

Eagle House School Sutton

95 Brighton Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5SJ

Inspection dates

3–5 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Sixth form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have worked together effectively to provide a good standard of education for their pupils. They have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils is outstanding. All staff are highly committed to the school's ethos of care and support. They provide a safe and nurturing environment, which allows pupils to thrive.
- The headteacher is very well supported by the proprietor and governing body. They have a clear vision for the school to promote its development.
- The rich curriculum offers pupils every opportunity to succeed both academically and in their personal and social development. Personalised learning helps to ensure good progress for pupils.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely strong. Pupils are typically happy at school as a result.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff know their pupils well. Teachers, therapists and learning support assistants work together effectively to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning.
- The post-16 provision is a safe and welcoming environment which prepares students effectively for adulthood and life beyond school. Students have access to a wide range of vocational courses and they achieve well.
- Leaders have developed a new assessment system this year. This is not yet fully embedded and needs refining to ensure that staff can measure pupils' progress with precision.
- Teachers plan carefully to meet the social and emotional needs of pupils. At times, activities do not stretch and challenge pupils sufficiently.
- The school has expanded since the previous inspection and pupils' needs are increasingly complex and varied. Many school leaders are new in post and governors acknowledge the ongoing need to support their professional development and extend their leadership skills as the school continues to grow.

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.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed and refine the assessment system across the school so that:
 - leaders and teachers are confident in measuring rates of progress precisely
 - pupils' targets are suitably aspirational and used to plan activities that sufficiently challenge pupils in their learning.
- Strengthen and develop new leadership so that the school continues to improve as it expands.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The chief executive officer, governors and senior leaders have the capacity, skills and expertise to move the school forward. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses and are ambitious in their plans for improving the school.
- Senior leaders work well together. They are committed to a shared purpose of providing the best education and care for their pupils. Leaders have an in-depth knowledge of the ever-changing needs of the pupils that are placed at the school and continuously review the provision as a result. As the headteacher said: 'We see the provision through the lens of educators, leaders and parents.'
- The new headteacher has wasted no time in identifying key priorities and taking effective action. The quality of teaching and learning is a continued focus for the school. Leaders rigorously monitor teaching and have an accurate picture of strengths and areas for development. Leaders have put in place bespoke training for staff as well as specific whole-school training. Staff, including those new to the profession, have the necessary skills and support to carry out their roles effectively as a result.
- There have been significant changes in school leadership and management since the previous inspection. Many leaders are new in post and some are still settling into their roles. While there is stability and strength in school leadership, leaders and managers need more time to implement plans and ongoing support from governors as the school continues to expand.
- Leaders have established personalised pathways that are well matched to pupils' needs and future education goals. Each key stage has three pathways: sensory, lower and upper. Leaders complete a thorough and detailed assessment of each pupil before they join the school. This is shared with staff who then have a clear understanding of each pupils' individual abilities and complex needs.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is tailored for each pupil. Leaders offer a range of courses, including work-related courses. These are carefully designed to reflect pupils' interests with an emphasis on teaching life skills so that pupils can develop their independence. For example, pupils learn how to travel safely, prepare healthy meals at the onsite café, and shop independently.
- Pupils have many opportunities to broaden their understanding of the wider world beyond the school. They enjoy going on trips, such as to the theatre, sea life centre, theme park or horse-riding. Extra-curricular activities, including clubs for sports, computing and music, motivate and enthuse pupils.
- Leaders thread pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the school. Pupils are aware of fundamental British values, and there are regular activities to learn about and celebrate differences in cultures, religions and people. The annual 'Celebration Day' is a much-anticipated event when pupils showcase their learning and perform for parents and carers.
- Leaders use a variety of information to establish pupils' starting points and track their attainment and personal development methodically. However, the new assessment system that was put in place this year is not yet fully embedded. Leaders and teachers

are not fully confident about measuring rates of progress. Leaders acknowledge this and are already planning how to refine the system. This will include more personalised targets which are more ambitious and ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged in their learning.

Governance

- Governors are highly experienced and very secure in their understanding of the school's effectiveness. They use their valuable skills and knowledge to challenge and support leaders effectively. Governors are diligent in ensuring that the independent school standards are maintained.
- Governors visit the school regularly and meet with staff to assess the impact of their work. Governors understand the importance of recruiting appropriate staff to ensure the continued success of the school. They know that new leaders' skills and talents need to be nurtured through effective training and mentoring.
- The proprietor plays an active role in the running of the school and is an integral part of governance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders make sure that staff are up to date in their safeguarding training and that they know and apply the school's safeguarding procedures. All staff are aware of their duty to look after and protect pupils from harm, and they are knowledgeable about all aspects of safeguarding. High-quality and regular training ensures that staff have a detailed understanding of different types of abuse, including neglect and child sexual exploitation.
- The safeguarding team demonstrates exemplary practice in safeguarding. Staff, including in-school therapists and psychologists, pool their expertise and coordinate their work when concerns are raised about a pupil. The team acts swiftly and effectively to ensure that pupils and families receive the support that they need. Leaders are extremely vigilant and can quickly identify any changes in pupils' behaviour that might indicate that they are at risk of hurting themselves or others.
- Leaders work closely with other external agencies such as children's services. This is very well-coordinated given the range of local authorities involved. The safeguarding team has sophisticated methods of recording and analysing safeguarding incidents. The team uses this information to review its work on a regular basis.
- The premises are safe and well maintained. The safeguarding policy is published on the school website and includes all relevant and statutory information.
- Leaders complete all the required checks to make sure that staff are suitable to work with children before they start work at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The school has a joined-up approach to teaching and learning. Teaching staff, learning support assistants and therapists work together very well to adapt the classrooms,

activities and resources to suit pupils' needs. Staff provide individual support, small group work and opportunities for pupils to work independently.

- Staff demonstrate strong subject knowledge and are skilled in using 'autism-friendly' strategies. This helps them to engage pupils and tailor work for their abilities. For example, in a key stage 4 science lesson, pupils completed different tasks on bone structure which were appropriate to their ability. Most-able pupils were able to use subject-specific vocabulary to describe joints and ligaments.
- Staff use visual resources to strengthen pupils' development of language and communication skills. Good examples were observed of staff adapting these resources for individual pupils. Staff routinely check pupils' understanding and continuously reinforce what pupils have previously learned.
- Clear structures and routines help pupils understand what they need to do and how to feel secure. Consistent use of the 'Zones of Regulation', for example, ensures that pupils develop an understanding of their own and other people's feelings and helps them to manage their own behaviour.
- Staff use information about pupils' starting points to plan and design activities that will move pupils on in their personal and academic development. As a result, learning is very personalised. However, some pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in their learning when staff do not have consistently high expectations of what the pupils can do.
- Some staff are not fully confident in using the new assessment system and are not precise enough in measuring pupils' progress accurately.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Many pupils join the school after being out of education for long periods and/or with a history of disrupted education. A large number of pupils arrive at different points in the year. Staff manage their transition into the school highly effectively through appropriate care and guidance.
- Staff know their pupils extremely well. Detailed personal development, support and behaviour plans help staff to understand pupils' individual behavioural and emotional learning needs.
- The collaborative approach from teaching staff and therapists provides well-targeted support for pupils to overcome their barriers to learning.
- Pupils are happy at school and feel that staff listen to them. One parent said of her son: 'He has transformed into a much happier child... he finally has a sense of belonging and fitting in.' Bullying is very rare.
- Pupils learn about staying safe through a variety of age-appropriate ways, including through the personal, social, health and economic curriculum. Pupils are aware of the risks around them and they show a secure understanding of how to stay safe online. They know, for example, not to share personal information online and are aware of stranger danger.

- Pupils are well supported at alternative provision, which is organised by the school. Leaders accompany some pupils to local colleges and ensure that staff understand pupils' needs. Pupils enjoy their time in these settings.
- Careers guidance is well planned and bespoke to pupils' ages and levels of development. Younger pupils gain an awareness of different jobs and workplaces from visitors to the school and in lessons. Older pupils have individual meetings with a careers adviser and they learn about college courses, different career routes and interview skills. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are generally polite and respectful of adults and each other. Staff help pupils to regulate and manage their own behaviour. For example, pupils can choose to take time out in a quiet space if they feel anxious or upset.
- Staff share their expertise to support each other with pupils' challenging behaviour. They are skilled in identifying potential triggers which can affect a pupil's behaviour, and are alert to any changes in behaviour.
- When pupils are having a bad day, staff respond sensitively and calmly. They manage incidents of challenging behaviour well because they apply and adapt strategies to help pupils feel secure.
- Pupils' attendance is good. Absence is carefully monitored and tracked. Pupils with high levels of persistent absence are supported effectively to improve their attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Reviews of pupils' work shows that pupils in all key stages make good progress over time in their different subjects. This includes English and mathematics.
- Pupils develop a wide range of skills, including independent living skills and creativity in subjects such as art and music. They make good progress in their reading, writing and numeracy skills and leaders plan to extend these skills more fully across the curriculum.
- Teachers measure small gains in pupils' learning, including their personal development, and independence skills. Many pupils make strong progress due to the specialist care and attention that they receive from staff.
- Pupils improve their communication, language and social skills well through highly effective speech and language therapy. Education, health and care plans are used to personalise pupils' learning and ensure that provision is linked to individual targets.
- Key stage 4 pupils have opportunities to gain nationally recognised qualifications, including GCSEs or Functional Skills in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. In 2017, all pupils who were entered for external examinations achieved their target grades.

Sixth form provision

Good

- Although new in post, the sixth form leader has clear plans in place to make the sixth form provision a beacon of best practice. She is well supported by leaders and governors. Together, they have maintained a high standard of provision for students in key stage 5.
- The 16 to 19 curriculum builds on the key stage 4 provision and includes a range of opportunities for students to develop independence. Through accredited courses, such as Personal Progress and Life Skills, pupils learn about living independently as they prepare for adulthood.
- Staff tailor activities well to meet students' complex and differing needs. They continue to develop students' English, mathematics and communication skills. Students are entered for a range of qualifications, dependent on their ability and interests, and they achieve well. Because of good teaching, students make good progress in all areas of learning and in their personal development.
- All students undertake work experience, either accompanied by staff or independently. This helps to boost students' confidence and self-esteem, as well as developing important work-related skills. Placements are carefully considered to reflect pupils' interests and next steps. The vast majority of students move on to meaningful and suitable further education, training or employment when they leave the school.
- Students are safe and well cared for. They work well with each other or on their own. Leaders and staff make sure that students are well prepared for life beyond school.

School details

Unique reference number	135801
DfE registration number	319/6074
Inspection number	10020779

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.

Type of school	Day special school for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	28
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Eagle House Mitcham Limited
Chair	Paul Conrathe
Headteacher	Francesca Arocas
Annual fees (day pupils)	£50,453 – £94,461
Telephone number	020 8661 1419
Website	www.eaglehousegroup.co.uk
Email address	admin@eaglehousegroup.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–12 September 2013

Information about this school

- Eagle House School Sutton opened in 2009. It is a small independent day school in the London Borough of Sutton.
- All pupils have education, health and care plans. All pupils have needs that relate to autistic spectrum disorder. Most pupils are boys.

- There have been significant changes in the senior leadership of the school. An executive headteacher was appointed in April 2017. The current headteacher took up her post in March 2018. The deputy headteacher in charge of sixth form took up her role in May 2018.
- The school has expanded since the previous inspection and buildings have been extended to accommodate additional pupils. The school is opening a new sixth form centre for students in the upper pathway on a different site in September 2018.
- The school uses two alternative providers, Carshalton College and NESCOL. Some students in the sixth form attend courses on set days during the school week.
- The school was last inspected in September 2013, when it was judged good for overall effectiveness and met all the regulatory requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector, accompanied by the headteacher, visited all classes in a range of subjects to observe pupils' learning.
- Pupils met with the inspector to talk about their views of the school.
- The inspector scrutinised work in a sample of pupils' books across all areas of learning.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the chief executive officer, school leaders, teachers, learning support assistants, the school improvement partner and two governors.
- The inspector had a telephone conversation with the proprietor.
- The inspector analysed school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, policies, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and curriculum plans.
- The inspector took account of the four responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspector considered the 54 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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