

The Robert Ogden School

Clayton Lane, Thurnscoe, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S63 0BG

Inspection dates

8 and 9 November 2022

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The school's safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. It is up to date with the latest statutory guidance.
- The proprietor ensures that staff are trained to understand their responsibilities to safeguard children. There are suitable arrangements in place to identify and manage any safeguarding concerns. Records for safeguarding are detailed and clear. Leaders work proactively with external agencies to support pupils and their families.
- Pupils learn about potential risks to their safety and how to deal with them. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn how to report their concerns. Learning topics are planned carefully to consider pupils' needs and vulnerabilities. These include learning about the importance of healthy relationships, online safety and bullying.

Paragraph 8, 8(a), 8(b)

- Pupils have positive experiences in the residential provision. They develop strong, trusting relationships with staff. The provision becomes an important part of pupils' family and social network.
- Staff provide high levels of supervision. They ensure that pupils are safe during their residential stays. Staff monitor pupils' online activity closely. They talk to pupils about these and other risks, including the potential for exploitation.
- Staff use positive support strategies to help pupils to manage their behaviour. Most incidents of poor behaviour reduce in severity and duration because of good routines and effective communication from staff to pupils. Staff rarely use physical intervention with pupils in the residential provision.
- These arrangements have regard to the National Minimum Standards for residential special schools.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 14

- The proprietor has implemented suitable behaviour and anti-bullying policies. These are published on the school's website. Staff are trained to help pupils to manage their behaviour. There is a consistent approach. Strategies of support are planned with consideration of pupils' needs and vulnerabilities.
- Leaders record pupils' behaviour thoroughly. They are diligent with their recording of all behaviour incidents. The number of recorded incidents is high. This is because every incident, no matter how minor, is logged. Information from these records is collated to help individual pupils to improve their behaviour.
- Incidents of pupils' behaviour that require staff to physically intervene are recorded clearly. The vast majority are low-level interventions. When 'unplanned' interventions take place, leaders take prompt actions to investigate the cause and impact. Pupils' support plans outline for staff pupils' needs and how to support them. Changes are made to provision and adult support when needed.
- Pupils are well supervised. Leaders ensure that staffing levels are high in order to keep pupils safe and provide good-quality care, including for pupils' mental and physical health. Staff are caring and empathetic towards pupils. Leaders make sure that pupils are confident to communicate their worries to staff.

Paragraph 11

- There is an appropriate health and safety policy for the school. The policy outlines the systems and processes in place to ensure the safety of staff and pupils. Staff receive relevant training to raise awareness of the importance of health and safety within school and when participating in experiences away from the school site.

Paragraph 13

- The proprietor has implemented an appropriate first-aid policy. It details how staff will care for pupils who may injure themselves or need basic medical care while at school. Staff have relevant qualifications, such as those needed to administer paediatric first aid and medication. Injuries to staff and pupils are recorded carefully.

Paragraph 15

- Admission and attendance registers meet the requirements. Leaders understand the need to monitor the attendance of pupils closely and do so rigorously. They record attendance using the appropriate DfE codes.
- The standards checked for this part are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- Leaders ensure that staff are suitably trained to consider the health, welfare and safety of pupils. They are aspirational for pupils and promote a nurturing ethos. They have made sure that the independent school standards checked at this inspection continue to be met.
- Leaders have established productive working relationships with a range of external agencies as well as therapy staff across the charity. They work actively with

professionals from the different local authorities who are responsible for maintaining pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans.

- Leaders ensure that staff plan provision to meet pupils' needs. Good-quality resources enhance the provision and support pupils to achieve targets identified in their EHC plans. For example, pupils can use the therapy room to support their occupational therapy. Some pupils enjoy having the option to learn in their own individual rooms, which are decorated to reflect their interests and hobbies.
- Staff who spoke to inspectors feel valued by leaders. They appreciate the support leaders provide for their welfare. They are grateful for the opportunities that leaders provide for them to progress in their careers and broaden their professional knowledge and experience.
- There has been significant turbulence and change within the leadership and management of the school. This has led to some confusion among leaders as to the current roles and responsibilities within governance.
- Changes to some systems and processes have affected leaders' strategic overview of some aspects of the school. For example, there is little by way of analysis of overall trends, particularly for behaviour. This is hampering school improvement.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- An accessibility plan is in place and up to date. Leaders have thought carefully about how the school's curriculum can be adapted to meet individual pupil's needs. The school site is accessible. Leaders have considered how they can make reasonable adjustments to the environment, when needed.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	106965
DfE registration number	370/6004
Inspection number	10259241

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	131
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	27
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	National Autistic Society
Chair	Stephen Ladyman
Headteacher	Mrs Lorraine Dormand
Annual fees (day pupils)	£64,224 to £94,085
Telephone number	01709 874 443
Website	www.robertogdenschool.org.uk
Email address	robert.ogden@nas.org.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	10 to 12 May 2022

Information about this school

- The school received its last full standard inspection in May 2022, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be good.
- A previous emergency unannounced inspection, which took place in January 2019, found all of the independent school standards that were checked were met.

- The school caters for pupils who have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder between the ages of five and 19. Pupils are currently placed at the school by 16 different local authorities.
- The school currently uses the services of one alternative provider. This provider is an unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The inspection was carried out because of concerns received by the DfE about the provision related to safeguarding arrangements and the oversight of leadership and management in the school (including governance).
- Inspectors met with several members of the senior leadership team, including the principal. They also met with two subject leaders. They met with several members of staff informally and formally. They spoke with some pupils. A virtual meeting was held with a representative of the National Autistic Society.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers at the school gates and spoke to some parents by telephone.
- Inspectors toured the school site and observed pupils' behaviour at different times of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, health and safety, first aid, risk assessment and behaviour management.
- Inspectors checked safeguarding arrangements. They scrutinised records for behaviour and safeguarding and discussed leaders' approach to ensuring the safeguarding of pupils.
- The responses to Ofsted's surveys were considered.

Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

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Senior His Majesty's Inspector

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