

Inspection of Bright Futures School

Friezland Lane, Greenfield, Oldham, Lancashire OL3 7EU

Inspection dates: 16 to 18 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Bright Futures School. They benefit from strong relationships with staff who encourage and reassure them at every opportunity. Parents and carers, and pupils, told inspectors that the school has made a positive difference to their lives.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning. Adults are skilled in supporting pupils' individual learning and development. This ensures that pupils experience a highly relevant curriculum that is appropriate to their needs. Pupils are taught by teachers who know them extremely well. This prepares pupils, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), well for the next steps in their education and adult life.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well. Pupils across the school focus intently on their learning. Staff successfully help pupils to learn to manage their behaviour and their emotions.

On the rare occasions that bullying occurs, leaders deal with these incidents immediately. Pupils feel happy and safe at school. This is because they are confident that staff will help them if they are worried or anxious about anything.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of activities to promote their wider personal development. This includes opportunities to go horse riding, cycling and trampolining, as well as being involved in charity work and environmental projects.

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

Leaders have made improvements to the quality of the curriculum. They have ensured that the curriculum is suitably ambitious. Leaders have also made sure that the curriculum is well designed in most subjects and key stages. They have placed the development of pupils' communication and language skills at the heart of everything that they do.

In most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn and in which order. The key knowledge that staff must teach pupils is clearly defined. However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum is less well developed. In these subjects, the essential knowledge that staff want pupils to learn and the order in which this should be taught are not as clear as they should be. Nevertheless, most pupils across key stages 1 to 4 achieve well over time.

In the majority of subjects, staff have a deep understanding of how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for all pupils. For example, in the communication and language curriculum, many teachers are experts in using the information that they have about pupils' additional needs to break learning down into small, manageable steps. This helps pupils to learn well.

In most subjects, teachers explain new ideas clearly and provide pupils with regular opportunities to revisit and recap important information, knowledge and skills. In a small number of other subjects, some teachers do not have the subject-specific knowledge required to deliver the curriculum as well as they should. These teachers lack confidence when adapting the delivery of the curriculum to meet pupils' individual needs. Some pupils do not learn as well as they should.

Teachers carefully consider the targets in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans when designing learning. Pupils engage well with their learning and they are motivated to complete the activities that teachers prepare for them. Adults are highly attuned to how calm or anxious pupils are in lessons. They skilfully use this insight to judge when pupils need a break from learning.

Reading is a priority in the school. Older pupils enjoy reading with younger pupils. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy the reading challenges that leaders set for them. Leaders place an appropriate emphasis on ensuring that all pupils learn to read well. For those pupils who need it, a suitable phonics programme is in place. Teachers deliver this phonics programme with increasing confidence and appropriate subject knowledge.

Staff explicitly teach pupils how to behave. For example, staff skilfully develop pupils' understanding of the most appropriate ways to react and behave in different situations. Over time, pupils increase their ability to manage their own behaviour. Pupils respond positively to the rewards that they receive for trying their best. Pupils attend school regularly. They benefit from a harmonious environment that supports them to learn effectively.

Central to leaders' work is developing pupils' personal, social, emotional and life skills. Pupils are supported to develop their self-esteem and are taught about how to keep themselves healthy, both mentally and physically. Leaders have successfully implemented the statutory guidance on relationships and sex education. Pupils enjoy opportunities to engage in horticulture, cookery, making crafted items to sell and working with animals.

Older pupils are offered highly personalised careers education, information, advice, and guidance. This includes work experience opportunities, such as working in local shops, the computing industry and animal husbandry. These opportunities are geared towards developing pupils' confidence, resilience and independence.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards are met. There are systems in place to ensure that leaders are held to account for the quality of education that the school provides.

Leaders and the proprietor have made arrangements to meet the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

The new, purpose-built building is well maintained, clean and well resourced. There is suitable outdoor space for pupils to get fresh air at breaktimes and to engage in physical education lessons.

Leaders have ensured that they adhere to statutory health and safety requirements. Leaders keep parents well informed about their work to improve the school. Policies are available to parents on the school's website and on request. The school's complaints policy is fully compliant. The school has a suitable plan that describes how pupils with SEND can take part fully in the school's curriculum.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel that they are well supported by leaders, including in managing their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's safeguarding policy complies with up-to-date, statutory guidance. This policy is published on the school's website and is available to parents on request.

Leaders and staff are well trained and knowledgeable about keeping pupils safe. The procedures in place to identify and report concerns are well understood by staff. Staff are strong advocates for all pupils, including those who are particularly vulnerable. When safeguarding concerns are identified, leaders engage well with external agencies to secure timely support for pupils and their families.

Strong partnership working between leaders and parents helps to keep pupils safe. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about different risks in a way that is appropriate for their age and level of cognitive understanding.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not considered exactly what pupils should learn and in what order. This hinders some pupils from achieving as highly as they could. Leaders should finalise the curriculum content in these remaining few subjects to ensure that teachers know exactly what knowledge pupils must learn.
- In a few subjects, some staff lack the confidence to deliver the curriculum as leaders intend. This means that some pupils are not learning all that they could. Leaders should ensure that staff are fully equipped to implement the curriculum effectively and confidently in these 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 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	105748
DfE registration number	353/6015
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10267594
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Proprietor	Bright Futures Schools Limited
Chair	Zoe Thompson
Headteacher	Alison Hughes
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000 to £52,000
Telephone number	01457 878738
Website	www.brightfutureschool.co.uk
Email address	alison@brightfutureschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 to 13 December 2018

Information about this school

- The previous standard inspection took place from 11 to 13 December 2018.
- A material change inspection took place in July 2020. The material change had been requested due to the school preparing to move to new premises.
- At the time of this inspection, the school had moved into its new, purpose-built premises. This provision is located at Friezland Lane, Greenfield, Oldham, Lancashire OL3 7EU.
- All the pupils who attend this school have SEND. All have an EHC plan. The school caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The headteacher, known as the head of learning, is due to retire at the end of the autumn term 2023. A new head of learning has been appointed and will begin at the school for a handover period from the beginning of the autumn term 2023.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no Reception-age children on roll.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors spoke with the head of learning and the head of development, who is also the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors also spoke with the middle manager and staff about safeguarding arrangements.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the premises. Inspectors checked documentation and other information to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- There is no governing body. The head of development is the sole proprietor, and along with the head of learning, is responsible for the governance of the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to the independent school standards, the curriculum, school improvement, safeguarding and the checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and spoke to members of staff about their well-being and workload.
- There were no responses to the pupil survey. However, inspectors spoke with some pupils about their work and school life. All meetings with pupils were carried out in the presence of a member of staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in communication and language, which incorporated aspects of early reading and phonics, and mathematics and humanities. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with curriculum leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of pupils' work, and, where appropriate, spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Barraclough

His Majesty's Inspector

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