

# Inspection of Kent House Hospital School

Crockenhill Road, St Mary Cray, Orpington, Kent BR5 4EP

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Inspection dates: 23 to 25 June 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**Yes**

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

When pupils arrive at Kent House Hospital School, they are in crisis. Pupils' acute mental health difficulties mean they are unable to keep themselves safe or to learn. The staff's exceptionally nurturing approach and the school's tranquil environment enable pupils to re-engage with education as quickly as possible.

When ready, pupils enjoy an exceptional curriculum designed to meet their individual needs and interests. Staff have very high expectations for each pupil. There is a particular focus on developing pupils personally, socially and emotionally. As pupils recover, their self-esteem grows and they are able to think more positively about their futures.

Pupils say they feel safe, cared for and respected. They are able to be themselves, and are supportive of each other. Bullying is exceptionally rare and dealt with quickly. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils have fantastic relationships with the specialist staff who truly understand how to meet their complex needs.

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

The school's flexible curriculum design, together with teachers' expertise in re-engaging pupils in learning, ensures that pupils receive an excellent education. Staff build very strong relationships with pupils and understand their different needs, interests and potential. Pupils' abilities to learn are seriously compromised by their poor mental health and the various medications they take. When the medical team agrees that pupils are safe and ready to go into the school, staff have high expectations of them to attend, engage and learn. Where pupils are not ready to access formal teaching, staff are timetabled to support them on the wards instead. This ensures, if well enough, pupils do not miss out on education.

The school provides a bespoke curriculum and timetable, sometimes in liaison with the pupil's home school. Pupils work towards a range of accredited academic and vocational qualifications. Pupils say they especially enjoy the practical nature of their learning in hair and beauty, and the optional short courses in childcare and animal care. Teachers assess pupils carefully, planning activities that build on pupils' previous learning, step by step. Over time, pupils begin to experience success again, which increases their confidence. Pupils achieve qualifications during their recovery, including GCSEs in a range of subjects, which had not been thought possible.

Teachers skilfully and sensitively prepare pupils, including those very few students aged over 16, for their next steps. A highly effective programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and careers education contributes strongly to this. For example, during the inspection, visitors from the armed forces and a high street retail chain talked to pupils about different career paths. As pupils' recovery progresses, staff prepare them well for coping with what comes next. For many, this involves moving to a different school, such as a residential special school. For some, it means returning to their home school.

The staff's commitment to pupils' personal development and recovery is awe-inspiring. Teachers are dedicated, flexible and resilient. Art therapy, talent shows, 'pop-up' events, Friday celebration assemblies and trampolining trips are just some of the ways in which pupils' social development is promoted. Pupils regularly learn about equality, including the different characteristics people have. For example, pupils were learning about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights as part of their Pride project during the inspection.

Leaders ensure that high-quality training is available to teachers. As the teaching team is small, the ability to share expertise between similar schools is invaluable. Although face-to-face training had to be postponed because of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, teachers have continued to access training online. They spoke positively about some of their recent training, for example on personality disorders and autism. They said this helps them understand how to adapt the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, ensure that all the independent school standards are met by checking them thoroughly and regularly. Hospital and school staff communicate with each other as a matter of routine to assure the safety of the premises and provision. The school's leaders have implemented a suitable accessibility plan, in line with requirements. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

The proprietors care deeply about providing the very best provision for these most vulnerable pupils. They have invested heavily in the premises since the previous inspection. For example, the outside area, previously a concrete courtyard, has been transformed into an attractive, vibrant space in which pupils can safely exercise, learn and relax.

Staff keep the medical team, parents, social care workers and local authorities regularly updated. Those spoken to during the inspection all described the school team as responsive and effective.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are kept safe thanks in part to the rigorous procedures in place to deal with incidents and concerns. Staff also skilfully ensure that pupils have a range of strategies to keep themselves safe. Staff in the school and hospital share information as a matter of routine. Pupils' daily personal risk assessments are thorough. Staff complete regular specialist training to ensure they understand pupils' particular safeguarding risks.

The school's child protection policy is written in line with the latest national guidance and is published online. Recruitment checks on the adults who work with pupils are completed in line with requirements, and recorded diligently.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141697
<b>DfE registration number</b>	305/6013
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10193514
<b>Type of school</b>	Hospital school for pupils sectioned under the Mental Health Act
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	12 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	15
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	None
<b>Proprietor</b>	Priory Education Services Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Strong
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lianne Watson
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£33,250 to £35,055
<b>Telephone number</b>	01689 883180
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk">www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:kenthousehospitalschool@priorygroup.com">kenthousehospitalschool@priorygroup.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30 April to 2 May 2019

## Information about this school

- Kent House Hospital School is an independent day school which provides the education provision for in-patients sectioned under the Mental Health Act at Kent House Hospital.
- On admission, pupils are suffering from acute mental health difficulties. Diagnoses include personality disorders and severe anxiety. Many pupils present as having disordered eating. Some have diagnoses of autism and all have social, emotional and mental health needs. Most have education, health and care plans.
- Though the school is registered for both boys and girls, the hospital and school currently admit girls only.
- Pupils usually attend the school for between six to nine months, but this depends on the length of their recovery.
- Most pupils remain on the roll of their home school while being educated at the hospital school. Most pupils have missed considerable periods of education.
- There is no separate sixth form.
- The hospital and school are owned and managed by Priory Education Services.
- The school's headteacher was appointed in January 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in May 2019 when it was judged to be inadequate because of fire safety failings. The school's most recent inspection was a progress monitoring inspection in October 2019, which confirmed that the concerns had been resolved.

## Information about this inspection

We 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.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- The inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- The inspectors met with the leaders responsible for safeguarding at both the hospital and the school.

- The inspectors spoke with pupils and staff about the school's procedures to keep everybody safe, and how pupils are taught to keep themselves safe.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of information, including leaders' review of the school's strengths and weaknesses, curriculum plans, risk assessments and records of incidents and safeguarding referrals.
- The inspectors did deep dives in PSHE education, hair and beauty, mathematics, health and social care, and personal effectiveness. The inspectors met with pupils, teachers and curriculum leaders. The inspectors also visited lessons and looked at pupils' work in these subjects.
- The inspectors had meetings with the executive headteacher and the headteacher. The inspectors also spoke with the operations director and the chair of the proprietorial body, who provide governance for the school.
- The inspectors spoke with two parents and considered the three responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors also considered the three responses from Ofsted's survey of staff's views and the eight responses to Ofsted's pupils' survey.
- The inspectors spoke with four representatives from different local authorities with responsibility for pupils placed at the hospital and school.

### **Inspection team**

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jo Jones

Ofsted Inspector

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