Inspection of Burlington House School Tooting

3 Garrads Road, Lambeth, London SW16 1JZ

Inspection dates:	7 to 9 May 2025

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
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?

Leaders have established a safe and nurturing environment for its pupils. New pupils settle in quickly and are made to feel welcome. Many pupils have had negative experiences of education prior to joining the school. Much of the school's work is focused on helping pupils to enjoy school and, in this, the school is very successful. Pupils are happy here and pleased to be in a school that understands and supports their individual needs. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and are focused during lessons. They take pride in their work and achieve well, rising to the high expectations set by staff.

Pupils develop trusting relationships with staff, and they appreciate the small class sizes. Typically, pupils describe school as being 'like a home'. Pupils develop valuable social skills as they work and play alongside each other. For example, shared mealtimes and the weekly 'mindfulness walk' build camaraderie and encourage pupils to interact with staff and other pupils. The popular after-school clubs give further opportunities for pupils to develop friendships and find new interests. Activities such as presenting at open mornings, various educational trips and the proactive school council help pupils to develop their self-esteem and skills such as resilience and leadership.

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

All pupils study a broad and ambitious curriculum. Along with English, mathematics and science, pupils study subjects such as performing arts, physical education, film studies and computing. In lessons, pupils receive personalised, appropriate support. Staff recap prior learning regularly and give pupils opportunities to practise and embed essential knowledge. Staff are skilled in reframing concepts that pupils find difficult or misunderstand. They ensure that pupils are fully involved in lessons and adapt teaching effectively to each pupil's needs.

Leaders, teaching staff, support staff and therapists work together successfully. Alongside pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans, they use a range of sources to create individualised targets for pupils. The school checks and reviews pupils' progress towards these targets effectively. However, on occasion, this process lacks rigour. Staff are not consistently clear about how well pupils are working towards their individual goals. This means that pupils next steps are sometimes not clear enough.

Reading is promoted well. Staff share their enthusiasm for reading with pupils through, for example, collective reading sessions. Pupils make regular use of the school library to read or listen to books independently. Those who need help in reading get effective support to improve their fluency and accuracy.

Teaching staff and support staff receive regular training to develop their practice. This includes specialised training in special educational needs to help staff hone their understanding and adapt teaching for individuals. Staff are proud to work here. This

is a close-knit staff team where everyone pulls together and shares responsibilities. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and ensure that staff are well supported. The school builds strong relationships with parents and carers. It is evident that parents feel immensely grateful to have this school. Many report the improvements they have seen in their child's happiness and learning in the short time they have attended.

Staff spend time getting to know their pupils well. Clear structures and routines help pupils feel secure. Staff help pupils to develop an understanding of their own and other people's emotions. This supports the harmonious atmosphere in school. Lessons are calm and pupils behave well. Awards such as 'oscars' and house points motivate pupils to try their best. The majority of pupils attend school regularly and many have improved their attendance significantly since attending the school. The school works well with families to overcome any barriers there are to attendance.

Pupils' wider personal development is woven through school life and prepares pupils well for their next steps and adulthood. For example, in therapy sessions, pupils learn practical life skills such as time management, financial awareness and cooking. This helps pupils to develop their independence. Relationships and sex education is taught in an age-appropriate way. The school provides useful opportunities for pupils to learn about citizenship and how they can play a useful role in society. Pupils help to organise charitable events in school and enjoy having school visitors such as the local mayor. Pupils are taught about respect, equality and tolerance and they are very accepting of other people's differences. From Year 7, pupils learn about different jobs and future career paths through the structured careers programme.

The proprietor body and local governing board have effective systems to ensure that the school meets the independent school standards (the standards). In addition, the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. However, leadership oversight of some aspects of the school's work is not as robust as it could be. At times, the school does not check carefully to see that its actions have the intended impact. As a result, the school's improvement work is not as sharply focused as it could be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- At times, the school's systems for assessing the impact of the curriculum on pupils' progress towards meeting their EHC plan targets are not as strong as they could be. This means that, sometimes, staff do not have a clear enough understanding of how well these pupils are doing in order to identify and support pupils' next steps. The school should strengthen its assessment systems to ensure

that staff are clear about pupils' individual targets and how well these are achieved.

- The school's systems for checking and evaluating key aspects of its work are sometimes not as focused as they could be. As a result, the proprietor and governing body do not have a clear enough picture of the school's performance to inform their decision-making. The school needs to strengthen this aspect of its strategic leadership.

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	150733
DfE registration number	208/6010
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10375121
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Cavendish Education Ltd
Chair	Simon Coles
Headteacher	Paul Jones
Annual fees (day pupils)	£42,387
Telephone number	020 8129 380
Website	www.burlingtonhouseschool.com/burlington-house-school-tooting
Email address	reception@bhstooting.com

Information about this school

- Burlington House School Tooting is an independent special day school located at 3 Garrads Road, Lambeth SW16 1JZ. It is registered for up to 50 pupils aged 11 to 16.
- The school caters for pupils with a primary diagnosis of dyslexia and for pupils with a range of SEND. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- This is the school's first standard inspection. The school was registered by the Department for Education on 29 May 2024.
- The school currently has pupils in Years 7 to 9 only. The school plans to admit its first cohort of key stage 4 pupils in September 2025.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2024.
- The proprietor body runs a number of other special schools in London.
- The school offers a breakfast club for its pupils.
- 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other school leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, the chair of the governing board and a director from the proprietor body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and science. 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 considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 children's interests first.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including school policies and procedures related to the independent school standards, behaviour and attendance records and other information provided by the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses, and the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Teresa Neary	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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