



Ofsted Report

Horton House School



THE OFFICE FOR STANDARDS IN EDUCATION,
CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SKILLS

Horton House School

Hill Top Farm, Sutton Road, Wawne, Hull, East Yorkshire HU7 5YY

Inspection dates

18 September 2019

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4

- Lessons are well planned and delivered. Teachers plan work carefully to make learning interesting. For example, a pupil explained with enthusiasm how he had removed a motherboard from a computer in an information and technology lesson.
- Staff have a good understanding of the complex needs of the pupils because of the opportunities for training that they receive from a range of providers. As a result, pupils enjoy positive relationships with the adults who support them. This enables pupils to feel increasingly confident to contribute to class discussions and to seek guidance when they need help.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour in lessons effectively. They are patient, calm and positive, and they know the pupils well. Staff work hard to diffuse potentially challenging situations before they arise. However, some pupils struggle to manage themselves, and they need extra support and time out of the classroom to regain control of their emotions.
- Expectations about what pupils can do are high. Most pupils respond well and apply themselves to their work, assisted by well-targeted support.
- Teachers have sound knowledge of the subjects that they teach. This enables them to ask searching questions in lessons to check out what pupils have understood. For example, pupils watch an experiment on condensation in a science lesson and the teacher asks, 'What is condensation?' and 'Where do the water particles come from?'
- Leaders have ensured that this standard remains met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- Leaders have ensured that effective arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. Leaders' checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and young people are secure. All required checks are recorded accurately on the single central record.
- The school's safeguarding policy is up to date and takes into account current

government requirements. The policy is published on the school's website.

- All staff receive appropriate and regular safeguarding training. This includes themes and topics such as female genital mutilation, grooming and preventing radicalisation and extremism. Staff spoken with during the inspection knew how to report any concerns about pupils' welfare and safety, and they understood their responsibilities to keep pupils safe.
- The designated safeguarding lead works with relevant external agencies when appropriate and maintains confidential records.
- Pupils spoken with during the inspection said that they felt safe in school. A parent spoken with said that this school was the safest school that their child had attended.

Paragraph 9

- A positive approach to managing pupils' behaviour has been introduced across the school. The new culture encourages pupils to reflect on their behaviour and, with the support of staff, make the right choices. Staff and pupils spoken with during the inspection say that this approach has improved behaviour and reduced the number of behavioural incidents.
- Daily debrief meetings have been introduced. Staff discuss individual pupils and their needs and share successful strategies to manage challenging behaviour.
- All staff have received training in restraining pupils. However, staff say that restraint is used as a last resort. De-escalation techniques, distraction, positive language, and opportunities to calm pupils or get them to reflect outside the classroom are strategies commonly used.
- A new reward system, based on collecting ticks over the course of the week for achieving personal behaviour targets, reinforces positive behaviour. Pupils are offered the opportunity to take part in an activity, such as horse riding, shopping or going to the park, as a reward for their efforts.
- Records of incidents of difficult behaviour are documented on the school's electronic system. The headteacher provided evidence which shows that, for some pupils, the number of restraints for challenging behaviour has reduced over time.
- Leaders are working with the local authority to continue to monitor and analyse behaviour incidents over time.

Paragraph 10

- The school's anti-bullying policy makes it clear that bullying is not tolerated. It outlines the signs to look out for and the different forms of bullying that can take place. The school has a clear strategy on what it teaches pupils about bullying and how any incidents are dealt with.
- Pupils spoken with during the inspection said that there wasn't any bullying at the school.

Paragraph 14

- Visits to lessons and outside areas at breaktime and lunchtime were carried out by the lead inspector and the headteacher. This showed that pupil-staff ratios were appropriate at the time of the inspection.
- Pupils were well supported in classrooms to do their work. Staff were also available to support any pupil who was finding it difficult to manage their behaviour in the classroom environment.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard remains met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21

- Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding requirements described in these standards have been met.
- The school makes all necessary checks for the suitability of staff and the proprietor, who have access to pupils, in line with the statutory guidance.
- All checks are made before employment, written references are required from candidates and interviews include safeguarding questions. Senior staff have received safer recruitment training. The proprietor is aware that there must always be an interview panel member who has undertaken safer recruitment training. Arrangements have been made for other leaders to receive this training.
- The executive manager checks that staff are up to date with their safeguarding training. The single central record and personnel files are also checked for compliance, and this information is reported to the proprietor.
- The details and dates of checks are recorded on the school's single central record.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)(c)

- The school's safeguarding policy is available to parents on the website.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard remains met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 32

- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards requested to be checked by the Department for Education (DfE) remain met.
- Leaders make sure that staff are well trained in keeping pupils safe and in managing difficult behaviour. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of the pupils, and they support them effectively in school.
- Safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour policies are fit for purpose.
- Safeguarding and behaviour incidents are monitored by the headteacher and the executive manager, and records show that for some pupils behaviour incidents and restraints are reducing. Information relating to the monitoring and analysis of

safeguarding and behaviour is provided to the proprietor and directors. A new governing body has been recently formed. The headteacher intends to train individual governors to undertake a range of roles so that they provide another layer of support and challenge to leaders.

- Staffing levels are appropriate to support pupils' complex needs. There is a high level of morale among the staff, who feel part of a team.
- Leaders provide detailed information about the procedures for checking that staff are suitable to work at the school. Some staff are trained in safer recruitment, and the proprietor and directors are undertaking training in the near future.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 133640 |
| DfE registration number | 810/6004 |
| Inspection number | 10114728 |

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

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| Type of school | Other independent special school |
| School status | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 14 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 0 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Harriet Appleby |
| Chair | N/A |
| Headteacher | Mr Francis McDonnell |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £40,500 |
| Telephone number | 01482 820112 |
| Website | www.hortongroup.co.uk |
| Email address | enquiries@hortongroup.co.uk |
| Date of previous standard inspection | 12–14 December 2018 |

Information about this school

- Horton House is an independent special school. The school is registered for 37 pupils in the age range of seven to 18. Currently, there are no learners in the sixth form.
- The school caters for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder, learning disabilities and social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

- The school's previous standard inspection took place in December 2018. The current headteacher took up his post in April 2019.
- The proprietor and trustees provide governance for the school. However, a new governing body is currently being established.
- Pupils often presented challenging behaviour in their previous schools. Many of the pupils have experienced significant disruption in their previous education or substantial periods of time missing education. All pupils attending Horton House school have an education, health and care plan (EHCP).
- One pupil has just commenced for one day a week at Bishop Burton college, with a view to taking up a full-time placement in the future.

Information about this inspection

- This unannounced emergency inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. This inspection was carried out in response to a complaint.
- The inspector visited a range of classrooms to observe pupils' behaviour and staff numbers.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, the principal, the headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead, the local authority designated officer, the executive manager, staff and a parent.
- The inspector analysed a range of school documentation, including policies for safeguarding, behaviour and anti-bullying, risk assessments and the school's records for behavioural incidents.

Inspection team

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Suzette Garland-Grimes, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Marian Thomas | Her Majesty's Inspector |

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