



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Additional Inspection Report

Beech House School

December 2022

School's details

School	Beech House School			
DfE number	354/6001			
Address	Beech House School 184 Manchester Road Rochdale Lancashire OL11 4JQ			
Telephone number	01706 646309			
Email address	info@beechhouseschool.co.uk			
Principal	Mr Kevin Sartain			
Proprietor	Mr Kevin Sartain			
Age range	2 to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	183			
	EYFS	53	Preparatory	25
	Seniors	105		
Date of inspection	7 December 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Beech House School is an independent co-educational day school. It is located close to Rochdale town centre. The principal is also the proprietor and has responsibility for governance. The school is divided into three sections: the senior school for pupils between the ages of eleven and sixteen; the upper preparatory department, for pupils aged from eight to eleven; and the lower preparatory department for pupils up to the age of seven and including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The lower preparatory department is located half a mile from the main site. The school has 22 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 6 have an education, health and care plan. There are 84 pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was an additional inspection in November 2020.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced additional inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) which focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraphs 2 to 4 (curriculum, relationships and sex education (RSE), teaching and assessment)	Met
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraphs 9 (behaviour) and 10 (bullying)	Met
Part 3, paragraphs 11 (health and safety) and 12 (fire)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 13 (first aid)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 15 (admissions and attendance)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 7, paragraph 33 (handling of complaints)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (quality of leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum, RSE, teaching, framework for pupils' performance [ISSR Part 1 paragraphs 2-4]

- 2.1 The school meets the standards.
- 2.2 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. The needs of those with SEND or other learning and behavioural barriers are addressed effectively where the school has information about any specific needs. Staff receive suitable training in this area. Teaching shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons. The extra-curricular arrangements include effective provision for pupils whose social anxiety means that their wellbeing is at risk during breaks and lunchtimes.
- 2.3 The personal, health, social and economic education (PHSE) curriculum effectively encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act. The curriculum is successfully implemented. In line with statutory guidance for RSE there is a planned programme, with topics being covered at an appropriate age and ability level.
- 2.4 A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]

- 2.5 The school meets the standard.
- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. In particular the school promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures. The school encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7]

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.9 The school meets the standard.
- 2.10 Implementation of all aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures is effective in providing appropriate support for the needs of pupils, including those in the EYFS.
- 2.11 Safeguarding procedures are implemented successfully to safeguard children at risk and those in need. Staff show effective understanding of their responsibilities, including with regard to child-on-child abuse and any such abuse linked to respect for those with protected characteristics, including race, and pupils with SEND. The safeguarding policy includes suitable definitions of abuse and appropriate guidance regarding possible abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil, including linking such abuse to bullying.

- 2.12 The training for those with specific safeguarding responsibilities is in line with local requirements and statutory advice and is up to date. Training in safeguarding for teaching and non-teaching staff is of sufficient quality and frequency. In discussions, staff showed a good knowledge of whistleblowing and safeguarding procedures and a confidence in using them. They have a suitable knowledge of the thresholds for reporting issues. Staff are aware of who to go to if they have a concern or receive a disclosure. They understand that they can make a direct referral to children's services if necessary. They take appropriate action when needful.
- 2.13 The DSLs on the two sites act on and refer the early signs of risk or need, monitor any potential for radicalisation, and ensure the school listens to the views of individual pupils as required by *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. This is confirmed in written evidence from safeguarding records. Where pupils express a concern they receive a response and appropriate action is taken where necessary. Effective communication is maintained with parents.
- 2.14 Pupils receive guidance on staying safe and show understanding of what they have been taught, including in relation to e-safety. Monitoring and filtering of technology is effective. The physical and mental health of all pupils involved in any incident are given a high priority, and the school liaises effectively with external agencies, including those concerning children missing in education. This ensures access to professional support for individual pupils.
- 2.15 Suitable arrangements for handling allegations against staff, senior leaders or the proprietor, and potential misconduct, are included in safeguarding procedures; they include seeking immediate advice from the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO). Records show that procedures are followed effectively, and the school follows up actions promptly. The school understands its role in reporting any person to relevant regulatory bodies if circumstances require it.
- 2.16 The proprietor is appropriately trained in safeguarding and conducts an annual review of the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements. The proprietor and heads of school work closely with the LADO and other external professionals in discussing individual cases and strategic aims. Suitable recruitment procedures for staff are outlined within the safeguarding policy and detailed in a separate recruitment policy.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour and bullying [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 9 and 10]

- 2.17 The school meets the standards.
- 2.18 A suitable behaviour policy and arrangements to guard against bullying are in place. Both are implemented effectively. Staff are given effective training and pupils are given guidance about bullying. There is a clear code of conduct for pupils. Sanctions are applied appropriately and proportionately. Records of misbehaviour are detailed, allowing trends to be identified and the effectiveness of sanctions to be evaluated. Appropriate adjustments are made for pupils with behavioural or other needs.
- 2.19 The school promotes respect of those with protected characteristics through its behaviour policy and has defined levels of behaviour that guide decisions when individual incidents arise. Records corroborate the views of pupils that there is almost no child-on-child abuse of those with protected characteristics. When any does occur, senior leaders treat incidents with due seriousness and effectively. They provide support for alleged victim and perpetrator and monitor the effectiveness of any action taken.
- 2.20 Detailed recording enables all pastoral concerns to be logged for each pupil. All incidents of misbehaviour between pupils are considered as potential bullying and/or safeguarding issues, and trends analysed. Allegations of bullying, when they occur, are reported quickly and in detail, and dealt

with proportionately. The school supports both the victim and perpetrator effectively. Subsequent behaviour is closely monitored. Documentation shows that parents of both alleged victim and perpetrator are involved at the earliest stages of any incident.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety, including fire [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 11 and 12]

- 2.21 The school meets the standards.
- 2.22 The proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws and regulations to prevent fire are complied with. There is an appropriate health and safety policy. The school has a fire risk (prevention) policy which includes the elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances. A tour of the senior school building confirmed that suitable measures to promote health and safety and mitigate any risk of accident or fire are in place.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – first aid [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 13]

- 2.23 The school meets the standard.
- 2.24 The proprietor ensures that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy. A tour of the school confirmed that suitable first aid equipment is in place.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14]

- 2.25 The school meets the standard.
- 2.26 Records of behavioural incidents confirm the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through appropriate deployment of school staff.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – admission and attendance registers [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 15]

- 2.27 The school meets the standard.
- 2.28 The proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. No contrary evidence was seen. The school is alert to absence of any pupil which suggests they may be a child missing education.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16]

- 2.29 The school meets the standard.
- 2.30 The school's risk assessment policy clearly describes appropriate lines of responsibility and the approaches to be taken to identify and mitigate risk. There is an effective culture of assessing risk to pupils in any decision taken, in particular regarding pupils about whom behavioural or safeguarding concerns have been identified. Appropriate assessments are also made for the needs of individual pupils both while in school and in the locality of the school. In all these areas, appropriate action is taken to mitigate risks identified.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

- 2.31 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Manner in which complaints are handled [ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33]

- 2.32 The school meets the standard.
- 2.33 The school's policy allows complaints to be considered on an informal basis. It provides for the establishment of a formal procedure for a complaint to be made in writing; for a hearing before a panel which includes an independent member and allows for parent to be accompanied; for the panel to make findings and recommendations; and for a confidential record to be kept of findings. Records of complaints show that the school follows its own procedures with sufficient rigour, including encouraging parents with concerns to follow the statutory procedures. Whether or not complaints have been upheld, the school undertakes a detailed review of any lessons learned and implements any consequent recommendations effectively.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.34 The school meets the standard.
- 2.35 Appropriate procedures are implemented which allow the senior leaders and the proprietor to manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements and monitor compliance with standards and other statutory advice. They work effectively with external agencies and promote the needs of those with SEND. In this way the leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently and the well-being of the pupils is promoted.

3. Summary of evidence

3.1 The inspectors held discussions with the principal, head of the senior school, those responsible for pupils with SEND, and other members of staff. They visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mr Stephen Cole

Reporting inspector

Mr Bill Burn

Assistant reporting inspector