

Inspection of Dudley House School

1 Dudley Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 9AA

Inspection dates: 28 to 30 November 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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Early years 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?

Dudley House is a 'small school with big ideas'. Pupils thrive at this school. They achieve well because any barriers to learning, including emotional and mental health needs, are well supported. This ensures that pupils are ready to learn. Parents and carers are resoundingly positive about the school. A typical comment from a parent was, 'This is the best school for my child.'

Pupils behave well throughout the school day. They go about their daily routine without any fuss. They learn to listen, share their ideas and value the opinions of others. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong.

Pupils learn about how to be a good citizen. For example, during a visit to a local food bank, pupils learned how products were organised and distributed. From fundraising for new school scooters by creating and marketing Christmas cards, to gifting plants to the local elderly community, pupils learn about their roles in society.

Pupils live out the values of respect, inclusivity and kindness, which are underpinned by the school's Christian ethos. However, a few pupils require further, bespoke support to ensure that they are as well prepared as they could be for their next stage in education.

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

Everyone is welcome at this school. The nurturing environment supports pupils across all year groups to learn and work in harmony. Many arrive with a diverse range of educational experiences and backgrounds. The school ensures that pupils' starting points are well considered. It makes sure that the all-round needs of pupils are met. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive because the school ensures that the curriculum builds on their previous knowledge.

The school provides a broad, ambitious and interesting curriculum. The curriculum links closely to a rich set of wider experiences that help pupils to understand their learning in meaningful ways. Pupils recall this curriculum well. For example, after a visit to a local river, pupils could explain how the water meanders as it travels downstream. They could also make connections to water pollution and consider the river's impact on animal habitats.

Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes. Much of the curriculum has been designed to accommodate this. The school ensures that all teachers have the knowledge to deliver this curriculum well. Teachers make sure that the checks they carry out on pupils' learning successfully identify where pupils have misunderstandings.

Pupils with SEND receive precise support to help them to know more of the school's curriculum. Leaders continue to refine the curriculum so that the key knowledge for each year group is as precise as it can be. They are ensuring that the curriculum clearly sets out exactly what pupils must recall at each stage.

From the very start, pupils learn to read well. All pupils, including the youngest, show an enthusiasm and a love for reading. The school has recently implemented a new early reading programme. It is helping all pupils, in a clear and logical way, to learn to read. Staff ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds they are learning. Pupils are provided with meaningful opportunities to read every day. Where necessary, staff tailor the reading programme for pupils who arrive at the school part-way through their primary education. They make sure that these pupils quickly learn to read.

Supporting pupils' ability to overcome setbacks is at the heart of the school's wider personal development offer. Pupils learn to participate in debates and discussions so that they understand balanced and fair viewpoints. The school provides pupils with opportunities to develop their talents and interests. For example, pupils have the opportunity to publish books that they have written. Pupils learn about the importance of healthy relationships. They learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens. They are taught to respect others and to appreciate the diversity that makes up modern Britain. However, the understanding of a few pupils in relation to online safety and the different groups with protected characteristics in society is not as secure as it could be.

The proprietor ensures that the independent school standards (the standards) are met consistently and securely. The outdoor spaces are attractive and regularly checked to make sure that they are safe. Pupils are provided with a wide range of resources and materials that contribute effectively to their learning. The school ensures that procedures for health and safety, including first aid, are reviewed and updated regularly. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The proprietor makes sure that policies on the school's website, including the school's safeguarding policy, are implemented effectively.

The school is mindful of staff workload. It is considered as part of the decisions the school makes. For example, steps have been taken to distribute leadership responsibilities. Staff appreciate leaders' concerns for their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The school has started to refine the curriculum so that it precisely identifies what pupils must know and remember. This work is not yet complete. This hinders how well teachers in mixed-aged classes can make checks on what pupils can recall. The school should ensure that its work to refine the curriculum enables the school's ambitions for its pupils to be fully realised.

- The school's personal development programme is generally rich and broad. However, the understanding of some pupils in relation to online safety and to groups with protected characteristics in society needs further consideration. These pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be. The school must ensure that pupils' understanding of online safety and diversity in contemporary society is secure so that they are ready for their next stage in education.

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	120728
DfE registration number	925/6016
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10286389
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	16
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Seventh-day Adventist Church, North England Conference
Chair	Pastor George Kumi
Headteacher	Jenny Johnson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,790
Telephone number	01476 400184
Website	www.dudleyhouseschool.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@dudleyhouseschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 to 31 January 2019

Information about this school

- Dudley House School is an independent school based on Christian values for pupils aged four to 11 years. The school admits children from all faiths.
- Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils has decreased and there have been significant staff changes.
- The school does not use any 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgment about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors held various meetings to consider the school's curriculum and provision for pupils with SEND. The inspection team carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography, and personal, social, health and economic education. They held discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and examined pupils' work. One inspector listened to some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The lead inspector toured the school site to check for compliance with the standards that relate to the premises.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the proprietorial board and the school's governors.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also spoke to pupils to gather their views on the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of members of staff, pupils and parents who had responded to Ofsted's inspection surveys.

Inspection team

Shaheen Hussain, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

George Huthart

Ofsted Inspector

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