

Inspection of Broadlands Hall

Little Wrating, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7UA

Inspection dates: 30 November–2 December 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Broadlands Hall School is a vibrant, welcoming, and happy community. Pupils are proud to be part of it, proud of their work and eager to share their achievements with visitors. They are caring and look out for each other. Relationships across the school are highly positive, so pupils behave exceptionally well. New pupils settle in quickly. They trust school staff because they take time to get to know pupils' individual interests from the outset. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, know that there is always someone there for them if they have a concern.

Lessons are purposeful because they are tailored to pupils' and students' learning needs. The curriculum ensures that they are taught how to keep safe in different situations. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school. They told inspectors that bullying is wrong, saying, 'It does not happen here.' They enjoy taking part in activities, such as swimming, physical education (PE), art and music, alongside a wide range of other learning. Pupils spoke excitedly with inspectors about their contribution to the school performance later this term. The focus on pupils' and sixth-form students' personal development helps them to prepare to take their next steps in education and adult life.

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

The proprietor and headteacher are highly ambitious for pupils and sixth-form students. They want all pupils to achieve their very best. This ambition is reflected in the curriculum offer. The quality of education has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders keep parents and carers very well informed about the school's work.

Pupils have access to a vibrant and broad curriculum entitlement, including English, mathematics, science, history, food studies, religious education, PE, art and music. Qualifications, including GCSEs and other awards, are offered at different levels to suit pupils' individual needs. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) runs through all aspects of the school's work.

The curriculum content in most subjects, including in mathematics, English and science, is planned well and taught in a logical order. Pupils achieve very well because they build their knowledge on what they already know. In a few subjects, for example in food studies, the curriculum does not consistently build pupils' knowledge in the same step-by-step way, though pupils love to cook. When this happens, pupils find it more difficult to remember the things they have been taught over time. This is because there are not enough opportunities to revisit previous learning systematically.

Staff know pupils exceptionally well. They check pupils' learning carefully when they join and regularly throughout their time in school. Effective interventions are planned to support catching up for those pupils who need extra help.

Improving pupils' reading ability so that they achieve well in all subjects is an especially high priority. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the books they read together with their teachers. Regular phonics practice helps all age groups to sound the letters in unfamiliar words. This helps them to improve their spelling as well as their reading. Work is underway to adapt the phonics programme to make it even more suitable for supporting older pupils and students in the sixth form to improve their reading fluency.

Pupils' positive behaviour is an exceptionally strong feature of the day-to-day life in the school. Adults are skilful in spotting any signs of anxiety. They are calm and effective in resolving any issues if they arise. Pupils attend school regularly. The highly effective working relationships they build with staff motivate them to achieve well. Over time, they become increasingly confident and self-assured learners. The school's caring community is enhanced by pupils' willingness to offer support to each other. They are mutually respectful of individual differences. Pupils and students in the sixth form trust school staff to look out for them. They know that there is always an adult they can go to if they are worried about anything.

Leaders are as equally ambitious for pupils' and students' personal development as they are for their academic achievement. The PSHE curriculum is well thought out and extensively promoted in lessons. It is a central focus of the inclusive culture of the school. Older pupils and students have opportunities to join in supported work experience, for example with the local food bank and in shops.

Careers information, education, advice and guidance, including links with local colleges, help pupils and students at all stages to prepare for their next steps in education and adult life. However, leaders know that this aspect of the school's work is not as well developed as most other aspects of the curriculum. They are taking steps to resolve this, especially for students in the sixth form.

Leaders are relentless in their pursuit of excellence. Well-considered curriculum changes have made a significant difference to pupils' and students' lives. Parents and carers are fulsome in their praise of the provision. As one of them said, 'The school has turned my young person's life around.' Staff are proud to work here. They know that leaders are mindful of their well-being and workload. The proprietor and headteacher work closely together to evaluate pupils' learning and to continuously improve the quality of education across the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

School leaders, staff and the proprietor ensure that safeguarding pupils is of the highest priority. Pupils are taught how to keep safe. Staff are well trained, so they know what to look out for if a pupil may be at risk of harm. All statutory safeguarding requirements are met, including the required checks on the suitability of new employees to work with children. Effective links with external agencies, for example social services, therapists and other health professionals, ensure that

support is in place when needed. Leaders are meticulous in following up on concerns. Safeguarding records are appropriately maintained and regularly checked.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The curriculum is well planned overall, but in a minority of subjects pupils and students do not have enough opportunities to revisit previous learning before moving on to the next stage. Consequently, they find it more difficult to remember the things they should already know. Leaders should continue their checks to ensure that all aspects of learning are as well sequenced as, for example, the curriculum in English and mathematics, so that pupils achieve equally well in all areas.
- While the school offers younger pupils access to an appropriate programme of careers education, over time students in the sixth form have not always had the same opportunities. Consequently, they are not as aware as they could be of the full range of choices available to them when they leave school. Leaders should continue the work to ensure that careers education is systematically well planned for all age groups, so that they are as well prepared as they can be to take the next steps into adult life.

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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	135252
DfE registration number	935/6086
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10203406
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	9 to 20
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	3
Proprietor	Keith A Boulter
Headteacher	Shane Rowe
Annual fees (day pupils)	£62,500
Telephone number	01440 702559
Website	https://broadlands-hall.co.uk/
Email address	head@broadlandshall.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–11 May 2017

The school's application to make a material change

- The school offers places for up to 20 boys aged between nine and 20 years.
- The proprietor made a material change request to the Department for Education (DfE) to increase the school's registration to admit up to 30 pupils. This was considered as part of the full standard inspection.
- During the inspection, the proprietor amended the material change request with the DfE to admit 25 pupils rather than the 30 originally asked for.
- The required independent school standards are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Boys	Boys
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	20	25
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	20	25
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	20	25
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	20	25

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	3	4
Number of part-time teaching staff	N/A	4
Number of staff in the welfare provision	18	23

Information about this school

- Broadlands Hall is registered to admit up to 20 pupils between the ages of nine and 20 years.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Just under half are children looked after.
- All those who attend are pupils with SEND and have an education, health and care plan, often associated with autism spectrum disorder, moderate to severe learning difficulties and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Many pupils have had significant periods of disruption to their formal education prior to joining the school.
- Inspection history:
 - in April 2008, a full standard inspection judged the school's overall effectiveness as good.
 - in November 2011, a full standard inspection judged the school's overall effectiveness as outstanding.
 - in October 2013, an emergency inspection judged that the proprietor had not taken effective action to keep pupils safe
 - in May 2014, a progress monitoring inspection judged that leaders had made progress in implementing the action plan against unmet standards
 - in November 2014, a full standard inspection judged the school's overall effectiveness to be inadequate
 - in May 2015, the progress monitoring inspection judged that standards remained unmet
 - in November 2015, the progress monitoring inspection judged that the school had fully implemented the action plan to meet the independent school standards
 - in May 2017, the full standard inspection judged the school's overall effectiveness as good
 - in April 2018 a monitoring inspection, to consider the school material change request to extend the age range of pupils, judged that the school was likely to meet the relevant standards if the material change was implemented
 - in July 2019, an emergency monitoring inspection judged that the school met all the independent school standards that were checked at that time, including those relating to safeguarding and pupils' welfare, health and safety.

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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- A material change, to increase the school's registration from 20 pupils currently to 30, was considered as part of this inspection. During the inspection, the proprietor contacted the DfE to request an amendment to the original change. This was to increase the current maximum number of pupils to 25, rather than 30 pupils as previously requested.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school staff, including curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met the proprietor to discuss the progress of the school since the full standard inspection in 2017 and the material change request.
- The nine responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for school staff and four Ofsted Parent View responses were looked at, along with the two free-text comments which parents submitted. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with two other parents.
- Inspectors also considered nine responses to the questionnaire for pupils. They gathered the views of a wider group of staff and pupils in meetings and informal conversations around the school.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with representatives from Newham, Suffolk and Essex local authorities.
- Inspectors checked school policies and a range of other documents, including fire and health and safety checks, risk assessments, complaints records, pupils' safeguarding records and the pre-employment checks made on the suitability of staff to work with children.
- Inspectors carried out an in-depth review of pupils' personal, social and health education, mathematics, English, and food studies. They visited lessons and held meetings with subject leaders, teachers, and support staff to speak about their curriculum plans. They looked at pupils' books and met with them to discuss their school experiences.

Inspection team

Christine Dick, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Cox

Ofsted Inspector

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