

Inspection of Esland Grantham School

Newton Chambers, Isaac Newton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 9RT

Inspection dates: 30 January to 1 February 2024

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?

Esland Grantham School is an inclusive, nurturing school where pupils are happy and feel safe. Staff are caring and attentive to pupils' needs. They make sure that every decision is made with pupils' best interests at heart. Pupils typically enjoy school. One pupil, echoing the views of others, said, 'Pupils have a real voice here. If you have your own way of learning, the teachers take this into account.'

Pupils develop positive relationships with each other and with the staff. They benefit from well-established routines. Each morning, staff warmly welcome pupils. This is followed routinely by various activities, such as breakfast club and time in 'the hub' with their friends. This helps pupils to feel settled for the school day and ready for learning.

Staff want the best for pupils. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils live up to these expectations. Staff help pupils to learn in a way that is meaningful to them.

The school encourages pupils to prepare for their next stage of education. Pupils go on outings to help build their independence, for example to the local shops and parks. Pupils enjoy enrichment activities. These include rock climbing and visits to the local gym.

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

The school's curriculum is designed to meet the pupils' diverse needs. Underpinning the curriculum is the support that pupils receive to understand their emotions and behaviour. Pupils study a broad range of subjects. Learning is well sequenced. This helps pupils to build their knowledge in a logical way. The systems for checking pupils' knowledge and skills are newly implemented. On occasions, pupils move on to new learning before they have secured their knowledge of, and skills related to, a key concept. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge.

Reading is a top priority in school. The school promotes reading for pleasure and is committed to helping pupils become fluent readers. Staff use a structured phonics programme well to help pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read. Pupils receive individual support to help them become more confident and fluent in their reading. Staff make sure that the books pupils read match the sounds pupils know.

All pupils in the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff know pupils' starting points and their additional needs. They use this information to adapt the curriculum and design a personalised learning pathway for each pupil. Reviews keep pupils' needs and aspirations at the heart of discussion and planning.

Pupils particularly enjoy cooking and the 'beliefs and values' curriculum. All pupils are encouraged to achieve qualifications, including GCSEs. Careers education

prepares pupils well for their next steps. Learning outside the classroom is developing to include interests that may lead to a career, for example in hairdressing and in mechanics.

There is a real 'family feel' to this school. Skilled staff help pupils who have difficulty managing their emotions. In lessons, staff adeptly help pupils to focus on their learning. Adults act as role models, demonstrating respectful, joyful relationships. From their starting points, pupils' behaviour and attendance improve considerably over time.

Personal development opportunities are planned with pupils' futures in mind. Pupils explore personal qualities and gain insights into different faiths, cultures and values. They experience responsibility through participation in the school council, which designed the school uniform. Pupils learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They speak with enthusiasm about their 'spa days', which help them to focus on their mental well-being. They loved the 'food-tasting from around the world' day and the Esland birthday celebration.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel valued and appreciate the consideration and care given to their workload and well-being.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards are consistently met. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The school site is maintained to an appropriate standard. All policies are available, including the school's safeguarding policy, either on the school's website or on request. The school maintains thorough risk assessments, including for each pupil and for off-site trips. These assessments correctly identify associated risks and provide appropriate mitigations to help staff to reduce them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Staff regularly check pupils' learning to identify the knowledge they understand and skills that pupils can practise. On occasions, staff do not use what these checks tell them to help fill gaps in pupils' knowledge or provide the precise support to improve pupils' skills. As a result, some pupils' knowledge or skills do not develop as securely as they could. The school should ensure that all staff know how to adapt their teaching, or the support they provide, to help all pupils become successful learners.

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	147703
DfE registration number	925/6055
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10299257
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	29
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Esland North Limited
Chair	Jill Palmer
Headteacher	Suzanne Harvey
Annual fees (day pupils)	£59,625
Telephone number	01476 855604
Website	www.eslandcare.co.uk/our-schools/esland-grantham-school
Email address	suzanneharvey@esland.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 to 15 September 2022

Information about this school

- Esland Grantham School is an independent special school that provides education to pupils with SEND aged seven to 18.
- The primary area of need for most pupils is social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils have a diagnosis of autism. There is also provision for pupils with a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and those who have had adverse childhood experiences. Most pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- Some of the pupils are looked after children. Several local authorities commission places for pupils at this school.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.
- Pupils who are above compulsory school age study a curriculum that is appropriate to their stage of education.
- The proprietor also operates an education outreach team that delivers education to pupils who are registered at the school but who receive their education off site.

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 reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the history curriculum and looked at pupils' history books. Inspectors discussed the personal, social and health education curriculum and visited a 'beliefs and values' lesson.
- Inspectors looked at individual pupils' EHC plans and checked these against the school's provision.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body, who is also chair of the governing body, and spoke with a safeguarding governor and a representative from the local authority for the area in which the school is located.

- 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.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and the school development plan.
- Inspectors took note of the response received on Ofsted Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors met with small groups of pupils to gather their views.
- Inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed the school's facilities to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Kirsty Norbury, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Dawn Ashbolt

His Majesty's Inspector

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