

Inspection of New Ways School

300 Redhill Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham B38 9EL

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have established an ethos of acceptance, where everyone celebrates being an individual. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel well looked after and cared for. This is important, as many have not been to school for a considerable time before joining New Ways.

Pupils show respect for adults and one another. This is because leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils have someone to talk to and teachers resolve any problems swiftly. This makes pupils feel safe at school.

This is an ambitious school where leaders want and expect the best for every pupil. Pupils experience successes in their learning because teachers are knowledgeable in the subjects they teach. Teachers carefully designed the curriculum so that teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. This means that pupils learn and remember more.

Leaders and all staff ignite a passion for reading. Pupils who were previously reluctant to read engage well because of effective help and support from adults. They read confidently and fluently.

The personal development of pupils is exceptional. Pupils learn about keeping safe and healthy, budgeting and relationships. They benefit from high-quality careers advice. This means they are well prepared for their futures.

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

Leaders and all staff are determined that every child will learn and achieve well. The curriculum is rich and ambitious, offering a broad range of subjects. Teachers are knowledgeable. Pupils are taught new concepts that build on what they already know and are able to do. For example, in English, pupils routinely practise basic grammatical skills, so that they are able to produce extended writing, using sophisticated techniques over time. In mathematics, essential learning is revised so that pupils are able to problem solve with confidence. Assessment strategies are used well, enabling teachers to identify learning gaps and plan additional teaching to support pupils.

The majority of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers know the needs of their pupils because these are identified quickly through robust processes. They fully understand the backgrounds of pupils and their significant gaps in learning. The curriculum is well adapted so that it is accessible to all.

Reading is given high importance within the school. This focus means that reluctant readers are taught to read, using well-planned strategies and approaches. Support for those who need extra help is carefully planned and delivered routinely and

consistently. Staff are highly skilled to teach reading. They persist and persevere to help every child develop a love of reading.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well thought out and takes into account the statutory requirements. Leaders know what is important for their pupils. They make sure this content is carefully covered and repeated, for example the teaching of online safety and appropriate relationships. The emphasis on inclusivity means that all pupils can access learning because teachers make necessary amendments. Pupils are respectful and reflective. They talk openly about their challenges and show support for one another.

Careers education is well planned. Pupils access a range of work experience. If this is not possible, leaders create opportunities within the school for pupils to access leadership roles, such as being a school librarian. The curriculum is well designed to prepare pupils well for their future steps.

Expectations for pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning are high. These expectations are understood and modelled by pupils who arrive on time and engage well in their learning. They show consistent respect towards their peers and staff. If a pupil needs additional support, staff recognise this quickly due to how well they understand pupils' individual needs. Leaders aim to instil morals for pupils, and kindness and resilience are modelled by all staff routinely. Highly positive relationships underpin pupils' strong learning experiences.

Pupils' wider development is exceptional. Leaders recognise that pupils have limited access to opportunities. Therefore, they make sure the curriculum is enhanced to ensure that pupils access a rich set of experiences beyond taught lessons. Pupils speak enthusiastically about trips and visits, including to places of worship where they learn to value and celebrate differences.

Staff are proud to be part of the school. They feel valued by leaders, who take their well-being and workload into account. The high focus on staff development and ambition means that all staff are encouraged to excel and develop their skills and practice.

The proprietor and those responsible for governance are aware of their responsibilities. They fulfil these well due to robust processes in place that take statutory requirements into account. The rigorous systems in place to monitor regulatory compliance mean that the school meets all of the independent school standards. Inclusivity is at the core of the school's work. The comprehensive accessibility plan takes into account the requirements of The Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture of safeguarding is strong. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive. It is written with due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State. It is

published on the school's website and made available upon request. Processes are robust and records are well maintained.

Leaders and all staff know their pupils well. They are skilled in recognising signs of abuse or harm. They are quick to spot when things are not right, and they take swift and appropriate action. The curriculum is underpinned with opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep safe. All staff are appropriately trained and highly vigilant.

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	145417
DfE registration number	330/6036
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10254686
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	25
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	David Manson
Chair	Nicola Kelly
Headteacher	Michelle Woodward
Annual fees (day pupils)	£47,970 to £85,020
Telephone number	01214512055
Website	www.keys-group.co.uk
Email address	michellewoodward@keys-group.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 to 7 February 2019

Information about this school

- New Ways School is a small, independent day school located on the outskirts of Birmingham. The school offers places to pupils with SEND and social and emotional difficulties. The school has a small sixth form with less than five pupils.
- The school was previously inspected in February 2019 when the overall effectiveness was judged to be good.
- Pupils are referred to the school by placing authorities including Birmingham, Sandwell and Staffordshire.
- The school does not make use of 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Meetings were also held with the regional manager, the director of education and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including reading, mathematics, history and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at some examples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans, spoke to leaders and reviewed pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads and reviewed the school's processes for managing concerns. Safeguarding procedures were also reviewed with other staff that the inspectors met. The school's single central record of checks made on staff was also reviewed.
- A number of key documents were also scrutinised, including policies relating to the curriculum, complaints, health and safety, behaviour and anti-bullying. The school's admissions policy and register were also checked.

Inspection team

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Chris Field Ofsted Inspector

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