

Inspection of Maple Hayes Hall School

Abnalls Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 8BL

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Outstanding
--------------------------	--------------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
--	-------------

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils are unable to read and write when they join the school at the end of key stage 2 or the start of key stage 3. The school's approach to teaching literacy skills ensures that, over time, pupils become fluent readers and confident writers. Parents say that the school has 'rescued' their child's education.

All pupils study a broad range of academic and practical subjects. They leave the school as independent learners with good literacy skills and recognised qualifications. Pupils are well set for their next steps in education and life at the end of their time at Maple Hayes Hall.

Pupils enjoy school. They are happy, safe and well looked after. Staff know pupils well and provide strong pastoral care. Members of staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct and work. Pupils rise to these high expectations. They demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They are polite and courteous.

Pupils behave well. Disruption to learning is very rare. Bullying is uncommon and staff deal effectively with any of which they are made aware.

The school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities beyond the taught curriculum. Older pupils take on leadership responsibilities. They provide excellent role models for the school's younger pupils.

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

This is a school with a clear vision. It aims to ensure that pupils acquire good literacy skills, effective learning habits and appropriate qualifications. The proprietors and headteacher have ensured that the school is highly successful in achieving these aims. Additionally, the proprietors ensure that the school consistently meets all the independent school standards. They provide strong support and challenge to leaders.

All pupils study a broad range of subjects. The curriculum is skilfully designed so that pupils' learning builds from year to year. For example, many pupils struggle with memory. Therefore, staff revisit key knowledge and skills. This helps pupils to remember what they have been taught.

Teachers are skilled. They have excellent subject knowledge that they use well to explain new content. Teachers adapt their teaching, taking into account pupils' needs. They check that pupils have understood new concepts. They identify and address pupils' misconceptions. They use assessment well to judge the progress pupils are making.

The school's literacy curriculum is exceptional. All pupils join the school because they have struggled to learn to read and write. The school transforms pupils' lives. They

become fluent readers, and they come to enjoy reading. They quickly learn to write in a cursive style with a fountain pen. They become confident writers and increasingly accurate spellers. Their confidence and self-esteem grow immensely, and they are successful in their other subjects. Pupils leave the school with at least seven GCSE qualifications. All move on to further study.

The school provides pupils with many opportunities to develop interests and aptitudes. There is a wide range of clubs and activities at lunchtime. Almost all pupils take part. Inspectors observed pupils rehearsing for their upcoming production of 'The Jungle Book'. Art is very popular in school, and corridors are decorated with beautiful artwork.

The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme is comprehensive and well planned. It includes age-appropriate relationships and sex education for all. Pupils also learn about important concepts such as democracy and the rule of law.

The PSHE education programme includes careers education. Each pupil has a careers interview each year. These help to inform the annual review process. Although careers education is effective in helping pupils to plan for the future, it currently draws on too limited a range of information sources. For example, COVID-19 has prevented pupils from attending careers fairs. Leaders intend to reintroduce these visits when circumstances allow. However, pupils are currently not as well informed as they could be, for example about apprenticeships.

The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils learn about different religions and cultures through religious education, art and English. Lunchtimes are deliberately planned social times. Pupils eat lunch in mixed-age groups, served by prefects from Year 11. After eating, pupils attend clubs, play together outside or play games in the lunch hall.

The school's staff form a committed team. All are proud to work at the school. Leaders ensure that teachers' workload is manageable. They provide staff with 15 'teacher days' each year when pupils are not in school. This time is used for training and curriculum development. Staff appreciate leaders' care for them.

Leaders seek the views of pupils, for example through questionnaires and annual reviews. Despite this, leaders are not aware of how strongly held some pupils' views are. Several pupils, especially girls, told inspectors they do not feel that their views are valued or listened to.

The school has a website. It contains useful information for parents. This includes a complaints procedure that complies with statutory guidance. All other policies required by the independent school standards are available to parents, either on the website or upon request. Leaders have ensured that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

The school is located within several acres of attractive grounds. The premises are in a good state of repair. Classrooms provide ample space with good lighting and acoustics. The school has all the facilities required by the independent school standards.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's child protection and safeguarding policy is comprehensive, up to date and fit for purpose. It can be found on the school's website. Leaders provide regular safeguarding training that equips staff well for their safeguarding responsibilities. Consequently, staff understand their duty to keep pupils safe. They readily pass on concerns to leaders. Leaders deal with these appropriately, ensuring that pupils get the right support in a timely manner.

There is a very strong culture of safeguarding and care for pupils throughout the school. Leaders ensure that all pre-employment checks on staff are carried out appropriately. These are recorded correctly on the school's single central record.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have not sought the views of pupils effectively enough. Consequently, some pupils, especially girls, feel that their views are not valued, and they are not being listened to. Leaders should develop effective ways to seek the views of pupils so that pupils understand that leaders and staff value their opinions.
- Careers education currently draws on too limited a range of information sources. Restrictions due to COVID-19 are partly responsible for this. Consequently, pupils are not as well informed as they could be about some post-16 options such as apprenticeships. Leaders should ensure that careers education provides pupils with detailed and comprehensive information about all post-16 options.

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	124488
DfE registration number	860/6022
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10212789
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Dr E Neville Brown and Brenda M Brown
Headteacher	Dr Daryl Brown
Annual fees (day pupils)	£16,740 for pupils aged under 13 years £22,350 for pupils aged 13 years or over
Telephone number	01543 264387
Website	www.dyslexia.school
Email address	office@dyslexia.school
Date of previous inspection	31 October to 2 November 2017

Information about this school

- Maple Hayes Hall is a school for pupils who have specific difficulties with reading, writing and spelling (dyslexia). It uses a unique approach to teaching literacy skills that has been created by a proprietor. This approach focuses on helping pupils read using the meaning of words.
- Almost all pupils have education, health and care plans and are funded by local authorities.
- The most recent standard inspection was in November 2017. The school met all of the independent school standards and was judged to be outstanding.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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 meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in 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 held meetings with the proprietors, the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors met with staff, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's approach to teaching reading, writing and spelling through the deep dives by visiting literacy lessons and speaking with staff, pupils and parents.
- Inspectors considered safeguarding by meeting with the designated safeguarding lead, scrutinising policies and records relating to child protection and examining the safeguarding checks made on staff before they join the school.
- Inspectors considered responses from staff to their online inspection questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke informally with pupils at breaktime and lunchtime. They held more formal meetings with three groups of pupils.

- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online inspection questionnaire, including written responses. An inspector spoke with several parents who were attending a parental consultation at the school. Inspectors considered several emails from parents.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Satchwell

Ofsted Inspector

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 2022