

Haddon Dene School

57 Gladstone Road, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 2HY

Inspection dates

21–23 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and those in positions of governance have ensured that the school has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- The large majority of pupils make good or better progress because most teaching and learning is good across all phases of the school.
- Pupils are respectful and polite. They have good attitudes to learning because they enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils behave well. They know that staff will respond when they have problems or concerns. Pupils report that there is no bullying at the school.
- Although children get off to a good start in the early years, more could be done to develop their independent learning skills, as well as improving the outdoor learning environment.
- Staff are beginning to use the school's new systems to monitor pupils' progress effectively. However, more time is needed for assessment procedures to become fully embedded.
- Senior leaders and those responsible for governance have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic. They are beginning to have a greater impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning within their own areas of responsibility.
- The curriculum is a strength. Teaching staff are knowledgeable. Subject specialists provide pupils with good-quality teaching and tuition, especially in the arts and in sport.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils told inspectors they feel safe in school and appreciate the care and attention given to them by staff.
- On occasion, teachers do not plan learning that fully meets the needs of all pupils. This includes pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- In some lessons, teaching support staff are not used as well as they could be to support pupils' learning.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers:
 - are more consistent in planning learning that takes into account fully the ability of all pupils
 - offer a more consistent level of support to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - ensure that support staff are better utilised to support learning.
- Improve provision in the early years by:
 - utilising the outside learning environment more effectively
 - giving children more opportunity to develop their independent learning skills.
- Further refine systems to monitor pupils' progress, so that they become a fully effective tool for staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning in order for pupils' outcomes to become outstanding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads the school with energy and total commitment. Her determination to address the weaknesses identified at the last inspection means the school is improving at a rapid pace.
- Members of the wider senior leadership team are effective and clearly understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. They support the headteacher well in addressing shortcomings in the quality of teaching and learning. As a consequence, teaching is improving and pupils are making better progress than they did in the recent past.
- Middle leaders respond well to the challenges placed on them by the headteacher. They enjoy the new levels of responsibility they have been given. This includes the SEN coordinator (SENCo), who is having an increasingly positive impact on improving provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Leaders have a better understanding of the quality of teaching and learning than was the case in the past. They have ensured that staff understand where provision could be better. Visits to other schools to share good practice, as well as focused professional development, are having a positive impact on improving the aspects that need to be improved further.
- The quality of the curriculum is a strength of the school. It suits the needs of the pupils well. Teachers have strong subject knowledge which is used effectively by leaders. This includes expertise in the arts and in physical education and sport, as well as in modern foreign languages and computing. Most pupils swim weekly. Dance, drama and music have a high profile.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of activities that enhance the wider curriculum. They told inspectors that they enjoy the many educational trips and clubs that are available. Outings to museums or theatres, horse riding, or parents who visit to share their specialist interests, such as beekeeping, all enrich the curriculum further.
- The school's curriculum also supports pupils' understanding and tolerance of the different cultures and faiths of others. Pupils only recently visited a local synagogue. Visits to the school by local magistrates, as well as the local Member of Parliament, help pupils understand British democracy and how the law is upheld.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors, and the vast majority who responded to the online parent questionnaire, are very positive about the leadership and management of the school. Their free-text messages in particular were mostly positive about the improvements seen since the last inspection.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have introduced new systems and processes to assess pupils' progress. These are helping teachers to plan learning, as well as enabling leaders to track pupils' progress. Leaders acknowledge that more time is needed before staff become fully conversant with all of the benefits the system can bring.

Governance

- Those in positions of governance are acutely aware of their statutory responsibilities. They have been reflective since the disappointing outcome of the last inspection. They are determined that leaders are provided with the right support and guidance to improve the school further. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and are working closely with the headteacher and other leaders to improve the quality of education at Haddon Dene School.
- The proprietor and directors act as the governing body for the school. A wider team of specialists provides support for school leaders in areas such as human resources, policy and legal matters, for instance. External moderation by specialist educational consultants provides the proprietor and school leaders with independent advice about the quality of provision. Because of this, leadership, management and governance of the school are sound.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The culture to ensure that pupils are kept safe is strong. Policies and procedures are fit for purpose, including checks on staff prior to their employment at the school. Staff are vigilant in their efforts to keep pupils safe.
- Staff training is up to date. This includes appropriate training for the school's designated safeguarding leads, and for first aid, for instance. Staff and those in positions of governance are aware of current government guidance about their responsibilities to keep pupils safe.
- All of the 16 parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection said they feel their children are safe at school. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire were very positive about all aspects of the school. A small minority of parents who replied to the questionnaire expressed negative views about the safety and welfare of pupils, as well as other aspects of provision.
- The school complies with all elements of the independent school standards regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils. This includes publishing a suitable safeguarding policy on its website.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Classrooms are happy places. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils understand that it is all right to make mistakes. Because of this, they are not afraid to offer answers, and generally engage very well in learning. As a consequence, most of them make good or better progress in a range of subjects across all year groups.
- Teachers' expectations of behaviour and engagement in learning are high. This includes subjects other than English and mathematics. Year 4 pupils were highly motivated during a drama lesson which focused on using their diaphragms to project their voices. Their attitudes to learning and approach to improving their delivery were admirable, given the unstructured nature of the exercise.
- Teachers put their strong subject knowledge to good use in classrooms. This enables

them to plan learning with confidence across the curriculum. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of subject-specialist teachers or tutors. This includes in computing, for instance, as well as in the arts and physical education and sport.

- Much of the learning that staff plan for is based on real life. Teachers try hard to make learning relevant to pupils. A mathematics lesson on using percentages was punctuated by the teacher constantly challenging pupils to relate their learning to day-to-day life. Pupils in Year 3 were keen to share their views on making the right kind of choices, comparing their ideas with each other, while speculating what their parents or other adults might think.
- Where teaching is stronger, staff plan learning that meets the needs of pupils of all abilities. Teachers use questioning well to confirm pupils' understanding, and add further challenge when needed. As a consequence, pupils are motivated to learn and are supported well when they are unsure.
- When teaching is less effective, teachers do not plan learning that meets the needs of pupils of all abilities. Sometimes, lower-attaining pupils or those who have SEN and/or disabilities are not supported well enough and their progress slows. Inconsistent use of teaching-support staff to strengthen learning also impacts on the progress pupils make in some lessons. Leaders are aware of these inconsistencies and have already begun to address them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy school. They show good attitudes to learning. During the inspection, most pupils were very deeply engaged in the activities teachers had planned for them. Inspectors witnessed a number of instances in classrooms when pupils congratulated each other on their success, or commiserated when things were not quite right.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe and how to keep healthy. They appreciate the lessons they have about staying safe online and understand about the potential dangers if they visit the local beach or when they cross the road. Visits by the fire brigade teach them about the dangers of fire.
- Pupils' well-being is supported well by staff. A dedicated member of staff is available to support pupils when the need arises. Pupils appreciate access to 'Ollie the Owl's worry box' and told inspectors they feel well cared for and safe at school. Pupils also told inspectors there is no bullying at school. However, a small minority of parents expressed concerns about bullying in Ofsted's online parent questionnaire.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are friendly and polite. They are respectful to each other and to staff and other adults. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is good in the school and that it does not impact negatively on their learning.
- During the inspection, inspectors found little evidence of poor behaviour. Playtimes were lively but safe. A group of boys were happy to share their Lego as they talked to the lead

inspector about the playtime rules. Pupils were well supervised at all times. Occasionally, younger pupils needed to be supervised more closely when they were excited.

- Most pupils attend school regularly. Attendance is monitored well by leaders. Absence is rarely a concern. When it is, leaders work well with families to ensure everything is done to offer appropriate support to improve the situation.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils make good or better progress from their different starting points. This is especially the case with most-able pupils. Because of this, attainment is high, and compares favourably with other schools nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. This is true in all phases of the school, although in some year groups, comparisons are not sensible due to low cohort numbers.
- Pupils' work provided inspectors with strong evidence that good progress is not restricted to mathematics and English. It is clear that pupils enjoy learning and are motivated to do their best in most things they do. This includes in science or in other subjects covered by the school's topic-based curriculum.
- Pupils are taught to be confident learners at Haddon Dene. Older pupils in particular display mature attitudes to learning. However, while pupils understand that they come to school to learn, there is an underlying sense of fun at the school. Although academic outcomes are important, the pastoral care and personal development of pupils are given equally high importance.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have introduced new systems and procedures for tracking the progress pupils make. Teachers are using the system to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding and to plan next steps in learning. Leaders are able to demonstrate that most pupils currently in the school are making good or better progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Classroom visits, including scrutiny of pupils' work, showed provision for lower-attaining pupils to be inconsistent. Sometimes, lower-attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they might, because teachers do not plan learning that closely matches their needs. This is also the case for the very few pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Where practice is better, pupils are supported well and their progress is strong. Leaders have already made developing these aspects of provision a key priority for improvement.

Early years provision

Good

- The headteacher leads the early years phase of the school. She understands clearly the strengths and areas that still need to be developed for the early years to become outstanding.
- Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception Years. Outcomes generally compare favourably to those seen in other schools nationally, although, as in other year groups, small numbers in some cohorts mean that comparisons are unwise.
- Transitions between Nursery and Reception are strong. Some most-able children in Nursery benefit from regular visits to Reception. Numbers are small, allowing staff to

focus on the needs of each individual child. Most children are very well prepared for their move up into Year 1 when the time comes.

- Parents are positive about all aspects of the early years. Staff work closely together to ensure that children feel safe and cared for. Parents appreciate the way staff communicate and keep them informed of their children's progress.
- Children behave well in the early years because staff have high expectations. The personal development of children is also a strength, although levels of supervision are high, and much of their learning is led by adults.
- Leaders know that more needs to be done to develop the outdoor learning environment. Part of the problem is due to the restrictions generated by the access to the school site and free-flow arrangements in and out of classrooms. However, leaders understand that improving this aspect of provision is crucial if they are to provide children with a truly first-class learning environment.

School details

Unique reference number	118962
DfE registration number	886/6022
Inspection number	10041265

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Number of part-time pupils	6
Proprietor	Dr Ali Khan
Headteacher	Alison Hatch
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,535–£7,020
Telephone number	01843 861 176
Website	www.haddondene.co.uk
Email address	secretary@haddondene.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–10 November 2016

Information about this school

- Haddon Dene is an independent day pre-preparatory and preparatory school.
- Pupils are taught in single-aged classes, one for each year group. The early years provision consists of a Nursery class and a Reception class.
- Very few pupils have SEN and/or disabilities. No pupils have a statement of SEN or an education, health and care plan.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2016.
- The school was previously inspected in November 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out a number of classroom visits during the inspection, observing pupils learning in 19 lessons, visiting every year group at least once. During classroom visits, inspectors observed teaching and learning, and assessed the quality of pupils' work. Most classroom visits were accompanied by senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and as pupils moved around the school. This included at the start and finish of the school day, during transitions between lessons, and at break and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, non-teaching support staff, the proprietor accompanied by a director, and a representative group of pupils.
- Inspectors took every opportunity to talk to pupils informally throughout the inspection, including during unstructured play. The lead inspector met with a small group of pupils to talk to them about the school's extra-curricular offer.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of day 2 and day 3 of the inspection. Inspectors took into account the 31 replies to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the accompanying free-text messages.
- A wide range of documents and policies was scrutinised, including those regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils, as well as other aspects of the independent school standards. The school's own self-evaluation, development planning and information about pupils' outcomes were also taken into consideration. Notes of visits from independent consultants were also considered.
- This was a full, standard inspection carried out earlier in the cycle than might be expected. The inspection was brought forward by the Department for Education due to concerns raised about provision for children who have SEN and/or disabilities, and perceived problems with bullying at the school.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Davies

Ofsted Inspector

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