

# Brookways School

660 London Road, North Cheam, Sutton SM3 9BZ

## Inspection dates

2–4 October 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The Brookways curriculum is creative, engaging and bespoke. It is carefully designed to meet the needs of pupils who not only have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, but who have also typically had a disrupted educational history. Pupils say they love learning at Brookways School.
- Almost all parents and carers speak overwhelmingly positively about the work of the school, as do representatives from placing local authorities. For some parents, the school's work has transformed their child's life.
- Leaders and those who fulfil governance roles are highly effective. They focus sharply on the quality of education, and regularly check compliance with the independent school standards.
- The headteacher leads her team with professionalism, empathy and drive. Pupils are at the centre of decision-making. The staff agree that the school's leadership is outstanding.
- Attendance is excellent. It is particularly impressive when compared to most pupils' attendance at their previous schools.
- The arrangements for keeping pupils as safe as possible are effective.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. Pupils enjoy a range of school events, trips and assemblies. They have access to speech and language and occupational therapies, and learn about keeping healthy, staying safe and being themselves through the 'living life well' programme.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and rapidly improving. Where teaching is highly effective, lessons are sharply focused on meeting pupils' specific needs and no learning time is wasted.
- Leaders are working hard through effective monitoring, modelling and training to improve teaching further so that pupils receive the same high quality of teaching across the school.
- Pupils' outcomes, as seen in their work in a range of subjects, are typically good or better. However, the school's academic assessment system is new and therefore does not yet show pupils' progress over time.

### 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?**

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes by:
  - sharing the existing highly effective practice more regularly and widely
  - using the new assessment system to provide an accurate measure of pupils' academic progress over time.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- Brookways School is exceptionally well led. Leaders at all levels have worked tirelessly to establish this new school, which provides an effective education for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- Leaders ensure that the independent school standards are met. They meticulously check compliance with the requirements as a matter of routine.
- The curriculum is bespoke. Its careful and creative design ensures coverage of all the required areas of learning, and that it effectively meets pupils' complex needs. Pupils learn individually and in groups, focusing initially on 'learning to learn'. They then move on to a programme that includes all the subjects of the national curriculum, social skills, cooking, the 'living life well' programme and therapy sessions. It is planned that, when pupils are ready, they will also work towards vocational qualifications.
- Almost every parent who contributed their view during the inspection was extremely positive about the school. Parents told the inspector that this is a school that treats their children as individuals, and tailors teaching and support accordingly. Comments included 'This school has given me my child back', 'My child's a different child since attending here' and 'We have a future now.'
- The school promotes equality and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development very well. Pupils are being very well prepared for their future lives in modern Britain. The integrated 'living life well' curriculum and weekly 'SMSC assemblies' are all effective in teaching pupils about the world around them. A range of trips and events further enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils recently planned and hosted the 'grand opening' of their school, learned how to cook pizza at a local restaurant, baked and raised funds for charities and celebrated their international carnival day, St George's Day and World Book Day.
- Leaders have worked hard to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is typically good. Leaders' monitoring of teaching is thorough and feedback aptly facilitates improvement. However, some teachers and systems are new and more work is required over time to share and model the strongest practice and to deploy the new assessment system.

### Governance

- The chair of the proprietorial board articulates the Kedleston ambition for Brookways School to become a centre of excellence for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. He has ensured that governance structures are robust and effective in realising this ambitious vision.
- Governance is delegated to national leads who regularly audit the school in key areas, such as compliance with the independent school standards, safeguarding, quality of education and health and safety. These audits provide helpful, detailed and impartial challenge, support, insight and advice to the headteacher, whose team acts on areas for development quickly and effectively.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's leaders facilitate a vigilant safeguarding culture. Staff formally meet twice each day and discuss every pupil in daily debriefing sessions.
- Staff are well trained, in line with the latest statutory guidance, to recognise signs that pupils may be at risk. They refer concerns, following the guidance in the school's robust policies and procedures, and follow them up tenaciously.
- Parents say they trust the school to keep their children safe, staff say they know how to keep pupils as safe as possible and the pupils themselves say they feel safe coming to school each day.
- The school's safeguarding policy is compliant with the latest statutory guidance and is available online.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is typically good.
- Teaching successfully enables pupils, many of whom have joined the school with negative experiences of education, to re-engage with learning. For some, this means supporting pupils in 'learning to learn', feeling safe and developing self-confidence before formal learning in subjects can be effective.
- Pupils have very positive relationships with their teachers, teaching assistants and therapists. Levels of staff supervision are high and so pupils are provided with an appropriate level of support. This enables them to feel safe and to learn.
- Most teachers plan learning activities thoughtfully and effectively to meet pupils' individual needs. In these lessons, pupils' personal, social and academic skills are developed effectively because activities are engaging, creative and sharply focused on enabling pupils to make progress. Leaders provide models of highly effective teaching on a daily basis to increase the proportion of highly engaging teaching across the school.
- The school is using a new assessment system to identify progress from pupils' starting points in all subjects. It is intended that teachers will use this information to support their planning but it is too early to judge the effectiveness of this initiative.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils feel safe coming to school and know they can trust the adults there to help them. They confirm that bullying is not a problem at Brookways. This means pupils, sometimes for the first time, feel comfortable enough to be themselves, to focus and to learn.
- The school's bespoke curriculum, which includes therapeutic input and a clear focus on the development of social skills and how to 'live life well', enables pupils to rapidly develop their self-confidence and life skills. Pupils learn to communicate more effectively, look after themselves and keep themselves safe, including when online.

- As a result, pupils are being very well prepared to remain in education and to lead safe and productive lives.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in managing their behaviour, understanding their own needs and regulating their emotional responses. This is thanks to patient, professional and knowledgeable staff who draw upon their training and skills proactively to identify behavioural triggers and de-escalate challenging situations. Pupils know and follow the school's simple and effective expectations, which are to 'be kind' and 'work hard'. As a result, pupils are being very well prepared for their lives outside, and after, school.
- Attendance is excellent. Most pupils' attendance is especially impressive when it is compared to their attendance rates in their previous schools.
- Incidents of serious misbehaviour and physical interventions, which are rare, are thoroughly documented and analysed well by leaders. The school's team works effectively and flexibly together to make positive changes in order to avoid repeated incidents.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- In the short space of time since the school opened in February 2018, and the even shorter time since most pupils have actually started attending Brookways, pupils have typically made good progress. Notably, this progress is in pupils' self-confidence, willingness to learn and their social and communication skills. The school's system for monitoring pupils' social and emotional well-being targets is robust and reflects the good progress seen in pupils and described in the school's case studies.
- The available evidence from pupils' work shows that they are making generally good progress across the curriculum. Progress is especially good in writing, art, science and secondary English.
- The school's curriculum is evolving and it is planned that pupils will be able to gain some accredited qualifications. The school does not yet have pupils in Year 11 and has not had any leavers.

## School details

Unique reference number	144774
DfE registration number	319/6000
Inspection number	10054306

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 school for pupils with autism spectrum disorder
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	16
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	The Kedleston Group
Chair	Paul Brosnan
Headteacher	Melanie Whitfield
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,000
Telephone number	020 8641 9191
Website	<a href="http://www.kedlestonschools.com">www.kedlestonschools.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:brookways@kedlestongroup.com">brookways@kedlestongroup.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Brookways School is an independent special school in the London Borough of Sutton.
- The school opened in February 2018. This is the school's first full standard inspection.
- All pupils have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, and have a range of associated difficulties.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils are placed by a range of local authorities.
- The school is part of, and governed by, The Kedleston Group of schools, which is overseen by a board of directors and led by a chief executive officer.
- The school makes no use of alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This full standard inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed learning in all areas of the school alongside the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's information about pupils' progress and attendance. He also considered a wide range of pupils' work and leaders' monitoring information.
- The inspector considered the six contributions to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. He also considered the school's internal surveys of parents and pupils, and met with four parents.
- The inspector had several meetings with a wide range of key people, including all members of the leadership team, the chief executive officer and the teaching and support team. He also considered the 15 staff survey responses.
- The inspector spoke by telephone with two representatives from placing local authorities.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation, including policies, logs, evidence of staff training and information related to safeguarding and health and safety.
- The inspector also toured the premises and considered additional information and evidence in relation to the independent school standards.

## Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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