

Adventure Wellbeing School

Sherwood House, Gadbrook Road, Rudheath, Northwich, Cheshire
CW9 7TN

Inspection date

10 April 2025

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1) to 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2) to 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(f), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 2A(1) to 2A(1)(g), 2A(2) and 2A(3)

- The proprietor can articulate a clear and ambitious vision for the proposed school. Its aim is to provide support and education for pupils aged four to 11 years of age who have a wide range of additional needs. This includes pupils with a broad range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school intends to provide pupils with a nurturing environment with an emphasis on learning outside of the classroom, to develop 'active bodies and curious minds.'
- The curriculum for children aged four is based on the early years foundation stage statutory framework. It is organised in detail so that teachers know what knowledge, skills and understanding they should emphasise across the seven areas of learning and development.
- The curriculum in key stages 1 and 2 is based on the national curriculum. There are separate schemes of work in place for all subjects. The curriculum shows that pupils are likely to have access to a suitably broad range of experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education. The school has put in place a programme to help pupils to build their phonics knowledge. These plans are likely to help pupils to develop their speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education scheme of work is likely to support pupils' personal development well. It is likely to support the promotion of fundamental British values. The school has thought in detail about how pupils will develop an understanding of these values through the study of all aspects of the proposed school's curriculum. This is likely to support pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 3 to 3(j) and 4

- The proprietor is clear about how it will check the quality of teaching and learning across the school. For instance, the headteacher proposes to have a monitoring cycle in place that will include lesson visits, work reviews and regular meetings with staff to discuss the progress that pupils make through the different areas of learning. Teachers and support staff will be supported through the process with appropriate training. This includes the provision of detailed guidance about how to lead a subject area effectively.
- There is a suitable assessment policy in place. On entry, pupils will undertake a series of baseline assessments, including social and emotional and well-being assessments. The proposed report to parents and carers includes information about pupils' academic progress, personal development, attitudes to learning and attendance.
- The proposed school explains clearly about how it will meet pupils' additional needs, including for social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. It has set up an online system that will track and monitor pupils' mental health and well-being development. This is likely to support pupils in making strong academic progress in line with targets identified in their education, health and care (EHC) plans and additional areas of need.
- The proposed school is equipped with appropriate resources to enable teachers to deliver the curriculum. There are 14 classrooms, a 'messy' room and a well-equipped sensory room. There are two breakout rooms. These rooms will be used for interventions to support pupils' learning and well-being.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b) to 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d) to 5(d)(iii)

- The proprietor and leaders have a deep understanding of the likely SEND needs of pupils that it intends to admit to the proposed school. They are aware of the possible SEMH needs of prospective pupils, and they have a well-thought-out approach in place to provide these pupils with the support that they need. For example, the proposed curriculum is underpinned by a therapeutic approach with an emphasis on helping pupils to be active, take notice, keep learning, give to others and connect. These are based on the National Health Service five steps to mental well-being which are at the heart of the proposed school's planned pastoral programme. Pupils will benefit from learning activities and pastoral support based on this approach which is likely to support their personal development. It is likely to help pupils to become responsible, resilient and independent young people who take an active role in their local community and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- There is a spiritual, moral, social and cultural policy in place. It sets out the school's aims to promote pupils' SMSC development. These aims are threaded throughout the whole curriculum, including through the programme of activities that the school proposes to build pupils' cultural capital. The programme includes, for example, trips

to local amenities such as shops and parks, and to places of interest that will support pupils to deepen their understanding of the subjects that they study.

- The curriculum documents, and wider documentation, suggest that fundamental British values would be actively promoted. For example, the PSHE scheme of work shows how pupils will acquire an appreciation of, and respect for, their own and other cultures.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b)

- There is a suitable safeguarding policy that adheres to current government guidance. The proposed school does not have a website currently. Leaders propose to provide parents with a copy of the policy on request.
- The headteacher, who will be the senior leader responsible for safeguarding, and the chair of the proprietor body responsible for safeguarding, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Their proposal for staff training and procedures for the recruitment of staff are comprehensive. The safeguarding policy sets out clearly the proposed school's expectations for staff behaviour. This includes guidance on how staff will follow up concerns about pupils, health and safety issues and whistleblowing policy.
- The proprietor and the headteacher demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding to ensure that pupils are kept as safe as possible throughout the day. This includes managing behaviour, nurturing pupils and the prevention of any risk of harm. It is proposed that individual risk assessments will be used for those pupils who may need additional support so that they can access fully all that the school has to offer.
- The planned PSHE programme is likely to help pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 9 to 9(c) and 10

- There is a behaviour policy in place. It acknowledges the additional needs of the pupils and how this may impact on their behaviour. It sets out how leaders will engage with pupils, parents and carers and external agencies to establish a positive behaviour culture at the school. It also gives examples of different types of behaviours that pupils might exhibit and how incidents are likely to be reported and recorded. The policy includes the use of physical restraint, and the procedures staff should follow if needed.
- The anti-bullying policy sets out the school's anti-bullying strategies. It includes signs and symptoms of bullying and the different forms it may take. The process for recording and reporting incidents is included. It details how pupils will be supported to

prevent bullying, including through the PSHE curriculum and wider opportunities that the school provides.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- The health and safety policy outlines the responsibilities of leaders, staff, first aiders and pupils. It covers a range of aspects of how to keep individuals safe while in school. This includes dealing with accidents, administering first aid, the control of hazardous substances, manual handling, stress at work and risk management.
- A tour of the premises shows that it is maintained to an extremely high standard. A fire risk assessment of the premises has been conducted. Fire extinguisher checks have been completed in a timely manner. There is a proposed register of fire safety procedures that will be carried out, including fire drills.
- The first aid policy includes detailed plans to ensure that pupils are kept safe. This includes the training of staff and how to record and report incidents. The system for recording is clear and an appropriate template for individual health plans is available for those pupils who may need one.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Paragraphs 14 and 15

- Proposed attendance registers use the Department for Education (DfE) coding and will record morning and afternoon sessions. The proposed admissions register will include all the required information, including two emergency contacts for pupils. Both registers adhere to government guidelines.
- Planned levels of supervision for pupils, including when they are out of school, are likely to ensure that pupils are kept free from harm.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

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

Paragraphs 18(1), 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3) to 21(3)(b), 21(5) to 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c) and 21(6)

- All required safeguarding checks for adults employed at the proposed school have been carried out for the chair of the proprietor body and the headteacher. The electronic recruitment file shows that references are followed up before staff appointment.
- The single central register (SCR) is stored electronically. It contains all pre-employment checks. All checks are recorded and dated. It will be updated as staff are recruited to the school. The staff that have already been recruited by the school have been recorded appropriately on the SCR.

- The proposed school does not intend to use supply staff, but it is clear about the checks and procedures it would need to carry out if it did.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(b), 24(1) to 24(1)(c), 24(2), 25, 26, 27 to 27(b), 28(1) to 28(1)(d), 28(2) to 28(2)(b), 29(1) to 29(1)(b)

- There are separate toilet facilities for boys and girls, with hot and cold running water and handwashing facilities. The medical room is well resourced and spacious. It is next to a toilet and will provide adequate facilities for the short-term care of sick pupils. This facility would be appropriate should the proposed school need to support any pupils with complex medical needs. There is a separate toilet for staff and visitors.
- The premises are decorated and maintained to a high standard. There are three classrooms that are well lit and have appropriate acoustics.
- The proposed school's facilities include a professional equipped kitchen area that is appropriate for the preparation of food. Drinking-water is readily available. The proposed school plans to provide pupils with their own water bottle that can be refilled during the day.
- The proposed school has adequate space for pupils to play and socialise. There is a playground with markings for traditional games and a modern activity trail that surrounds the building. This will provide pupils with a range of outdoor learning experiences which include music, gardening, reading, relaxation and sand and water play. The indoor hall provides space for pupils to take part in indoor physical education activities. Pupils will also access outdoor physical education off site. The school proposes access to swimming lessons by the provision of a pop-up swimming pool.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1) to 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f) to 32(1)(j), 32(2) to 32(2)(d), 32(3) to 32(3)(g)

- At the time of this inspection, the proposed school's website was under construction. The school provided all relevant documentation and policies required electronically or during the on-site inspection. The school's prospectus includes information on the school's ethos.
- The proposed school was clear about its responsibilities to contribute to annual reviews for pupils with an EHC plan.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33 to 33(k)

- The proposed school's complaints policy details the procedures for handling complaints. The aim is to resolve complaints informally in the first instance, but if required more formal steps are explained. This includes the use of a panel hearing. Suitable timeframes for handling complaints are also included.
- The proprietor is aware that the number of complaints needs to be published on the school's website.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1) to 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor and the headteacher demonstrate a strong understanding of the independent school standards. They have developed a clear system to ensure that they have oversight of the standards.
- The proprietor and the headteacher have a wide and varied experience in education, this includes leading provision for pupils with SEND. In addition, the proposed school has appointed an experienced special educational needs coordinator. This is likely to support the varied needs of pupils with SEND well. The proprietor and the school demonstrate a strong commitment to actively promoting pupils' mental health and well-being.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed school is granted permission to open.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has ensured that it has a suitable accessibility plan in place that meets the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- The proprietor is able to demonstrate extensive experience and understanding of the statutory requirements.
- The proprietor has ensured that there is appropriate accommodation and resources in place to meet these requirements for children aged four, which is in line with the proposed school's age range on application. This includes provision for intimate care of children, should it be required.
- There are appropriate facilities in place to support the delivery of the curriculum across the seven areas of learning and development.

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.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	151622
DfE registration number	896/6034
Inspection number	10390026

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Adventure Wellbeing Schools Ltd
Chair	Nicola Sothern
Headteacher	Caroline Butler
Annual fees (day pupils)	£50,000 to £68,000
Telephone number	0797582314
Website	None
Email address	nicola.sothern@awschools.com

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	4 to 11	4 to 11
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	50	50

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	50
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	50
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	50
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	50

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	18
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	0

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school will be located at Sherwood House, Gadbrook Road, Rudheath, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 7TN. The premises consist of 14 classrooms, two breakout rooms, a room for 'mess' activities, a sensory room, a multi-use hall, a first aid room and appropriate space for staff. The proposed school intends to use local sports facilities to provide outdoor education.
- The proposed school intends to cater for up to 50 pupils aged four to 11 years. These pupils will have a range of additional SEND and SEMH needs and are likely to have an EHC plan.
- It is proposed that local authorities will place pupils at the school.
- The school does not intend to use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the DfE to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet all the independent school standards if it is registered. This is the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector conducted a tour of the premises with the chair of the proprietor body and the headteacher, who is also the leader responsible for safeguarding. Safeguarding and welfare arrangements were discussed as part of the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation and policies submitted by leaders. Documents relating to the standards were also reviewed during the inspection.
- Meetings were held with the chair of the proprietor body, the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and the school's business manager.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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