

Inspection of Aurora White House School

Quidenham, Norwich, Norfolk NR16 2NZ

Inspection dates: 11 to 13 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well cared for, happy and safe. They value the positive relationships they build with adults. Pupils know that there are trusted adults they can speak with should they have any concerns or worries. Pupils value the 'five golden rules' and the rewards they can receive to celebrate their positive behaviour.

Pupils say that if any bullying happens, it is dealt with by adults well. They enjoy learning in the extensive woodland within the school grounds. This helps them to develop valuable skills such as identifying and managing personal risks, including when touching things that might hurt them or climbing trees. Pupils enjoy swimming in the school's own pool and taking part in sports.

They learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy and to make responsible choices about what they eat. Pupils like the opportunities they have to learn to cook healthy meals.

Pupils enjoy listening to stories and can talk about their favourite authors. Adults support pupils well to catch up so they become confident readers.

Most pupils have experienced disrupted learning throughout their education. Leaders make sure that staff help new pupils with any immediate social and emotional needs. As a result, pupils are ready and want to learn with their classmates.

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

The proprietor and leaders at all levels share a clear vision for supporting pupils to become resilient, happy and confident learners. They have established the pastoral curriculum to meet pupils' social, emotional and communication needs effectively. Leaders ensure that staff have processes in place to identify, record, review and analyse every aspect of pupils' social, emotional and physical well-being. Teachers and other staff use this information well to provide the precise support pupils need to keep safe and emotionally well.

Staff responsible for safeguarding, attendance and behaviour work effectively with clinicians and other specialists. The needs of every pupil are well understood. This helps to remove any potential barriers to learning so that every pupil can attend school and have the opportunity to be successful. Consequently, pupils gain confidence, begin to understand their place in the world, build and maintain high-quality relationships and recognise themselves as individuals.

The curriculum is designed to meet pupils' needs. In many subjects, including English and mathematics, the detail of the information that pupils need to learn is set out and organised logically to build on what they already know. In mathematics, for example, pupils build their knowledge and understanding of number and place value progressively over time. Pupils become more confident and able to tackle complex tasks.

In a few other subjects, leaders have not yet considered precisely enough the most important information that pupils need to learn and the order in which they should learn this. This means that the precise detail of what pupils need to learn to improve is not always consistently clear. In addition, leaders have not yet fully implemented the specific subject training that teachers will need to teach the intended curriculum effectively.

Pupils are taught to read well. Consequently, they learn their letters and sounds quickly, so they begin to read words with confidence. Staff develop pupils' love of reading by providing well-considered books that are right for pupils' age and ability. They read stories to pupils and encourage pupils to read aloud in class.

Pupils' education, health and care plans (EHC plan) are reviewed regularly. Leaders check that pupils are achieving as well as they should and that support is matched appropriately to individual learning needs. Teachers use these assessments to plan work that helps pupils to learn and develop further.

Those responsible for governance have clearly defined roles. They routinely check the quality of leaders' work. The proprietor and governors have a secure understanding of the independent school standards. They ensure that they meet the requirements consistently. The school site is safe because they ensure that health and safety policies and procedures are followed rigorously. The proprietor and governors ensure that they provide the information required, such as the school's safeguarding policy and complaints procedure. The school fulfils its duty as set out in section 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All independent school standards in relation to pupils' welfare and safeguarding of pupils are met. Leaders have appropriate risk assessments in place.

Leaders' checks for keeping children safe are rigorous. They work collaboratively with clinicians, therapists and staff to make sure that pupils and their families receive the support they need.

Staff are well trained. They know the signs that indicate a pupil may be at risk of harm and how to report concerns promptly. Leaders analyse information carefully so that they can manage support for each pupil effectively.

Leaders carry out all the necessary employment checks on staff and safeguarding checks on visitors to the school meticulously.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some subjects where the curriculum planning is more recent, leaders have not precisely set out all of the important content pupils need to learn and the order in which they need to learn it. This means that pupils are not learning and achieving as well as they can. Leaders need to design the curriculum in a few subjects more carefully so that teachers teach the most important knowledge in a logical sequence and pupils can achieve as well as they can.
- Leaders have not yet identified all the training that teachers need to develop their subject knowledge further in a small number of subjects as they have in English and mathematics. Consequently, a few teachers do not yet teach with the same skill and precision across all subjects. Leaders need to continue to evaluate the provision to ensure that teachers have the support they need to develop their expertise further in the subjects they are less confident to teach.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	148360
DfE registration number	926/6031
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10243317
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Aurora Care and Education Opco Ltd
Chair	Phil Jonas
Headteacher	David Clarke
Annual fees (day pupils)	£43,116
Telephone number	01953 887217
Website	www.the-aurora-group.com
Email address	david.clarke@the-aurora-goup.com

Information about this school

- This was the school's first standard inspection since it opened in June 2021.
- The school had a pre-registration inspection in May 2021 and was judged as likely to meet the independent school standards.
- The school does not use alternative provision
- Many of the school leaders work across both the Aurora White House School and The Aurora Eccles school.
- All pupils that attend the school have an EHC plan and are funded by the local authority.
- The Aurora White House School occupies a separate primary site within the larger Aurora Eccles School site.
- Pupils at the Aurora White House School also access a range of facilities shared with Aurora Eccles School, such as the swimming pool.

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 and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other senior leaders, and spoke with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector held remote meetings with the four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a remote meeting with the chief executive officer and met with the principal.
- The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' curriculum plans, the school's single central record of pre-employment checks on staff, school policies, minutes of governor meetings and records of pupils' attendance.
- All documentation relating to the independent school standards was checked.
- Inspectors considered 13 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 34 responses from Ofsted's staff survey.

- The subjects covered in depth as part of this inspection were English, including early reading, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic education.
- In each subject, inspectors visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Clare Fletcher

Ofsted Inspector

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