

Inspection of ISP School

Glengorse Estate, Glengorse, Battle TN33 0TX

Inspection dates: 16 to 18 September 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
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Personal development	Outstanding
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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 join this school after having had significant and prolonged disruption to their education. Most have missed a lot of school and have previously had negative experiences of education. ISP school is a thoroughly welcoming and positive place. Pupils and staff actively participate in daily 'community meetings', as the whole school comes together to discuss relevant matters.

Pupils benefit from the school's clear routines and expectations. Once pupils are allocated a place at the school, leaders implement an expertly curated individualised transition. This enables pupils to quickly become part of the school. Pupils are helped to re-engage with learning, socialise and learn how to manage their behaviour. The school has high ambitions for its pupils. Pupils typically work hard and achieve well given their starting points.

Leaders' attention to pupils' personal development is a fundamental and exceptional part of school life. The school's therapy and pastoral teams provide expert input. Staff use effective strategies to support and develop each individual pupil. Staff model calm, respectful behaviour and set clear boundaries for pupils. Pupils learn about safe, healthy relationships and the importance of consent. This helps them to start building purposeful, kind and empathetic friendships with one another.

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

The school's leaders have ensured the provision it offers continues to be strengthened since the last inspection. Leaders at all levels have the energy and vision to give the pupils broad and purposeful opportunities. As a result, they are moving the school forward in all areas.

All pupils who attend the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities related to their social, emotional and mental health needs. The school's clear induction processes help staff to identify where pupils have gaps in their learning. Staff work together to identify and implement the support that pupils need.

The school sets high expectations for learning. The curriculum in place is ambitious and meets the needs of all pupils. All pupils access a broad and interesting curriculum that is taught by staff with secure subject knowledge. For example, the school's mathematics programme is well established. Pupils enjoy learning mathematics and achieve well given their starting points. Across the wider curriculum, pupils' depth of learning is typically secure and they achieve well. By the end of Year 11, pupils gain useful qualifications and typically secure places on further education or training courses.

Pupils often join the school with severe and persistent literacy difficulties. The school has implemented a reading curriculum that is re-engaging pupils' interest in books effectively. While pupils do have opportunities to write, teachers' expectations for

high-quality writing are not consistent through the school. As a result, the written work pupils produce often lacks the depth and technical accuracy that it should.

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is a clear strength. It underpins all aspects of school life. In particular it helps to build pupils' resilience, while ensuring they become caring, compassionate citizens. Pupils appreciate staff genuinely knowing and understanding them as individuals. The school provides an extensive range of activities that helps to develop pupils' interests, resilience, confidence and independence. These include cooking, drama performances and developing individual interests independently, such as singing. All these opportunities expertly develop pupils' character and self-esteem and prepare them extremely well for life in modern Britain.

Classrooms are calm places, where pupils can concentrate on their learning. Pupils value the positive learning environment that exists at school. Staff are extremely well trained and highly consistent in their approaches to managing behaviour. Pupils appreciate this consistency. This gives pupils a genuine feeling of self-worth that they are proud to share with visitors.

Due to the high quality of provision, parents and carers are understandably very positive about how well the school is led and managed. The proprietor, school-based leaders and executive leaders carefully ensure that the independent school standards (the standards) are consistently met. Leaders put actions in place to address any staff concerns. This has a positive impact on staff's well-being and workload. Staff appreciate the support and guidance leaders provide to develop their skills in order to meet the needs of the pupils. Leaders have ensured that the school meets the requirements of 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 proprietor has not ensured that pupils have enough opportunity to practise their writing skills. Consequently, pupils do not write as accurately and in as much detail as they could. The school needs to ensure that pupils are well supported to improve their writing across the whole 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	148552
DfE registration number	845/6067
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10391805
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent School
Age range of pupils	7 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Integrated Services Programme
Chair	Jo August
Headteacher	Caroline Belchem
Annual fees (day pupils)	£53,648 to £56,514
Telephone number	01424 238640
Website	ispschools.org.uk/battle
Email address	battle@ispschools.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 to 3 November 2022

Information about this school

- The school operates from one site located at Glengorse Estate, Glengorse, Battle TN33 0TX.
- ISP School, Battle is a special school providing education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, as well as communication and interaction and cognition and learning needs. Pupils may well have associated conditions, such as autism spectrum disorder and/or sensory or physical needs.
- The school is part of a group of three ISP schools that are overseen by a shared local governing board. This group of schools is part of Polaris Education.
- All pupils are placed by local authorities and have education, health and care plans. Many have been out of education for long periods before joining the school.
- The school is registered to admit up to 60 pupils between the ages 7 and 18. It presently has 47 pupils in Years 8 to 12.
- The school currently uses one unregistered 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 evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings with the headteacher, other leaders and teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector held an online meeting with the chair of the proprietor body and also met members of the local governing body, including the chair. He also talked on the telephone to two different representatives of local authorities that place pupils at the school.
- The inspectors talked informally and formally to different groups and individual pupils to gather their views about the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography and personal, social and health education. Deep dives included visiting

lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to leaders, teachers and pupils about how teaching in these subjects builds on pupils' knowledge over time.

- 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.
- The lead inspector had a tour of the school's premises. He checked a range of policies and documents, including the school's single central record. He also reviewed the school's website and other records regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff linked to the independent school standards.
- The inspectors gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour, the school's wider curriculum offer and how leaders support staff with their workload. They also considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils were also considered.

Inspection team

Chris Parker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katie Hancock

His Majesty's Inspector

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