

Inspection of Break Through School

121 Nuxley Road, Belvedere DA17 5JX

Inspection dates: 3 to 5 June 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are safe and happy in this calm, settled school environment. Staff develop caring professional relationships with pupils. They know and understand pupils well. They provide thoughtful, well-placed support which helps pupils to be successful here. Many pupils spoke of how valuable they find the relationships and approach staff take, which helps them to feel comfortable in the school environment.

The school has high ambition for what pupils will achieve. The school prepares pupils well for their next steps in education, employment or training. This supports pupils to make thoughtful plans for their future, which they talk about with some enthusiasm.

The school's high expectations for pupils' behaviour are clear. Staff work closely with pupils' families to help them reach these expectations. This has a particularly positive impact on pupils' attendance, which is high. Pupils behave well. Bullying, prejudice and discrimination is rare and is not tolerated by the school.

The school provides activities to develop pupils' wider experience and skills, such as considering safety skills and resilience in activities such as rock climbing and orienteering. There are opportunities for pupils to share their views with the school and help to make changes, such as to the food offered as part of the lunch menu.

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

The school offers an ambitious curriculum. In years 7 to 9, pupils study a broad range of subjects which prepare them for their next steps well. In years 10 and 11, pupils work towards a range of qualifications including in subjects such as mental health and cookery. The school has identified clearly the knowledge pupils must learn to help them succeed in each subject. They have designed the curriculum so that pupils learn this content in a logical order. For instance, in art, pupils learn about colour theory. Next, they select complementary colours and blend these to create their own landscapes with chalk and watercolour. Pupils revisit content learned previously to help them remember it. This also supports pupils who join at different points in the curriculum to catch up with this content.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They present information to pupils clearly and enable them to apply what they have learned. For instance, when learning about budgeting, pupils in Year 10 made choices about how to spend and make savings within a budget on a meal at a local café. Teachers check pupils' understanding and correct misconceptions where they arise. They encourage pupils to contribute to discussions in the classroom. However, some curriculum thinking has not identified as systematically the key subject specific language and vocabulary that pupils need to know to help them understand and recall important concepts securely. This limits how precisely pupils recall some important language.

All pupils who attend the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The majority have an education, health and care plan in place before they arrive at the school. The school quickly develops a detailed understanding of pupils' individual needs. Leaders have established systems and support for staff which enables them to meet pupils' needs well. The curriculum is tailored with pupils' needs in mind and staff make prompt, thoughtful and effective adaptations to support pupils further. This enables pupils with SEND to access resources and content well. It builds their confidence and supports them to be successful in learning the curriculum.

The school identifies any support pupils need to strengthen their reading skills. Pupils receive additional teaching and practise for reading, including phonics for those at the early stages of reading. Most pupils read well. However, in some instances, pupils do not routinely receive opportunities to practise reading across the curriculum. This limits opportunities to develop pupils' reading fluency.

Pupils know what is expected of their behaviour within school. They interact respectfully with one another and with staff. They typically focus well on learning and do not disrupt others. The school is quick to provide effective support to pupils who need it to improve their behaviour.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about how to maintain their physical and mental health. Pupils are well informed about how to identify online and off-line risks and how to keep themselves safe from these. The school develops pupils' knowledge of different religions, cultures, beliefs and backgrounds. Pupils speak confidently about the importance of the protected characteristics and British values in preventing prejudice and discrimination.

Leaders have a sharp understanding of the key strengths of the school and priorities for development. They work in a focused manner to develop the school. The proprietor carries out its statutory obligations. It holds leaders to account well and sets strategy effectively. The proprietor works closely with leaders to measure the impact of improvements to the school's work.

Parents and carers appreciate the high levels of communication between staff, pupils and parents. Staff are proud to work here. They are consulted and value the support and development they receive.

The school meets all the independent school standards and fulfils the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders show that they have both the capability and capacity to meet the independent school standards over time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some instances, the school has not identified the subject-specific terminology that pupils need to know in order to understand and recall important concepts securely. As a result, pupils recall content less well in some areas of the curriculum than in others. Where this is the case, the school should identify and teach the key subject specific terminology that pupils need to know to support their learning.
- Sometimes, the school does not provide structured opportunities for pupils to practise reading across the curriculum. This limits the opportunities pupils have to develop reading fluency. The school should ensure that pupils have opportunities to read widely across the curriculum.

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	140039
DfE registration number	303/6001
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10391767
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent School
Age range of pupils	11 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	I E Informal Education Ltd.
Chair	Tracey Storey
Headteacher	Ruth Elliott
Annual fees (day pupils)	£32,175 to £75,243.50
Telephone number	01322 440049
Website	www.breakthroughschool.co.uk
Email address	info@breakthroughschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 to 20 October 2022

Information about this school

- The school is an alternative provision independent school.
- The proprietor body is I.E. Informal Education Ltd.
- The school is a member of the Melrose Education Limited group of schools.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in October 2022.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers of education.
- The school operates from two sites: 121 Nuxley Road, Belvedere DA17 5JX and 44 Nuxley Road, Belvedere DA17 5JG.
- The school caters for pupils with special educational needs, particularly pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs, and speech, language and communication needs.

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 second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with three members of the proprietor body, the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education. 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. Inspectors also visited a sample of lessons and reviewed pupils' work in other subjects.
- 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.

- To check for compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors carried out checks on health and safety documentation, including fire safety and risk assessments, and checked the maintenance quality of each school site.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils by speaking to pupils in lessons and speaking to unaccompanied groups of pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. They also held discussions with some parents by telephone.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff through meetings with both teaching and non-teaching staff and responses to the Ofsted online staff survey.

Inspection team

Rebecca Iles-Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lascelles Haughton

His Majesty's Inspector

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