

Inspection of The Davenport School

The Lodge, Foxborough Hill, Eastry, Sandwich, Kent CT13 0NY

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

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' behaviour is transformed at this school. Staff welcome pupils into school with understanding and compassion. Adults at the school meet pupils' special educational needs well. Pupils thrive in this nurturing environment.

Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Leaders have designed a curriculum to hook pupils' interests and capture their imagination. Pupils speak excitedly about trips, including to farms and parks. Once pupils settle into the school, they make great strides in their learning across most of the curriculum.

Staff foster positive working relationships between pupils. Pupils get on well together, and there is a family atmosphere. Pupils learn very well how to understand and resolve differences. Leaders ensure that any rare occurrence of bullying is dealt with effectively. The culture is based on mutual respect.

Parents and carers are highly appreciative of what the school does for their children. Staff keep in regular contact with parents and carers so that all adults work together to support pupils. As one parent said, 'This school has changed our lives, it is a godsend because my child is now a rounded person.'

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have redesigned the curriculum. They make sure that the curriculum builds pupils' knowledge sequentially over time. Leaders involve all teaching staff in planning and reviewing the curriculum. This is so that good ideas and practice are shared successfully. Leaders' deliberate and planned action to improve the curriculum has paid dividends. Pupils generally achieve well.

Teachers have good subject knowledge, including how to teach early reading skills and phonics. Pupils are guided carefully through stages of reading. Pupils have access to books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. Leaders keep a close eye on pupils' reading abilities. Swift intervention supports pupils to get back on track if they fall behind. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of genres, including novels and poetry. They enjoy their teacher reading to them. Pupils are motivated by the use of drama to help them understand narratives.

Typically, pupils have received disjointed education in past educational placements. They have significant gaps in their knowledge when they join the school. Assessment is in place for the core subjects and helps teachers to plan pupils' next steps. However, teachers' assessment of pupils' academic development across the curriculum is not as precise as it could be. Therefore, staff do not know exactly what pupils know and can do in some subjects such as history, geography, music and art. This means that pupils' achievement in these subjects is variable.

The school is a settled and calm environment. Staff are highly effective role models and speak calmly to pupils at all times. Staff know pupils very well and are adept at

de-escalating any unsettled behaviour quickly. Therefore, pupils stay highly focused on their learning.

The school provides a comprehensive personal, social and health education. A key feature of the programme includes well-planned relationships education. Leaders take careful account of the targets in pupils' education, health and care plans. Staff share helpful summaries of successful strategies to support pupils' needs with colleagues. This ensures there is a consistent approach that wraps around each pupil. Consequently, pupils learn skills to cope with their social and emotional difficulties.

Pupils learn well about the world around them. They understand different cultures and how to be a good citizen. Leaders provide clubs and activities for pupils but do not yet ensure that pupils' individual talents are stretched to the full.

Leaders provide effective training for all staff. This includes sharing expertise with local mainstream primary school staff. Staff have improved their teaching skills and knowledge of a mainstream curriculum. Staff feel valued and are appreciative of leaders' support. Highly effective staff put pupils' needs at the heart of all they do.

Governance is effective. The chair of governors visits the school regularly to meet with staff and pupils. Governance arrangements make sure that all statutory legislation such as equality duties are followed closely. The independent school standards are consistently met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A suitable safeguarding policy is published online. Staff are trained well to keep a close eye on pupils and report any safeguarding issues. Leaders keep a well-organised system to record safeguarding concerns and the subsequent action that is taken. Leaders liaise conscientiously with outside agencies such as social services. Governors keep diligent oversight of all safeguarding matters.

Leaders make sure that appropriate checks are made when recruiting staff to the school. Records of these checks are kept meticulously.

Leaders make sure that pupils know what to do if they need help. Pupils are taught to keep safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have improved the planning of the curriculum to improve pupils' knowledge across subjects. An assessment system is in place for the core subjects, but staff do not yet have a full picture of how pupils are learning across

the foundation subjects such as history, geography, art and music. This means that aspects of the curriculum may not be as effective as they could be. Leaders should spread the good practice already in place in the core subjects across the whole curriculum.

- Leaders have improved the curriculum, and they provide a varied experience of extra-curricular activities. However, leaders have not yet provided deliberate and focused activities to fully stretch pupils' unique talents. Therefore, pupils may not have enough opportunities to develop their special interests during their time at school. Leaders should develop a way to make best use of the time available during the school day to deepen and stretch pupils' talents and interests.

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	133298
DfE registration number	886/6089
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10232301
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Ethelbert Children's Services
Chair	Gordon Shaw
Headteacher	Julie Bartlett
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,776
Telephone number	01304 621836
Website	www.ethelbertonline.co.uk/education/the-davenport-school/
Email address	julie.bayley@ethelbert.net
Date of previous inspection	12 to 14 November 2019

Information about this school

- Davenport is an independent school which caters for pupils from the age of five to 12 years. The school is one of two schools within Ethelbert Children's Services.
- The school provides for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs. All have an education, health and care plan. Most pupils live in one of the organisation's homes or are looked after through their fostering service.
- The previous standard inspection took place in November 2019 when the school was found to require improvement.
- The school does not currently 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 and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the chair of governors, the headteacher, the teacher in charge, other leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the headteacher of a local primary school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, carried out lesson visits, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors viewed the website and looked at a number of policies and documents. They also considered the views of staff by looking at their responses to Ofsted's online survey.
- The lead inspector spoke with a parent and considered parents' and carers' responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record of recruitment checks and other safeguarding records. Inspectors also met with the designated safeguarding lead and spoke to staff and pupils

Inspection team

Sue Child, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Hogarth

Ofsted Inspector

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