

Inspection of Kestrel House School

104 Crouch Hill, Crouch End, London N8 9EA

Inspection dates: 28 to 30 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?

Pupils enjoy coming to this delightful school. It is clear to see from their happy faces as pupils arrive in the morning and throughout the school day that they feel safe. Leaders have created an inviting and well-organised place for pupils to learn. Their vision for excellence is very clear and is shared by staff.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Because of their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), pupils need extra help with their behaviour. This is provided in an expert way so that pupils return to learning as quickly as possible. As they progress through the school, pupils learn how to manage their own behaviour with growing independence.

Parents and carers notice and appreciate how much staff smile at their children and celebrate the unique qualities of every pupil. There is lots of positive communication between home and school. Parents come into the school for training and support from the school team and to meet and talk with other parents.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for every pupil, and they ensure that pupils achieve their best. Staff go the extra mile. They care about the pupils and are proud of all their accomplishments.

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

Leaders have established an inclusive and welcoming environment where each pupil is understood and celebrated. Staff are experts in the particular needs of the pupils who attend the school, and they continually update and extend their skills and knowledge through regular training.

The curriculum that leaders have put together is well thought out and constructed. It is underpinned by sound thinking about what helps pupils with complex autism learn and remember. There is a strong focus on communication so that pupils gain the skills they need to be as independent as possible in the future. The curriculum also helps them make sense of the world around them and to interact with other people. Leaders have put in place a system to assess pupils' progression through the curriculum. This system checks that pupils learn skills and knowledge in a logical way so that teaching builds on what pupils already know and can remember.

Leaders have made sure that there is an approach to early reading that is appropriate to the needs of pupils. Some pupils are ready to learn how to decode text using phonics, and this is done in a structured and systematic way. Other pupils are working on the skills that will get them ready for phonics. For example, they learn to recognise different sounds and that objects, images and symbols can be used to represent words, ideas and sounds. All pupils access literacy and enjoy stories and books in a way that is appropriate to their needs and level of understanding.

Leaders have been relentless in establishing an approach to behaviour which is rooted in respect for pupils and a deep understanding of what pupils are communicating through their behaviour. Lessons are structured carefully, building in movement breaks and other activities that help pupils stay engaged.

The provision for pupils' personal development is exemplary. Leaders have ensured that a rich programme is in place that builds on pupils' strengths and interests. The programme develops pupils' resilience and helps to support their mental health and well-being. Pupils go on trips and visits that support their learning, for example to the London Eye and local community gardens and parks. They learn to travel on public transport and to shop for the ingredients that they will use in cooking lessons. Pupils have opportunities to learn about the world of work and to develop the important life skills they will need for the future, including healthy relationships and safe behaviour in the community.

Activities to develop pupils' social and cultural education are meticulously planned and include a wide variety of events such as charity coffee mornings, events to mark Black History Month, different religious festivals and celebrations, Pride Month and Autism Awareness month. These occasions help pupils build their understanding of tolerance and respect for others.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They say that it is a busy job, but they appreciate the opportunities they get to take on extra responsibilities and develop their careers. They feel valued by leaders and say that leaders listen to their ideas about reducing workload. Leaders also consider the mental health and well-being of staff.

The proprietor has ensured that there are effective arrangements in place to check that the school meets all statutory obligations. This includes ensuring that pupils have appropriate relationships and sex education.

The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that systems to check the suitability of staff before they start working at the school are rigorous. Safeguarding policies and practice follow all statutory guidelines and are detailed.

Leaders make sure that staff know and understand their responsibilities. Staff are well trained and have an in-depth knowledge of the additional safeguarding risks to the pupils at the school as a result of their SEND.

If leaders feel that a pupil needs extra help from safeguarding partners, they take quick action. Leaders work well with these other agencies, taking an active role to promote pupils' best 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	135683
DfE registration number	309/6002
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10267647
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	39
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education Ltd
Chair	Richard Power
Headteacher	Lorna Bailey
Annual fees (day pupils)	£54,485 to £82,820
Telephone number	020 8348 8500
Website	www.kestrelhouseschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@kestrelhouseschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 to 7 February 2019

Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils with an education, health and care plan which identifies autism spectrum disorder or communication and interaction difficulties as the main area of need.
- The school's most recent inspection was a material change inspection in December 2019.
- The school's last full standard inspection was in February 2019, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be good and all the independent school standards were judged to be met.
- The school does not 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with the chair of governors and the chair of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors met with the safeguarding leaders and scrutinised school policies and records of the safeguarding checks on adults who work at the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, personal, social and health education and physical well-being. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about some other subjects, including information and communication technology and science.
- In order to check compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors scrutinised documentation and other evidence. They also held discussions with the headteacher, the chair of governors, the chair of the proprietor body, school administrators and employees of Acorn Care and Education Ltd who support the administration team at the school.

Inspection team

Gary Pocock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lisa Strong

His Majesty's 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