

# Inspection of Longdon Park School

Park Hill, Hilton Road, Egginton, Derbyshire DE65 6GU

---

Inspection dates: 9 to 11 July 2024

**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?**

Longdon Park School is a warm, inclusive setting where pupils are nurtured to achieve their best. It is a place where pupils can be themselves. They say, 'There is no discrimination here. We are all different and we are all okay.'

There are strong relationships between staff and pupils. These close connections make pupils feel safe. The school's pastoral team is on hand if pupils have any worries. Pupils can also spend time with one of the school's well-being dogs if they need comforting.

Pupils' needs and aspirations shape the education they receive at Longdon Park School. Every pupil's learning pathway is highly personalised. It is right for them and their stage of learning. It takes account of what they want to do in the future.

Most pupils like going to school and have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy earning 'sleuth points' for working well. They like having a say on the items in the 'sleuth shop' and saving up for rewards. Staff help pupils to regulate their behaviour and to reflect on the consequences of their actions.

The school's personal development offer is outstanding. Staff take every opportunity to develop pupils' character and prepare them for adulthood.

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

All the pupils at Longdon Park School have a diagnosis of autism or demonstrate behaviours associated with autism. The support pupils receive is fully aligned to their education, health and care (EHC) plans. Staff know pupils' needs well and ensure that learning is tailored accordingly.

The school's curriculum is broad and well sequenced. There is a range of options for pupils to pursue their talents and interests. Pupils can work towards GCSEs and accredited vocational qualifications. At the school's new state-of-the-art Longdon Parkway site, pupils can study carpentry, creative media, hospitality and catering and life skills. Pupils enjoy using the specialist equipment and facilities at their disposal at Longdon Parkway. They are proud of the work they produce.

Staff have good subject knowledge. They ensure that learning environments take account of pupils' sensory and emotional needs. They provide visual aids and physical resources to support pupils' understanding. However, staff do not always address misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills as well as they could. Consequently, pupils cannot always build their understanding step by step because important prior learning has not been acquired securely.

Staff teach the school's new phonics scheme well. Pupils in the early stages of learning to read are given the support they need to catch up. Leaders have developed the school library. It has been stocked with a diverse range of interesting

texts. However, there is still more work to do to develop the school's reading culture. Not all staff promote the love of reading as well as they could. Some pupils do not have positive attitudes to reading or read very much in their own time.

Most pupils focus on their learning and engage well in lessons. Staff support pupils effectively if they are dysregulated. They adapt individual support plans in response to pupils' behaviour. They use the school's neurodiversity strategy of 'ask, accept, develop' to help pupils succeed. Pupils know what bullying is. They say there is zero tolerance of bullying at Longdon Park School.

Most pupils attend well. The school works effectively with pupils and their families when absence is high. It seeks to identify and address the reasons for low attendance. This approach has seen a reduction in persistent absence.

High-quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is woven into all aspects of school life. A wide, rich and coherently planned set of experiences help pupils to understand the world around them. These include outdoor learning, horse riding, ice skating, swimming, and Duke of Edinburgh expeditions. Pupils are usually tolerant and respectful. They are aware of different cultures and religions, and they understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are given appropriate impartial and high-quality careers guidance. The school provides good quality, meaningful opportunities for pupils to encounter the world of work and learn important life skills. Pupils say, 'We study how to get hired for a job and we have lessons on budgeting and cooking and the government.'

Staff appreciate the consideration that is given to their well-being and workload. They feel listened to. They describe leaders as having an 'open door' and being responsive. Staff in the early stages of their teaching career feel very well supported.

The proprietor ensures that the school consistently and securely meets all the independent school standards (the standards). The proprietor checks closely on the quality of education at Longdon Park School, providing effective challenge and support. All policies are implemented effectively, including those for safeguarding, risk assessment, behaviour and attendance. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- Staff do not always address misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills well enough. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills they need to

identify and remedy pupils' misconceptions or gaps in knowledge before moving on to new tasks so that all pupils are helped to achieve as well as they can.

- Pupils' attitudes towards reading are not consistently positive. Staff do not consistently promote a love of reading, despite recently establishing a well-stocked library. Some pupils do not value independent reading. They do not apply their reading skills as well as they might, nor draw upon the knowledge they gain from reading as well as they could. The school should continue to develop its reading culture so that more pupils enjoy reading and achieve well from doing so.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141994
<b>DfE registration number</b>	830/6043
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322503
<b>Type of school</b>	Other Independent Special School
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	85
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Outcomes First Group Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Power
<b>Headteacher</b>	Edward Barnes (Acting headteacher)
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£64,000 – £93,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01283 733195
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.longdonparkschool.co.uk">www.longdonparkschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:longdonparkschool@optionsautism.com">longdonparkschool@optionsautism.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	16 to 18 November 2021

## Information about this school

- Longdon Park School is an independent special school.
- The school is part of Acorn Care and Education Ltd, which is part of Outcomes First Group Ltd.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for up to 100 pupils, aged 7 to 18. There are currently 85 pupils on roll, aged between 7 and 18.
- Pupils are placed at the school by several different local authorities.
- The school caters for pupils who have a diagnosis of autism or who demonstrate behaviours associated with autism. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school has two sites. Longdon Parkway opened in September 2023. Longdon Parkway is a purpose-built vocational centre able to offer additional job-related pathways for pupils with a primary diagnosis of autism and/or difficulties with social communication, sensory processing and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Pupils who are above the compulsory school age pursue a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs, including preparing them for adulthood.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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 judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and art and design. For the deep dives, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered pupils' learning in geography, computing and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher and the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders with

responsibility for pupils with SEND, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and personal development.

- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation and the school development plan. They also reviewed a wide range of curriculum plans, a variety of policies and risk assessments, as well as documentation relating to behaviour, attendance and governance.
- To check the school's compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed facilities at the school's two sites.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietorial body and the regional director for Longdon Park School.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Shaun Carter, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Mosley

Ofsted 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024