

Inspection of Parkside House School

Station Road, Backworth, North Tyneside, Tyne and Wear NE27 0AB

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Sixth-form provision	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

This school provides good-quality education for pupils who have often spent extended periods of time out of education. Pupils enjoy small group, and sometimes one-to-one, teaching at this small and nurturing school. Teachers use the information in each pupil's education, health and care (EHC) plan to match learning to pupils' individual needs. There is a broad range of subjects for pupils to study. Pupils can achieve various academic and vocational qualifications.

Staff have high expectations for pupils. They help them to manage their behaviour. Pupils learn to overcome barriers to learning. They develop trusting relationships with staff. Pupils value the support that they receive. They know they can talk to staff about their worries. Staff deal with instances of bullying effectively.

Pupils are mostly positive about the school. They take pleasure in caring for the school's rabbits and guinea pigs. They appreciate the opportunities to take part in organised trips, community events and sporting competitions. They enjoy a range of enrichment activities, including horse riding and swimming. These experiences help them to develop confidence and resilience. Pupils learn vital skills to prepare them for adulthood. They enjoy the range of after-school clubs, including cookery, computing and art.

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

Pupils arrive at the school after having previously experienced significant disruption in their education. Leaders use the information contained in pupils' EHC plans to help them to decide what provision will best meet pupils' needs. They assess what knowledge and skills pupils already have when they join the school. They plan a curriculum to meet pupils' needs and aspirations. Staff are appropriately trained to support pupils' social, emotional and behavioural needs.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Pupils have opportunities to study different curriculum subjects to a high standard. For example, pupils, including students in the post-16 provision, can gain GCSE or A level qualifications.

Leaders place appropriate emphasis on pupils developing good levels of literacy and numeracy. Their aim is to equip pupils with the skills they need to succeed in later life. They place high priority on reading. Phonics and reading interventions help pupils in the early stages of learning to read to make effective and rapid progress with their reading. Pupils read daily and for different purposes. Pupils are encouraged to write in all curriculum subjects. For those pupils who struggle to write, staff use effective strategies to help pupils to develop their writing skills.

In mathematics, leaders have tailored the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. Pupils develop their mathematical vocabulary and skills alongside learning important facts and methods. For instance, pupils can explain Pythagoras's theorem. They can apply it to different mathematical problems.

In subjects such as art, it is clear what knowledge and skills teachers want pupils to learn and when. This includes students in the post-16 provision. As part of the projects pupils undertake in art, they conduct research where they develop a theoretical knowledge of art genres, themes and artists. This is carefully designed to engage the pupils, given the nature of their special educational needs. Pupils gain a good understanding of art with increasing complexity through their time in school. However, not all subjects are as well thought through. Some curriculum subjects for pupils in key stage 2 are not well designed. They do not clearly identify the knowledge that underpins the skills that pupils need to learn. Subject leaders have not considered how learning for their subject should start in key stage 2 so that pupils are well prepared for Year 7 and beyond.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is given high priority. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is coherently planned. Pupils learn about a range of relevant topics. They learn to celebrate differences between people and also cultures. They develop their understanding of healthy relationships. There is a well-considered relationships, sex and health education curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils understand and are aware of issues of national and local importance. These include exploring hate crime and risks from child criminal exploitation (county lines).

Pupils take part in various trips, including to places of religious worship. They visit the local law courts and enjoy going to the cinema and theatre. Pupils are encouraged to take part in outdoor education. Pupils and students in the post-16 provision develop skills which prepare them for adult life. For example, they learn how to travel safely when using public transport.

There is a new programme to teach pupils about their options for further education and future careers. Pupils receive focused guidance and independent advice to help them to make informed decisions. Pupils can take part in work experience opportunities. They are well prepared for their next steps.

Staff enjoy working at the school. Most feel that leaders do their best to support them with their workload and welfare. Many value working within the staff team. They appreciate the opportunities that they have to develop their expertise.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards are met. There is an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. Appropriate health and safety checks are conducted regularly to ensure pupils are kept safe, including those who attend alternative provisions. The proprietor has implemented a suitable accessibility plan for the school. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is high priority. Staff receive relevant training. They have regular safeguarding updates to ensure the safety of pupils. They know what to do if they have concerns about the welfare of pupils. Pupils learn about risks to their safety and how to manage them, including through learning about addiction and internet safety. The proprietor is taking appropriate action to ensure the well-being of pupils. They are making improvements to the security of the school site to keep pupils safe. They seek advice from external agencies, when necessary, to get pupils the help and support that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some key stage 2 subjects, leaders have not identified well enough the most important knowledge that underpins the skills that teachers want pupils to use. It is unclear how pupils build this knowledge over time. Leaders must ensure that teachers know the knowledge that they want pupils in key stage 2 to learn in each subject and when.

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	135001
DfE registration number	392/6011
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	10267637
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	8
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education Limited
Chair	Richard Power
Headteacher	Belinda Young
Annual fees (day pupils)	£22,525 to £45,848
Telephone number	0191 216 1051
Website	www.parksidehouseschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@parksidehouseschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 September 2022

Information about this school

- The school admits pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Most pupils also have secondary needs, including autism spectrum disorder and moderate learning difficulties.
- All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school currently uses four alternative education providers. These providers are unregistered.
- The school uses two off-site sports providers for physical education lessons.
- The previous standard inspection of the school took place in March 2020. The school was judged good.
- A material change inspection to increase the maximum number of pupils from 35 to 55 took place in September 2022. The school was judged unlikely to meet the independent school standards that were checked at the time of the inspection.
- The material change has already been implemented. The school is registered to have 35 pupils on roll. There are currently 45 pupils on roll.
- Since the last inspection, several new staff have been appointed. There is a new additional deputy headteacher, and a special educational needs coordinator has been appointed.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, the designated leader for safeguarding, the deputy headteachers, the leader for pastoral care and some curriculum leaders. They met with some members of staff and some pupils. Inspectors also met with an external consultant for school improvement.
- The lead inspector met with that chair of the governing body and the chair of the proprietorial body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into English, mathematics, art and humanities. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teaching staff and

spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects, including PSHE and computing.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff about the school's approach to safeguarding pupils in school. Inspectors checked the single central register and reviewed records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Checks were made on staff training and safeguarding procedures. Inspectors checked the implementation of risk assessment and health and safety policies, including the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for parents, pupils and staff.

The school's progress in meeting previously failed standards

During the inspection, inspectors checked whether the school now meets the independent school standards that it was judged to have failed at the material change inspection that took place on 22 September 2022.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school now meets the previously failed standards.**
- The material change inspection found that leaders did not make all the relevant checks on alternative education providers.
- There is now a robust system in place to check the suitability of staff working in alternative providers before pupils attend. Staff visit the providers often. Leaders review the suitability of alternative providers regularly.
- The material change inspection found that staff did not have a good understanding of local safeguarding risks. They were unclear about the whistle-blowing procedure.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy is up to date with statutory guidance and understood by staff. It is published on the school's website. Staff receive appropriate training. Leaders provide regular updates for staff on local and national issues that may put pupils at risk. Staff are now clear on the procedures to follow if they have a concern about the conduct of an adult working in school.
- The material change inspection identified that there were gaps in safeguarding record-keeping.
- Records for safeguarding are now suitably detailed. Leaders' actions are recorded thoroughly. This includes the impact of the actions taken and partnership work with external agencies. Records are reviewed frequently to ensure support provided to pupils is appropriate.
- The proprietor has strengthened their oversight of safeguarding procedures. Additional leaders for safeguarding have been appointed. Safeguarding concerns and the actions taken are regularly reported to the proprietorial body for their scrutiny.
- The material change inspection found that necessary checks had not been made on a contractor used by the school.
- All the necessary checks have now been completed on the contractor. Leaders' safer recruitment procedures are robust.
- The material change inspection found that leaders were unclear about the internet filtering system that the school uses to prevent pupils from accessing inappropriate information.
- A new system to monitor pupils' use of the internet while in school has been implemented. Leaders for safeguarding receive frequent reports which alert them to any concerns. Teachers provide pupils with regular lessons which highlight the importance of online safety.

- The material change inspection found that leaders did not consistently record all the necessary details for pupils who were removed from the school roll.
- The proprietor has now ensured that records for pupils who have been removed from the school roll are checked regularly by leaders for completeness. Leaders keep careful track of the destinations of pupils who leave the school roll, including the details of their next schools and colleges.
- The material change inspection found that there was not a suitably strong culture of safeguarding at the school.
- The proprietor has ensured that leaders have a secure understanding of their responsibility to safeguard pupils. The safeguarding team have received additional training. The new pastoral leader works closely with senior leaders to provide pupils and their families with prompt and effective support.
- The proprietor has made sure that leaders have a secure understanding of the independent school standards. Previously unmet standards relating to safeguarding and leadership and management are now met. All the other independent school standards remain met.

The school now meets the following standards:

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - 34(1)(c) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Information about the progress monitoring inspection

- Inspectors scrutinised the school's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and the safer recruitment of staff.
- The school's single central register was scrutinised to ensure that the necessary checks are carried out on all adults who work with children.
- The lead inspector examined the details that leaders collect to assure themselves of the suitability of staff working with pupils in alternative education provisions.

She spoke by telephone with one alternative provider and two providers for off-site physical education.

- Inspectors met with representatives of the proprietorial body, senior leaders, several leaders for safeguarding, the pastoral leader, several members of staff and pupils to discuss the culture of safeguarding.
- The lead inspector scrutinised records for safeguarding and behaviour and looked at how pupils learn about potential risks to their safety, including online safety.
- The lead inspector discussed proposed improvements to the security of the school site with the chair of the local governing body and senior leaders.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nick Horn

Ofsted Inspector

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