

Inspection of Baston House School

Baston Road, Hayes, Bromley, Kent BR2 7AB

Inspection dates: 5–7 November 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **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?

Pupils settle quickly into life at Baston House, and almost all start to attend school much more regularly. They like gaining new knowledge and skills. They particularly enjoy the wide range of practical activities on offer, such as computing, art, music and cookery.

Pupils respond well to leaders' and teachers' high expectations. Staff expect all pupils to achieve highly. Pupils leave with recognised qualifications, including GCSEs and BTEC First vocational qualifications. These enable pupils to obtain employment, apprenticeships or college placements.

Staff provide exceptional support for pupils' personal development. Pupils greatly appreciate the guidance staff provide. They learn many strategies to help them face challenges resiliently. Pupils told us how much they enjoy the many experiences they have outside of lessons, such as the talent show and careers events.

The school is friendly and welcoming. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils trust the people who work with them, whether they are from the teaching or therapy teams. They feel safe at school. Pupils know the school's routines and behave well. They do not think that bullying is an issue. They told us that if it happens, staff deal with it quickly and in line with the school policy.

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

The headteacher's high aspirations are shared by staff, governors and families. Supported by a capable leadership team, he has raised expectations for what pupils can achieve. Staff work effectively with families and external agencies to create a supportive atmosphere. This enables all pupils to achieve well.

The proprietor works closely with the leadership team. Together, they make sure that the requirements of the independent school standards are met. They also check that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that the premises are accessible to all. Leaders' work is sharply focused on ensuring that pupils receive a high-quality education. Should any concerns arise, the proprietor and leaders follow agreed procedures. They work with families and the relevant authorities to deal with concerns as quickly as possible.

All pupils study a broad range of subjects, in line with the requirements of the independent school standards. Leaders and staff know exactly what knowledge and attitudes pupils need to be successful, both at school and in the future. They plan subjects carefully and make ambitious choices about what pupils should study. In key stages 2 and 3, planning is based on the national curriculum. In key stage 4 and the sixth form, planning enables pupils to gain relevant qualifications. In turn, this supports pupils to fulfil their ambitions for their next steps in education and employment. Pupils also receive high-quality careers education. Staff provide comprehensive information. They help pupils to complete applications for colleges and apprenticeships. All pupils

who left the school at the end of Year 11, or completed the sixth form, have moved on to further education, employment or an apprenticeship.

The sixth-form curriculum is well planned. It enables students to extend and improve their qualifications successfully. Students also benefit from accredited courses to develop their social and independent living skills. Almost all students now do work experience. Students appreciate being able to experience different types of employment.

Many pupils join the school with gaps in their knowledge. This is typically linked to pupils' irregular attendance at previous schools. Teachers and the therapy team work closely together to support pupils to overcome any gaps. Staff are skilled in adapting planning to meet pupils' needs. They plan topics in ways that tap into pupils' interests. This inspires pupils to learn and helps them to catch up with work that they have missed. For example, in computing, pupils' interest in gaming was used to develop their skills in animation. Leaders take every opportunity to extend pupils' knowledge. They bring in external speakers and take pupils on visits so that they can explore topics in more depth.

Pupils achieve well in reading. Leaders have invested in high-quality resources to develop pupils' reading abilities. This has increased pupils' enjoyment of reading and developed their confidence as readers. Most pupils said that they now enjoy reading.

Pupils also achieve well in mathematics. Planning focuses on ensuring that pupils master important knowledge and skills. For example, pupils practise calculation methods and times tables regularly. They enjoy using this knowledge to solve problems. When planning work in science, teachers take into account what pupils have already studied in mathematics. They plan well-chosen activities so that pupils can apply and deepen both their mathematical and their scientific knowledge. This approach is not used consistently enough in other subjects.

In writing, staff plan pupils' learning carefully. They aim to ensure that pupils become accurate and confident writers. Sometimes, though, teachers do not expect pupils to write accurately in other subjects. This prevents pupils from achieving to the best of their abilities in writing.

Leaders and staff provide exceptional levels of support for pupils' personal development. The programme for pupils' personal, social, economic and health (PSHE) programme is carefully planned. Pupils learn about different beliefs and cultures and the importance of respecting difference. Pupils also have plentiful opportunities to find out about their rights and responsibilities as citizens. The therapeutic provision is also of high quality. Pupils learn strategies that they can use to manage their behaviour and feelings. From a young age, leaders encourage pupils to take on leadership roles. Sixth-form students respond well to the opportunities they have to earn privileges. They are keen to show that they are responsible and independent. Pupils behave well in lessons. Staff manage any issues effectively. They make sure that pupils' learning is not disrupted. Pupils take pride in their achievements, as their well-presented work shows.

Leaders make sure that the premises are suitable for all aspects of pupils' learning. They have realistic plans which, if approved, will enable them to offer a wider range of subjects and increase the number of pupils on roll. They have already invested in a new science laboratory as well as a well-equipped room for design and technology. A new food technology room is also planned. Leaders' plans take into account pupils' additional needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong safeguarding culture. All staff receive regular training. They are vigilant and respond quickly to any concerns that arise.

Pupils were positive about the way in which staff work to keep them safe. They are well supervised at social times. Leaders work closely with parents and carers, the local authority and other agencies to ensure that any concerns about pupils' welfare are followed up promptly.

The proprietor and governors make sure that staff are appointed in accordance with statutory guidance. They also make thorough checks on the safety and suitability of the premises, including whether the school complies with the Equality Act 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders and staff have put considerable effort into improving pupils' reading skills. This work has paid dividends. However, the quality of pupils' writing has not kept pace with improvements in their reading. Leaders and teachers should strengthen subject planning so that pupils have enough opportunities to consolidate their writing skills, including when they write in other subjects.
- In mathematics, teaching gives due weight to ensuring that pupils master basic skills as soon as possible. For instance, pupils have well-planned opportunities to practise and remember their times tables. Pupils have opportunities to apply these skills in some other subjects, such as science. However, this is not consistent. Leaders should refine subject planning so that opportunities for pupils to deepen their mathematical knowledge are identified appropriately across a range of subjects.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	136265
DfE registration number	305/6082
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10115252
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	24
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Outcomes First Group
Chair	Graham Baker
Headteacher	Greg Sorrell
Annual fees (day pupils)	£47,300
Telephone number	0208 462 1010
Website	www.bastonhouseschool.org.uk
Email address	info@bastonhouseschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–3 May 2018

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Options Autism division of Outcomes First Group.
- The school caters specifically for pupils with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The school is registered to admit pupils aged from 5 to 19 years. It currently does not have any pupils below Year 5.
- Since the previous inspection, a new science laboratory and design and technology workshop have been built, and plans are in place for a new food technology room.
- The school does not use any alternative provision. Some sixth-form students attend local colleges, including Hadlow College for part-time vocational courses.

Information about this inspection

We 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.

- We focused deeply on reading, English, mathematics, computing and PSHE. We visited lessons jointly with senior leaders and looked at samples of pupils' work. We also considered pupils' learning in other subjects, such as science and food technology.
- We spoke formally with a group of pupils from Year 5 to the sixth form. We also spoke informally with other pupils.
- We held meetings with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders and members of the governing body and the Outcomes First Group. We spoke by telephone with the chief executive officer, who is also the chair of the governing body.
- We reviewed the responses of 24 parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. We also took into account the two responses from pupils and the 28 responses from staff to Ofsted's surveys.
- We looked at records related to behaviour, bullying, complaints and safeguarding.

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.
- The school's proposal is to increase the number of pupils on roll from 85 to 115. The school will continue to cater for pupils with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.
- This was the first material change inspection carried out by Ofsted.

Inspection team

Grace Marriott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Ofsted Inspector

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