

G.E.M Hereford

Trinity House, 31 Barricombe Drive, Hereford HR4 0NU

Inspection date

17 September 2025

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
Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b) and 32(1)(c)

- The school's safeguarding policy complies with current guidance and is published on the school's website. The policy is implemented effectively. The school has comprehensive safeguarding procedures in place. The school intends that the implementation of the policy will be equally as effective and robust at the additional premises should the material change be approved.
- The school provides staff with safeguarding training so that they understand their responsibilities and know how to report concerns. Leaders review concerns and take appropriate action to ensure that pupils are not at further risk.

Paragraphs 11,12,14,16 to 16(b)

- The school has an appropriate health and safety policy which is regularly reviewed. The school ensures that there are well-considered checks and procedures routinely conducted across the premises. The school intends that the additional premises will be incorporated into the routine checks for health and safety.
- The school has ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The school has recently updated the fire risk action plans to take account of the proposed increase in pupil numbers and the additional premises.
- The school intends for class sizes to remain small. The proprietor has considered the needs of the pupils at the school. Staff are deployed in high ratios when learning, and during social times. The school intends that this will continue should the material change to increase pupil numbers be approved.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school identifies and takes action to mitigate against any risks. The school has an appropriate and suitably detailed risk assessment policy in place.

- The school has completed risk assessments for the planned additional premises, including considering how traffic can be managed so that pupils are safe when arriving at and leaving school each day.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the proposed material change is approved and implemented.

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

Paragraphs 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) to 21(3)(b), 21(5) to 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c) to 21(6)

- Leaders have experience and knowledge of safe recruitment procedures. The school undertakes all necessary pre-employment checks. These checks are recorded on the school's single central record.
- The school completes all required checks prior to the employment of staff. It also makes checks relating to section 128 of the Education and Skills act 2008 to ensure that staff with leadership responsibilities are suitable to manage a school.
- Leaders are aware of the procedures and checks they should follow in the event of employing supply staff to ensure these staff are suitable to work with pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed material change is approved and implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(c), 24(1) to 24(2), 25 to 29(1)(b)

- The additional premises have been renovated and equipped to a high standard and are ready to be used as part of the school should the material change be approved. The school intends to teach mainly younger pupils at the current site and older pupils at the additional premises. There is space across both buildings to accommodate the proposed number of pupils.
- The school buildings have adequate toilet facilities for the proposed number of pupils. All toilets are lockable from inside and have warm, temperature-controlled water for washing.
- There are suitable showering and changing facilities available for pupils. The school also has arrangements in place to use local sports facilities for some physical education lessons.
- There is a suitably equipped medical room in both buildings with washing facilities and close proximity to a toilet. The rooms are stocked with suitable supplies, and these are regularly checked and restocked.
- The school has a number of spaces for teaching. Some are small, providing a homely environment. All are well lit with natural light. The acoustic conditions are suitable for teaching and learning.
- Both buildings have adequate internal and external lighting.
- Pupils have access to drinking water at all times, and this is labelled clearly.

- The proposed new site has secure, spacious well-maintained gardens, lawns and a paddock area for outside play and physical education. The existing site has grassed areas and a tarmac area that are suitable for the same purposes.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed material change is approved and implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1) to 34(1)(c)

- The school's request for a material change to increase numbers is in response to demand from local authorities for places. The proprietor's rationale and plans to accommodate the material change are well considered. Leaders have thoughtfully considered the impact of increasing the numbers on roll on the existing pupils. Planned growth is expected to be gradual and managed well should the material change be approved.
- The proprietor and leaders demonstrate a secure knowledge of how to cater for the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They have taken this into account when planning for this material change. Leaders are vigilant in promoting the health, safety and welfare of pupils and demonstrate a secure understanding of the standards.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed material change is approved and implemented.

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	149469
DfE registration number	884/6019
Inspection number	10397270

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	Independent special school
School status	Independent day school
Proprietor	GEM Schools Ltd
Chair	Debra Thomas
Headteacher	Rodney Goold
Annual fees (day pupils)	£42,000 to £75,000
Telephone number	01432 801000
Website	www.gemhereford.org
Email address	admin@gemhereford.org
Date of previous standard inspection	25 to 27 June 2024

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	8 to 18	8 - 18	8 - 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	15	42	42

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	15	42
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	15	42
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	15	42
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	15	42

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	6	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	3	3
Number of staff in the welfare provision	11	13

Information about this school

- The current school is located at Trinity House, 31 Barricombe Drive, Hereford HR4 0NU. The school intends to open additional premises at Hildersley Cottage, Hildersley, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR97NJ should the material change be approved.
- The school is registered to admit 17 pupils.
- The school caters for pupils with pupils with autistic spectrum disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, trauma, and related diagnoses. Many pupils have additional needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils are referred to the school by local authorities.
- The school's last standard inspection was in June 2024 when it was evaluated to be good.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE to establish whether the school would be likely to meet all of the relevant school standards if the proposed material change to increase the number of pupils on roll from 17 to 42 were to be implemented.
- This was the first material change inspection since the school's previous standard inspection.
- The inspection focused on some of the welfare, health and safety standards in part 3; all of the standards in part 4 for the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors; all of the standards in part 5 for premises and accommodation and the standards in part 8 for the quality of leadership and management of schools.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the proprietor and members of the staff, including the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector toured the existing premises and the proposed additional site with the headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised documents relating to welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Corinne Biddell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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