

North Hill House

Fromefield, Frome, Somerset BA11 2HB

Inspection dates

26 November 2024

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

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b) and 2(1)(b)(i)

- At the time of the last inspection, the curriculum lacked coherence and structure. It did not help pupils build knowledge over time, nor towards more complex learning. The school have rectified these failings. The curriculum policy is published on the school website. There are now detailed plans for every subject that make clear pupils should learn, and in what order. The curriculum is now designed to cater for the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) that all pupils at the school have. It is adapted for the needs of individual pupils. Consequently, pupils now know and remember more.
- The independent school standards ('the standards') in these paragraphs are now met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e) and 3(g)

- At the time of the last inspection, the use of assessment was not effective. Staff did not use accurate information to ensure that pupils received the support they needed. There is now a framework in place to assess pupils' progress through the curriculum. Information gained from assessments is now used to ensure that teaching meets the needs and prior attainment of pupils. This means that pupils are better able to learn the curriculum that the school has designed.
- When it was last inspected, the school did not use effective strategies to support pupils. Since the last inspection the school has ensured that teachers have both the subject knowledge and the teaching expertise that they need. Teachers take account of the starting points of pupils when planning lessons. They know how to design activities that engage pupils with their learning. All staff are skilled at supporting pupils to learn by adapting to the needs of the individual. Consequently, pupils are now producing written work that shows they know and remember more.

The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The safeguarding policy takes account of the latest statutory guidance. Safeguarding arrangements are appropriate. Recruitment and allegations about staff are managed robustly. The proprietor has suitable processes in place to check that safeguarding at the school is effective. Pupils are safe at the school.

The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c) and 14

- The behaviour policy is suitable. It is implemented by staff. Pupils behave well. They are calm in lessons and at social times. Staff provide appropriate supervision throughout the school day. Adults form warm, professional relationships with pupils which enable them to support those who are struggling to manage their feelings and behaviour. The school treats all behaviour as a form of communication. They are tenacious in finding out what the underlying cause is, when pupils do not behave well enough. This approach helps pupils to become better able to regulate their own behaviour over time and identify what actions they can take if they are finding a situation difficult.

The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- There is an effective risk assessment policy in place. It is implemented appropriately by staff. For instance, there are appropriate risk assessments in place for educational activities, such as outdoor education, and for individual pupils. This helps to keep pupils safe, while also enabling them to experience new challenges and situations.
- The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)(c)

- The safeguarding policy is published on the school website.
- The standard in this part is now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the time of the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that all of the independent school standards were met. Consequently, this paragraph of the standards was not met. It was noted in the previous inspection that there was confidence that the new leadership team would make the necessary improvements so that pupils could receive a good quality of education. The proprietor has ensured that leaders have the training and support they need to fulfil their roles. As a result, the school now meets the standards that were checked as part of this inspection.
- The standards in this part 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)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
 - 2(1)(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(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 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(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range; and
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

Part 3: Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State
- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
 - 9(a) a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour;
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively; and
 - 9(c) a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.
- 14 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.

- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1)(c) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request;

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–
 - (a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - (b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

School details

Unique reference number	131975
DfE registration number	933/6200
Inspection number	10357869

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 special school
Age range of pupils	6 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	4
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Aspris Children's Services Ltd
Chair	Nancy O'Regan
Headteacher	Michael Pearce
Annual fees (day pupils)	£93,637 to £120,150
Telephone number	01373466222
Website	www.aspriscs.co.uk
Email address	NorthHillHouseSchool@AsprisCS.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	6 to 8 February 2024

Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), predominantly autism.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
- The school use one unregistered alternative provider.

- The last standard inspection of this school was in February 2024.
- The school is registered to admit 66 pupils.

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 was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since its last standard inspection in February 2024. Since then leaders were asked to submit an action plan. This plan was evaluated by Ofsted in June. It was subsequently accepted by the Department for Education.
- The inspection was conducted with no notice.
- Staff were present when the inspector spoke to pupils. Staff supported pupils so that they were able to provide their views on what it is like to be a pupil at the school.
- The inspector reviewed school documentation, including the action plan approved by the Department for Education, records of restrictive physical intervention, curriculum plans risk assessments, the safeguarding policy and single central record.
- Staff views were sought, in formal meetings and informally throughout inspection.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other school leaders, the regional director (also the chair of governors) and a representative of the proprietor body.
- Lessons were visited across the age range that the school caters for. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site was observed.

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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