

Inspection of Kaleidoscope School

Porthill Lodge, High Street, Wolstanton, Newcastle-Under-Lyme ST5 0EZ

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Kaleidoscope School is a very special place. The ethos, 'we believe you can' permeates every aspect of school life.

The school has very high aspirations and expectations for every pupil, whatever their starting point. All pupils study a broad range of subjects and enjoy living up to leaders' ambitions for them.

A wide range of opportunities is on offer for all. For example, pupils learn about democracy by voting for head boy and head girl. They enthusiastically apply for important roles in school, such as being a prefect. Pupils raise money for those who are less fortunate and litter pick in the local community. They relish these opportunities and learn much from them.

Pupils behave very well around school. Staff and pupils get on well and show each other kindness and respect. Staff are incredibly patient and understand the needs of individual pupils. Charlie, the school dog, offers pupils support if they feel anxious or need a short break from learning. Pupils flourish in this caring environment.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Parents and carers speak very highly of Kaleidoscope. One parent, sharing the view of many, said that they consider the school to be a 'second family', where pupils are well cared for and safe.

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

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school identifies individual needs exceptionally well. Every pupil's needs, interests and abilities are considered very carefully in all that the school does.

The school places a strong priority on pupils being able to communicate. From being able to express an interest in learning to ride a bike to being taught the language to keep themselves safe, all pupils are given a voice. Leaders are dedicated to ensuring that pupils' access to communication and language is not limited in any way.

The school promotes pupils' love of stories and song. Some pupils are at the very earliest stages of learning to read. Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils need to learn about sounds. For example, pupils can choose musical instruments and listen to the sounds they make. Other pupils recognise picture cues for 'louder' and 'quieter' and take delight in following staff's instructions as they play their instruments. Pupils who understand that letters represent sounds enjoy using these sounds to learn to read words. Staff teach pupils skilfully and make careful checks on their learning. This helps staff to identify precise next steps in reading for every pupil. Staff provide extra support so that everyone keeps up.

The school has carefully constructed a broad curriculum that sparks pupils' interests. The curriculum for each subject is organised into specific, small steps of learning. Leaders have given considerable thought to ensuring that pupils build on what they have learned before. For example, in personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn to identify individual body parts before learning the importance of brushing their teeth. In mathematics, pupils learn to count using familiar objects they are interested in before learning simple addition. However, although the curriculum sets out precisely what is to be learned, there are some occasions when staff are not as confident as they could be in adapting the right activities to ensure that pupils who are struggling can learn what is intended.

Adults patiently manage pupils' behaviour. They intervene quickly when they spot signs that pupils might need support. Staff tailor activities, transitions and the environment to ensure that learning is calm and purposeful. Adults model respect and understanding. As a result, pupils are polite, kind and behave well. For example, on a tour of the school, they knock politely on classroom doors before entering. Lunchtimes are social times where pupils are supported to learn table manners, independence and respect for others.

All pupils benefit from the school's unwavering determination that they should be full and active members of their local communities, now and in the future. For example, pupils compile shopping lists and visit local supermarkets. They donate the groceries they have bought to local charities. Pupils can learn about caring for others through looking after Charlie the dog, and the pet snails. Where pupils have specific talents, the school ensures that they have every opportunity to practise their skills and excel. For example, leaders have arranged for pupils to become part of local football teams, play chess and go fishing with a local charity. Pupils also learn about other faiths and visit places of worship. They are being prepared exceptionally well for life in modern Britain.

The proprietor body has a clear vision for the school. Leaders and all staff share this vision. The proprietors' strong sense of moral purpose and determination to help every pupil reach their full potential shines through. While there is currently no external governing body, the proprietors seek external, expert advice. This strengthens the quality of provision. The proprietors have ensured that the school consistently meets the independent school standards.

Staff feel valued, supported and listened to. Leaders and proprietors are mindful of their well-being and, as a result, staff morale is high. They are incredibly proud to work at the school. Parents could not speak more highly of the school, staff and proprietors.

The proprietor body oversees its statutory duties well. 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)

- The school has not yet ensured that teachers' knowledge and understanding of how best to teach each subject is as refined as it could be. As a result, teachers are not always confident to modify their delivery of the curriculum when pupils are struggling to understand something. The school should ensure that all staff strengthen their pedagogical understanding across all subjects, so that they are able to adapt learning as necessary in order to meet different pupils' needs.

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

Unique reference number	149024
DfE registration number	860/6089
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10267728
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	28
Proprietor	Beechfield Education Ltd
Chair	Jo Talbot-Beech
Headteacher	Samantha Goodin
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,074 to £52,820
Telephone number	01782 624689
Website	https://kaleidoscopeschool.co.uk/
Email address	admin@kaleidoscopeschool.co.uk

Information about this school

- Kaleidoscope School first opened as a provider of alternative provision in January 2022 and is now registered as an independent special school.
- The school is registered to provide education for pupils aged 4 to 11 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. At the time of the inspection, there were no children in the early years.
- All pupils attending the school have education, health and care plans. The school caters for pupils with complex needs, including autism and social, emotional and health needs.
- The school uses no 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.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher and school manager. She also spoke to the members of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and personal, social and health education (PSHE). For each deep dive, 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.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at playtimes and lunchtimes. They spoke to pupils and considered behaviour and bullying records.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including school policies and the school's website.
- The lead inspector made checks relating to the independent school standards, including checks on the school's premises.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent view. They also considered online staff surveys. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Rachel Henrick, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Stevens

His Majesty's Inspector

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