

Inspection of Kite Ridge School

Verney Avenue, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP12 3NE

Inspection dates:	25 and 26 March 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are known and expertly cared for at this school. Pupils join here having been excluded from other schools for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have highly complex sensory, communication and interaction needs, as well as often being at the earliest stages of cognitive development. Most come here unable to work with other pupils or adults. However, due to the specialist support they receive, they build positive relationships with the staff who help them. They trust that their adults will keep them safe. Due to this, pupils begin to develop the capacity to work with others.

During social times, pupils are increasingly able to manage being outside or in the lunch hall with their peers. They use their individual methods of communication well to voice their needs and wants, and staff respond to these rapidly. Instances of distress do happen because of pupils' sensory processing needs. However, effective implementation of behaviour support plans means that adults spot signs of distress early and provide sensitive and effective support.

This is an ambitious provision. Pupils benefit from the personalised curriculum they receive. They engage well with their activities and often meet the high expectations that staff have for what they will achieve.

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

The school has an ambitious curriculum, designed around the specific SEND that pupils have. Some parts of the curriculum are new. As such, the school has not finished training all staff in these curriculum areas. This means that some staff do not have the knowledge to support teaching and pupils' learning as well as they could.

Learning pathways are well matched to provide pupils with a highly individualised offer. Ambitious end points are identified for all pupils. The school has secure and specialist knowledge of what pupils need to be ready for their next stage. Learning is coherently sequenced through each pupil's curriculum to help them achieve these outcomes.

Some pupils receive a formal curriculum which includes mathematics, English and phonics. This is well implemented by teaching staff. Pupils who access this curriculum are learning to read well, with the use of matched books and resources. They also secure foundational mathematics and English knowledge well. Some pupils are not ready for the formal curriculum. These pupils take part in activities specifically designed to meet their social interaction, communication and therapeutic needs. These pupils become independent communicators, able to express wishes and choices. Pupils' needs are well met through the curriculum. As a result, pupils achieve well at this school.

There is a calm and nurturing culture through the school. Pupils learn and use effective strategies to support their self and co-regulation. They engage in learning activities well and form positive relationships with those around them.

Each pupil has a preparation for adulthood 'transitions' programme. This sets out what is important for each pupil to achieve before they leave the school. It also clearly sets out what will help them to achieve this. Pupils take part in a range of activities that support their wider development to achieve these goals. They visit the local community, plan shopping trips and learn vital self-care skills. This prepares pupils well for life beyond the school.

Staff are highly motivated and passionate about what they do. They feel that their well-being is prioritised by the school and appreciate the training and support they receive. The school has made great strides to develop the curriculum offer. It has secured systems which keep pupils safe, well supported and able to achieve well. However, there are some administrative systems where oversight has not been as robust. This includes oversight of policy review as well as safeguarding record-keeping. Leaders recognise this and are clear about their plans to improve their oversight.

The school is ambitious and places pupils at the heart of all decisions made. School leaders, governors and the local authority have worked well together to improve the school. They have ensured a high-quality curriculum is in place which meets pupils' needs well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school takes effective and timely action to ensure that pupils and their families are safe and receive the help that they need. There is an open and transparent culture for safeguarding through the school. Staff have secure knowledge of how and where to report safeguarding concerns and do so quickly.

Safeguarding records currently do not match the requirements as set out in legislation and guidance. While the school can demonstrate the appropriate action taken following a concern being raised and the outcome of this, this detail is not clearly recorded in safeguarding files for all concerns. Therefore, there is not a safeguarding record-keeping system which consistently shows a chronology of incidents, a summary of concerns or what the action taken or outcome was.

The school was receptive to this feedback during the inspection. Prior to the end of the inspection, safeguarding leaders had devised, and were ready to implement, an appropriate approach for record-keeping.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There has not been secure leadership oversight of some school systems and procedures. Consequently, a number of policies require review, and safeguarding

records need to be sharpened. Governors and school leaders need to be precise in their strategic oversight and monitoring of these areas.

- Some parts of the curriculum are newly in place and training in these areas is still being rolled out. This means some learning mentors do not have a secure understanding of the formal aspects of the curriculum. The school should ensure that all staff receive training that will give them the knowledge needed to support teaching effectively and to help pupils build their knowledge over time.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	138102
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10341711
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	8
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Kathy Forbes
Headteacher	Steven Sneesby
Website	www.kiteridge.bucks.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils who have been, or are at risk of being, permanently excluded from schools for pupils with special educational needs.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Pupils who attend here have a range of complex needs. These include severe learning difficulties, social, communication and interaction and sensory needs.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has a designation as a pupil referral unit. However, currently, the local authority allocates pupils to Kite Ridge on full-time and permanent placements.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and another member of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading and communication, mathematics and humanities. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, spoke to teachers, communicated with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. They also communicated with pupils in lessons and during play and lunchtimes.
- The lead inspector considered a range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school, their school improvement plan and minutes from governors' meetings.
- Inspectors considered parents' and carers' responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, including free-text comments.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.

Inspection team

Nina Marabese, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Maxine McDonald-Taylor

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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