

# Inspection of Park House School

Wentworth Way, Tankersley, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S75 3DH

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Inspection dates: 21 to 23 June 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a small school where pupils are safe and happy.

Many pupils have struggled to manage in their previous schools. Pupils often have a lot of gaps in their learning when they join Park House School. Leaders are determined that pupils will achieve their full potential. Pupils study the national curriculum. Teaching groups are small. Pupils build positive relationships with staff. Pupils are keen to learn. They attend well and concentrate in lessons. Pupils make progress quickly in most areas of the curriculum. However, some pupils' speaking and listening skills are not developed as much as they need to be.

Leaders recognise the importance of reading. Many pupils who join the school are still at the early stage of reading. Pupils are taught to read by well-trained staff. Pupils quickly become increasingly confident readers.

This is a friendly school. Bullying is very rare. Staff are quick to sort out any misunderstandings between pupils.

Leaders help pupils to learn about themselves and the world around them. Staff provide pupils with many opportunities to learn outside the classroom. Pupils have the chance to try new things, such as kayaking and abseiling. Many pupils said that they particularly like the 'making memories' programme. This is where pupils choose to go on one special trip a year that is personal to them.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that takes into account the needs of each individual child. Pupils have the opportunity to take a range of qualifications, including GCSEs and vocational awards.

There are well-sequenced long- and medium-term plans for each subject. Pupils steadily build up what they know in each subject from key stage 2 to key stage 4. Key learning is frequently revisited. The work in pupils' books reflects the planned learning for all subjects.

Teachers regularly check what pupils know and can do. Staff carefully monitor the individual progress of each pupil. For example, in mathematics, teachers keep a careful track of what pupils have mastered. Staff adapt lessons to fit each individual. Pupils only move on when they are secure in what they have learned.

Reading is taught well. Pupils who are at the early stage of reading are taught phonics. The phonics programme is delivered effectively by well-trained staff. There is a well-resourced library. Pupils regularly get out books and comics to read for pleasure.

Leaders have developed school-wide plans to support pupils' reading, writing and use of number. Staff implement these plans diligently. Leaders are aware that there is not currently as strong a focus on pupils' speaking and listening. Many pupils struggle to express themselves in a variety of situations and to a range of audiences.

All pupils at the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The special educational needs coordinator regularly checks that pupils are getting the help they need. This includes help for their emotional well-being and mental health. Leaders gather a lot of information on pupils when they join the school. However, the initial checks on pupils' speech, language and communication needs are not very detailed. This limits how well staff are able to support pupils' speaking and listening.

Leaders have high expectations for behaviour and attendance. Many pupils have struggled to attend in their previous school. The attendance of nearly all pupils improves once they are settled at Park House. Sometimes, pupils struggle to manage their emotions through the school day. When this happens, pupils become distressed and show increasingly challenging behaviours. Staff intervene promptly and confidently. Pupils are helped to calm down and return to learning. Suspensions are extremely rare, and there are no permanent exclusions.

There is a highly structured approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Every day, there are timetabled personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and enrichment activities. Pupils learn about health and well-being, living in the wider world and relationships. Pupils learn how to stay safe in the community and when online. There is a programme of relationships and sex education for pupils. The school's RSE policy is fully compliant with statutory guidance. Pupils are taught to respect other people. Pupils learn about lifestyles and beliefs that are different from their own.

Pupils are prepared for life after school. Pupils get impartial guidance from careers advisers. These careers advisers come into the school from each pupil's local authority. Staff help pupils to attend work placements and to visit local colleges. Some pupils need more help, however, to be able to speak confidently in a variety of situations.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards (the standards) are met. The school premises and safety equipment are maintained to a high standard. All required policies and protocols are in place. Leaders are rightly proud of the school's robust commitment to equality, inclusion and diversity. The proprietor ensures that all duties required by the Equality Act 2010 are met.

The proprietor knows the school well. The chair of the proprietor body is on the school's local governing board. He receives termly updates about pupils' needs and staff well-being. Staff appreciate the personal and professional support they receive. Staff have access to a wide range of training. For example, there is a termly subject network meeting held across all the proprietor's schools.

Many parents and carers said how happy they are with the progress their child has made since joining the school. Parents also appreciate the close communication between home and school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are highly attuned to the potential risks faced by their pupils. The proprietor ensures that pupil safety is constantly monitored. Pupils know whom to go to if they are worried about anything.

The proprietor ensures that robust checks are completed on any adult before they begin work or volunteer at the school. Staff receive regular training in child protection and safeguarding. Leaders ensure that staff understand how to implement the school's child protection and safeguarding policy. This policy is compliant with current government guidance and published on the school's website.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is experienced and receives enhanced training for her role. The DSL is quick to refer to external agencies to get pupils the help they need. The headteacher and proprietor maintain oversight of all safeguarding referrals. There is a proprietor group lead for safeguarding who gives school leaders advice and guidance when needed.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The teaching of speaking and listening is underdeveloped. This is limiting some pupils' capacity to learn how to speak calmly and confidently in a variety of social situations and to a range of audiences. Leaders should review the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' speaking and listening. As part of this, leaders should reflect on what opportunities pupils have to improve their speaking and listening across the curriculum, including in the enrichment programme. Leaders should also review the specialist assessments and strategies to which staff have access that contribute to pupils' speech, language and communication 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142320
<b>DfE registration number</b>	370/6000
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10267675
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 17
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	19
<b>Proprietor</b>	Keys Care Limited
<b>Chair</b>	David Manson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jennie Allport
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£47,970 to £81,120
<b>Telephone number</b>	01226 744870
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://education.keyschildren.co.uk/school/park-house-school/">https://education.keyschildren.co.uk/school/park-house-school/</a>
<b>Email address</b>	jennieallport@keys-group.co.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 to 7 March 2019

## Information about this school

- Park House School opened for pupils in August 2015. It is a small, independent special school for boys and girls aged seven to 17 and is located near Barnsley. At the time of this inspection, there were no girls or 17-year-olds on the school roll.
- The school is part of the Keys Group. The Keys Group runs many independent special schools across England and Wales.
- The school's most recent standard inspection was in March 2019, when it was judged to be good.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Many pupils have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. All pupils in the school have an EHC plan.
- The school does not use any alternative education providers.
- Pupils are placed at the school by their local authority.

## 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.
- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders and the proprietor. They also met with a range of other staff.
- Inspectors undertook a tour of the school and visited the classrooms, social areas and other facilities. They checked the school buildings and grounds against the standards.
- Inspectors did deep dives in English (including reading), mathematics, science and PSHE. The deep dive for each subject included a meeting with curriculum leaders and a review of subject documents and plans. The deep dive also involved lesson visits, meetings with pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at the curriculum plans for all other subjects and reviewed pupils' work from history and geography lessons.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school throughout the day, including at breaktimes and in lessons. Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documents and the arrangements to safeguard pupils. This included checking the school's safeguarding systems and the single central record of staff recruitment checks, meeting with the DSL, and speaking with staff and pupils about safeguarding. The lead inspector spoke to the local authority designated officer.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the surveys completed by staff. Inspectors spoke to, and considered emails from, representatives of the local authorities that commission places at the school.

### **Inspection team**

Patricia Head, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jenny Thomas

His Majesty's Inspector

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