

# Inspection of Hopewell School

Harmony House, Baden Powell Close, Dagenham, Essex RM9 6XN

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Inspection dates: 3 to 5 June 2025

## **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?**

Pupils are happy to attend this school. They feel safe and supported and make progress in their lessons. The school prioritises the important communication, literacy and numeracy skills that pupils need. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their life after school.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of interesting and challenging activities that the school organises to develop pupils' personal, social and emotional skills. For example, pupils go climbing and have regular swimming and sailing activities.

Pupils behave well. Because of their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), pupils sometimes need help to manage their emotions. Staff offer this support in a calm and respectful way so pupils can usually get back to learning as quickly as possible. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens, and if it did, pupils are confident that adults would sort it out quickly. Unkind behaviour is never tolerated.

There is an ambitious curriculum in place to meet the needs of all pupils at Hopewell School. Pupils like the extra time and support they get in lessons, and they feel that staff understand them well. The curriculum helps them learn important knowledge in an organised way.

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

The school's curriculum is broad and tailored to the interests and needs of the pupils. It also has a sharp focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to make sure that pupils have the essential skills and knowledge for later life. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They adapt lessons to the individual needs of the pupils in their class. In some lessons, teachers do not always adapt the content of the curriculum to the individual needs of pupils as well as they could. This slows down learning for these pupils.

When pupils join the school, often after a long period out of education, the school makes a careful assessment of what they know and can do. Staff track pupils' journey through the curriculum, including spotting if there are any misconceptions. Teachers typically use this information well to inform what they will teach next.

Pupils who join the school without the skills and knowledge to read fluently have regular and frequent help to catch up as quickly as possible. Staff identify what support the pupils need, and these structured interventions have a positive impact. All pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading. Staff model this by sharing the books that they are reading and by their enthusiastic participation in daily reading activities with pupils. The school provides well-focused sessions for parents to learn how to support their child's reading and encourages them to take part in book clubs.

Pupils learn about a wide range of important topics that help them develop towards adulthood. For example, pupils learn about relationships and sex education, diversity, tolerance and respect for other people, and the difference between right and wrong. The school has ensured a focus on learning about safety around water this term, because of a recent increase in tragic incidents. Pupils have taken part in these lessons with mature interest. All pupils receive independent careers advice and guidance and learn about different types of work and training. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils also benefit from other regular opportunities for high-quality experiences off site through a creative programme of outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils take part in fun and challenging pursuits such as bushcraft, sailing, canoeing, high ropes, archery and axe throwing. These activities build pupils' confidence, resilience and social and communication skills.

The school is a calm and orderly environment. Staff know the pupils very well, and they are alert to any signs that pupils need help to regulate their emotions. Staff are confident in the management of behaviour, and they work well as a team to support pupils and each other. At times, there is some variation in the way behaviour is managed. As a result, a small number of pupils are not making as much progress as they could. New staff receive training and support, including regular supervision, to feel confident in their roles. The school takes all reasonable steps to encourage pupils to attend school regularly.

There is a well-organised system for recruiting and training new staff. The school understands the importance of ensuring that all staff who work with vulnerable pupils at the school are suitable for the role. The systems for vetting staff and preparing them for their roles are secure. There are some weaknesses in the way the school records some statutory information, for example on the school's admission register. This was quickly rectified so that the school met the requirements of the independent school standards, but the proprietor and governors had not noticed these gaps were present.

Staff like working at the school and with the pupils. Staff feel well supported by leaders, including governors. They say that leaders take their well-being into consideration and have taken steps to reduce workload. The school is compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Some aspects of the school's record-keeping are not well organised. This lack of oversight means that the school's improvement work is not as focused as it could

be. The school should ensure that all record-keeping is well organised and that the proprietor and those responsible for governance fulfil their roles more effectively.

- There is some variability in curriculum implementation and support for pupils' individual needs. Where this is the case, pupils struggle to engage in their learning and do not achieve as well as they could. The school should continue its work to support staff in implementing the curriculum consistently well.
- There is some variation in the way behaviour is managed. As a result, a small number of pupils are not making as much progress as they could. The school should ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills they need to be able to meet the different needs of pupils so they remain fully engaged in their learning.

## **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>             | 134388                                                                     |
| <b>DfE registration number</b>             | 301/6002                                                                   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Barking and Dagenham                                                       |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10375105                                                                   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Other independent special school                                           |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Independent day school                                                     |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 5 to 19                                                                    |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                      |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 54                                                                         |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                          | Herman Allen                                                               |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Matt Miller                                                                |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Franck Coido                                                               |
| <b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>            | £50,000 to £65,000                                                         |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 8593 6610                                                              |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.hopewellschool.co.uk">www.hopewellschool.co.uk</a>     |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:admin@hopewellschool.co.uk">admin@hopewellschool.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 4 to 6 July 2023                                                           |

## Information about this school

- Hopewell School is an independent special day school in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. It is located in shared premises. The school no longer operates on an additional site.
- The school provides placements for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. The school does not offer sixth-form provision, but some individual pupils stay beyond the age of 16 to complete qualifications.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Currently, the school has pupils from Year 4 upwards.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school's last standard inspection was in July 2023 when it was judged to be requires improvement.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to the leadership team.

## 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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors met with the proprietor and the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including reading, mathematics, personal, social, health and economic education and creative media.
- For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors 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 considered the responses of parents to the Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also reviewed the responses to the online surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Gary Pocock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jude Wilson

His Majesty's Inspector

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