

Inspection of Burstow Park School

Antlands Lane, Burstow, Surrey RH6 9TF

Inspection dates: 22 to 24 October 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils join Burstow Park School having had difficult prior experiences in education. Some of them have spent prolonged periods outside of school. The more time pupils spend here, the more positive their association with education becomes. Most pupils develop warm and supportive relationships with staff. They are known well and made to feel valued. They develop their confidence and faith that they can do well. Pupils access a range of clubs that tap into their interests, including coding, jewellery making and art.

Although staff and leaders are ambitious for pupils to do well, not all pupils achieve as well as they should. This is because, despite work to develop the curriculum, pupils do not consistently receive teaching that identifies their gaps in learning or supports them in remembering this knowledge over time.

As a result of their special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils struggle to regulate their own behaviour. Planned support is in place to help pupils develop the tools they need to do this more effectively. However, not all staff intervene with more challenging behaviour as effectively as they should. This means that disruption to learning for some pupils happens too often.

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

A planned curriculum is in place. In some subjects, this is carefully mapped out, identifying the specific knowledge and skills pupils need to develop. However, in a number of subjects, this curriculum design is still not as precisely thought through as it needs to be. This means that in some lessons, staff do not routinely prioritise the most important learning or know which concepts need to be revisited to secure them in pupils' long-term memories. Similarly, while pupils who struggle to read are identified and given support to help them develop fluency, some staff do not have the expertise to support them in making these important gains as effectively as they should.

In lessons, staff check pupils' work. However, staff are not as adept as they need to be at checking that pupils have understood the intended learning as well as they need to. As a result, misconceptions are sometimes not addressed, and staff do not consistently check that the essential building blocks of prior learning are secure before they move on to new learning.

On entry, a small number of pupils spend some time at the Blended Learning Centre. There, staff give them bespoke support to help them develop the learning behaviours and resilience they need to thrive in the classroom. Where this works effectively, pupils then transition well into the main site to access learning in classes. However, at points, this transition is not as effective as intended as sometimes pupils move across before they are ready to make a successful transition.

The wider development of pupils is well thought through. Their aspirations are fostered by outside speakers from industry, teaching them about careers that they might aspire to. A well-considered personal, social, health and economic curriculum is in place. The school supplements this with what it calls 'Social Comms' lessons, where pupils develop their social skills, including how to relate to one another successfully through tone and body language. These lessons are well matched to pupils' needs and impact their developing skills positively.

Pupils are not routinely supported with their behaviour as well as they need to be. When pupils struggle to regulate their conduct, some staff are not as effective in dealing with it. This means that, at times, anxious or distressed behaviour is not intervened with effectively. Thus, it has the potential to grow and build. This leads to disruption to the learning for other pupils.

New school leaders are ambitious for what pupils can do and recognise the need to develop staff to ensure greater consistency in how effectively pupils are supported. Many initiatives are new, and so the impact of this work, while promising, is not yet evident.

The proprietor demonstrates an effective balance of support and challenge in overseeing the provision. The proprietor ensures that all the independent school standards are met, including ensuring that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Checks on pupils' understanding are not as precise as they need to be. This means staff do not routinely have an accurate understanding of what pupils have understood or pick up on subject-specific misconceptions quickly enough. The school needs to develop its assessment practices so staff can identify what pupils know and where they need to adapt their input accordingly to support pupils in doing well.
- In some subjects, the school has not identified precisely enough the small steps of component knowledge they want pupils to learn. This means, in lessons, staff are sometimes not prioritising the most important knowledge pupils need to know or checking that this has been secured. Leaders need to ensure that the specific knowledge and skills pupils need to learn are precisely identified and taught to support all pupils in achieving well.
- Staff are not consistently effective in supporting pupils in regulating their behaviour. As a result, some instances of poor behaviour build, and disruptions to pupils' learning are too frequent. Leaders need to ensure staff have

the skills and strategies they need to use to de-escalate challenging behaviours effectively so pupils have a more settled experience of school.

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	148736
DfE registration number	936/6055
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10342183
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Proprietor	Burstow Park School Ltd
Chair	Emma Slaughter
Headteacher	Anthony Padfield
Annual fees (day pupils)	£56,820
Telephone number	01293 226 940
Website	www.burstowparkschool.org
Email address	bps@burstowparkschool.org
Date of previous inspection	4 to 6 October 2022

Information about this school

- Burstow Park School is a special school catering for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils on roll have an education, health and care plan.
- The school operates across two separate sites: the main school site based at Antlands Lane, Burstow, Surrey, RH6 9TF and the Blended Learning Centre based at 53 Hanworth Road, Horley, RH1 5HS.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- There have been a number of staffing changes since the last inspection, including a new headteacher and leadership team.

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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also visited lessons from some other taught subjects.
- 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.
- The inspection team took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and records of proprietor monitoring visits.
- The team spoke with pupils about their experience of the school. It took account of parent and carer and staff views through conversations and responses to

Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Marian Feeley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Cole

Ofsted Inspector

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