

Southover Partnership School

288 Kingsbury Road, London NW9 9HA

54 Hutton Grove, London N12 8DR

75 Chase Road, London N14 4QY

Inspection dates

6–8 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The curriculum is truly bespoke to meet the individual needs of pupils. Leaders and teachers produce highly effective personalised learning programmes. As a result, pupils' outcomes are excellent. From their typically low starting points and disrupted educational histories, pupils make outstanding progress.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers skilfully balance 'relentless care' with high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In particular, the leadership and teaching of English is exceptional.
- Pupils' personal development is excellent. Their behaviour, which is often very challenging at the outset, improves significantly over time.
- Staff are proud to work at Southover Partnership School. They work as a team to provide pupils with excellent support.
- Staff's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. A range of therapies, events and experiences effectively prepare pupils for their lives as citizens in modern Britain.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Parents speak very positively about the school. For many, the school's work is transformational.
- Leaders relentlessly focus on ensuring that pupils are at the centre of everything that happens at the school. As a result, they have ensured that the quality of provision is outstanding. However, while leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met, they acknowledge that they need to focus more sharply on ensuring full compliance with regulatory requirements.
- In addition, the arrangements for governance are new, following the school's recent change to become a charity. The new trustees are ready to undertake their duties in supporting, advising and challenging leaders to improve the school further, but their work has yet to show demonstrable impact.

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 effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the new board of trustees provides effective external support, advice and challenge in order to drive further improvements
 - leaders' checks on compliance with legislation, including the independent school standards and associated regulatory requirements, are more rigorous.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Southover Partnership School is led by an experienced and committed team. Leaders oversee a truly effective provision which successfully enables pupils with a range of complex needs to re-engage with education and make outstanding progress.
- The curriculum is bespoke and carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils. There is a sustained focus on enabling pupils to feel good about learning by building relationships and raising their self-esteem. Pupils learn all the subjects of the national curriculum and also have access to a significant range of accredited learning, such as employability, religious studies, citizenship, radio production and home cooking skills. Pupils make outstanding progress on their individual curriculum pathways and are very well prepared for their next steps. Older pupils have access to external, impartial careers advice and undertake supported work experience placements, which ensure that they can make informed choices about their futures.
- Leaders prioritise pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have access to a range of therapies and weekly personal, social, health and economic education sessions which focus on three core themes: health and well-being, relationships and living in the wider world. Pupils raise money for charities and regularly visit places of cultural and religious interest. They are given many opportunities to understand how people from different cultures and backgrounds contribute to life in London and Britain. The school's work to actively encourage respect for difference is also exemplified in the school's positive and open approach to teaching pupils about people with protected characteristics.
- Leaders consistently, rigorously and effectively monitor the quality of teaching across the school's sites. The information from this monitoring is used effectively to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress and to provide a high quality of training. These actions contribute strongly to the outstanding teaching in the school.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. However, there is a lack of rigour in monitoring compliance with the latest regulatory and legislative requirements. Inspectors allowed leaders time to undertake additional work to meet a very few of these requirements during the inspection.

Governance

- The arrangements for governance are very new and rapidly developing.
- In January 2018, the school (as part of the wider Southover Partnership organisation) became a charity. As a result, there is now a new board of trustees chaired by the previous sole proprietor.
- The new board of trustees includes professionals who work in educational psychology, education and finance. This range of expertise has been sought to provide a strong team to support, advise and challenge the school's leaders. Detailed plans have been made for monitoring, meeting and mentoring leaders. However, it is too early to judge the impact of these or, more broadly, the new arrangements for governance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders successfully realise their commitment to 'relentlessly care' for pupils. A culture of vigilance pervades the school's work.
- All three of the school's sites have very high staff-to-pupil ratios; pupils are well monitored and supervised.
- Safeguarding training for all staff meets requirements. Concerns are rapidly shared with designated leaders, who fully understand their statutory responsibilities and are tenacious in following them up.
- Most parents told inspectors they trust the school to keep their children safe; all pupils spoken to also agreed that they feel safe in their school.
- The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest statutory guidance and is available on the school's website.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching is highly effective. Pupils have their own personalised curriculum; teaching is therefore bespoke to each pupil's needs and interests. Teachers meticulously plan lessons which effectively develop pupils' social, thinking, communication and core academic skills.
- Teachers and key workers are highly skilled professionals who work together for the benefit of pupils. They are effectively deployed and work skilfully to facilitate outstanding learning, while also raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence to learn.
- Teaching includes highly effective practice in all subjects, especially English. Teachers skilfully balance nurture and care with very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils' challenging behaviours and complex needs are not seen as an excuse for lowering expectations. On the contrary, staff embrace the challenges they are presented with and regularly 'think outside the box' to make the teaching fit the pupil.
- As a result of excellent teaching, pupils of all abilities and needs make outstanding progress over time.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Effective safeguarding arrangements ensure that pupils are kept as safe as possible. The school's consistent approach and positive relationships engender a feeling of security and confidence in pupils, enabling them to be themselves, and to feel able to learn.
- The school develops pupils' social, thinking and communication skills very effectively. As well as through the provision of therapies, such as counselling, equine therapy and drama therapy, the school's tailored curriculum helps pupils to develop their personal skills over time. As a result, pupils with complex needs who have typically not been in school for significant periods of time are very well prepared for their next steps.

- The school's arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety when attending alternative provision, such as colleges and Sweet Tree Farm, are very robust. As a result, wherever pupils may be learning, their personal development and welfare is prioritised equally well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Staff at all levels are highly effective in managing challenging behaviour consistently. As a result, pupils make very strong personal progress in self-regulating their emotions and improving their behaviours. Thanks to the highly effective support, incidents typically decrease significantly over time.
- Leaders effectively use the school's thorough records of behavioural incidents and physical interventions to review trends; they then take effective action to tailor support accordingly.
- Training for staff is effective, including in relation to physical intervention, which is used rarely and only when absolutely necessary. Staff are patient, kind, nurturing and truly understand pupils' needs.
- Attendance is good, overall. The majority of pupils attend very regularly. Where pupils' attendance has been very low in their previous setting, their attendance at Southover Partnership School typically rapidly improves.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils' outcomes are outstanding. From typically low starting points, pupils make very strong progress over time. This is especially impressive considering the range of complex needs the majority of pupils have, and the disrupted educational histories that most have experienced.
- Pupils make excellent progress in their social, thinking and communication skills, and emotional well-being. This crucial progress underpins pupils' readiness for learning and enables them to make up for lost time with very good academic progress.
- Current pupils in all year groups and at all sites make very strong progress across the curriculum, including in English, mathematics, science, cooking, drama, physical education and computing. Pupils' reading and writing skills are very well developed as a result of excellent English teaching.
- The school's bespoke 'my curriculum' package gives pupils opportunities to work towards a range of courses designed to meet their personal needs and interests. Pupils are successful in completing qualifications in core subjects at GCSE and A level and a very wide range of other accredited programmes, including art and design, psychology, sports and leisure and horsemanship, to name only a few. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for their next steps.
- Typically, Year 11 pupils proceed successfully to further education. In July 2017, this was the case for all leavers. Some pupils remain at the school for Year 12, where they attend work placements and supported college programmes and study a range of relevant qualifications.

School details

Unique reference number	135373
DfE registration number	304/6121
Inspection number	10041399

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 special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	8 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	29
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	The Southover Partnership
Chair	Carol Frankl
Headteacher	Dayo Okunlola
Annual fees (day pupils)	£48,000–60,000
Telephone number	020 8446 0300
Website	www.southoverpartnership.com
Email address	info@southoverpartnership.com
Date of previous inspection	28–30 January 2015

Information about this school

- Southover Partnership School is an independent special day school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder and other complex needs. It is situated on three sites in the London boroughs of Brent, Barnet and Enfield.
- All pupils have education, health and care plans and are placed by a wide range of local authorities. Typically, the pupils placed at the school have significantly disrupted educational histories.
- The school's previous full inspection was in January 2015. Ofsted carried out an emergency inspection in October 2015, which identified some unmet independent school

standards. Following this, the school's progress monitoring inspection in July 2016 judged the standards to have been met, and the school was subsequently returned to the standard inspection cycle.

- The school, which is part of the wider Southover Partnership organisation, officially became a charity in January 2018. The new board of trustees, chaired by the previous sole proprietor, now fulfils the role of both the school's proprietorial board and the governing body.
- The school does not provide separate sixth-form provision.
- The school makes use of the following alternative providers:
 - College of North West London, London NW10 2XD
 - Sweet Tree Farm, London NW7 4EY
 - SIH equine therapy, Harrow HA8 8QZ
 - College of Haringey, Enfield & North East London, London N15 4RU
 - PACE mentoring, London NW1 7LR
 - Silverdale motorcycle project, London NW1 3SE
 - Harrow College, Middlesex HA1 3AQ
 - Access to music, London N1 6LP
 - First Rung, Enfield EN3 4DZ.

Information about this inspection

- This full standard inspection took place with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed a range of teaching across the school's three sites jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also met pupils formally and informally throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors had several meetings with staff, including all members of the leadership team, the chair of trustees and all members of staff from two of the school's sites. The lead inspector also spoke by telephone with the three trustees.
- Inspectors considered the 44 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's information about pupils' progress, attendance and incidents of misbehaviour and physical intervention.
- Inspectors also scrutinised a range of pupils' work jointly with a senior leader.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives from two placing local authorities.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including school policies, logs, evidence of staff training and information related to safeguarding and health and safety.
- Inspectors considered the five contributions to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors met with a parent and spoke to two parents by telephone.
- Both inspectors visited and toured all three premises and considered a range of additional information and evidence in relation to the independent school standards.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Matthews	Ofsted Inspector

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