

Inspection of Draycott Moor College

Draycott Old Road, Draycott-in-the-Moors, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST11 9AH

Inspection dates: 10 and 12 May 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

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 enjoy attending this calm and caring school. Staff take the time to get to know each pupil really well, building strong, positive relationships. Consequently, pupils feel safe. They are confident that if they have a problem, they can get help and support. Bullying seldom occurs. One pupil said, 'in this school we have learned to laugh with each other, not at each other'.

Many pupils have experienced significant disruption in their previous schools. Leaders ensure that gaps in pupils' learning are rapidly identified and addressed. Staff support pupils well to develop the positive attitudes to learning that will help them to do their very best. Pupils are proud of their achievements.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well. Pupils know and appreciate that staff give them every opportunity to meet these high standards and to achieve rewards for doing so. As a result, they develop a strong sense of what is right and wrong. Over time, they begin to make the right choices more often.

Personal development is at the heart of everything the school does. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about themselves, the world they live in and the skills to do so successfully.

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

School leaders want pupils to achieve the very best that they can. The gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge and barriers to learning are identified well by leaders. All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan to address their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use these well to support pupils' learning.

Staff place a high priority on pupils' personal development. Pupils develop behaviours, values and attitudes that will help them in their lives. Pupils learn about fundamental British Values, such as democracy, mutual respect and tolerance, and liberty. They develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding through a wide range of activities, including the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. Pupils learn through approaches best suited to their learning needs, such as debate, discussion and visual aids. Topics are selected that help pupils understand their experiences and to raise their expectations of what they can achieve. Leaders have designed the curriculum to be flexible. This means that staff can adapt the curriculum easily if a pupil misses any lessons. This reduces the impact on their learning.

Curriculum leaders have good subject knowledge. In most subjects, leaders have carefully considered and organised pupils' learning. They pay close attention to how the learning is presented to meet pupils' needs. In these cases, pupils build on what they already know so that they can understand and remember new learning. For instance, in mathematics, leaders thought carefully about how to eradicate the fear

and dislike of the subject that created a further barrier to learning. The planned curriculum now provides the basis of bespoke individual plans for every pupil.

In a small number of subjects, such as history, teachers have not fully considered the best ways to adapt how the curriculum is delivered. In these cases, pupils find it harder to access the work and build on previous learning. On occasion, the curriculum does not always identify well enough what pupils should be learning. As a result, pupils are sometimes unclear about what they should be learning in a lesson, or across a series of lessons.

Helping pupils to read confidently and fluently is a school priority. Well-considered resources help pupils who struggle to read to catch up with their classmates. This is beginning to have a positive effect on how well pupils read. Leaders have identified the need to develop a reading culture in the school, but this is at an early stage. Planning has started, including the development of a new library area. However, opportunities to read for pleasure are not consistently championed across the curriculum.

All pupils receive regular careers information, advice and guidance. As well as time-tabled lessons, pupils have support from an external careers adviser. Consequently, pupils are well-prepared for their next steps in education and/or employment and training. Pupils take part in and enjoy a wide range of courses and activities through the school's links with a local college. This helps them to make informed choices about the courses they want to follow when they leave school.

Leaders have worked effectively to improve pupils' attendance. Leaders assiduously follow up the very few cases where attendance does not improve, working with all appropriate partners to make sure that these pupils are safe.

Staff have access to a wide range of professional development opportunities. Leaders are keen to support staff who wish to improve their qualifications and skills. Staff are unanimously proud to work in this school because they feel valued and respected.

The proprietor and leaders make sure that the school consistently meets the independent school standards. Regular quality assurance visits by directors have a strong focus on safeguarding as well as setting strategy and holding school leaders to account. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. This is because they have an accessibility plan in place that considers how the premises, information and the curriculum can be improved for pupils with SEND.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in this school. The safeguarding policy follows government guidance and is published on the school's website. Staff are well trained and fully aware of the risks pupils face in their communities. Staff recognise the

signs of harm, neglect and abuse and how to log their concerns. Leaders follow these up, no matter how small. Information is shared effectively, and early help secured quickly. Leaders work closely with external agencies such as social services. Pupils learn how to stay safe through the PSHE programme. Leaders record the checks made on staff's suitability to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a very few subjects, learning is not always precisely matched to pupils' needs. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should make sure that all staff adapt or modify the delivery of the curriculum so that all the pupils can build on their previous learning.
- In a few subjects, subject leaders have not identified clearly what they want pupils to learn, know and remember in a lesson or across a series of lessons. On occasion, this can lead to pupils' learning not progressing from one lesson to another. Leaders should make sure that all teachers precisely identify what they want pupils to learn in lessons and across lessons.
- Reading for pleasure has been identified as a priority for the school. However, plans have been developed but not yet consistently applied. Consequently, several pupils do not read widely, often or for pleasure. Leaders should make sure that staff routinely encourage pupils to read different texts, authors, genres and media.

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	133989
DfE registration number	860/6026
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10207415
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	18
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Horizon Education and Care Group
Chair	Amanda Cunningham (Chief Executive Officer)
Headteacher	Kerry Lynch-wood
Annual fees (day pupils)	£61,500 to £100,000
Telephone number	01782 399849
Website	https://www.horizoncare.co.uk/our-schools
Email address	enquires@horizoncare.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–7 February 2019

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new chief executive officer has taken control of Horizon Education and Care Group Ltd, the proprietor of Draycott Moor College.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for boys and girls aged 10 to 16. At present there are no pupils in Year 6.
- The school provides education for pupils who have social, emotional, and mental health difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Many have been excluded from their previous schools and some have missed a significant proportion of their education.
- The school makes use of registered alternative provision provided by Stoke-on-Trent college. Ofsted separately inspects this setting.
- The school's last full standard inspection was in February 2019.

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 full standard inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with those responsible for governance, including the chief executive officer, the operations director and the quality assurance director.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in English, mathematics, history and food technology. Each deep dive included discussions with curriculum leaders, visits to lessons, and a scrutiny of pupils' work. Inspectors met with pupils to discuss their learning in these subjects and more generally about their experiences in school.
- Inspectors reviewed the PSHE curriculum.
- Inspectors talked to staff to discuss the support they receive to develop their skills and knowledge and to manage their workload.
- A range of documentation was reviewed, including those about the curriculum, school policies, and the school's website.
- The lead inspector scrutinised safeguarding documents, reviewed the school's processes for reporting concerns and checked staff recruitment procedures.

- Inspectors checked all the independent school standards, including those relating to the school premises.
- The lead inspector considered responses to Ofsted’s pupil and staff surveys.
- There were no responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents.

Inspection team

Mel Ford, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Bianka Zemke

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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