

Access School

Holbrook Villa Farm, Harmer Hill, Broughton, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY4 3EW

Inspection dates

25 and 27 April 2023

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)b, 2(1)(b)(i)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that teachers were using pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans to inform and adapt learning activities. Targets in pupils' individual learning plans (ILPs) sometimes lacked ambition and did not relate to academic achievement. This did not help pupils to achieve their full potential.
- Leaders are now using EHC plans to create an ILP for each pupil. The outcomes from EHC plans are used to create individual targets for pupils with a greater focus on academic achievement.
- Leaders have ensured that each pupil has a literacy and numeracy target that is reviewed regularly by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). These targets, particularly in literacy, are specific and clear.
- Teachers are now using these targets to help adapt lessons, so that pupils can make better academic progress.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in these paragraphs are now met.

Paragraph 3, 3(c), 3(d), 3(h)

- At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' learning was sometimes hindered by disruption. Strategies to prevent pupils from leaving lessons or disrupting the learning of others were not always effective. Leaders were not carefully tracking the learning that had been missed.
- Leaders have taken effective steps to help improve classroom behaviour. Lessons are generally calm and purposeful. Teachers build positive relationships with pupils and are alert to potential issues that may arise.
- Staff have a very good understanding of each pupil's social, emotional and mental health needs and use effective strategies in the classroom to help focus pupils on their work.

- Teachers have an accurate view of where pupils are up to with their learning and use this to plan lesson activities and address gaps in knowledge.
- Although there are times when some pupils are still unsettled, this is usually managed well by staff, and appropriate risk assessments are in place for pupils who display more challenging behaviours.
- The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b) and Part 6 paragraph 32(1)(c)

- Leaders have ensured that their safeguarding policy is available on the school's website and is compliant with the latest guidance issued by the government.
- Leaders have ensured that all appropriate checks on staff have been carried out before they begin working at the school. This information is all stored securely on the school's single central record.
- Leaders know that pupils who attend this school are extremely vulnerable and are at greater risk of harm. As a result, all staff receive regular and pertinent safeguarding training and are alert to signs of potential abuse.
- Leaders keep accurate and up-to-date records of safeguarding concerns and act quickly to ensure that pupils get the help and support they need.
- The standards in these paragraphs remain met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10

- Leaders have ensured that an appropriate behaviour policy and an anti-bullying strategy are in place.
- Leaders keep detailed records of all behaviour concerns, including serious incidents, and use these to analyse patterns and trends each month.
- All staff have access to the school's online system for recording behaviour and know how to record incidents of misbehaviour, should these arise.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff have received appropriate physical intervention training, including on de-escalation strategies. Although the number of physical interventions remains high, this has steadily reduced as the academic year has progressed.
- Leaders keep accurate logs of physical interventions but recognise that there are ways in which the recording of this information could be improved.
- The standards in these paragraphs remain met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that all the independent school standards were met securely and consistently. Issues were identified in the way in which staff were using pupils' EHC plans and the way they were managing pupils' behaviour.
- The head of education now meets the proprietor board once a month to provide an update on the school's progress. The board scrutinises the information it is given to provide both support and challenge to leaders, particularly around safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Leaders have looked to strengthen their work further around the curriculum. The proprietor board has brought in two experienced external consultants to provide training to staff. These consultants have helped to bring about further improvement and a better understanding of the independent school standards.
- Effective steps have been taken to ensure that staff have a better understanding of how to meet targets in EHC and ILP plans. Alongside this, leaders and staff are helping to ensure that incidents of poor behaviour are managed effectively.
- The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 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.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 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(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	132772
DfE registration number	893/6096
Inspection number	10284188

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

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	23
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Family Care Associates
Chair	Andrew O'Reilly
Headteacher	Sarah Earing
Annual fees (day pupils)	£30,615 to £35,207
Telephone number	01939 220797
Website	www.family-care.co.uk
Email address	access@family-care.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	27 to 29 September 2022

Information about this school

- Access School provides education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school was previously inspected in September 2022 and judged to require improvement.
- All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This progress monitoring inspection was carried out without notice. The inspection took place on two separate days due to the majority of pupils not being on site on day one.
- This was the school's first monitoring inspection since its last standard inspection in September 2022, at which it was judged to require improvement.
- The school was required to prepare an action plan as a result of non-compliance with the standards following the September 2022 standard inspection. The proposed action plan was judged unsatisfactory in February 2023.
- The inspector met with the head of education, the head of school and the school's SENCo. He toured the school premises and also spoke with other staff.
- The inspector checked the school's curriculum policy and subject plans. He visited lessons and spoke with pupils. He examined a sample of pupils' EHC plans and ILPs.
- The inspector held a meeting about the school's safeguarding procedures. He checked the school's single central record and examined how safeguarding concerns were recorded and followed up. The safeguarding policy on the school's website was also checked.
- The inspector examined the school's behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy. He looked at how incidents of misbehaviour were recorded and what training staff had received on physical intervention.

Inspection team

Mark Howes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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