visitors.
- School policies reflect the promotion of fundamental British values. This includes ensuring that pupils are not exposed to partisan political views in teaching or any other activities.
- This standard is likely to be met.

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

### *Paragraphs 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16*

- Leaders have taken action to address the concerns raised at the first pre-registration inspection related to checks on staff. They have completed all required checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. Leaders demonstrated an understanding of the requirements of 'Keeping children safe in education', 2020.
- Leaders have set up appropriate systems to manage concerns relating to pupils' welfare. They have suitable training in place that will enable staff to take the right actions when they have concerns about a pupil. Leaders have written a safeguarding policy that meets current requirements.
- Leaders have put appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies into place. Leaders are knowledgeable about the potential needs and vulnerabilities of the pupils who will attend the school. They plan to provide a framework and training for behaviour management, which staff will adapt to meet pupils' individual needs. The policies indicate high expectations for pupils' behaviour and how staff will manage any concerns or incidents that occur.

- Leaders have a clear understanding of relevant health and safety regulations to ensure that pupils will be safe on the school premises. The site complies with fire safety regulations.
- The arrangements for first aid, health and safety and risk assessments are suitable for the proposed school.
- Leaders have made suitable arrangements for the supervision of pupils at all times of the school day, including when pupils arrive and leave the school site.
- The admissions and attendance registers contain all the required information.
- These standards are likely to be met.

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

*Paragraphs 17, 18, 19, 20, 21*

- Since the last pre-registration inspection, leaders have completed all required checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Enhanced criminal record checks are complete for all staff. Checks that leaders are not prohibited from undertaking management work in a school are complete.
- Leaders intend to cover any staff absence internally, as they feel that the pupils at the school will need the familiarity of working with people they already know. They do not intend to employ supply staff. However, leaders know what action they need to take if they do use supply teachers in the future.
- The school's single central register now contains all required information.
- These standards are likely to be met.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraphs 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31*

- Leaders have taken action to address the issues raised at the time of the first pre-registration inspection.
- Leaders have obtained planning permission to use the building as a school. However, the number of pupils allowed at the school is limited to 15. Work is required to improve access to the site from the road before the planning authority considers allowing higher numbers of pupils.
- Work to provide parking and a turning circle are complete. Leaders have erected a fence to secure the gardens at the back of the school.
- There are toilets and washing facilities on each floor of the building. Each toilet can be secured from the inside and is for individual pupil use. There are two showers on the site and a room that will be used for single-sex changing as required.
- Leaders have identified a space for the care of unwell pupils. There is a temporary bed available for use, and the room has a sink. There is a toilet nearby.
- The proposed classrooms are of reasonable size, well-lit and have appropriate acoustics. Specialist rooms are available for science, art, music, drama and food technology.
- Drinking water is freely available, and taps are clearly labelled.

- Toilets have a ready supply of cold water, and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water.
- The property has ample outdoor space. There is a walled garden which pupils will access at break and lunchtime. This is currently predominantly grassed. Leaders have plans to increase the area of hard surface to improve accessibility in wet weather.
- There are further paddocks at the back of the school which will provide ample space for physical education.
- These standards are likely to be met.

## Part 6. Provision of information

### *Paragraph 32*

- Leaders are aware of the information that they are required to make available to parents and other relevant stakeholders. They intend providing this information via publication on the school's website.
- Leaders have plans to provide a written report to parents on pupils' progress and attainment on an annual basis.
- Leaders also have plans in place to show how the provision will meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and to show how any funding will be spent.
- This standard is likely to be met.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

### *Paragraph 33*

- The complaints policy, which is published on the proposed school's website, meets requirements. The policy clearly outlines the procedures that parents can follow should they have a complaint. Timescales are clearly stated.
- Leaders plan to keep a confidential record of complaints that makes clear the findings of each complaint and at which stage the complaint was resolved.
- This standard is likely to be met.

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

### *Paragraph 34*

- The joint headteachers, who are also the proprietors, are committed to providing a high-quality education for the pupils at their school. They have taken effective action to address the issues raised at the time of the first pre-registration inspection. The school is now likely to meet all requirements.
- Leaders have undertaken a review of their proposed fees. They now have a business model in place which demonstrates that the fees are sufficient to ensure the financial viability of the school.
- The joint headteachers are outward-looking. They have established an advisory governing board. The members of this board are suitably qualified to advise and support leaders. For example, one member is a national leader of school governance.

- Leaders have also created an associates team. This team of experienced professionals is well placed to offer leaders support and advice in establishing a high-quality provision for pupils with specific learning difficulties.
- This standard is likely to be met.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have created a suitable accessibility plan.

## **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	148006
DfE registration number	933/6015
Inspection number	10171179

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	Special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Abbot's Way Ltd
Chair	Miss Hellen Lush and Mr Gareth Wright
Headteacher	Miss Hellen Lush and Mr Gareth Wright (joint headteachers)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£18,981–£23,379
Telephone number	01458 397497
Website	<a href="http://www.abbotswayschool.co.uk">www.abbotswayschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@abbotsway.co.uk">office@abbotsway.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	10
Number of pupils of compulsory school age who have an education, health and care plan, or who is looked after by a local authority	6
Total hours operating as a school per week	30
Total hours of teaching provided per week	15

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 13	7 to 14	7 to 14
Number of pupils on the school roll	10	40	15

### *Reason for inspector's recommendations*

- Currently, planning permission limits the number of pupils on site to 15 due to access to the site from the road.

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	40
Number of part-time pupils	10	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	10	Up to 40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	6	Up to 40
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority an education, health and care plan	5	Up to 40

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4.5	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	6	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	3	4



## **Information about this proposed school**

- Abbot's Way School proposes to provide education for up to 40 pupils aged 7 to 14. The school site sits approximately four miles outside of the town of Glastonbury in Somerset. The proposed premises were formerly a boarding house and part of the estates of the Shapwick School that liquidated in March 2020. It is anticipated that pupils will either be allocated by local authorities or privately funded.
- The proprietor is Abbot's Way School Ltd. There are currently two directors of the company, both of whom intend to act as joint headteachers of the school. The proprietor does not run any other school.
- The proposed school intends to provide education for pupils with an education, health and care plan, specifically for those with speech, language and communication needs. The proposed school does not have any religious character.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. It was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.
- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic of 2020.
- This was the proposed school's second pre-registration inspection. The first pre-registration inspection was on 22 July 2020.
- The inspector reviewed documentation related to the curriculum, safeguarding, health and safety of the premises and the suitability of staff.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, who is also the headteacher, as well as the chair of the advisory governing board and the school secretary.
- The school is currently operating. There are 10 pupils on roll, six of whom have education, health and care plans. None of the pupils are children looked after. No pupils are attending the school for more than 15 hours each week.
- No teaching was observed during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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