

# Arbour House School

15-17 Glendinning Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 7QF

**Inspection date**

14 March 2023

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented**

## Main inspection findings

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

#### *Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- Leaders have ensured the safeguarding policy is in line with the most recent statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Staff implement this policy effectively. The policy is published on the school's website.
- Leaders demonstrate a secure knowledge of how to keep pupils safe. Records kept are meticulous. Leaders encourage a culture of vigilance. Staff receive regular and timely safeguarding training. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure pupils get the support they need.
- Members of the proprietor board and the regional director place safeguarding at the heart of their work. They meet regularly with school leaders to assure themselves that staff act in the best interests of pupils. Leaders plan to increase the number of designated safeguarding leads for the proposed additional site so that they continue to ensure all pupils are kept safe.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to continue to be met if the request for the material change is approved.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- Leaders take health and safety seriously. Staff and external consultants complete regular health and safety checks. These are carefully logged, and any faults are acted upon quickly. Leaders plan to ensure the same exacting standards in the additional premises.
- Leaders have clear fire safety procedures in place, including at the additional site. Record-keeping demonstrates that staff carry out termly fire drills and weekly fire alarm testing. The new additional accommodation complies with fire safety regulations.
- Leaders have ensured a comprehensive risk assessment policy is in place. They maintain detailed assessments for risk both on and off site. These include potential risks to individual pupils. Leaders regularly review risk assessments to ensure they

remain relevant and accurate.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the request for the material change is approved.

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

##### *Paragraphs 17–21*

- Leaders and members of the proprietor board are vigilant when ensuring all necessary checks are carried out on staff working at the school. They make sure all necessary documentation such as qualifications and references are obtained.
- Safeguarding leaders in school ensure adults are deemed safe to work with pupils prior to taking up post. They have undertaken relevant and up-to-date safer recruitment training.
- Leaders keep all statutory information on a single electronic system. Senior staff, including the regional director, monitor this regularly to ensure it is accurate and complete. All staff with leadership positions, including governors and members of the proprietor board, have had the statutory checks to determine their suitability for their role, including section 128 checks.
- The standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

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

##### *Paragraphs 22–31*

- Leaders have considered carefully the development and refurbishment of the new additional premises for its secondary-age pupils. This includes the planned increase in pupil numbers. The accommodation is set over three floors and has been completed to a high standard. This space is planned to include classrooms, therapy rooms, community areas, offices and a dedicated library. This will enable staff to have a large number of additional spaces to support the teaching of the planned curriculum and interventions. Plans also include subject-specific teaching rooms, for example for art, science and food technology.
- Leaders have ensured that there is workspace access for staff. Rooms are well decorated and lit. All first-floor and second-floor learning areas have suitable acoustics and ventilation.
- The additional site includes separate and suitable toilet facilities for pupils and staff. There is a medical room on the ground floor, with a bed and appropriate washing facilities. This is close to a toilet. Drinking water is readily available.
- Outdoor areas provide spaces for pupils to play and socialise, including a planned forest school area. Playground markings and additional resources are to be added in due course. Pupils will be able to have some physical education provision on site, as well as continuing to use the local community sports hall with changing facilities and a swimming pool.
- At the time of this material change, the secondary site is in its final stages of refurbishment. Signage and some aspects of the external areas are not yet complete. Leaders will ensure that unfinished work is completed and complies with the

standards before admitting pupils.

- Once leaders have completed the building work, the standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

### *Paragraph 34*

- Leaders, including governors and the proprietor board, are passionate about ensuring all pupils receive the right support emotionally, socially and academically. They recognise the importance of pupil well-being. Leaders have a secure understanding of the standards.
- Leaders have given careful thought to the proposed increase in pupil numbers and the organisational structures across both the current and new additional sites. They intend a gradual increase in pupil numbers. Leaders plan to recruit additional staff with the appropriate knowledge and skills to support pupils' individual needs.
- Governors, as well as members of the proprietor board, continue to maintain direct oversight of the school's work. Clear lines of accountability ensure that changes made to a rise in numbers and accommodation are carefully managed.
- The school is likely to continue to meet the standards if the material change is approved.

## **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 that are relevant to the material change.

## School details

Unique reference number	143642
DfE registration number	838/6039
Inspection number	10278195

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Potens
Chair	Nicki Stadames
Headteacher	Julie Perks
Annual fees (day pupils)	£58,000
Telephone number	01305781400
Website	<a href="http://www.potens-uk.com">www.potens-uk.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:arbouradmin@potens-education.co.uk">arbouradmin@potens-education.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	17 to 19 May 2022

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	6 to 18	6 to 18	6 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	25	60	60

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	18	60
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	18	60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	18	60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	18	60

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	8	17
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	2
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	0

## Information about this school

- Arbour House is a special school which provides education for pupils with complex personal, social and emotional health issues, autism spectrum disorder and learning difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- Pupils attend from a range of local authorities.
- The school had its last full standard inspection in May 2022 where it was judged to be good. The school met the standards.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in response to the proprietor's request to increase the maximum pupil capacity from 25 to 60 across two sites, one for primary-age pupils and one for secondary-age pupils. This was the second material change inspection to the school's registration.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the school administrator. The inspector held a remote meeting with the chair of governors and the regional director.
- The inspector toured the new additional school site with leaders to check the suitability and safety of the proposed premises in relation to the increase in pupil numbers.
- The inspector reviewed and evaluated documents provided by the school, including risk assessments, policies, the single central record and safeguarding information.
- The inspector spoke to a group of pupils about how the school keeps them safe.

## Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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