

Inspection of Stone Lodge Therapeutic School

Stone Lodge, Rothwell Road, Kettering NN16 8XF

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Stone Lodge Therapeutic School has a safe and caring culture. Pupils are known exceptionally well. As pupils join the school, staff take time to identify their individual needs. They piece together why pupils have struggled to attend school in the past. The school works with determination to break down the barriers that have stopped pupils from enjoying, and engaging in, their education previously. Now, many pupils attend school well.

Pupils appreciate the positive and nurturing relationships they have with staff. They know that they are expected to behave well. They are confident that staff support them in moments of stress or frustration. Increasingly, pupils recognise their emotions, find the right words to explain how they feel and have a range of strategies to use when they face personal challenges. Pupils are respected and listened to by staff. Parents and carers also value the high levels of care and support their children receive. A parent, typical of many, described how their child's 'confidence has soared' since joining the school.

The school's personal development offer is exceptional. It makes a significant contribution to the school's ambition that every pupil will experience success and believe in themselves as they face their future.

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

Much has been achieved in the year since the school has opened. The school realises its bold and ambitious vision. A therapeutic approach is at the heart of this provision. Pupils' emotional well-being is reviewed to determine the precise and targeted actions needed to help meet pupils' special educational needs and or/disabilities (SEND). Pupils are enabled to feel secure in their surroundings and confident in their relationships. Only then, does the school know that pupils are ready to learn.

The school provides pupils with an ambitious, broad and engaging curriculum. Pupils study a core curriculum, comprising of English, mathematics and science as well as a range of national curriculum subjects. The school recognises pupils' gaps in their knowledge due to significant absence in their previous settings. It routinely checks when pupils need extra help and quickly puts this support in place. For example, pupils' phonics knowledge and reading skills are checked promptly after they arrive at the school. A profile of their reading needs is created. The school provides the extra support that pupils need to catch up. Pupils become increasingly fluent readers. This enables pupils to access the curriculum with a greater degree of success.

The school enables pupils to learn well. New knowledge is presented clearly. Pupils connect prior learning with new learning, where new ideas are explained and examples shared before pupils start the work to build and apply their learning.

Individual plans for pupils are created and are based on their education, health and care (EHC) plans. These include pupils' academic and personal, social and emotional targets. Plans are reviewed and updated to reflect changes in pupils' circumstances and development. However, some plans do not set out the approaches that all staff should use to enable all pupils to achieve their potential. For example, on occasion, assessments of therapeutic needs are not consistently used to inform pupils' plans.

The school goes above and beyond to make sure that pupils have access to a vast range of experiences and opportunities. Pupils learn about other cultures. For example, they visit Diwali celebrations and enjoy the lights and different foods. They support their local community by visiting, chatting to and playing chess with residents at a local care home. The school sensitively helps pupils to consider future careers based on their personal interests. Older pupils gain experience of the work of employment by working in the school garden, on a farm, at an equine centre and in a garage. This highly personalised approach is a strength of the school.

Staff form a positive, strong and united team. They appreciate the training and support they receive. They enjoy their work and are rightly proud to be part of the school.

The proprietor and governors work hand in hand with leaders. They provide effective challenge and hold leaders to account. Their strong oversight ensures that the school meets the independent school standards securely and consistently. The school site is well maintained. Effective health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment policies are implemented effectively. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. All required information is readily available to parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- While the school completes thorough assessments of pupils' needs, there is some variability in how this assessment information is used to inform the content of individual pupils' plans. As a result, the plans are not comprehensive in providing guidance about which strategies are best suited to meet pupils' needs. The school should ensure that all relevant information is available and used effectively, thus enabling pupils to be fully supported in their learning and to learn as well as they can.

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	149665
DfE registration number	940/6001
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10322527
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Number of part-time pupils	8
Proprietor	Rockingham Educational Services Ltd
Chair	Mohammed Ali Damani
Headteacher	Ollie Sharp
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,000 to £71,000
Telephone number	01536 904277
Website	www.stonelodgetherapeuticschool.co.uk
Email address	office@stonelodgeschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Stone Lodge Therapeutic School is an independent special school that provides education for up to 36 pupils aged 11 to 17. There are currently 26 pupils on roll. The school is based at Stone Lodge, Rothwell Road, Kettering NN16 8XF.
- The school caters for pupils with autism and social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school was registered by the Department for Education on 3 May 2023. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- The school uses four unregistered alternative providers.

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 met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the clinical leader and the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND. A meeting was held with the chair of governors and the chair of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and food studies. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to recordings of pupils reading to a member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; reviewed safeguarding records; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at lunchtime and around the school site.
- Inspectors considered parental free-text comments submitted to Ofsted Parent View. An inspector spoke with parents.

- Inspectors spoke to staff and pupils to gather their views of about the school. Inspectors reviewed the responses submitted to Ofsted’s surveys for school staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector toured the school site to review the suitability of the accommodation.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents. They reviewed policies including those related to health and safety, risk assessments, curriculum and complaints.

Inspection team

Caroline Poole, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Christine Horrocks

Ofsted Inspector

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