

Newbury Manor School

Newbury Manor, Newbury, Near Mells, Frome, Somerset BA11 3RG

Inspection date

5 October 2023

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The proprietor publishes a detailed safeguarding policy on the school's website. This takes account of the most recent guidance from the Secretary of State. The school provides up-to-date training for staff and clear local procedures. As a result, group-wide expectations for safeguarding pupils are implemented reliably in this school.
- Recently, the school has introduced a new system for recording safeguarding concerns. Existing records have been carefully archived and are readily available for reference. The school now considers safeguarding concerns alongside patterns in pupils' behaviour and attendance. This provides a more rounded view of pupils' welfare.
- The school knows its pupils and families well. It recognises that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities may be especially vulnerable. The school shares information readily with safeguarding partners, such as social workers. The school is tenacious in ensuring that children and families receive the support they need.
- Staff are trained to know the features of a healthy, open school culture and to understand how this helps to keep pupils safe. Staff support an open culture by reporting any low-level or professional concerns they might have about adults working within the school. Allegations about staff are managed sensitively and appropriately. The school regularly consults with the local authority designated officer and follows their advice.

Paragraph 11

- The proprietor sets out the roles and responsibilities for health and safety practice, including the general approach to risk assessment, on the school's website. The school arranges for checks at appropriate intervals, for example of asbestos and legionella. Maintenance records confirm routine checks, for example water temperatures and emergency lighting. The school completes a detailed health and safety risk assessment for each classroom.

Paragraph 12

- The school's fire risk assessment is current and all recommendations have been actioned. A pre-occupation fire risk assessment was carried out by a qualified person following the conversion of the residential wing for educational purpose. There is an appropriate fire system and fire equipment is allocated to rooms according to risk. Fire extinguishers are checked annually.

Paragraph 14

- The proprietor has increased the number of teaching and support staff in preparation for the material change. The school plans to increase the number of pupils gradually. Currently, pupils are organised into classes of approximately four pupils. The school works to a ratio of one teacher to five pupils. Therefore, there is room to admit some pupils to existing classes and to create two further classes of up to five pupils.
- The school has already admitted an additional 10 pupils beyond its registration agreement. These pupils have successfully integrated into the school. Pupils are well supervised. During the inspection, pupils were observed using classrooms and outdoor spaces throughout the site with appropriate supervision.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The arrangements for assessing and managing risk are set out clearly in the policy. Supporting risk assessments are in place addressing the site and the various educational activities that the pupils take part in. Risk assessments are typically detailed, considering personalised risks in relation to individual pupils.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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

Paragraph 18

- The proprietor ensures that the full range of vetting checks are carried out before a staff member begins work at the school.

Paragraph 19

- The school does not use supply staff. Instead, the school very occasionally appoints 'bank staff'. Bank staff must undergo the same vetting checks as a permanent member of staff. These checks are undertaken by the school; therefore, there is no third-party involvement.

Paragraph 20

- Members of the proprietor body undertake appropriate checks to confirm their suitability for the role. This includes section 128 management checks.

Paragraph 21

- The school maintains a digital single central record which was printed for scrutiny on this inspection. There is a careful audit process through which the school identifies and actions any gaps or queries arising within the record.
- School leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23

- Appropriate toilet facilities are available throughout the site. Most of the toilets are individual cubicles which can be secured from the inside. Therefore, most toilets can be used by pupils of either gender. There is one toilet block designated for the sole use of boys.
- Shower and changing facilities are sufficient for the proposed number of pupils. This includes the dedication of some facilities for pupils with intimate care needs.

Paragraph 24

- An upstairs wing of the school, known as 'Avebury', previously used for the accommodation of residential pupils, has been renovated for educational purpose. As part of this work, there is now increased space and separate rooms for the administration of medical treatment and the accommodation of sick pupils.

Paragraph 25

- To support an increase in pupil capacity, the proprietor has converted the 'Avebury' wing to include three classrooms for the teaching of English, drama, and Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network qualifications. There is a 'well-being hub' for the pastoral care of pupils. Additional therapy rooms have been assigned, for example a music therapy room. A room that was previously a kitchen has been repurposed for the teaching of independent living skills. The converted spaces have been decorated and resourced to a high standard. The 'Avebury' wing has been incorporated into maintenance routines for the whole school.
- The site is generally well maintained. The proprietor is subject to some limitations because the school is based in a listed building. There are some rooms which are in need of paintwork. This is being addressed as part of an ongoing cycle of maintenance.

Paragraphs 26, 27

- Throughout the site, the acoustics and lighting are suitable for educational purpose.
- External lighting is provided to ensure safe access to the school in the dark.

Paragraph 28

- Drinking-water is available from drinking fountains in the dining spaces.
- Toilet facilities are supplied with both cold and hot water. The temperature of hot water is monitored and does not pose a scalding risk.

Paragraph 29

- The school benefits from ample outdoor space. This includes a walled area that is equipped for play and safe climbing. There is space and equipment to support the playing of games such as football.
- Pupils have supervised access to forest school facilities and a comfortably furnished yurt situated in a field behind the walled play area. Since the last inspection, the forest school area has been developed with the addition of a wooden structure. This provides cover from the elements as does the yurt.

- Pupils go off site, to a local leisure centre, for their taught physical education lessons. This includes swimming and hydrotherapy.
- School leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- Since the last standard inspection, there have been changes to the senior leadership team following the secondment of the deputy headteacher to support another school within the Aspris group. The proprietor has ensured that the senior leadership team has the capacity to continue to lead the school successfully, including through a period of growth. For example, a dedicated special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has been appointed and the school's middle leadership has been strengthened through the appointment of curriculum and phase leaders. The proprietor intends to appoint one further assistant headteacher.
- The arrangements for governance serve this school well. The proprietor provides valuable support and challenge to the school through a team of specialist executive leaders. For example, there is a specialist safeguarding leader for the division who supports and advises on complex cases.
- Leaders at all levels work together to promote pupils' well-being. The modifications that have been made to the site to support the proposed increase in pupil numbers have considerably enhanced the school's pastoral and therapeutic offer. Pupils access speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and music therapy as appropriate to their needs.
- The school is likely to meet the standard in part 8 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	131016
DfE registration number	933/6195
Inspection number	10304643

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 residential special school
Proprietor	Aspis Children's Services Ltd
Chair	John Anderson
Headteacher	Rebecca McArthur
Annual fees (day pupils)	£85,000 to 110,000
Telephone number	01373814980
Website	www.aspriscs.co.uk/find-a-location/newbury-manor-school-frome/
Email address	rebeccamcarthur@aspriscs.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	21 to 24 February 2023

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	55	65	65

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	45	65
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	45	65
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	45	65
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	45	65

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	12	13
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	32	33

Information about this school

- Since the previous standard inspection, the residential provision has moved off the school site. The residential provision was inspected in March 2023 under the social care common inspection framework and judged to be good.
- The arrangements for leadership and governance remain the same. The headteacher has oversight of both the school and the residential provision. An operations director for the group acts as chair of governors to the school. The operations director works within a wider governance team, which includes a chair for the proprietor.
- The school is operating beyond its registration agreement with the Department for Education. The school is registered to admit 45 pupils. With the agreement of the department, there were 55 pupils on roll at the time of the material change inspection.
- The school caters for pupils with a diagnosis of autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. All pupils on roll have education, health and care plans. Most

placements are funded by local authorities in Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, and Wiltshire.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in response to the proprietor's request to increase pupil capacity from 45 to 65.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, who holds the role of designated safeguarding lead, members of the senior leadership team, including the SENCo, the operations director and the chair for the proprietor.
- The inspector reviewed documents and policies, including the safeguarding policy, a range of risk assessments and records related to the maintenance of health and safety standards across the site.
- The inspector toured the school site with leaders to check that the premises were suitable and safe for the accommodation of 65 pupils.

Inspection team

Lydia Pride, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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