

Inspection of Nugent House School

Carr Mill Road, Billinge, Wigan, Lancashire WN5 7TT

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 May 2025

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff at Nugent House School establish strong, trusting relationships. They take time to understand each pupil individually. Staff focus on learning about each pupil's specific background and challenges that may affect their education. This tailored approach underpins the school's success. It helps pupils, and students in the sixth form, feel safe and part of the school community.

The school has high expectations for pupils to do well. It has developed a well-structured curriculum tailored to meet pupils' individual needs. Most pupils, all of who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), respond positively. They rise to the school's high standards for learning and behaviour. Staff carefully identify each pupil's specific needs. They offer a broad range of pastoral and therapeutic support. As a result, pupils gradually become more prepared to learn and begin to achieve success.

The school plans purposeful experiences beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils look forward to their 'directed learning' opportunities. They take full advantage of activities such as horticulture and animal care. These experiences help to build pupils' social skills and resilience.

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

The school has a strong vision for the high-quality education that it provides for pupils. Each pupil has an education, health and care plan. The school has carefully designed a rich curriculum with pupils' needs in mind. They have thought deeply about the overall design of the curriculum to ensure that it is broad, balanced and well matched to pupils' individual needs.

Many pupils arrive at Nugent House School with significant gaps in their learning due to the amount of schooling that they have missed. Teachers use a range of appropriate strategies to check what pupils know and can do. In the main, these systems are used well. Teachers are specialists and know their subjects well. They use the most effective teaching strategies to deliver their curriculum. However, at times, checks on pupils' learning are less effective. This means that some learning activities are not closely matched to what they can and cannot do. Sometimes the work is not challenging enough. Consequently, a small number of pupils do not learn as well as they could.

The school has identified pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read and has begun to put support in place. However, support for those at the early stages of reading is not fully established across the school. This means that some pupils are not getting the precise support they need to be able to learn and apply phonics knowledge consistently.

Overall, pupils' behaviour, attitudes and attendance significantly improve during their time here. Staff use positive behaviour strategies to support pupils to manage their

behaviour. School leaders monitor attendance with rigour. They work closely with families to secure the right support for the few pupils whose attendance is still too low. Almost all pupils attend school more regularly than in their previous settings.

Students in the sixth form practise real-life skills, such as shopping and engage in work experience placements to further develop their independence. There is a dedicated post-16 provision with tailored courses and work placements. The school is ambitious for pupils' futures.

Pupils are well prepared for their lives beyond school. They follow a well-considered comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education programme. For example, pupils learn important topics such as physical and mental health and relationships and sex education. The careers programme is well structured. It enables pupils to learn about the worlds of further education, apprenticeships and work. Pupils also learn the importance of fundamental British values. They are well prepared for their next steps and life in modern Britain.

Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes in leadership. Interim leadership of the school has been secured by the proprietor. This has made a positive difference and builds on what has gone before.

The school and proprietor have a clear vision that is well on its way to being realised. The proprietor closely monitors the school to ensure that the independent school standards (the standards) are met consistently. It fulfils its duties under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Staff appreciate the support they receive for their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- In some subjects, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified and addressed consistently well. This means that these gaps persist over time. The school should ensure that staff have the expertise to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge so that pupils build knowledge securely over time.
- In some subjects, at times, the school has not ensured that the learning activities and work that pupils are given helps them to deepen their knowledge. This means that some pupils do not acquire the depth of knowledge that they could. The school should ensure that pupils access sufficient opportunities to deepen their subject-specific knowledge.

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	104839
DfE registration number	342/6004
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10375125
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	5
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Nugent Care
Chair	Hetal Mainwaring
Headteacher	Gemma Dixon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£64,250
Telephone number	01744 892551
Website	www.nugenthouse.co.uk
Email address	nugent.house@wearenugent.org
Date of previous inspection	26 to 28 April 2022

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new interim headteacher has been put into place by the proprietor.
- The school operates from premises at Carr Mill Road, Billinge, Wigan, Lancashire WN5 7TT.
- Nugent House School caters for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social needs. It is registered for up to 110 pupils.
- The school uses four unregistered providers of alternative provision for a small number of pupils.

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 education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the interim headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and other staff. The lead inspector met with a representative from the proprietor body.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school site to check that it met the standards relating to premises and accommodation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation to check compliance with the standards. These included school policies, the school's development plan and the information the school provides to parents and carers.
- 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.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tim Sherriff

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