

# Inspection of Strive for Education

21 North Park Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 5PD

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Inspection dates: 7 to 9 November 2023

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<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Attendance at this school is a wonderful experience for pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are highly respectful. The atmosphere at the school is calm and caring. During unstructured time, pupils and staff socialise together in a relaxed setting. This helps pupils to feel comfortable and safe. Staff have created a homely atmosphere which is rare to see. Bullying and hurtful language are incredibly rare.

Many pupils' attitudes to school are positive for the first time because of leaders' work to create a welcoming environment. The positive atmosphere in the school means that pupils strive to meet leaders' high expectations of them. Leaders ensure they have a clear understanding of pupils' aspirations. The curriculum is tailored for each pupil to meet these aspirations.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of enriching experiences. For example, pupils make objects in woodwork classes which are donated to local care homes. Strong links with local businesses provide pupils with an understanding of potential future careers. Older pupils in the post-16 provision undertake work experience in the local area. Form time is used to ensure that pupils are exposed to the rich diversity of cultures that make up modern Britain.

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

Many pupils that attend Strive for Education have an education, health and care plan. Leaders work together to ensure that important information from these plans is available to teachers. Teachers therefore have a detailed understanding of the individual needs of pupils, including any safeguarding concerns. Lesson resources take account of these needs to ensure that pupils experience regular success. For example, many pupils quickly complete qualifications in subjects such as mathematics and English. They work towards national qualifications in personal, social and health education (PSHE).

The curriculum is focused on developing pupils social, academic and vocational skills. These three strands underpin all aspects of the school's work. For example, the school day is organised to ensure that pupils have breakfast and a chance to talk to staff before any lessons take place. This is incredibly successful in ensuring that pupils are ready to learn when lessons begin.

Curriculum planning is consistently strong across all subjects. Key knowledge is identified. Pupils' knowledge deepens and develops because of this. For example, in English, pupils learn about the formal structures of different types of writing. They then use this information to produce their own writing. In cookery, pupils develop technical knowledge such as knife skills and safe working practices.

When pupils join the school, teachers check the knowledge that pupils have and then develop individualised plans for each subject. These are regularly reviewed and updated as pupils progress through the curriculum. The curriculum would be further

strengthened by ensuring that the targets in these plans are consistently more specific to the subject content that pupils need to learn.

Leaders have developed a highly effective structure to develop pupils' social skills and knowledge of the world. The curriculum is woven together to ensure pupils regularly receive important information across a range of subjects. For example, physical health features in PSHE, sport and cooking lessons. English lessons make use of resources linked to topical news items. Pupils are given a chance to debate topical issues. Pupils are encouraged to air their views in measured, respectful ways.

Leaders maintain a clear focus on developing positive attitudes towards school. They understand the link between attendance and safeguarding and so focus on improving pupils' attendance at school, which, for many, has been historically low. A key aspect of this work is developing positive relationships with parents and carers. During this inspection, the views of parents and carers were unanimously positive. Many see the work of the school as life-changing for their children. One parent commented that their son 'was thriving at Strive'. This is a widely shared view, including by inspectors that visited the school. Attitudes among pupils are positive. For many pupils, attendance is improving because of the consistent, caring environment that leaders have created. In lessons, pupils are highly motivated and engaged by passionate, enthusiastic and caring staff. The high levels of respect between staff and pupils are demonstrated in the polite, caring behaviour in lessons.

An important aspect of the school's work is to prepare pupils for future independence. The structure of form time and PSHE lessons means that pupils receive regular, formal learning in this area. This work continues informally during social times when staff and pupils eat together. Careers lessons and advice are timetabled regularly. Leaders' knowledge of pupils' aspirations mean that they can ensure pupils work towards specific qualifications. Rewards events are designed to ensure that pupils encounter new situations and settings. Leaders are currently finalising plans for extra-curricular clubs which will ensure that pupils have more opportunity to pursue their interests.

Leaders organise classes in the school with care so that pupils attending Strive for Education as part of the alternative provision offer are supported to access a curriculum which is appropriate for them and takes account of each pupil's specific needs. Should the material change request that was examined as part of this inspection go ahead, leaders have considered the ways in which they would make use of increased building space and staffing to ensure that they can accommodate this change well. In the view of inspectors, the increased numbers of staff and space available ensure that all the independent school standards would be likely to continue to be met if the material change was implemented.

The clear vision of the school is shared and understood by all staff. Staff that expressed a view to inspectors were overwhelmingly positive about working at Strive for Education. This is because they feel supported and listened to. They receive regular training, including important safeguarding updates, and are supported to develop detailed curriculum plans. The proprietors seek and act on feedback to

make constant improvements in the working of the school. They understand their responsibilities to ensure that the school meets the independent school standards and have systems to constantly review the ways in which they meet these standards. This includes ensuring that staff are know how and when to report safeguarding concerns

## **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 subject specific targets for pupils are too broad. The information from initial assessments conducted when pupils enter the school is sometimes not used precisely enough. This means that opportunities to help pupils develop more sophisticated understanding of subject content can be missed. Leaders should ensure that the information they collect about pupils' subject specific ability is used to develop precise targets for pupils.

## **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>	149401
<b>DfE registration number</b>	815/6055
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10299270
<b>Type of school</b>	Independent Special School
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	23
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	12
<b>Proprietors</b>	Strive for Education Limited
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andy Brown
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	From £45,000 for a full-time place
<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 649070
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.striveforeducation.co.uk">www.striveforeducation.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:andy@striveforeducation.co.uk">andy@striveforeducation.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This was the first standard inspection since the school was registered by the Department for Education (DfE) in February 2023.
- Strive for Education is a special school which caters for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Some pupils attend Strive for education full time. Other pupils are dual registered at Strive for Education and attend on a part-time basis as part of an alternative provision.
- The school is registered to accept 12 pupils on a full-basis and six pupils on a part-time basis as part of the alternative provision offer. At the time of this inspection, 11 pupils were full-time Strive for Education pupils. A further 12 pupils are on the school's roll as part-time alternative provision pupils. There are never more than six pupils as part of the alternative provision on-site and never more than 18 pupils on-site in total. The school therefore operates within its registration.
- The school has two locations which are next door to each other in the centre of Harrogate. These are 19 and 21 North Park Road, Harrogate, HG1 5PD. Number 19 has only recently been acquired by the school. There is also a workshop location, situated in Starbeck, about one mile away from the main school premises. The address for this is Spa Terrace, Harrogate, HG2 7JH.
- The school does not make any use of 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.

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 first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and business and operations director, who are also the co-proprietors. Inspectors also spoke with the assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, PSHE, cookery and preparation for independent living. For most of these deep dives, 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. For preparation for independent living, there were no lessons timetabled that inspectors could visit.

- 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 put pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils both formally and informally and took account of pupil, staff and parent views through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records of behaviour and attendance and observed lesson changeovers, social times and form times.

### **The proposed change to the school's status.**

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.**

### **The school is likely to meet the following standards that were checked as part of the material change inspection.**

#### **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
  - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- 14 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-

-16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and

-16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

#### **Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

- All standards in scope in this part.

#### **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- All standards in scope in this part.

#### **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

■ 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school

–34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;

–34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and –34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils

### **Information about the material change inspection**

- The DfE commissioned a material change inspection to take place at the same time as the standard inspection. The purpose of the inspection was to confirm whether the school is likely to meet the requirements of the independent school standards in part 3, part 4 and part 8 that relate to the increase in pupil numbers from 18 pupils to 24 pupils. The inspection was also to check whether the new premises are likely to meet the independent school standards in part 3 and part 5.
- The lead inspector met with the proprietor and school leaders and spoke with them about their plans for the proposed change
- The lead inspector considered documentation related to safeguarding, behaviour, health and safety and risk assessment.
- The lead inspector conducted a tour of the new premises, which are already in use and situated next door to the school's existing premises.
- The lead inspector also considered the proposed changes to staffing to accommodate the increased numbers of pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Bernard Clark

Ofsted Inspector



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