

New Barn School

Welford, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 8HZ

Inspection date

20 March 2023

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- Leaders have a clear understanding of the latest statutory safeguarding requirements. The school's safeguarding policy is implemented effectively and published on the school website. Staff receive regular and up-to-date training to support pupils with safeguarding concerns, as well as with their behaviour, pastoral and emotional needs.
- Leaders are knowledgeable about how to manage any safeguarding concerns that might arise. They meet with staff twice daily to discuss and share pertinent safeguarding and welfare information. Leaders have effective systems in place to record and share information with appropriate authorities, to help keep pupils safe.
- Leaders have devised a comprehensive health and safety policy which is suitable for the new secondary site. Potential hazards for pupils and staff have been carefully considered. Leaders understand fully their responsibility to risk assess and monitor the health and safety of all who will use the River View premises.
- Leaders have implemented an effective risk-assessment policy. This policy includes detailed information of any possible health and safety risks identified in the school environment and beyond. Leaders have taken appropriate actions to minimise the potential health and safety risks for staff and pupils. For example, there is a suitable area for taxis to drop off and collect pupils. In addition, the fencing around the outdoor play areas is being secured further.
- The secondary site complies with the relevant fire safety regulations. The proprietor ensures that checks on fire safety equipment, such as fire extinguishers, take place regularly and procedures are fit for purpose. Appropriate and effective plans for fire evacuation are in place. All staff who will work at the River View site have completed fire marshal and fire safety training.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school employs a suitable number of staff to provide appropriate supervision. Careful consideration has been given to how pupil

supervision will be managed. The proposed staffing ratios are likely to be adequate to enable adults to manage their breaks without compromising pupil welfare and safety.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 17–18(2)(e), 18(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(3)(b), 21(6)–21(7)(b)

- The single central record is maintained electronically and meets all statutory requirements. The headteacher ensures that all necessary checks to confirm that staff are suitable to work with children are completed before they start at the school. The proprietor and the headteacher monitor this regularly to ensure it is up to date and accurate.
- The proprietor has completed all required checks on those persons who hold a leadership and management position in the school.
- Leaders are aware of the procedures that they should follow if they employ agency staff or accept volunteers in school.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22–24(1)(b), 24(2), 25–29(1)(b)

- The school has secured the additional premises (River View House) in a location close to the main school site (New Barn). The new premises, River View House, will cater for secondary age pupils. This premises offer specialist resources and designated technical learning areas to provide pupils with a wider range of subjects and vocational courses they can choose to study.
- The school has a mixture of well-furnished classrooms and breakout spaces for small groups and one-to-one work. This includes the specially designated spaces, such as a design technology room, a music area, a science laboratory, a canteen and an art studio. There are also therapy and pastoral support rooms. Rooms are a suitable size for the intended number of pupils. The premises are likely to accommodate up to 60 pupils comfortably.
- The proposed school is located in an area away from the main road. The school site is close to other external users, including local businesses, a leisure centre and colleges. Leaders understand the potential risks to pupils and have suitable risk assessment procedures in place. This includes risk assessments for a river and a public park adjacent to the site.
- The school has a medical room with appropriate facilities for short-term care if pupils are unwell or injured. A bed and washing facilities are also available. First-aid equipment is stored safely and is easily accessible, including in all classrooms and specialist areas.
- The accommodation at River View is appropriate for the needs and age range of pupils for which it is intended. At this point in time, the building is suitably furnished, and all necessary installations and fittings are complete. Plans to further secure the

fencing around the outdoor recreation areas will be completed shortly. Leaders carry out regular premises checks diligently. They identify potential hazards and action is taken swiftly to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety at all times.

- The acoustic conditions of classrooms, specialist areas and the canteen are suitable for the activities that take place in them.
- Lighting in all areas and classrooms is of a suitable standard and appropriate for pupils' learning. External lighting is in place to provide safe access and exit from the premises during the hours of darkness.
- Drinking water is always readily accessible to pupils while the premises are in use. These facilities are clearly labelled and are in shared areas on both floors as well as the canteen.
- Toilet and washing facilities are available for the sole use of pupils. These have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. Changing and shower facilities exist on site should they be required.
- There is ample space at the River View site for outdoor play and activities. Leaders also intend to continue to use facilities at the nearby leisure centre for some aspects of the physical education and sports provision.
- This part of the independent school standards is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The proprietor demonstrates a secure understanding of the independent school standards. Leaders, governors and the proprietor have the knowledge, relevant expertise and skills to carry out their roles effectively.
- The proprietor has clear structures in place to hold leaders to account. There is a well-established governing board. Through this, the proprietor has ensured that there are clear lines of accountability across all phases and sites. The proprietor makes use of external educational experts to support the effective operation of the school.
- Leaders are committed to providing a high-quality education for each pupil and propose to increase capacity slowly. They are mindful that any changes to capacity do not have an adverse impact on pupils currently at the school.
- Leaders are vigilant about all aspects of safeguarding. They demonstrate an effective knowledge of how to manage safeguarding concerns. Leaders promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils effectively. Suitable provision is in place to support pupils' well-being.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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	144033
DfE registration number	869/6019
Inspection number	10271199

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	Independent
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	P Bloom Ltd
Chair	Mike Deacy
Headteacher	Bridget Cooper Eastwood
Annual fees (day pupils)	£48,020 to £80,140
Telephone number	01488 505145
Website	www.acornnewbarnschool.co.uk
Email address	newbarnschool@acornnewbarnschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	21 to 23 June 2022

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	6 to 19	6 to 19	6 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	70	130	130

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	70	130
Number of part-time pupils	70	130
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	70	130
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	70	130
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	70	130

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	As required
Number of staff in the welfare provision	6	6

Information about this school

- New Barn is an independent school for pupils aged five to 19. Pupils are referred to the school by their local authority, which funds their place. All pupils have complex social, emotional and mental health needs. Many have a medical diagnosis, for example for autistic spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is currently based on two sites that are located close to each other in a rural setting. Primary-age pupils are based at Willow Farm, RG20 8HZ. Secondary-age pupils are based at Home Farm, RG20 8HR. This material change means that the school will be based on a new purpose-built site for the secondary phase, River View, RG14 2PS.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in June 2022, when the school was judged to be good. Since then, the school has requested this material change

inspection and sought permission from the Department for Education (DfE) to increase the number of pupil places from 70 to 130.

- The school caters for some pupils who are accommodated in residential homes operated by the school's proprietor.
- At the time of this inspection, the school was using seven alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with two days' notice.
- The inspection was carried out at the request of the DfE. The purpose of the inspection was to establish if the school would be likely to meet all the relevant independent school standards if the material change to the provision is implemented.
- The DfE requested that the school's arrangements for safeguarding, health and safety, and risk assessments were scrutinised in order to check that they would be likely to meet all requirements. Further checks were made on the proposed new premises, recruitment of staff and the quality and capacity of leaders to manage the material change.
- This was the school's fourth material change inspection since December 2017. The school intends to increase pupil roll from 70 to 130.
- The lead inspector met with the executive headteacher and two headteachers. She also met online with a representative of the proprietor and the chair of governors. The inspector toured the proposed new site to check the facilities and the planned provision. A range of documents, risk assessments, policies and plans were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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