

Inspection of Horton House School

Hill Top Farm, Sutton Road, Wawne HU7 5YY

Inspection dates: 28–30 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Horton House School has two sites. Younger pupils attend the site at Wawne. Older pupils attend the Beverley site. Primary pupils like learning new things and most attend school regularly. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors also said they felt safe. Primary teachers understand pupils' needs and help them to succeed. The curriculum is stronger in the primary years of the school. For example, mathematics books show that pupils use the skills they have learned to tackle new learning.

Older pupils are not as happy and settled at school. Staff who teach older pupils are not always able to say what they want pupils to learn. Many pupils choose not to behave well, and this regularly disrupts the learning for other pupils. Some pupils run around in corridors rather than focusing on their work in classrooms. Secondary school staff are not always effective at calming pupils or helping them to regulate their own behaviour. Secondary pupils often take longer than primary pupils to return to the classroom after breaktime or lunchtime. A small number of pupils spend more time out of the classroom than they do inside it.

Bullying is not always dealt with as well as it could be. A small number of pupils told inspectors that some pupils can be bullies. While staff often sort it out, sometimes bullying continues.

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

The secondary curriculum is not well planned in most subject areas. Pupils find new learning hard because they have not completed previous tasks or retained key knowledge. Few subject areas have a lead teacher or curriculum coordinator to plan the curriculum.

The teaching of reading and mathematics is well planned for primary pupils. This is not the same for secondary-age pupils. Secondary pupils confirmed that they are rarely given encouragement to develop a love of reading or to continue to learn to read. Secondary mathematics books show that pupils do not learn concepts in a logical sequence and that topics are often muddled and disjointed.

The curriculum is not clearly defined. Staff often lack the understanding of what it is they want pupils to learn in each subject. Most have not received enough training or lack experience of teaching pupils. Sometimes, classes are joined together at short notice. Staff then do not know what pupils already know and remember or whether planned learning is relevant to them. During the inspection, there were examples of pupils from different year groups in the same class being given the same task with little guidance. The content did not logically build on prior knowledge for either year group.

Many pupils have gaps in their learning from periods spent away from the classroom. These are rarely taken into account when learning is planned. Staff do not often check

on how much pupils understand. This often adds to the frustration that pupils feel at not being successful, and their behaviour deteriorates.

Primary pupils' behaviour is well managed overall. In the secondary years, staff are not always able to help pupils calm down when they are upset or angry. This often results in pupils' behaviour getting worse, and they take longer to re-engage with their work. This reduces learning time.

The new leaders agree that this situation is not acceptable and are planning further training for staff, but this has yet to happen. Pupils' poor behaviour impacts on the learning of other pupils. A small group of pupils told the inspection team that they often prefer it when other pupils are out of the room as they are able to get on with the task in hand. Some staff have developed stronger relationships with pupils. When these staff are teaching, behaviour is better and pupils focus more.

Currently, not all pupils are provided with independent careers advice and guidance. One local authority has contacted the school to arrange support for pupils from their area. Leaders have not ensured that pupils from other local authorities receive appropriate, independent advice and guidance.

The very new leadership team consists of an executive headteacher and a head of school. Both leaders have previous experience in both leadership and working with pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. They have a clear vision for the future. They recognise that they need effective staff and resources to realise this vision and bring about improvement to the quality of education within the school.

Secondary staff spoken with during the inspection said that leaders listen to their needs and support them to do their job. Staff have confidence that issues around pupils' behaviour will be dealt with effectively in the future by the new leaders.

The proprietors have not enabled leaders to bring about improvement. Resources are lacking in many subject areas and there is limited capacity to improve this. This means that pupils do not have the good-quality resources that they need to support the delivery of the curriculum.

The proprietors have not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met, including some aspects of fire safety training for staff. The curriculum is not planned and delivered effectively by knowledgeable staff. Behaviour management is weak and pupils' personal development curriculum does not include access to careers education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is experienced and keeps well-ordered records in pupils' files. The system in school for raising a concern about a child is effective and is clearly understood by both new and longstanding members of staff. All referrals from staff are dealt with quickly, and decisions made are communicated effectively. Records show that the DSL regularly secures the help that children and their families need from outside organisations and partners. Referral notes are meticulously filed and resulting concerns are rigorously followed up.

All of the required checks are carried out before staff are recruited to join the school. Staff undertake regular safeguarding training and know how to recognise and report concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- The secondary school curriculum is not well planned to ensure that pupils gain the knowledge they need over time. Many subjects are not planned or sequenced effectively. Key knowledge is not identified and curriculum delivery is often poor. This reduces older pupils' opportunities to learn. Many subject areas do not have a curriculum leader. Leaders need to develop the roles of subject coordinators and ensure that curriculum plans for secondary-age pupils are logical and well planned.
- Staff lack the training required to successfully deliver the curriculum to secondary-age pupils. Many staff have poor subject knowledge and lack the skills to teach pupils in this age range. For example, lessons are often disjointed and lack a clear explanation of what it is pupils are expected to learn. Pupils become restless when they don't understand what they need to do and become disengaged. Leaders need to make sure that teachers are well trained to effectively deliver the curriculum to secondary-age pupils.
- Not all staff are following the new behaviour policy. At the time of the inspection, many secondary pupils spent much of their time out of the classroom roaming around the school corridors. Leaders need to make sure that a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour is in place and that all members of staff are effectively trained and supported to this end.
- Plans are not in place to deliver careers education to all secondary pupils. Leaders need to develop a clear structure which gives equal access to independent careers education to all secondary pupils.
- There is no system in place to assess what pupils know and understand when they join the school. Many pupils joining the school have been out of education for significant lengths of time. Gaps in their knowledge are not identified. Leaders need to make sure that they establish what pupils know so that they can be helped to catch up and that the curriculum can be planned to meet their needs.
- The school has few resources. For example, books in the secondary section of school are in short supply, limiting pupils' access to reading books for pleasure. At the time of the inspection, the proprietor had taken some steps to start to improve leaders' access to funds. Urgent access to an agreed school budget is

needed so that leaders can plan for the improvements needed to the quality of education and pupils' personal development.

- The proprietor has not ensured that staff are trained to use the fire extinguishers in and around the building. The school's fire safety policy states that fire extinguishers are not to be used by untrained staff. At the time of the inspection, only one member of staff had completed the required training. Leaders need to provide further training urgently so that staff have the knowledge needed in the event of an emergency.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	133640
DfE registration number	811/6021
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	10192263
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	35
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Joseph Appleby
Headteacher	Rebecca Sayer
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,500
Telephone number	01482 820112
Website	www.hortongroup.co.uk
Email address	becsayer@hortongroup.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–14 December 2018

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new executive headteacher and head of school have been appointed.
- The school's last standard inspection took place on 12 to 14 December 2018. The school received an emergency inspection on 18 September 2019.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school accepts pupils between the ages of seven and 18.
- The school makes provision for pupils who have SEMH needs. Some have additional needs such as autism spectrum disorder.
- All pupils who attend have an education, health and care plan which identifies their special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school is currently operating from two sites. The primary school's site is at Sutton Road, Wawne, Hull, HU7 5YY. The secondary school's site is at Samman Road, Beverly, HU17 5YY.
- Joseph Appleby became the new proprietor in September 2021.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the executive head teacher, the head of school, the proprietor and a trustee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in science, mathematics, reading and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some teachers, spoke to some pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to teachers about other subject areas.
- Checks were carried out on both of the school's premises to ensure compliance with Part 5 of the independent school standards.
- When inspecting safeguarding, the following were carried out:

- checks were carried out on the single central record to ensure all recruitment checks on staff were carried out
- discussions were held with the DSL for the school on current safeguarding concerns and staff's training
- a selection of pupils' safeguarding files were checked, including pupils who were on the child protection register
- discussions were held with staff to check on recent safeguarding training.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work-
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that-
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;

- 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils’ work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;
 - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.
- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school’s own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
- 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
- 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021