

# Inspection of Medway Green School

School Lane, Wouldham, Rochester, Kent ME1 3TS

---

Inspection dates: 26 to 28 November 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

---

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Medway Green School is a very special place. It provides an inspirational educational and therapeutic environment in which pupils thrive and enjoy learning. Many pupils have had a difficult and unsettled time in education before joining the school. As a result, they typically arrive with negative views of learning and poor self-esteem. This school is their lifeline. Staff welcome pupils and help them to settle in quickly. Pupils make friends and gradually grow in confidence.

Strong relationships between staff and pupils contribute to highly positive attitudes. Pupils feel safe because they know they can trust staff and ask them for help to manage their emotions whenever needed. Pupils themselves encourage each other to persevere with changing their thinking and behaviour for the better. Social times are relaxed and friendly, with some pupils playing football together, while others enjoy talking with staff, playing board games and exploring the climbing area.

There are exceptionally high expectations of pupils' achievement. The school is extremely successful in motivating and preparing pupils for their next steps in education, training and employment. Pupils work hard to acquire the knowledge and skills they will need for their futures.

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

The school has made a huge amount of progress since its last inspection. Leaders have cultivated a highly collaborative ethos. Staff understand the school's vision and actively contribute towards the development of school improvement priorities. Consequently, staff are dedicated to working together in a cohesive team to create the very best opportunities for pupils. Those who are new to teaching benefit greatly from the support they receive from their highly skilled and knowledgeable colleagues.

Since the last inspection, the school has seen a rapid growth in admissions of pupils in key stages 3 and 4 who have had disrupted educations in the past. As this is now a much larger school that provides exclusively for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), pupils' needs are at the heart of the curriculum. Specialist therapeutic and education staff work exceptionally well together to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils' highly specialist learning needs are refined into termly individual education plans. These plans identify the precise therapies, knowledge and life skills required to meet pupils' individual needs. The curriculum is carefully crafted around pupils' interests, which contributes to their steady re-engagement with learning. Evidence of progress towards pupils' individual targets is captured across the curriculum and used to inform future learning. Staff are skilled at adapting learning activities during lessons or supporting behaviour in response to pupils' engagement. As a result, pupils make excellent progress. They typically gain many qualifications along the

way, which encourages them as they work towards ambitious academic and work-related goals.

Behaviour around the school and in lessons is excellent. Staff have a deep understanding of pupils' therapeutic and academic needs. Staff help pupils to build their self-esteem through positive experiences. The precisely targeted support pupils receive is at the heart of the school's success here. Pupils are motivated and focused due to the positive experiences throughout the school. They learn and show respect for themselves and others. Pupils rightly say they feel safe to be themselves.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the curriculum. They benefit exceptionally well from a progressive range of precisely targeted opportunities in preparation for life in the wider world. The school is ambitious for pupils' futures and provides ongoing careers advice and guidance. Staff carefully build pupils' interests into the curriculum, through which pupils gain vocational qualifications. The school has a well-established outdoor learning offer, where pupils work collaboratively to solve problems. They develop the resilience and responsibility they will need as adults. Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They learn the importance of fundamental British values. The school teaches pupils how to be responsible through a range of leadership roles, such as in the school council, mentoring younger pupils and caring for the school pets.

Reading is a high priority across the school. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read receive individualised phonics support. Pupils practise sounding out letters and writing words and become fluent readers. Pupils are exposed to a wide range of books, so they become familiar with different genres. Time is set aside daily for pupils to read books they enjoy. Staff weave reading into activities that pupils enjoy throughout the curriculum, such as following recipes while cooking. This, along with the school's additional literacy programmes, has a highly positive impact, especially for reluctant readers who have had negative experiences of reading in the past.

The proprietor carefully monitors the school's work to ensure the independent school standards are consistently met. Educational and clinical staff all benefit from extensive professional development opportunities. This includes from a wide range of professional networks established by the proprietor. The proprietor has established a strong culture of staff welfare and promotes the reduction of their workload. The school's governing body holds a clear, strategic role. There are comprehensive systems to provide excellent challenge and support to school leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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>	147207
<b>DfE registration number</b>	886/6157
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10342145
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	70
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	7
<b>Proprietor</b>	Acorn Education Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Power
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanna McDonough
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£46,175 - £85,911
<b>Telephone number</b>	01634 968 420
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.medwaygreenschool.co.uk">www.medwaygreenschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:mgs-office@medwaygreenschool.co.uk">mgs-office@medwaygreenschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	7 to 9 December 2021

## Information about this school

- A material change inspection to consider the proprietor's request to increase the age range and number of pupils on roll took place in July 2023. This inspection was the school's second standard inspection.
- The school caters for pupils who have SEND related to their social, emotional and mental health. All pupils have an education, health and care plan and are placed at the school by their local authorities.
- The school does not use 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings with the headteacher, other leaders and teaching staff in the school. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and the governors. She also talked to the chair of proprietors on the telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, communication and interaction and personal, social, health and economic education. 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.
- Inspectors toured the school's premises. They checked a range of policies and documents, including the school's single central record. They also reviewed the school's website and other records regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff linked to the independent school standards.
- Inspectors gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour, the school's wider curriculum offer and how leaders support staff with their workload.
- Inspectors talked with pupils throughout the inspection to gain their views about the school. This included two different formal meetings with small groups of pupils.

- Inspectors met with staff and took account of the online staff survey.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by reviewing responses, including free-text responses, submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- 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.

### **Inspection team**

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elaine Parkinson

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024