

Inspection of On Track Education Silverstone

Pitts Farm, Towcester Road, Silverstone, Northamptonshire NN12 8UB

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils are positive about attending this school. They like the fact that everyone knows each other and that most pupils get on well. They appreciate how staff help them to settle in and get into a routine.

Pupils feel safe in school. Bullying is dealt with promptly by staff when it happens. Pupils have someone who they can talk to if they have any worries. They say staff listen to their concerns. Pupils appreciate that staff help them, even when they make a mistake. They know that staff want them to be happy and successful.

Pupils' behaviour is improving. Most pupils show respect to their peers and adults. The number of pupils suspended for poor behaviour is reducing. However, a small number of pupils are disruptive during lessons. This limits their own learning and that of others. Staff do not always respond consistently to incidents of poor behaviour.

The curriculum is not yet well thought out and implemented in all subjects. Pupils sometimes find the work too hard or too easy. Some pupils do not get the help they need to read with confidence. Pupils are beginning to benefit from 'culture and character' sessions that support their personal development.

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

The curriculum offers pupils a range of experiences. Changes to the timetable this academic year mean that pupils in key stage 4 are taught by subject-specialist staff. However, recent staffing changes have reduced the choice of vocational courses available for these pupils to study.

The quality of pupils' learning varies from subject to subject. In some subjects, the curriculum is well thought out. For example, the mathematics and English programmes are well organised and build on what pupils know and remember. In these subjects, pupils increase their knowledge and develop their skills over time. However, in some subjects, leaders have not thought carefully enough about what pupils know already and what they need to learn. Pupils do not secure the knowledge that is essential for them to be able to understand more complex ideas.

Some staff do not have the subject expertise necessary to implement the curriculum consistently well. They are not skilled enough to be able to correct pupils' misconceptions or rectify mistakes. Staff, particularly those new to the school, are not always aware of pupils' specific learning needs. They do not take these needs into account well enough when planning and delivering the curriculum. Pupils sometimes disengage during lessons because they cannot access the learning.

Leaders' plans to create a culture of reading in school are in the early stages of development. Leaders check how well pupils can read when they join the school. However, they do not have a robust strategy in place to support a small number of

pupils who cannot read accurately or fluently. Staffing and timetable limitations mean that these pupils get limited help. Teachers do not make the best use of time set aside for pupils to read. Not enough thought is given to what pupils are reading beyond the English curriculum.

Leaders are reviewing how they manage pupils' behaviour. There is an increased emphasis on promoting pupils' well-being and helping them learn how to self-regulate. Pupils' behaviour is improving. The number of incidents of poor behaviour requiring physical restraint is beginning to fall. However, some pupils continue to miss too much learning because they struggle to control their emotions.

Pupils' attendance often improves after they join the school. However, a small number of pupils do not attend school regularly enough.

Leaders have raised the profile of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. New curriculum plans include appropriate aspects of relationships education and online safety. Pupils understand the importance of equality and diversity. They welcome differences in others. Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy, physically and mentally. They benefit from taking part in forest school sessions. They value work experience placements, for example, as a landscape gardener, a mechanic or working in a bakery. These help pupils to prepare for their next steps. However, pupils' understanding of different cultures and faiths is limited.

Staff are positive about working at the school. They say leaders listen to their views. They appreciate the support they get with their workload and well-being. Staff are beginning to engage with training to improve their practice, particularly those who joined the school recently or have taken on new leadership roles.

The school has been through a period of transition. Significant staffing changes have led to inconsistencies in the quality of the provision. Leaders are realistic about the school's strengths and what needs to get better. A recent staffing restructure has helped to clarify leadership roles and responsibilities. While leaders' actions to improve the school are recent, they are starting to have a positive impact. The proprietor board supports leaders well and holds them to account. It shares leaders' vision and ambition for the school and the pupils it serves.

Leaders have carried out work recently to improve the school environment. The site is well maintained and provides a suitable environment for learning. The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Policies are up to date and reflect the latest statutory guidance. The safeguarding policy and the relationships and sex education and health education policy are available on the school's website.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn how to stay safe and look after their well-being. For example, they know what makes healthy relationships and understand the importance of consent.

Staff are well trained. They know how to spot if a pupil is at risk of potential harm. They report concerns promptly and are confident that leaders will take appropriate action. Staff know what they must do if they are concerned about the behaviour of an adult towards a pupil.

Leaders are aware of particular safeguarding issues that affect individual pupils. They work closely with external agencies when pupils need extra support. Pupils' safeguarding records are comprehensive.

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

- Some leaders, including senior leaders, pastoral leaders and subject leaders, are relatively new to their positions. They do not have a precise enough understanding of what needs to get better in their areas of responsibility and how to bring about the improvements necessary. The proprietor board and senior leaders need to provide leaders, at all levels, with the right support so that they have the knowledge and expertise they need to carry out their roles effectively.
- The curriculum is not implemented consistently well in all subjects. Some staff do not have the knowledge and skills of the subjects they teach to choose the most effective approaches. Some pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders need to ensure that staff have opportunities to improve their subject knowledge, expertise and practice. They need to make sure that the curriculum in each subject is implemented consistently so that all pupils achieve well.
- Staff do not always use the information in pupils' education, health and care plans (EHC plans) to identify the best ways for each pupil to learn the curriculum. The work in each subject does not always match pupils' needs well enough. Leaders need to ensure that all staff use the information about pupils' specific needs when planning and implementing the curriculum.
- Leaders have not prioritised the teaching of early reading. They have not promoted the importance of reading more widely well enough. Pupils in the early stages of learning to read do not get the help they need to become confident and fluent readers. Other pupils do not routinely choose to read independently. Leaders must ensure that there is a coherent and consistent approach to the teaching of early reading, including the teaching of phonics. They must ensure that reading is promoted widely across the curriculum.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to managing pupils' behaviour. This strategy is only in the early stages of being implemented. Incidents of poor behaviour and the use of physical restraint are falling but are still too high. Leaders need to ensure that the new behaviour policy is implemented effectively so that pupils learn to manage their emotions and self-regulate.

- Leaders have not ensured that all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are promoted equally well. Pupils' knowledge of different cultures and religions is limited. Leaders should ensure that pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop an understanding and respect for those of different faiths and cultures.

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 (DfE) has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	134137
DfE registration number	941/6008
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10213158
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	28
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	On Track Education Services Limited
Chair	Jane Cox and Penny Harris
Headteacher	Mandy Hayward-Flint (acting)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£37,829 to £78,109
Telephone number	01327 366926
Website	https://www.ontrackededucation.com
Email address	silverstoneoffice@ontrackededucation.com
Date of previous inspection	28 to 30 November 2017

Information about this school

- On Track Education Silverstone is an independent special school.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for up to 40 pupils. There are currently 28 pupils on roll.
- Almost all pupils have an EHC plan. Many pupils have social, emotional or mental health needs. Some have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Some pupils have been excluded permanently from other schools.
- Pupils travel to the school from several local authorities.
- The acting headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher took up their positions in April 2022.
- Since April 2022, leaders have restructured the staff. A number of new curriculum leaders have been appointed. A new deputy designated safeguarding leader post has been created. A new special educational needs coordinator has been appointed and will join the school in January 2023. Some staff have left the school and have not been replaced.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers for pupils to receive some of their education.
- The school's most recent standard inspection took place from 28 to 30 November 2017. A material change inspection of the school took place on 9 July 2019.
- At the beginning of the inspection, the school was registered to admit pupils between the ages of 11 and 18 years. During the inspection, leaders confirmed with the DfE that they no longer wanted the school to be able to provide education for students over the age of 16 years. The school is now registered to provide education for pupils aged between 11 and 16 years.

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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of 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 the leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher and other leaders.

- The lead inspector met with safeguarding leaders to examine safeguarding records, the school's system for recruiting staff and the school's single central record. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors did deep dives in four subjects: English, mathematics, humanities and PSHE education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with teachers of the subject to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke with pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils during social times and spoke with groups of pupils from different key stages.
- The lead inspector met with one of the co-chairs of the proprietor board.
- Inspectors spoke on the telephone with a representative of one of the alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plans, a variety of policies, information about pupils' attendance and behaviour, examples of pupils' EHC plans and individual risk assessments for pupils.
- Inspectors took into account responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also noted responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.
- In order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed facilities at the school's site.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Lowther

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons; and
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
 - 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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