

Inspection of an outstanding school: Eresby School

Eresby Avenue, Spilsby, Lincolnshire PE23 5HU

Inspection dates:

26–27 February 2020

Outcome

Eresby School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents and carers, pupils and staff are proud to be members of Eresby School. Pupils flourish here. They relish having their photographs displayed, celebrating their outstanding achievements. The school is a warm and friendly community. Pupils and parents value the 'family-orientated' feeling within the school. One comment, typical of many, was, 'My child has come on leaps and bounds at this school. He loves coming to Eresby!'

Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. Staff place central importance on helping pupils to become independent citizens. Relationships between pupils and staff are exceptionally positive and trusting. Pupils learn valuable life skills. Trips and visits deepen their learning. They enjoy taking on positions of responsibility, such as being members of the school council.

Pupils feel safe in school. They behave exceptionally well in lessons. Friendships are important to everyone. We saw pupils using 'emotion boards' to talk successfully about how they were feeling. Staff encourage pupils to share something kind about their friends each day. Incidents of bullying are incredibly rare because of pupils' close-knit relationships.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, including governors, have a sharp understanding of the school's strengths. They are relentless in wanting the best for all pupils. Leaders review and develop the curriculum to ensure that it is ambitious and inclusive.

Staff know their pupils exceptionally well. They use information from pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans to tailor the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. Pupils receive a high-quality curriculum. It is based on the national curriculum when appropriate. Leaders plan the curriculum in a methodical way to ensure that it is coherent and well sequenced. Teachers make sure that pupils practise what they have learned. This helps

them to remember more. Teachers make regular checks so that they know exactly how well each pupil is doing. They have an in-depth knowledge of every pupil and what they need to learn next. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to provide skilled support. Pupils are well motivated. They achieve exceptionally well.

Leaders have high expectations of staff and provide high-quality professional training. Staff value these opportunities. They say that the school is an 'inspirational' place to work and learn. Leaders value the difference that the staff make.

There is an infectious culture of reading at the school. Pupils enjoy choosing books that they read for pleasure. They read frequently. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to use and improve their phonics knowledge. Staff ensure that all pupils have time to hear and say letter sounds. They check carefully that pupils have remembered this information before moving on. They provide expert support to ensure that pupils build up their reading knowledge and become confident, independent readers. Staff make good use of resources, such as symbols and sensory items, to help bring the stories they read to life. Pupils are captivated by these sessions. Parents are fully involved in the education of their children. They are encouraged to read with them at home.

Subject leaders know what pupils need to be taught and how best to teach it. For example, the well-planned mathematics curriculum helps to prepare pupils well for adulthood. Pupils learn about measurement. They apply their knowledge to shopping and cooking. They say they are excited by their learning in this subject. They can remember what they learned before. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to challenge pupils to attempt more complex tasks when they are ready.

The personal development of pupils is a cornerstone of the curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for their next steps through life-skills lessons. They receive excellent careers advice and guidance. Pupils learn employability skills and how to complete job applications. Pupils learn about British values, such as respect and democracy. They have rich opportunities to learn about cultures that are different to their own. During 'culture week', for example, pupils celebrated the cultural diversity of Mexico, through food, dress and dance. Pupils enjoy being together.

The early years curriculum is delivered by a specialist teacher. Staff know children incredibly well. They focus on building children's language and vocabulary. The stimulating environment nurtures curious and independent learners. Children know classroom routines very well. They join in enthusiastically with activities. They share, take turns and practise communication skills as they play together. The quality of children's experiences in early years is exceptional. They are well prepared for Year 1.

In the sixth form, leaders are passionate about wanting the best for the students. The curriculum is thoughtfully planned to help students prepare for life in modern Britain. Expectations are high, and students are encouraged to aim high. Close links with the local community and excellent opportunities for work experience help students to make valuable contributions to society.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured a strong culture of vigilance throughout the school. Leaders' processes to safeguard pupils are timely and efficient, and include thorough checks on the suitability of adults to work with young people.

Leaders provide regular and up-to-date training for all staff. Staff know reporting procedures well. Record-keeping is meticulous, including for the rare occasions when physical intervention has been required. Pupils trust staff. They say that they feel safe in school. They know how to keep safe online. Pupils understand the importance of personal safety by learning about stranger danger.

Background

When we have judged a special school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Eresby Special School as outstanding on 26 January 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	120760
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10121289
Type of school	All-through special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	12
Appropriate authority	Multi-academy trust
Chair of Multi Academy Trust	David Ross
Principal	Michele Holiday
Website	www.eresbyspecialschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school has expanded since the previous inspection to provide additional places for pupils with a range of moderate to severe learning difficulties. Many have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Some have a diagnosis of developmental delay or profound and multiple sensory difficulties. Most pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has been part of the David Ross Education Trust since May 2013.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the principal and senior staff. I spoke with members of the governing body and a representative from the multi-academy trust.

- We did deep dives in reading and communication, mathematics and preparation for adulthood. For each of these subjects, we met with senior leaders and subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at a sample of pupils' work and met with pupils to discuss their experience of learning.
- We looked at a range of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement; overviews of the school's curriculum planning; the school's most recent published information on the achievement and progress of pupils; school policies and a scrutiny of pupils' EHC plans.
- To check the school's arrangements for safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's designated leaders for safeguarding. Policies, procedures and record-keeping were evaluated. This included an evaluation of the school's single central register and the school's processes for recruiting staff.
- We observed pupils' behaviour and spoke to them informally during social times.
- One inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day. We took account of the 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as the 17 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Jason Brooks, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jacqueline Thornalley

Ofsted Inspector

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