

Inspection of The View School

Church Street, Edenbridge TN8 5BD

Inspection dates: 19 to 21 September 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Requires improvement

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

What is it like to attend this school?

This happy and nurturing environment transforms pupils' lives for the better. Pupils appreciate the pivotal difference that the school has made to them. They love their education here and have a strong sense of belonging. Pupils want to do well and they work hard. This is heartening because many of them have previously struggled in other school settings or may not have attended for a variety of reasons. As one pupil said, 'Staff make sure we know that our worries and struggles do not define us; they keep explaining things in a kind way until we understand.'

Staff build strong and trusting relationships with pupils. They have a clear ambition and determination that every pupil should benefit from a rich, broad learning experience – and they do. Wherever needed, pupils receive effective support to manage their feelings and emotions. As a result, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere all around the school.

Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to develop their interests and talents. For example, they learn new hobbies such as playing musical instruments, growing vegetables and cooking. Pupils learn to take risks safely, make the right choices and communicate their views confidently. Consequently, they become positive and responsible citizens.

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

The school is ambitious for all pupils to achieve well irrespective of their starting points. It caters exclusively for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils have a wide range of learning needs that are identified carefully, known well and responded to thoughtfully. The school has crafted a curriculum that has appropriate breadth and caters well for pupils' own strengths and interests. In most subjects, the important knowledge pupils should learn and the order in which they should learn it are identified precisely. This helps teachers know exactly what pupils need to learn step by step. However, this is not the case in English, where the curriculum is not as well defined. As a result, pupils are not learning as well as they do in other subjects.

Pupils' behaviour is a strength. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and warm. All pupils have a trusted adult they can talk to about any worries they might have. Staff understand the challenges that pupils face. Adults are adept at addressing any gaps in pupils' learning. Subjects such as cooking and art make a strong contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school. These subjects also equip them with useful knowledge for future education and valuable life skills. Older pupils can choose to study nationally accredited courses, such as functional skills and GCSEs.

Rightly, the school emphasises that 'reading is the passport' to future success. An exciting range of texts is available to reignite pupils' love of reading. Most pupils are at an earlier stage of learning to read. Gaps in their phonics knowledge are

identified quickly and accurately. Expert staff ensure that pupils have the tailored support that they need to help them learn to read quickly and fluently.

At every opportunity, pupils' personal development is promoted effectively. Much of this work is aimed at building their confidence and preparing them for their next steps in education. Effective careers advice and guidance are helping to shape pupils' aspirations for education and training after they leave the school. An interesting range of trips and visits ensures that pupils' experience of school life is fulfilling. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme helps pupils gain an increasing awareness of the wider world around them. It also promotes their understanding of what it means to live in modern Britain.

The proprietor has a comprehensive understanding of the school. They ensure that the independent school standards (the standards) are met. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Staff are proud to work here and talk positively about their workload. This includes those staff who are new to teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In English, the curriculum is not as well defined as it could be. Pupils do not build their knowledge of this subject as well as they could. The school should ensure that the essential knowledge that pupils should learn is precisely identified in all subjects, so that they can learn consistently well.

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	147034
DfE registration number	886/6155
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10286137
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	24
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	The View School Limited
Chair	Julian Roberts
Headteacher	Louise Bourne
Annual fees (day pupils)	£58,000 to £100,000
Telephone number	01732 865049
Website	www.theviewschool.org
Email address	info@theviewschool.org
Date of previous inspection	24 to 26 November 2021

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils aged 11 to 19 with social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils also have autism. All pupils attending the school have an education, health and care plan.
- At the time of this inspection, there were no students in the sixth form.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in November 2021. At this point, it was registered for 24 pupils. It applied to increase this number to 26 and received a material change inspection to consider this in November 2022. At the same time, a progress monitoring inspection took place. This showed that the school had taken appropriate action and that the standards were now met.

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.

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 a wide range of meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, and teaching and support staff in the school. The lead inspector also met with the school's sole director.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science and PSHE. 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 also considered curriculum information, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 looked at the school’s website, toured the school premises, examined policies and associated documentation, and spoke to staff to consider whether the school meets the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers submitted through Ofsted Parent View. Ofsted’s surveys for staff and for pupils were also considered.

Inspection team

Louise Walker, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Sue Cox

His Majesty’s Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023