

Inspection of Aspris Telford School

Dale Road, Coalbrookdale, Telford TF8 7DT

Inspection dates: 24 to 26 June 2025

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a successful, caring and well-led school. Before coming here, pupils have had difficult experiences elsewhere. Some have been out of education for a while. This school supports them to re-engage with learning and see its relevance to their lives. Classroom work is pitched at the right level so that pupils feel successful. Alongside this, the school supports pupils to broaden their interests and gain work-related experiences and qualifications.

When planning pupils' learning, the school consults with pupils, and their parents and carers. This gives them a voice in shaping curriculum targets. It also enables the school to share its high expectations for pupils. Pupils can find it hard to adjust to these. However, the school's consistent routines and effective teaching soon bring about many positive changes.

Pupils' behaviour can bring challenges but staff manage these calmly. They help pupils to reflect on their actions and to find constructive ways to deal with their emotions. There are high levels of staff supervision. Any unkind behaviour is noticed, and stopped, straightway. This helps pupils to feel safe and content at school.

Parents are very positive about the school. They praise the way staff understand their children's needs and teach them important life skills.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

This school meets pupils' needs. Staff know how to support pupils so that their behaviour, attendance and learning improve.

The school has a thorough admissions process. Staff meet with pupils and carefully check that the school is the 'right fit' for them. During this time, and straightaway after pupils start, the school identifies pupils' needs and any gaps in their learning. This includes checks on how well they can read. Staff use this information to set them on the most appropriate curriculum pathway, and at the right level. A phonics catch-up programme is used daily for those who need it. This works well. Whatever their starting points, the school's knowledgeable staff make sure that their tailored teaching hits the mark.

The school's core curriculum offer of English, mathematics and science is taught by staff with appropriate subject knowledge. They make sure that new learning builds securely on what has gone before. In addition, they use effective routines for recapping on key vocabulary and prior learning. This helps pupils to embed knowledge so that it sticks. Beyond this core offer, pupils learn about history, technology and take part in various physical activities.

Increasingly, pupils work towards academic qualifications, for example functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. Since the previous inspection,

ongoing staff training and recruitment have strengthened the curriculum and teaching. A link with a local art studio, for example, provides pupils with expert tuition that results in some excellent outcomes, both in their artwork and wider personal development. Nevertheless, the school recognises that there is scope to raise the ambition of learning and qualifications in places, such as science.

Alongside academic studies, the school provides a thoughtful and varied programme of vocational studies. To supplement this, informed careers guidance and work placements in, for example, a local café or with a gardening business get pupils ready for further education, training or work.

Staff are well trained to understand pupils' needs. This enables them to weave the school's therapeutic approach throughout the curriculum. Because of this, pupils learn how to manage different situations and their feelings in positive ways. Over time, this helps them settle to tasks and to persevere. This supports them to engage and concentrate in lessons. In addition, the school offers numerous off-site activities that promote healthy habits and introduce pupils to new things. For instance, pupils can take part in horse-riding and kick boxing and use sports facilities at a nearby park. Staff take pupils to see castles, museums and galleries. This rich programme of activities builds cultural knowledge and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Importantly, it helps pupils to develop constructive interests that bring them comfort and help them find purpose.

Communication with parents is strong. Staff call home each morning for a daily update, which helps staff prepare for the day ahead. Parents are very pleased with the school and the positive difference it makes to their children's education and futures.

Staff report high levels of satisfaction with the school. They appreciate the school's attention to their welfare at work and feel supported to do their jobs well. They understand their safeguarding duties and what to do if they have any concerns. The safeguarding policy and other required policies are up to date and published on the school's website.

The proprietor body has established an efficient leadership structure and effective routines for gathering and responding to information. This enables informed, ambitious oversight. This oversight supports quality assurance of all aspects of the school's work. It also ensures compliance with statutory requirements, such as the Equality Act 2010. The school is now looking to refine its local systems for analysing information about pupils in order to spot trends over time more easily.

The school's strong local leadership, with support from the proprietor, has successfully tackled the areas for improvement from the previous inspection, and built a culture that drives ongoing school improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The ambition in the curriculum for scientific learning is not as well established or strong as that seen in other curriculum areas. This means that pupils' achievements are not as high as those seen elsewhere. The school should strengthen curriculum design and ambition in this area of learning.
- The school's routines for analysing information held on records, such as those relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour, are not as effective as they could be. This makes it harder to spot trends over time. The school should refine its systems for analysing information so that leaders can evaluate the impact of their work, and target future work, with even greater precision.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	146350
DfE registration number	894/6012
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10391788
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Aspris Children's Services Ltd
Chair for the proprietor	Nancy O'Regan
Headteacher	Clare Davis
Annual fees (day pupils)	£92,847
Telephone number	01952 433637
Website	www.aspriscs.co.uk/find-a-location/aspris-telford-school
Email address	telfordschool@aspriscs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 to 23 November 2023

Information about this school

- The school is located in a rural setting near to the historic Shropshire town of Ironbridge.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan. They are referred to the school by local authorities.
- It does not use any alternative provision.
- The school was registered by the Department for Education on 5 June 2019. The previous standard inspection took place between 21 and 23 November 2023.
- The school is registered to enrol pupils between the ages of 11 and 18. However, at the time of this inspection, the number of post-16 pupils was small. Consequently, the inspection did not make a separate judgement for this aspect of the school's provision.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met and talked with the headteacher, staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke with several leaders from Aspris Children's Service Ltd.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and vocational studies. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited classrooms, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also considered the curriculum in other subjects. An inspector visited off-site activities at a local art studio and park.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors observed staff and pupil interactions. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times during the day. Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff and parents' views.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation published on the school's website. They checked the premises and looked at documents and records kept in school.

Inspection team

Martin Pye, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Simon Smith

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025