

# Inspection of Southover Partnership School

288 Kingsbury Road, Roe Green Park, Kingsbury, London NW9 9HA

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Inspection dates: 7–9 December 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils receive exceptional support and have an enjoyable and successful experience at school. Each pupil forms strong professional relationships with the dedicated members of staff who work with them. Pupils are safe in school. They always have an adult to speak to if they feel worried or upset. Staff are alert to any falling out between pupils, or bullying, and swiftly help to put things right. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is typically settled and calm.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievements. Staff take time to ensure pupils develop essential knowledge and skills, become increasingly independent and are fully prepared for their chosen destinations. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to access a broad range of subjects so that they can pursue their interests and fulfil their career aspirations. Pupils thrive on this personalised approach which helps them to overcome barriers to learning.

Pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem as they participate in an extensive range of activities. Weekly visits to a farm and work placements promote pupils' social and work-related skills. Leaders listen to, and act on, pupils' views, for example providing additional sports equipment for use at breaktimes and organising fun outings.

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

Subject leaders have thought carefully about how every subject is taught in the school. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They plan the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn to help ensure all meet their full potential whatever their starting points. Pupils achieve a wide range of qualifications. They are very well prepared for the next steps in their education and employment.

Teachers use assessment systems effectively to identify any gaps in pupils' learning. Staff know their pupils very well and adapt their teaching and support to meet individual needs. They anticipate what pupils may find difficult. Teachers help pupils to retain knowledge by regularly recapping what has been learned, before moving on to more complex concepts. Staff give helpful tips on remembering technical vocabulary and key facts, for example by referring the content of the lesson to everyday situations. Leaders identify pupils who need additional help with reading and provide extra help through a suitable phonics programme when needed.

Pupils are respectful to their teachers and key workers, and responsive to their expectations. They embark on tasks readily. They are encouraged when teachers make links between pupils' studies and their personal interests. There is a comprehensive careers programme. Pupils learn about different careers and the qualifications they need to follow their chosen pathway. Staff support pupils to make a smooth transition to new educational settings. This includes travel training to help pupils grow in confidence in taking journeys independently.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop skills and interests beyond their academic studies. Promotion of pupils' mental health and emotional well-being is integrated across all aspects of life in school. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) includes relationships and sex education. Leaders and staff tailor the approach to the coverage of sensitive topics with individual pupils. They review and adapt plans for each pupil to provide the most appropriate guidance on risky behaviours and issues such as consent and harmful sexual behaviour.

Leaders carefully monitor pupils' behaviour. Staff are vigilant for any pupils who need more support to make positive changes to their behaviour. The school environment across all three sites is generally orderly. However, there is some variation in instances of low-level disruption between the different sites. Leaders are looking carefully at this and taking appropriate actions to ensure there is similarly effective support for behaviour at all school sites.

Leaders, including the chair of trustees, know and fulfil their responsibility to meet the independent school standards. The trustees are expanding their membership and link members' expertise with specific aspects of the school's work.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and that leaders are approachable. Some staff expressed concern about their workload, including some duplication of tasks. They would like more formal forums for consultation between staff and leaders. The executive headteacher has plans in place to provide more opportunities for staff to be involved in and give feedback on decision-making.

The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are up to date with safeguarding requirements and know their statutory duties. They pick up any concerns swiftly and know the procedures to follow. Leaders have positive relationships with external agencies to ensure extra support is available for pupils at the earliest opportunity.

Staff are vigilant to the additional vulnerability of any of their pupils. They are alert to risks to pupils such as radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

Leaders make the required employment checks of staff. Some improvements were made to the administration of safeguarding records during the inspection so that information was more detailed and accessible.

The child protection and safeguarding policy is published on the school's website.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and proprietor)

- There is some variation in responses to pupils' behaviour between the three school sites. Leaders should ensure that there are similarly high expectations of staff and pupils at each site so that there is a consistent and effective application of the behaviour policy across the school.
- Some staff have concerns about their workload and feel they do not have sufficient opportunities to be involved with decision-making in the school. The executive headteacher and the board of trustees should implement their plans for closer consultation and collaboration with staff.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135373
<b>DfE registration number</b>	304/6121
<b>Local authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10210716
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	40
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	None
<b>Proprietor</b>	The Southover Partnership
<b>Chair</b>	Carol Frankl
<b>Headteacher</b>	Merushka Hansraj (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£48,000 to £60,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8446 0300
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.southoverpartnership.com">www.southoverpartnership.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@southoverpartnership.com">info@southoverpartnership.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6–8 February 2018

## Information about this school

- The school is an independent special day school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, autism spectrum disorder and other complex needs.
- The school operates over three sites in the London boroughs of Barnet, Brent and Enfield. In addition to the main site, the school also has bases at: Hutton Grove, London N12 and Chase Road, London N14.
- A new executive headteacher started at the school in September 2021.
- The school's 'My Curriculum' is a personalised offer of curriculum subjects, qualifications and enrichment opportunities, according to each pupil's interests and aspirations.
- The school makes use of the following alternative providers: College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London; College of North West London; Freightliners Farm; Harrow College; SIH equine therapy.
- The school is part of The Southover Partnership, an independent charity. The board of trustees of the charity fulfils the role of both the school's proprietorial board and the governing body.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in February 2018.

## 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.

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.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the heads of school and other school leaders, the chair and vice chair of the trust, teachers and non-teaching staff. They also met with pupils and held conversations with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, and PSHE. This included meeting subject leaders, visiting lessons, talking to pupils and looking at their work. Inspectors also considered other subjects taught at the school as part of the school's 'My Curriculum' programme.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation including school policies, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and minutes of meetings of the

board of trustees. They also considered documents relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils to check compliance with the independent school standards.

- The inspection of safeguarding included review of the single central record of employment checks, review of records relating to the school's work to safeguard pupils, and calls to representatives of local authorities.
- Inspectors visited and toured the three school sites.
- Inspectors considered the responses to surveys completed by parents and members of staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Samantha Ingram

Her Majesty's Inspector

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