

# Inspection of The Orchard Independent Special School

Unit 1, Sargon Way, Great Grimsby Business Park, Grimsby DN37 9PH

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Inspection dates: 4 to 6 June 2024

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## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**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?**

This is a school with a big heart that champions every pupil to success. Pupils quickly settle into this caring environment. They are well looked after by committed adults who know how best to help each individual. Parents, pupils and staff are united by the shared vision of preparing individuals for their next steps. One pupil captured the thoughts of many when they said, 'There is something for everyone here.'

Pupils benefit from an ambitious curriculum that is carefully tailored to meet their individual needs. Lessons are calm and purposeful, allowing the majority of pupils to learn without distractions. Pupils enjoy social times, engaging in activities such as playing board games with staff, and participating in organised physical exercises. This is a happy and supportive environment where bullying is not tolerated, and any rare instances are swiftly addressed.

Pupils value the range of extra-curricular experiences available. Drama and football clubs are popular, as are the reward visits held every Friday. Pupils also have opportunities to engage with the wider community. Some enjoy reading to residents at the nearby care home, while others participate in fundraising for their chosen causes. During the inspection, Year 9 pupils were looking forward to their upcoming residential educational visit.

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

The school carefully considers what each pupil needs to achieve success, both academically and in developing their confidence and broader social skills. The 'small steps' that each pupil needs to achieve to meet their targets are clearly defined. Teachers monitor these closely and adapt their approach accordingly. They make links between new learning and what pupils have been taught before. This approach reinforces pupils' learning and helps them to remember what they have learned over time.

Teaching staff value the training that they have received to meet the needs of pupils, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, there is currently insufficient strategic oversight of this important aspect of the school's work. This results in limited opportunities to further enhance the support that the school provides to both pupils and staff. Additional leadership capacity has been recruited for the next academic year.

Pupils who need help to read fluently and with confidence are quickly identified when they start school. Those who are at the earliest stages of learning to read benefit from the interventions they receive from well-trained staff. Consequently, younger pupils quickly learn to read with increasing accuracy. The school is taking the right steps to encourage older, reluctant readers to engage positively with reading.

For many pupils, the learning environment provides a pivotal opportunity to embrace education positively. As a result of the support that they receive, most pupils meet the school's high expectations for their behaviour. Staff have the training, skills and knowledge to help those pupils whose behaviour becomes dysregulated. Leaders carefully analyse behaviour records, including on the rare occasion when physical intervention has been needed. They know that, over time, pupils behave increasingly well.

Some pupils do not attend school often enough. They miss out on what the school has to offer and their learning. Although detailed information about each pupil's attendance is collected, there is a lack of precision in analysing this data. This limits the school's ability to determine the most effective strategies for improving the attendance of specific groups of pupils. The 'school advisory panel' and proprietor body are aware that there is more to do to monitor the impact of the actions taken by the school to improve attendance for these pupils.

Pupils display high levels of conduct and respect, including to visitors. Pupils are kind to their peers. Some offer kind words or a reassuring hug to a friend when it is needed. Pupils know the importance of keeping mentally, physically and emotionally healthy. They learn about careers through the taught curriculum and have the opportunity to visit local colleges, business enterprises and engage with local employers. Pupils are taught what it means to be a British citizen in our diverse society. They are well supported to take up their next steps in learning with confidence.

Staff are proud to work here. They know that leaders consider their workload and well-being. The proprietor ensures that all of the independent school standards are met. The school buildings are maintained to a high standard. All necessary policies are in place. The proprietor ensures that all duties required by the Equality Act 2010 are met. However, some of the strategic systems overseen by key leaders, including the proprietor and directors, lack sharpness and depth. This hampers the advisory panel and proprietor body from getting the information and assurances that they need to oversee, challenge and support the school as effectively as they could.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Some pupils do not attend school often enough. They miss out on the opportunities that the school provides. This impacts on the amount of progress that they make. The school must ensure that it carefully analyses attendance trends and acts strategically to secure improved levels of attendance across the school.

- In some areas of the school's work, there is a lack of precision in leadership systems and processes. This limits the opportunities to further enhance the support that the school provides to staff and pupils. The proprietor body should ensure that it has a clear oversight of all leadership actions and decision-making to enable the best possible guidance and support for pupils and staff.

### **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144366
<b>DfE registration number</b>	812/6005
<b>Local authority</b>	North East Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321502
<b>Type of school</b>	Other Independent Special School
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	94
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Orchard Education Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Tracey Storey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steven Broderick
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£34,000 to £58,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01472 898498
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.orchardhumber.co.uk">www.orchardhumber.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@orchardhumber.co.uk">info@orchardhumber.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 to 6 May 2022

## Information about this school

- The Orchard Independent Special School operates from three premises: Sargon Way, DN37 9PH; Laceby Road, DN34 5LT; and Roberts Street, DN43 8HF.
- All pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan for their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

## 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the second 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 of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. Discussions were held with members of the proprietor body. Inspectors met with three members of the school's advisory panel.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, PSHE and early reading. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. An inspector listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans, reviewed pupils' work and spoke to pupils about some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: spoke with the designated safeguarding lead; reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors undertook a tour of all three sites from which the school operates. Inspectors visited all areas, including classrooms, social spaces and other

facilities. They checked the school buildings and grounds against the independent school standards.

- The views of staff were considered through formal and informal meetings with staff and through their responses to Ofsted’s staff questionnaire. Inspectors took account of the views of parents through their responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of attending the school and considered their responses to Ofsted’s online survey for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Eleanor Belfield, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Gordon Watts

Ofsted Inspector

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