

Inspection of Infiniti School

The Street, Doddington, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 0BG

Inspection dates: 29 April to 1 May 2025

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and their families receive a positive and exceptionally warm welcome to Infiniti School. Excellent relationships are quickly built between staff and pupils. Consequently, pupils feel safe, happy and lucky to attend this unique school. Each pupil is greeted individually as they arrive in the morning. Concerns are responded to immediately by pastoral staff. Pupils trust the staff deeply to help resolve wide-ranging concerns. The care provided by the pastoral team is a strength of the school.

All pupils have experienced disrupted education. Most have missed vast amounts of schooling. The school is highly skilled at re-engaging pupils in learning across a wide curriculum. Pupils achieve well, gain qualifications and develop ambition for their adult lives.

Pupils are supported effectively to manage their emotions. Incidents of poor behaviour are responded to skilfully and the school day continues smoothly. Pupils feel valued and have a voice in school decision-making. Pupils are proud of their positions of responsibility, such as reading, attendance and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community ambassadors.

Opportunities for pupils to develop and widen their interests are of exceptional quality. Pupils routinely enjoy rich experiences, including a residential sailing trip. Such events promote pupils' social skills and personal development successfully.

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

The school offers a broad curriculum, prioritising well-being, reading, English and mathematics. In each subject area, the school has developed a well-sequenced curriculum that identifies what pupils will learn over time.

Reviews of each pupil's learning and wider needs are completed. This includes identifying pupils' previously unmet needs and barriers to learning. As a result, each pupil has a bespoke timetable reflecting their individual learning requirements and priorities. All pupils' timetables include therapies and off-site activities. These experiences enhance pupils' self-esteem, confidence and re-engagement in learning.

In English, pupils learn about different styles of writing and the importance of accurate grammar and punctuation. However, pupils have limited opportunities to practise and improve their oracy and writing skills, including across the curriculum. Consequently, some pupils do not develop sufficient fluency in writing and oracy. Leaders are aware that more needs to be done in these areas.

In some subjects, such as art, the curriculum is adapted precisely so that learning is closely matched to what pupils can and cannot do. However, this is not commonly the case across the subjects. Typically, learning activities are not adapted well. Therefore, pupils rely excessively on adult support.

Staff are trained in the school's phonics programme. They understand the positive impact of confident, fluent reading on pupils' longer-term prospects. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read are identified and receive additional support. The school's focus on reading is demonstrated in refreshed libraries and, notably, in the enjoyable daily paired reading sessions between staff and pupils.

Staff model the behaviours and attitudes that they want pupils to develop. Pupils generally behave well. They are highly motivated by the reward trips on offer for positive behaviour and high attendance. Suspensions are used sparingly. Leaders know the detail of each incident and the actions taken to support those involved. Attendance has improved over the last two years. Typically, over time, pupils' attendance and behaviour improve, often significantly.

Pupils are prepared well for the next steps in their education, employment, training and adulthood. Pupils take part in lessons and visits relating to careers. Across all subjects, teachers make links between learning and job roles. Pupils' broader development is supported through carefully planned, high-quality opportunities. Pupils learn about other faiths, cultures, values, democracy and responsibility. All students benefit from extensive off-site activities, trips and residential experiences. Pupils appreciate the range of experiences and say that they gain confidence as a result.

The proprietor and leaders have secured a happy, ambitious environment where everyone is valued. The school is compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Established systems for oversight ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently. Governors carry out their roles knowledgeably, hold leaders to account for the school's continuing improvement and ensure that statutory obligations are met.

The school engages extensively with families, and the community, to promote pupils' education. Staff report that their workload is always considered. Pupils, parents and carers and staff all agree that they are supported extremely well. They are justifiably proud to be part of the Infiniti School community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- Assessment information is not used consistently well across the subjects to plan learning activities and approaches matched to pupils' learning needs. This means that some pupils do not progress through the curriculum as well as they might. Leaders should ensure that staff respond to assessment information and use the most effective pedagogical approaches to help pupils learn.

- There are limited purposeful opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their oracy and writing skills across the curriculum. This means that pupils do not acquire these helpful and important skills as successfully as they could. Leaders should continue to strengthen these aspects of teaching and learning so that pupils become increasingly confident orators and authors.

How can I feed back my views?

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	147635
DfE registration number	886/6159
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10342155
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	31
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	NR Education Ltd
Chair	Jennifer Daly
Headteacher	Anna Daly
Annual fees (day pupils)	£44,000 to £72,000
Telephone number	01795 886687
Website	www.infinitischool.co.uk
Email address	office@infinitischool.org
Date of previous inspection	7 to 9 December 2021

Information about this school

- Infiniti School is a small independent special school that operates from a single site. The school is registered to admit 32 pupils.
- All pupils who attend Infiniti School have an education, health and care (EHC) plan with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) identified as their main area of need.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes in leadership and governance. The proprietor was formerly the headteacher and also chair of the governing body. The deputy headteacher was appointed as headteacher and commenced the role in September 2022. New governors have joined the school and a new chairperson has been appointed.
- The school uses four registered alternative provisions.

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 evaluation about the quality of a school's provision.
- Inspectors discussed the continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher throughout the inspection. The lead inspector met separately with the proprietor and with a member of the governing body.
- Inspectors also met with curriculum leaders and with a group of staff including teachers, pastoral and support staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, humanities and art. 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.
- Inspectors considered the school's work to promote reading. The lead inspector spoke to pupils about their reading experiences and visited paired reading sessions.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of the school, staff and pupils; and

considered the extent to which the school has created an open and honest culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- A wide range of school policies and documents were examined to provide inspection evidence and to check compliance with the standards. Documents included: the schools' self-evaluation and development plan, evidence of staff training, headteacher reports to the governing body, governing body meeting minutes, and the school's checks on health and safety and compliance. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.
- As part of the checks made on the school's compliance with the standards, the lead inspectors toured the school premises with the proprietor and the headteacher.

The school's proposed change to the maximum number of pupils

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.**
- The proprietor and school safeguarding leads have considered how to amend safeguarding, health and safety, risk assessment and fire safety policies and procedures to ensure that these are suitable for an increased number of pupils. A comprehensive risk assessment policy is in place. Risk assessments, including relating to activities and individual pupils, show that leaders are adept at identifying and taking action to reduce risks to pupils.
- Pupils are supervised well throughout the day: on arrival, at breaktimes, as they move to and from off-site activities and as they depart at the end of the day.
- Currently, there is an extremely high staff-to-pupil ratio in school. This staffing number would be sufficient should the material change application be approved. Nevertheless, the proprietor intends to appoint additional staff in the event of pupil numbers increasing. All those appointed are subject to appropriate checks.
- There is ample space on the school site, including classrooms, outdoor space and toilet facilities to accommodate the increase in numbers should the material change request be approved.
- The proprietor and leaders have a shared vision for the increase in capacity of the school from 32 to 45 pupils with EHC plans. Leaders have extensive knowledge and expertise in the provision of education for pupils with SEMH needs. Leaders demonstrate securely that they have the knowledge required to implement this material change request. They have effective, rigorous systems in place to ensure that the standards are met consistently. Leaders fulfil their responsibilities to promote pupils' well-being.

Information about the material change inspection

- In addition to the checks made on the premises relating to the school's current compliance with the standards, the lead inspector further assessed the school premises, particularly the availability of suitable classroom and outdoor spaces, resources and toilet facilities to ascertain that these are suitable to accommodate the education and welfare of an additional 13 pupils.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the proprietor and leaders to discuss the implications of increasing pupil numbers, including relating to staffing and pupils' welfare.

Inspection team

Hilary Macdonald, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Clarke	Ofsted Inspector

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