

Inspection of Aspire Hub Burnley

Chapel Place, Hammerton Street, Burnley BB11 1LE

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at school. They feel confident to talk to staff members if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils receive high-quality pastoral support to help them to reengage successfully with education. Pupils said that leaders and staff deal with bullying effectively.

Leaders expect all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve highly. However, in some subjects, pupils do not have the prior knowledge that they require to make sense of new learning. Added to this, pupils do not benefit from a curriculum that is delivered consistently well by teachers. Consequently, in some subjects, pupils do not learn as much as they should.

Leaders and staff aim to create an orderly environment around the school. Most staff expect pupils to behave well. Pupils are usually respectful to their peers and members of staff. They like to socialise with their friends during breakfast club. Typically, the school is calm and orderly. However, pupils' learning is sometimes disrupted by incidents of poor behaviour.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Some pupils like to play football. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles or to visit places of interest, including museums. The range of extra-curricular activities is narrow. That said, pupils relish raising funds for different charities.

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

While the curriculum is well designed in some subjects, in other subjects the curriculum is not organised effectively enough. As a result, the curriculum is uneven in quality. This is because leaders have not given sufficient thought to the order in which some subject content must be taught. Consequently, teachers do not deliver all of the knowledge that they should. This means that some pupils develop gaps in their learning.

In addition to the weaknesses in the curriculum design, some staff do not have the necessary subject expertise to deliver aspects of the curriculum well. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, do not develop the depth of subject knowledge that they should.

In the main, teachers use leaders' assessment systems well to check that pupils are learning new information. Where teachers have relevant subject expertise, they are more confident in identifying and addressing pupils' misconceptions. However, the inconsistency in the quality of the curriculum design hinders some teachers' ability to fully address pupils' misunderstandings.

Leaders have raised the profile of reading across the school. They have introduced a well-structured and logically ordered phonics programme. However, some staff do

not deliver the phonics programme consistently well. They have not been sufficiently well trained to develop the necessary expertise. Consequently, some pupils do not learn to read with fluency and accuracy as quickly as they should. Despite this, staff offer extra support and guidance to those pupils who find reading more difficult.

Leaders identify and assess the additional needs of pupils with SEND in a timely manner. This helps leaders to establish each pupil's individual learning needs. Leaders work closely with parents and carers, alongside a wide range of external professionals, to make sure that pupils with SEND get the support that they need. Leaders adapt the delivery of the curriculum when necessary so that pupils with SEND can access the same learning as their peers. However, due to the weaknesses in the curriculum, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could.

Typically, pupils abide by the school rules around the site. However, some pupils have difficulty managing their own behaviour in class. Leaders have not ensured that staff are equally well trained to manage pupils' behaviour. Some staff who are new to the school do not have the confidence to deal with incidents of disruption to learning as well as they should.

Leaders provide some opportunities to promote pupils' wider personal development. For example, pupils learn the importance of eating healthily and take part in competitive sports. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and pursue other interests. For example, the range of enrichment activities to support pupils' wider personal development is narrow.

Leaders have implemented the school's relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education policy and curriculum effectively. Parents are made aware of the RSE policy when their children are admitted to the school.

Staff, including those new to the school, acknowledge that their work can be challenging. Despite this, staff feel well supported by leaders. They told inspectors that leaders and governors are considerate of their workload and well-being.

The proprietor body and the board of directors have overseen a decline in the quality of education that the school provides to its pupils. They have started to take effective action to reverse the decline in the school's effectiveness.

The proprietor body has ensured that leaders have the necessary skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles. They ensure that the independent school standards (the standards) are met. The proprietor body understands its responsibilities in relation to pupils' welfare.

The school's accessibility policy complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that effective safeguarding procedures are in place to protect pupils' welfare. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities for maintaining pupils' safety.

Staff are familiar with the school's policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They know how to identify the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff record and report any concerns that they have about pupils promptly.

Leaders work well with different external agencies so that pupils and their families quickly get the help that they require. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the local community.

Leaders have ensured that there is an up-to-date safeguarding policy in place. This complies with the latest government statutory guidance. This is available on the school's website.

What does the school need to do to further improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not as well designed as it should be. This makes it difficult for pupils to develop a deep and rich body of subject knowledge. Leaders should finalise their curriculum thinking in these remaining subjects. This is so that teachers are clear about what subject content to teach and when.
- Some staff lack the experience and expertise to deliver the curriculum, including the phonics programme, well. This hampers how well teachers address pupils' misconceptions in their learning, including in reading. Leaders must provide staff with the training and support that they require to develop sufficient expertise to deliver the curriculum, including the phonics programme, well.
- Some staff who are new to the school do not have the confidence and training that they require to implement the school's behaviour policy as intended. Pupils' learning is sometimes disrupted by poor behaviour. Leaders must ensure that staff are well trained to manage pupils' behaviour.
- The schools' programme for pupils' wider personal development is underdeveloped. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their wider talents and interests. Leaders should develop a carefully considered programme of wider personal development that meets pupils' learning needs.

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	145194
DfE registration number	888/6074
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10254683
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Proprietor	Aspire Behaviour Management Ltd
Headteacher	Gillian Bullock
Annual fees (day pupils)	£19,950 to £31,350
Telephone number	01282 792943
Website	www.theaspirehubburnley.co.uk
Email address	g.bullock@aspirebm.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 to 15 November 2018

Information about this school

- The previous standard inspection was on 13 to 15 November 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school admits pupils with SEND, including autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and social, emotional and mental health needs. A few pupils have an education, health and care plan. Some pupils have been identified as being at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream education.
- Most of the pupils who attend the school are dual registered with their mainstream school and Aspire Hub Burnley.
- The school is located at Chapel Place, Hammerton Street, Burnley BB11 1LE.

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 held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders. Inspectors discussed the provision for pupils with SEND. They also held discussions about attendance and behaviour, the opportunities available for pupils' wider personal development and staff training and development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives from local authorities and from those schools who have placed pupils at the school. He also held a discussion with a member of the board of directors.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's staff survey. Inspectors also spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors spoke with parents. There were no responses to Ofsted Parent View.

- There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. Inspectors talked with pupils about their safety and welfare.
- Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy. They spoke to safeguarding leaders about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents.
- Inspectors made a tour of the premises. They examined a range of documentation to check the school's compliance with the standards.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ian Young

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023