

Inspection of Eastwood Grange School

Eastwood Grange, Milken Lane, Ashover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S45 0BA

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are positive about this school. They know that no one gives up on them. They get on well with each other and form trusting relationships with staff. They know staff care about them and want them to do well. The school's atmosphere is usually calm. Pupils feel safe at school. Most are happy to be there.

Appropriate support and therapy help new pupils settle in. Many pupils increase their attendance over time. Pupils' conduct benefits from clear routines and structures. Bullying is not common. Staff resolve it promptly when it happens. Pupils learn how to manage the triggers that affect their behaviour. They appreciate rewards for demonstrating the school's values of respect, resilience and right time, right place.

Leaders design the curriculum to help each pupil overcome barriers to learning. However, the curriculum is not implemented consistently well in some subjects. Not all pupils get the help they need to read accurately and fluently.

Pupils value learning how to live independently. They gain suitable qualifications. They know these will help them take their next steps toward their chosen careers. As one staff member reflected, 'Pupils leave knowing they are important, they mean something, and having pride in their education.'

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

Leaders personalise study programmes to meet each pupil's particular needs. Pupils study a balance of academic and vocational subjects. They also receive therapeutic support. Some pupils study well-chosen courses offered by alternative providers. These courses focus on pupils' particular interests. Typically, one parent explained, 'The bespoke curriculum gives children the confidence to try new things and not be terrified of failure.'

The curriculum is well planned in some subjects. In English and mathematics, leaders have thought carefully about what pupils need to know. They have considered the order in which pupils should learn new content. Pupils revisit prior learning. They build their knowledge and develop their skills. In other subjects, such as physical education, leaders are still in the early stages of deciding what they want pupils to learn and when.

The curriculum is not implemented consistently well in all subjects. Some staff do not have the subject knowledge they need. They do not make appropriate choices when deciding how to teach pupils new content. They are not sufficiently skilled at identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge. Not all staff adapt the curriculum well enough to meet pupils' needs. Some subject leaders are learning how to carry out their roles effectively.

Leaders are in the early stages of promoting the importance of reading across the curriculum. Some staff know how to teach phonics. They provide regular sessions

that help the youngest pupils build their knowledge. However, they do not consistently ensure that books are matched to the letters and sounds that pupils know. Time dedicated to reading each week is not always used well. Some staff do not provide pupils who are at an early stage of reading with effective support.

Staff have strong relationships with pupils and know them well. Therapists help pupils learn how to understand and manage their emotions and behaviour. Pupils are positive about this support. The number of incidents involving physical restraint is reducing. Pupils often follow a part-time programme when they join the school. This helps many of them to re-integrate into education. The behaviour and attitudes of most pupils improve over time.

Leaders ensure that pupils' personal development is a strength. The provision for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is well thought out. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to learn about relationships and sex education (RSE) at a level appropriate to each individual. They support the development of pupils' resilience, character and independence. Pupils know how to eat healthily and the importance of keeping physically and mentally fit. Post-16 students learn important life skills, such as financial budgeting and how to drive safely. The 'question of the week' gives pupils the chance to debate and discuss issues in a considered way. They understand diversity and respect differences in others. Pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance. Some post-16 students benefit from successful work placements. This helps them to prepare for when they leave school.

Staff are positive about working at the school. They appreciate the support they get from leaders with their workload and well-being.

The proprietor board shares leaders' vision for how the school needs to improve. However, leaders have not yet realised this vision fully. The proprietor board supports leaders well and holds them to account. However, not all leaders have had the training necessary for them to be fully effective in their roles.

Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met consistently and securely over time. Routine health and safety checks help maintain the premises to a good standard. The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Policies are up to date and reflect the latest statutory guidance. The safeguarding and RSE policies are available on the school's website.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are knowledgeable about safeguarding. They prioritise pupils' welfare. Staff are alert to any signs that pupils may be at risk of potential harm. Leaders act swiftly in response to concerns raised by staff or pupils. They seek help from external agencies to make sure that pupils get the support they need. Leaders keep detailed records of the actions they take to keep pupils safe.

Leaders regularly carry out welfare checks on pupils who receive part of their education off site. They keep pupils' individual risk assessments up to date.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Some subject leaders do not have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their roles effectively. They do not have a precise-enough understanding of what is working well in their area of responsibility and what needs to improve. Senior leaders need to provide leaders, at all levels, with the right support so that they have the knowledge and skills to lead their areas of responsibility and be effective in their roles.
- Leaders do not promote reading consistently well. They have not established a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. Not all staff know how to support pupils to develop their reading skills. Leaders should ensure that staff know how to help pupils read fluently and independently. They should make sure that pupils' reading books consistently match their reading knowledge. Leaders must ensure that there is a coherent and consistent approach to the teaching of reading.
- The curriculum is not implemented consistently well in all subjects. Some staff do not have the knowledge and skills they need to choose the most effective approaches. Some pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders need to ensure that staff have opportunities to improve their subject knowledge, expertise and practice. They need to make sure that the curriculum in each subject is implemented consistently so that all pupils achieve well.

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	113026
DfE registration number	830/6013
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10204901
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	10
Number of part-time pupils	11
Proprietor	Aspris Children's Services Ltd.
Chair	John Anderson
Headteacher	Stuart Lees
Annual fees (day pupils)	£73,879
Telephone number	01246 590255
Website	www.aspriscs.com
Email address	eastwoodgrange@aspriscs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 to 8 November 2018

Information about this school

- Eastwood Grange School is an independent special school.
- The school's proprietor has changed since the previous standard inspection. In January 2021, the school's previous proprietor was acquired by Waterland. Waterland established Aspris as a standalone company in July 2021. Aspris Children's Services Ltd was registered as the school's proprietor in January 2022.

- The school is on one site. The satellite provision attended by pupils at the time of the previous standard inspection is no longer used by the school.
- In May 2019, a new headteacher was appointed. The deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2019.
- The chair of the proprietor board took up the position in May 2022.
- New curriculum leaders of English and PSHE have been appointed in the last year. A new teacher in the primary phase joined the school recently.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Most pupils have behavioural, social, emotional or mental health needs. Some pupils have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.
- Pupils travel to the school from several local authorities.
- The school uses six unregistered alternative providers for pupils to receive some of their education. The school also uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school's most recent standard inspection took place from 6 to 8 November 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.

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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders.
- The lead inspector met with safeguarding leaders to examine safeguarding records, the school's system for recruiting staff and the school's single central record. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors did deep dives in four subjects: English, mathematics, reading and PSHE education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with teachers of the subject to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors reviewed information about the curriculum pathways that pupils study.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils during social times and spoke with pupils.

- The lead inspector met remotely with the chair of the proprietor board.
- Inspectors spoke on the telephone with a representative who oversees five of the alternative providers used by the school.
- Pupils did not attend the school site on the second day of the inspection due to a power failure.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plans, a variety of policies, information about pupils' attendance and behaviour, examples of pupils' support and EHC plans and individual risk assessments for pupils.
- Inspectors took into account responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. No responses were received to the staff survey or the pupil survey.
- To check the school's compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed facilities at the school's site.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gary Nixon

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