

Inspection of On Track Education Services Ltd

Narita House, Fishleigh Rd, Roundswell Business Park, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 3UD

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 October 2022

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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Sixth-form provision	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?

Most pupils at On Track Education in Barnstaple have experienced difficulties in previous educational settings. At the school, they receive a fresh start. Staff know pupils and their backgrounds well. They care about each pupil as an individual. Most parents and carers appreciate this. As one parent said, 'Since my child started at On Track, it has transformed their life. They feel safe and want to go to school.'

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils learn how to understand their emotions. Staff encourage pupils to use this knowledge to communicate how they feel. Well-trained staff help pupils regulate their behaviour if they become anxious.

Staff have high expectations for pupils to engage in academic learning. This enables pupils to make up for learning lost through periods out of education in the past.

Pupils understand what bullying is and why it is not acceptable. Pupils told inspectors that when bullying occurs, staff act quickly and effectively so that it does not continue.

Leaders ensure that the school caters for pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They ensure that staff meet pupils' needs, as identified in their education, health and care (EHC) plan.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils, including post-16 students, benefit from a broad, well-planned curriculum that meets individual pupils' needs and interests. The curriculum allows pupils to achieve GCSEs, functional skills and vocational qualifications. Leaders ensure that each subject curriculum identifies the essential knowledge that pupils should learn. Pupils at each site, and those who work off-site, access the same curriculum. As a result, all pupils have clear goals to achieve by the time they leave school.

Leaders identify the specific learning needs of pupils accurately. They train staff to support pupils' social and emotional needs well. Leaders and staff regularly review and adapt learning for pupils. As a result, teachers know how to support pupils' learning effectively. Teachers have appropriate knowledge of the subjects they teach. Leaders have established a system for teachers to check pupils' understanding. However, teachers do not yet use this approach consistently to identify gaps in pupils' learning and inform future teaching.

Leaders place a high priority on reading. Staff deliver phonics teaching to pupils at the early stages of reading. They use books that contain the sounds that pupils know. Pupils use their phonics knowledge to become more accurate readers. More confident pupils can choose books from the libraries at each site. This helps them become independent, confident readers.

Pupils' attendance and behaviour improve when they join the school compared with their previous school or setting. Leaders support and challenge parents appropriately if pupils do not attend regularly.

Most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. This is because staff use a consistent, calm and positive approach to managing behaviour. Leaders place a high priority on staff building solid relationships with pupils. This helps staff know the potential triggers that may affect pupils' behaviour. As a result, staff are frequently able to intervene before situations escalate.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. In personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn about diversity and equality. They know the importance of respecting those whose beliefs, opinions and values differ from their own. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn about the potential risks they may face in their lives. This includes issues around online safety, alcohol, smoking, drugs and extremism. Pupils also learn about different aspects of physical and emotional health and well-being. Leaders have developed an age-appropriate relationships and sex education and health education curriculum.

Pupils receive impartial careers advice and guidance. Pupils in key stage 4 and post-16 students have opportunities for work experience. These pupils also have access to courses at a local college. This helps to prepare them for their next steps.

There have been several school leadership changes since the previous standard inspection. Staff told the inspectors that they understand and support the new headteacher's ambitions for the school. Most staff said that leaders are supportive and considerate of their well-being and workload. They are proud to be part of the school.

The proprietor's involvement supports leaders effectively to improve the school. The directors ensure that school leaders have the knowledge they need to be successful. Directors support and challenge leaders well. Their involvement has created stability during times of transition.

The proprietor ensures that the independent school standards and the requirements of schedule 10 of the 2010 Equality Act are met. Robust health and safety policies and procedures ensure the safety of all three school sites. The school's website provides the information that parents and local authorities require.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise the safeguarding of pupils. All staff have safeguarding training. Staff know how to recognise the signs of abuse. They know how to report any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Leaders take appropriate actions to ensure that

pupils are safe. They work closely with external agencies to provide support to families.

Pupils get regular information about safeguarding through the personal development programme. This includes learning about drugs and online safety.

The proprietor fulfils their safeguarding responsibilities well. Appropriate procedures are in place to manage allegations about staff conduct. They regularly check the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding systems. The safeguarding and child protection policy adheres to the guidance in 'Keeping children safe in education, 2022' and it is published on the school's website.

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

- The use of assessment is not yet consistent. Therefore, gaps in pupils' understanding are not always identified precisely and some misconceptions go unaddressed. This hinders pupils' ability to learn more and remember more in some subjects. Leaders need to ensure that assessment in all subjects is effective in identifying what pupils have learned and remembered.

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	145181
DfE registration number	878/6071
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10239792
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	10
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	On Track Education Services Limited
Chair	Jane Cox
Headteacher	Maria Roberts
Annual fees (day pupils)	£27,284 to £64,277
Telephone number	01271 372269
Website	www.ontrackededucation.com
Email address	mroberts@ontrackededucation.com
Date of previous inspection	10 to 12 July 2018

Information about this school

- The school is operated by On Track Education Services Limited. The proprietor has seven other schools.
- The school is located over three sites:
 - Narita House, Roundswell Business Park, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 3UD
 - 16a Castle Park Road, Whiddon Valley, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8PA
 - Saunders House, Northam, Devon EX39 1AB
- The school caters for pupils who have a range of SEND, including autism spectrum disorder and social, emotional and mental health difficulties. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- All pupils are placed at the school through their local authority. The majority of pupils come from Devon.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in July 2018. At that time, all aspects of the school's work were judged good and all the independent school standards were met.
- The school has subsequently had two additional inspections. The school was judged to meet all relevant independent school standards at the time of these inspections in June 2019 and September 2020.
- The school's current headteacher was appointed in May 2022.
- There is no governing body.
- The school does not use any 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.

- 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, other senior leaders and other members of staff. The lead inspector met with a director who represented the proprietor and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English (including reading), mathematics, computing and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, 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.

- The lead inspector toured each of the school sites to check that all the independent school standards relating to the premises were met.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. The inspectors also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe and reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors met with several groups of pupils to gather their views.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martin Greenwood

Ofsted Inspector

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