

Horton House School

Hill Top Farm, Sutton Road, Wawne, Hull, East Yorkshire HU7 5YY

Inspection dates

12–14 December 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders' regular checks on the effectiveness of the school ensure that the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders know the school and pupils well. They are highly ambitious for their pupils.
- The school's curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills. Leaders have designed the curriculum to reflect the additional needs and interests of pupils. The curriculum strongly promotes personal, social, health and economic education alongside British values and equality.
- Teachers plan work carefully, taking into account the additional needs of pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons and take part with enthusiasm.
- Well-trained staff know and understand pupils' needs well. They build strong, positive relationships with pupils. These relationships help pupils to develop socially, emotionally and academically.
- Pupils feel safe and are taught how to stay safe. Where appropriate, pupils have individual risk assessments. These provide further support to help them to stay safe.
- Pupils make good progress because of the strong teaching they receive. Some pupils make even better progress due to the targeted support they receive from highly skilled staff. However, this is not yet consistent enough across all key stages of the school.
- The newly developed outdoor area benefits pupils during breaktime and physical education. However, there is little equipment for them to use to develop their imagination and skills.
- Although the proprietor is now taking a more active role at school, she does not yet have a great enough understanding of the management of the school to effectively hold leaders to account.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule of 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?

- Ensure that the proprietor enhances her understanding of the management of the school so that she can provide more effective challenge and support for leaders.
- Provide high-quality, targeted support for all pupils which is delivered by trained and skilled staff.
- Provide resources in the outdoor area to increase pupils' opportunities to engage in high-quality physical activities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The proprietor and leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The determination and dedication of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher have brought about significant improvements in the school. Together, they have a clear vision and are passionate about providing the best possible education for their pupils. All members of staff share this vision. Leaders have very high expectations of pupils and staff and they model this well. Leaders are unwavering in their resolve to develop the school to be the best that it can be. The headteacher stated, 'Our children deserve the best – we do that on a daily basis.'
- Leaders are highly ambitious for pupils. They make sure that most pupils receive effective support with their learning that enables them to make good progress. Leaders make sure that staff are well trained. They work with other schools to provide staff with opportunities to observe classroom practice in different settings.
- Leaders have introduced strong assessment and moderation practice. They regularly check the progress of pupils. This enables them to work with teachers to identify and target the pupils who may be falling behind.
- Leaders' regular visits to lessons ensure that they have an accurate view of the standards of teaching, learning and assessment at the school. They can then identify any staff who may need additional support. When necessary, support is given in a timely manner. As a result, the standard of teaching is at least good across the school.
- Leaders communicate with staff frequently and to good effect. They conduct regular checks on pupils' social skills and emotional well-being. This enables the strong senior team to be aware of any difficulties or barriers to pupils' learning that may occur. Leaders deal with any issues swiftly to prevent disruption to learning and personal development.
- Leaders have introduced a broad curriculum that supports pupils well in developing their core skills in English and mathematics. The curriculum reflects the high aspirations that leaders and staff have for pupils.
- The key stage 3 curriculum develops and consolidates key skills in core subjects while offering a broad range of other subjects, including computing, art, music, physical education and humanities.
- In key stage 4, the curriculum is highly bespoke and addresses pupils' individual needs regarding their chosen pathways. All pupils study English, mathematics and science. There are then a variety of other subjects to choose from that lead to accreditation and/or qualifications. The qualifications available include GCSE, functional skills and entry level.
- Pupils receive high-quality independent careers advice to enable them to make informed choices about their futures.
- Staff produce highly effective, comprehensive and detailed schemes of work for each pupil in all key stages to ensure that pupils cover the curriculum in detail.

Governance

- The proprietor and trustees provide the governance for the school.
- The proprietor visits the school regularly. She appreciates the significant improvements that the headteacher and deputy headteacher have made. She understands the substantial impact this has had on outcomes for pupils. However, the proprietor does not yet have a full enough understanding of the school's new processes and systems to provide strong challenge and support for leaders. The proprietor recognises this, and is determined to quickly gain the greater understanding necessary to hold leaders rigorously to account.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school has published a suitable safeguarding policy on its website.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. The policy accurately reflects the government's latest guidance.
- The designated lead for safeguarding (DSL) is highly knowledgeable. She makes sure that all staff complete statutory safeguarding training. The DSL provides regular updates for staff. Daily meetings take place where staff discuss the welfare of pupils.
- Staff are knowledgeable about the signs of abuse and neglect. They understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are vigilant in respect of pupils' welfare. Staff know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a pupil.
- Safeguarding leaders take swift action to support pupils if they have a concern. Leaders work closely with parents and external agencies to provide effective support.
- Staff are familiar with their responsibilities to protect pupils from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders and staff complete comprehensive risk assessments relating to the risks pupils may encounter during activities. Staff take appropriate action to minimise the risks they identify. Staff ensure that the health and safety of pupils is carefully planned for. For example, staff make sure pupils wear safety goggles during practical science lessons.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for at school. They trust staff. Pupils are confident that they always have someone to talk to if they have any concerns or worries.
- The majority of parents support the school. They express gratitude to leaders and staff for the work they do to make their children's school experiences positive.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers use assessment effectively in order to plan lessons that meet the needs of each pupil. They consider the interests and additional needs of pupils to provide interesting and motivating learning activities. Staff use resources effectively to improve and reinforce the learning experiences of pupils. Teachers and support staff have extremely positive

relationships with pupils and know them well. As a result, pupils engage in lessons and have positive learning attitudes.

- Teachers and support staff reflect leaders' high expectations and aspirations for pupils. Staff praise and encourage pupils. This enables pupils to maintain their positive learning attitudes, builds their self-esteem and has a positive impact on their achievements.
- Staff encourage pupils to be independent. Pupils are confident when working alone and most understand that it is acceptable to get things wrong. Staff provide challenge in lessons. Pupils are able to draw conclusions using their knowledge and skills.
- Teachers and support staff have a good depth of subject knowledge. They are confident about answering pupils' questions, which are at times difficult and complex. Most staff use questioning effectively to draw out answers from pupils.
- Pupils' workbooks are well presented, showing a sense of pride in the work. Most pupils are happy to discuss their work and can explain the purpose of lessons to others.
- The leader with responsibility for teaching has introduced many new ideas that have led to sustained and significant improvements for pupils. For example, she has ensured that teachers are well trained to meet the additional needs of pupils. New links have been formed with other schools to enable staff to moderate work externally. Each half term there is a focus on a different aspect of teaching, to enhance and further improve learning for pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- All staff know and understand the pupils well. The positive relationships in school contribute to pupils making very good progress in their learning and personal development. Pupils are able to develop resilience, increase their self-esteem and feel proud of their achievements. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are eager to do well.
- Staff plan activities that target pupils' personal needs. For example, pupils can take part in horse riding, fishing and a variety of highly specialised therapies, such as art therapy.
- Pupils are happy and very well cared for by highly experienced and dedicated staff.
- Staff work closely with parents so that there is consistency in approach and routine as much as possible.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Weekly assemblies reinforce the important qualities of being a responsible and informed member of society. Pupils can express different points of view about current affairs. They understand the importance of equality.
- Pupils show respect towards each other, staff and visitors. They are polite and are willing to share their thoughts and feelings.
- Staff treat pupils with sensitivity, particularly when they may be experiencing periods of distress or difficulty.

- Pupils have a great deal of trust in staff and this enables them to communicate their difficulties. They know that staff will keep them safe and support them with their personal development and emotional well-being.
- Pupils learn how to be healthy. They take part in physical education lessons. However, in the outdoor area there is not enough apparatus or resources for pupils to fully develop their physical skills. This limits pupils' imaginative play development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is due to the high expectations of leaders and staff and the understanding they have of each pupil. Pupils know and understand the rules. They understand why they must follow rules and they do this consistently. Older pupils set a very good example for younger pupils to follow. In the weekly assembly, pupils are excited about receiving the many awards available to them.
- The support of staff enables pupils to conduct themselves well. Staff successfully address any difficulties that pupils encounter. Because of this, pupils return to their learning activities quickly and without any disruption to the learning of others.
- Leaders regularly check pupils' attendance. When a pupil does not attend regularly, staff work closely with parents and other professionals to seek a solution. Pupils then receive the necessary support they need to be able to attend.
- Rates of attendance for most pupils are above average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils often arrive at the school having missed significant periods of school. This results in standards and competencies below or well below those expected for their age, both academically and in personal development. All pupils attending Horton House School have an education, health and care plan (EHCP).
- Leaders quickly identify pupils' starting points and any additional needs. They use this information to identify gaps in pupils' learning and then provide targeted support for pupils to help them catch up.
- From their different starting points, pupils quickly begin to make progress. Over time, pupils' progress is strong in a wide variety of subjects, including English, mathematics, science and art. Pupils make significant progress in their personal development and social skills due to the skilled support of staff.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work demonstrates that most pupils make at least good progress in lessons.
- A large majority of pupils are able to gain accreditation at different levels as they move through the school. There is an expectation that pupils will access and achieve a variety of GCSE certificates by the end of Year 11.
- All pupils who left school at the end of key stage 4 progressed to an education placement, employment or training.

- Leaders emphasise the importance of reading to pupils. Classes are named after well-known authors and each session of the day is known as a 'chapter'. Staff encourage pupils to read frequently. The newly established and well-resourced library provides pupils with many opportunities for reading for pleasure. Pupils at different stages of reading ability are confident when reading to others. They make plausible attempts at unknown words by using the strategies they have learned.

School details

Unique reference number	133640
DfE registration number	810/6004
Inspection number	10053829

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	7 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Harriet Appleby
Headteacher	Catherine Jones
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,500
Telephone number	01482 820 112
Website	www.hortongroup.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@hortongroup.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–24 November 2016

Information about this school

- Horton House is an independent special school. The school is registered for 37 pupils in the age range of seven to 18. Currently there are no learners in the sixth form.
- The school caters for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder, learning disabilities and social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- The school's last standard inspection took place in November 2016. The current headteacher took up her post in February 2017.
- The proprietor and trustees provide the governance for the school.
- Pupils often presented challenging behaviour in their previous schools. Many of the pupils

have experienced significant disruption in their previous education or substantial periods of time missing education. All pupils attending Horton House School have an EHCP.

- Pupils are placed at the school from several local authorities.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector took a tour of the school site. The facilities were checked against Part 5 of the independent school standards.
- The inspector observed learning taking place in six lessons. The observations were carried out jointly with the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. Lessons were observed at a local college where staff take key stage 4 pupils to use specialist science equipment.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, the proprietor, the designated lead for safeguarding, the lead for behaviour and attendance, middle leaders for English and mathematics and the lead for teaching and learning.
- An extensive range of documentation was scrutinised, including policies, curriculum plans, information provided for trustees, documents relating to staff training, and information about pupil progress, behaviour and attendance, the quality of teaching, safeguarding and complaints against the school. The inspector looked at the school's single central record of employment checks.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at social times, in classrooms and when they moved around school.
- There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire. There were too few responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View. However, the inspector considered the six responses to the free-text service, one letter from a parent and 20 responses to the staff survey.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work.

Inspection team

Sara Roe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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