

Broadlands Hall

Little Wratting, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 7UD

Inspection dates

9–11 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Sixth form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, good leadership from the headteacher has transformed the school.
- Pupils recognise the improvements the headteacher has made. They say that school is now a safe, stimulating and enjoyable place to be.
- Personal development and welfare are outstanding. Staff know the precise needs and interests of every pupil, and go out of their way to meet them.
- Behaviour is managed exceptionally well. Strong relations, excellent care and endless patience combine to ensure that pupils are well prepared for adulthood.
- Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress. At times, the teaching of pupils of low ability is exceptional. They make rapid progress, particularly in increasing their communication and social skills.
- Teachers' questioning, use of phonics and checking of pupils' work during lessons does not always ensure that the most able remain fully challenged.
- Older pupils in the sixth form receive high-quality care and support. They engage regularly with the local community and develop essential personal skills needed for living independently.
- Middle leaders oversee the personal development and welfare of all pupils exceptionally well. Their roles in leading improvements to teaching and raising pupils' achievement are underdeveloped.
- The proprietor oversees the school's strategic development and manages its finances effectively.
- Evaluation of the school's effectiveness is largely accurate, but does not fully consider the progress pupils that make in all subjects, or the impact of all leaders.

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.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Gain greater consistency in the overall quality of teaching and learning by:
 - sharing the best practice evident in parts of the school of how teachers and support staff work together to maximise pupils' learning
 - developing effective questioning techniques to engage all pupils
 - making regular checks of the quality and quantity of pupils' work during lessons
 - providing further training for some staff in the use of phonics to promote pupils' reading skills.
- Raise achievement by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are always fully challenged
 - providing an appropriate choice of vocational and GCSE awards tailored to pupils' ability and interests.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - delegating more responsibility to middle leaders to lead improvements
 - ensuring that the proprietor liaises frequently with middle leaders to assess the impact of their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Over the past two years, the new headteacher has raised expectations and put in place clear policies and procedures to improve all aspects of the school. She has ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- The headteacher's vision and ambition have led to significant improvements. The school is calm, purposeful and well-organised. Procedures for monitoring staff, and assessing and recording information about pupils are systematic. Links have been forged with the local community and with nearby schools to enrich the curriculum, broaden extra-curricular activities and provide opportunities for work experience.
- Pupils and staff have welcomed the improvements. Pupils appreciate the enriched curriculum and the safe, stimulating environment provided for them. Staff shared with inspectors that they value highly the headteacher's leadership and praised the 'massive improvements' she has made. They are proud to work in the school, commenting that 'it is a pleasure to work at Broadlands.'
- Improvement plans are suitably prioritised. They include extensive staff training and routine monitoring of the work to improve the quality of teaching, assessment and the management of pupils' behaviour. Teachers and learning support assistants are more accountable because the procedures to manage their performance are more systematic.
- Self-evaluation is largely accurate. However, leaders' views of the impact teaching has on pupils' learning, and their achievement across all subjects, are too generous. Furthermore, the impact of all leaders on the achievement of pupils in all subjects is not fully considered when evaluating the school's effectiveness.
- Middle leaders oversee effectively one of the four houses, and monitor the behaviour and well-being of pupils in their care. They also have responsibility for subjects, assessment and enrichment. Their roles and responsibilities in securing sustained improvements to teaching and learning, and the outcomes achieved by pupils, are less clear.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils have regular opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and scientific knowledge and skills. Pupils pursue qualifications depending on their potential to achieve them. Pupils engage in an extensive range of enrichment activities, including weekly swimming, horse riding and furniture restoration. Off-site visits add significantly to their enjoyment of school, and help to broaden their understanding of beliefs and values of people in Britain and the wider world.
- This year, the school has welcomed pupils from a range of challenging backgrounds who are much more able than previous groups. School leaders are beginning to adapt to this to ensure that pupils' needs are fully met. Plans are being put in place to enable them to follow an appropriate choice of entry-level, vocational and GCSE awards, tailored to their individual ability and interests.

Governance

- Following the school's previous full inspection and subsequent monitoring visits by inspectors, the proprietor strengthened the leadership. His prompt action has instigated

rapid improvement. The proprietor works in partnership with the headteacher. They meet weekly to monitor the school's performance and to hold the headteacher accountable for making improvements.

- The proprietor ensures that the school is well resourced.
- The proprietor does not meet often enough with middle leaders to gain a thorough understanding of the impact of their work. He and the headteacher acknowledge that as improvements become firmly embedded, scope exists to delegate further responsibility to other leaders in order to broaden the school's capacity to improve.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All of the required checks are made when appointing adults to work with children.
- Staff training is up to date, including 'Prevent' duty training to spot those at risk of becoming radicalised or vulnerable to extremism.
- Child protection arrangements are thorough, but disorganised. This is because some records are kept in different parts of the school. School leaders recognise that to aid clarity and retain a full understanding of the issues concerning each pupil, full records need to be stored centrally, in the school.
- Pupils are kept safe. The site is secure; requirements to protect pupils are in place and checked periodically.
- Pupils are taught about the risks attached to using social media. Mobile phones are not allowed in school in order to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is based firmly on gaining a full understanding of individual pupils' social, emotional and behavioural needs, and their prior experiences when they join the school. This enables staff to build strong relations with pupils, gain their confidence and plan suitable learning activities.
- Staff work together to manage behaviour effectively. Pupils understand the clear expectations of them and usually respond accordingly. Staff are adept at using humour and sensitivity to handle difficult situations, and in recognising when pupils need space and time to calm down.
- Pupils benefit from being taught in very small groups. Following a brief introduction at the start of lessons, pupils learn alongside their support assistant, facilitated by the teacher. Pupils who are prone to displaying challenging behaviour in lessons, or are more suited to learning by themselves, are given their own classroom areas to work in with their support assistant. This one-to-one tuition aids their progress significantly. Pupils like it because 'it's easier to concentrate', and feel that 'we get more work done' due to the personalised, tailored support they receive, especially when they 'get stuck'.
- Information gained from initial assessments each half-term is used to plan suitable learning for each pupil. Teachers collate a wide range of information about pupils, including individual education and behaviour plans, which are used to monitor pupils'

progress from their very different starting points. This information is reviewed each term to assess how well each pupil is progressing, and to reset their targets. Procedures are in place for interpreting this information and sharing it with parents and carers.

- In lessons, tasks are broken down to enable pupils to take small steps and build steadily on prior learning. Good-quality resources, especially interactive whiteboards and video, are used well to capture and retain pupils' interest. Pupils' books show that experiences during off-site visits, both locally and further afield, are followed up well back in the classroom to enhance learning. For example, pupils have produced high-quality portfolios of their trip to the theatre in London.
- Strategies to manage pupils with complex needs, especially those with no, or underdeveloped, speech and language, are exceptionally strong. Relationships are excellent. Staff demonstrate expertise, endless patience and understanding when teaching the pupils. Communication through sign language, pictures and sounds are used well to encourage pupils to talk.
- The best practice evident in teaching pupils of low ability is not matched elsewhere. This is because not all teachers make full use of their support assistants to check pupils' understanding, or monitor their work during lessons. A few staff do not show a thorough understanding of using letters and sounds to promote pupils' reading skills.
- The most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. The quality and quantity of work in their books shows that expectations of them are not high enough. In some lessons, pupils ease off when tasks fail to inspire them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Learning within the curriculum and the extra-curricular programme prepares pupils exceptionally well for the next stage of their lives. Pupils are shown how to modify and control their behaviour and acquire the skills they need to become more independent. They are taught how to eat healthily, including how to shop for, and prepare, their own food. They are shown how to conduct themselves in public and travel safely outside of school.
- Pupils arrive in school promptly each morning; clean, in uniform and ready to learn. Staff meet and greet pupils on arrival. They take time to review what went well the day before, and what needs to be done each day. Each day is seen as 'a new day'. Relationships are strong and routines are well established. Pupils settle quickly because they know what they should be doing and where they should be.
- Pupils are provided with a rich, stimulating environment in which to learn. The school grounds provide ample outdoor space for socialising, playing sport and gardening. Classrooms and corridors are vibrant, colourful and feature excellent displays of pupils' work, including photographs of them involved in recent events. Dates of pupils' birthdays are displayed to remind everyone to celebrate them. This helps pupils to feel cared for, safe and gain in confidence.
- Weekly personal, social and health education lessons are used effectively to give pupils a

broader understanding of themselves and the world around them. Learning is matched to their different needs. Lower-ability pupils learn essential life skills they will need to help them live independently. Most-able pupils learn about citizenship, democracy, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and relationships. Pupils are taught about different careers available to them by attending careers fairs and visiting local employers.

- Pupils enjoy being members of 'Drake, Scott, Raleigh or Cook' houses, and value the opportunities to represent them in school competitions. Weekly assemblies enable pupils and staff to come together to celebrate achievements, and perform for others. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Pupils are reminded of the school's values, particularly the 'circle of compassion' to reinforce their behaviour and care towards others. Pupils are expected to show respect and tolerance for one another, regardless of each other's particular needs.
- Music therapy is used well to generate good communication between pupils and promote their confidence and self-esteem.
- Attendance is consistently above average.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils arrive in school with complex needs and very challenging behaviour. Many of them have missed long periods of schooling. Despite this, the school is a calm, safe environment. This is because pupils behave exceptionally well. Throughout the inspection, there were no incidents of poor behaviour, bad language or disrespect towards staff. Inspectors found pupils welcoming and keen to introduce themselves with a handshake, and a smile.
- Leaders, teachers and support staff work collectively, as a team to manage behaviour consistently. They establish good relations with pupils and make their expectations of them quite clear. Many of them are expert in defusing awkward situations, and getting the best out of pupils.
- Pupils told inspectors that school is a safe, friendly place to be. The school's records and observations by inspectors confirmed this. Pupils feel that the rewards and sanctions procedures work well, especially the rewards. They can earn money each day for good behaviour. At the end of each week, half of it is given to them to spend, and half is put into a personal bank account for them. This is awarded to them when they leave school to help them begin the next stage of their lives. They understand fully that poor behaviour leads to less money being earned and saved.
- Pupils feel free from all forms of bullying, because 'everyone gets on'. Pupils are taught to understand that some non-verbal pupils have behavioural outbursts, but they know what to do and don't get worried. If it does occur, pupils feel that staff will quickly sort things out promptly, and that any racist incidents are dealt with firmly by staff.
- Very few pupils are excluded from school. Records show that there are very few incidents requiring restraint by staff.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. Wall displays warn them of the importance of keeping safe online. They are taught that strangers can present a danger but talking to some, such as police and firemen, is safe.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Until very recently, their very low starting points on entry meant that only a small minority were suited to formal examinations. This is changing as more higher-attaining pupils begin to join the school.
- The headteacher has raised the school's academic profile by registering the school to administer examinations. In 2016, two pupils suited to the rigours of GCSE examinations achieved an A* to C grade in mathematics. A small minority of other pupils attained pre-foundation stage units and other vocational awards.
- This year, the majority of pupils are working towards achieving pre-entry level awards. Leaders' assessment information, observations by inspectors and scrutiny of pupils' work confirm that currently pupils make good progress. Partnerships with local schools are being forged to strengthen leaders' moderation of pupils' achievement and to broaden opportunities for pupils.
- Every pupil follows a curriculum tailored to their ability. Assessments of their progress are recorded to show the incremental steps they make in their personal development and academic progress over time. The greatest gains are made in preparing pupils for the next stage of their lives.
- The progress made by pupils with very complex needs is exceptional, particularly in developing communication and social skills. Leaders can point to clear examples of pupils who arrived in school unable to speak but now communicate regularly with staff and their peers. This is achieved by expert staff who involve pupils in purposeful learning to build their confidence and resilience, and encourage them to talk. For example, in a key stage 4 lesson, pupils developed their understanding of the wider world by studying the locations and cultures of different European countries. Learning was made enjoyable and interactive by identifying locations, sorting flags and tasting foods from each country. Progress was rapid because staff made learning interesting, meaningful and fun.
- Pupils are encouraged to reinforce their basic literacy and numeracy skills by applying them to real-life situations that will help them to live more independently. For example, in mathematics, pupils in key stage 3 calculated the cost of preparing a packed lunch and arranging transport for an off-site visit. In key stage 4, pupils used their mathematical and computing skills to search the internet and calculate the costs of furnishing their first flat. Strategies to encourage pupils to read regularly, and for pleasure, are less well developed.
- The school currently takes pupils from seven different local authorities. A few pupils are capable of more-challenging tasks and higher attainment than others. Inspectors found that the expectations of some staff are not always high enough to ensure that higher-attaining pupils make the progress that they are capable of attaining.
- A few pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Leaders do their best to chase up this additional funding, with some success. When the money is secured, leaders ensure that it is spent on enhancing the provision for those it is allocated to. The school does not receive any Year 7 catch-up funding.

Sixth form provision

Good

- All of the independent school standards are met in relation to the sixth form provision.
- Five students in years 12 and 13 and two others in Year 14 attend the sixth form. The curriculum is planned to meet their needs and highly personalised, individual programmes are designed to reinforce their basic literacy and numeracy.
- Programmes include a wide range of enrichment activities, including gardening, art and sport. Students make good progress. Great emphasis is placed on learning how to look after themselves and acquiring the basic skills needed for independent living.
- The post-16 students engage fully in the life of the school, including celebrations, off-site visits and whole school events. They are exceptionally well cared for. All of them are closely supervised and learn alongside a member of staff whom they trust and respect.
- Students are well prepared for the next stage of their lives. Records for previous students show that they proceed to college courses or are helped to enter adult services run by their local authority.
- Those students capable of travelling off site with supervision have work placements, enabling them to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired. For example, they learn how to serve others in local shops or on a nearby farm. This helps them to engage more widely with members of the local community and gain a better understanding of keeping safe when travelling and working outside of school.

School details

Unique reference number	135252
DfE registration number	935/6086
Inspection number	10030847

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 category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	18
Of which, number of pupils in the sixth form	7
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Colonel Keith A Boulter
Chair	N/A
Headteacher	Ms Hazel Simmons
Annual fees	£50,360
Telephone number	01440 702559
Website	www.broadlands-hall.co.uk
Email address	hazelsimmons@broadlands-hall.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–27 November 2014.

Information about this school

- Broadlands Hall School is registered to admit up to 19 boys between the ages of 11 and 19 years.
- The majority of pupils are white British.
- All of the pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.

- Most of the pupils are autistic with moderate to severe learning needs and associated social, emotional and mental health needs.
- A few pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. The funding is not always made available to the school.
- The previous standard inspection of the school was conducted by Ofsted in November 2014, when the school's overall effectiveness was judged as inadequate and some of the independent school standards were unmet.
- Following the November 2014 inspection, The Department for Education (DfE) required the school to submit an action plan to show how the unmet standards would be addressed. In March 2015, the action plan was evaluated by Ofsted and judged as requiring improvement.
- In May 2015, Ofsted conducted a monitoring inspection, commissioned by the DfE to judge the progress of the school in addressing the unmet independent school standards. The inspection found that some standards remained unmet. An action plan was submitted in May 2015, which was judged as acceptable. A second monitoring inspection took place in November 2015, when all of the independent school standards inspected at that time were met.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE and was brought forward from the normal cycle to ascertain whether the school now meets all of the independent school standards. This inspection is the first standard inspection since the inspection in November 2014, when the school's effectiveness was judged as inadequate.
- Inspectors observed all teachers and most of the learning support assistants at work in lessons during the inspection. They visited an assembly and carried out a learning walk to observe the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, the proprietor and two groups of pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at safeguarding and the child protection policy and procedures, risk assessments, education, health and care plans, behaviour plans, self-evaluation and improvement planning, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and other information provided by senior leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in lessons. They considered the responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire, Parent View, four free-texts sent by parents and carers, and 20 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kim Pigram

Her Majesty's Inspector

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