

Inspection of Crookhey Hall School

Garstang Road, Cockerham, Lancaster LA2 0HA

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 October 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

At Crookhey Hall School, the school motto of 'preparing pupils for life in modern Britain' shines through in the experiences that pupils have. Pupils learn to engage with education while learning about themselves and the wider world.

Pupils enjoy attending school and feel valued by staff. Trusting relationships exist between staff and pupils. This helps pupils to feel safe and secure.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils try hard to live up to these expectations. They appreciate the time that staff take to recognise their achievements, both academically and in their personal development.

Many pupils who attend the school have had previous negative experiences of education. The school supports pupils' emotional development effectively. Pupils develop confidence and resilience as staff provide the support that they need while recognising when to promote independence. Consequently, pupils' behaviour improves the longer they attend the school. Pupils learn to recognise and manage their emotions. Staff swiftly intervene when pupils require additional support to resolve conflict. Pupils learn about how their choices impact others. This prepares them well for their next steps.

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

All pupils at the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The clinical team work closely with staff to help shape the delivery of the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. This is regularly evaluated to match pupils' needs as they develop.

Pupils learn a curriculum that carefully considers what they will learn and when this will be taught. The school has carefully set out what pupils need to know and remember at each stage. This includes some opportunities for pupils to revisit learning to help them know and remember more. Many staff are experts in their subjects. This enables them to make changes to the curriculum in response to what is working well. However, some checks that the school makes on pupils' learning do not enable staff to respond quickly enough to pupils' gaps in knowledge. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils who find it hard to read receive the help that they need to catch up quickly. There is an agreed approach to teaching phonics that supports pupils who are at the earliest stages of learning to read well. Staff model sounds accurately and support pupils with a consistent approach that extends through to their writing.

The school has a carefully planned offer for pupils' personal development. Pupils develop a strong sense of belonging. This gives them the confidence and interest that they need to learn about others and the world around them. Difference is celebrated at Crookhey Hall. Pupils learn about what makes people special, as well

as how to show respect for how different people live. The school prioritises opportunities for pupils to learn independent living skills. For example, pupils plan transport for trips, organise budgets and assess risks.

Pupils benefit from a well-thought-out careers programme. They receive the support that they need to create plans for their future and to achieve the necessary qualifications. The school offers a wide range of on-site experiences such as hairdressing. This enables pupils to gain realistic experiences in preparation for their further learning.

Staff know pupils' individual needs well. They know how to best support each pupil if they are finding something difficult. The consistent approach helps pupils to become familiar with the school's expectations.

The school closely monitors pupils' attendance. It maintains effective working relationships with parents that positively impact pupils attending regularly. The school offers bespoke support to families where pupils' attendance causes concern. Parents value the efforts of the school to support them in this area.

The proprietor has an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. It holds leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. This includes regular quality assurance of compliance with the independent school standards (the standards).

The school complies 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 of the checks that the school makes on pupils' learning do not enable staff to respond quickly enough to pupils' gaps in knowledge. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should refine its expectations for ongoing assessment of pupils' learning over time to support pupils in achieving well.

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

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| Unique reference number | 119849 |
| DfE registration number | 888/6022 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 10342010 |
| Type of school | Other independent special school |
| School category | Independent day school |
| Age range of pupils | 10 to 17 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 96 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Acorn Care and Education Ltd |
| Chair | Richard Power |
| Headteacher | Jane Husbands |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £50,796 to £80,000 |
| Telephone number | 01524 792618 |
| Website | www.crookheyhall.com |
| Email address | reception@crookheyhallschool.co.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 18 to 20 January 2022 |

Information about this school

- Crookhey Hall School is a co-educational school catering for pupils aged 10 to 17 with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school operates from premises at Garstang Road, Cockerham, Lancaster, LA2 0HA.
- The proprietor is Acorn Care and Education Limited. The group operates a large number of schools across England.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place from 18 to 20 January 2022.
- The school is registered to admit up to 100 pupils.
- The headteacher has joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The school uses one unregistered 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.

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, deputy headteachers, the regional director and the director of operations. The lead inspector spoke to the chair of the proprietor body by telephone.
- The lead inspector spoke to two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English (including reading), mathematics, personal, social, health and economic education and horticulture. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.

- An inspector carried out a tour of the premises.
- An inspector visited the alternative provision being used by the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation to check compliance with the standards.
- An inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- Inspectors considered the free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as the responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff to gather their views of the school.

Inspection team

Jane Dennis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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