

# On Track Education Centre Wisbech

Enterprise House, Old Field Lane, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 2RJ

## Inspection dates

11–13 December 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher's vision and ambition to secure high-quality provision have resulted in significant improvements since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders, including the proprietors, have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The relatively new teaching team is a powerful force for change. Teachers know their pupils' learning needs remarkably well and plan effectively to meet them.
- The curriculum is suitably tailored to capture individual pupils' interests.
- Pupils make typically good progress in gaining accredited qualifications, including GCSEs, often from very low starting points.
- Effective one-to-one support builds a culture of trust between pupils and staff, which leads to a positive climate for learning.
- Pupils' academic, social and personal development is checked carefully. Appropriate action is taken to deal with any gaps identified.
- Safeguarding is effective and of the highest priority. Staff are vigilant in protecting the vulnerable young people in their care.
- Most pupils do well in improving their behaviour, confidence and attitudes to learning.
- Staff help pupils to relate more effectively to others in school and across the wider community.
- While pupils improve their attendance during their time in the school, some do not attend as regularly as they should.
- A few staff do not have the skills they need to help pupils to make strong progress in reading and literacy.
- Some teachers do not challenge pupils' off-task behaviour quickly enough.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
  - teachers have the skills they need to make sure that pupils catch up quickly with their reading and writing skills
  - pupils are supported well to gain confidence in writing at length
  - all staff challenge off-task behaviour consistently to prevent further escalation and any potential disruption to learning
  - the good practice that exists in teaching and learning is routinely shared.
- Build on current work to improve pupils' attendance and reduce any incidence of persistent absence.

### The school's progress towards meeting the standards that were not met at the previous inspection (the first progress monitoring inspection, March 2018)

#### Part 1 Quality of education provided

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d)

- This independent school standard relates to the quality of teaching at the school.
- This standard was not met at the standard inspection in February 2017 and at the monitoring inspection in March 2018.
- Teaching has improved. Teachers know their pupils well and have a good understanding of their learning needs. Lessons are typically well planned and so pupils make suitable progress over time from their different starting points.
- This independent school standard is now met.

#### Part 8. Quality of leadership in, and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(b)

- This independent school standard was not met at the standard inspection in February 2017 and at the monitoring inspection in March 2018.
- Leaders have now strengthened procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching.
- Teaching across the school is typically good.
- This independent school standard is now met.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are now met. The relatively new team of staff, ably led by the headteacher, has worked tirelessly to deal with previous imbalances in the provision of pastoral and academic support.
- High expectations of pupils' behaviour and the development of their positive attitudes to learning are at the heart of the school's work. Staff value the headteacher's strong leadership and the focus on continual improvement. Together they have established a clear understanding of the provision's strengths and the things that they need to change.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection. The workforce has been strengthened through recent appointments. There is now a dedicated behavioural specialist to work with individual pupils, provide staff training and to help establish further links with external agencies.
- A comprehensive system for assessing pupils' progress is in place. The headteacher's regular checks on teaching quality, through lesson observations and book reviews, support the sharing of good practice and help staff to develop their expertise further. There is strong sense of trust and openness across the cohesive teaching team.
- The wide range of staff skills combine effectively to provide suitable support to help vulnerable pupils to build their confidence, often after a significant period of disruption to their education. The whole team are indisputably committed to improving the life chances of the young people in their care. This is a major strength of the school.
- Leaders work closely with staff to match qualification routes to pupils' needs and interests and to support their next steps in education, training or employment.
- The curriculum offers a range of opportunities for pupils to gain qualifications, including BTEC awards and GCSE courses. Individual programmes of study are designed to fill the significant gaps in previous learning and to help pupils progress to the next stage in their education, employment or training.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are typically positive and productive. Staff are caring, and the environment is welcoming. British values, such as tolerance and respect, are at the core of daily life in the school. Parents, carers and other stakeholders value the good communication links and the support staff give to help motivate pupils to learn.
- Leaders know that while pupils generally improve their attendance during their time in school, not all of them attend as regularly as they should. Further work is under way to analyse the underlying reasons and to identify and remove any potential barriers standing in the way of further improvements.
- Because of significant gaps in their education, many pupils join the school with knowledge and skills well below age-related expectations, most notably in reading and writing. Additional training is planned to equip all staff with the expertise they need to help pupils improve their reading and ability to write at length.

### Governance

- The directors are ambitious for the quality of education that the school provides and for the pupils it serves. They are regular visitors to the site.

- Since the previous inspection, quality assurance procedures have been revised to include more frequent checks on teaching and learning. This is ensuring that senior leaders have a better understanding of what is working well and the things that need to improve.
- The headteacher is held to account for the implementation of the school's development plan through half-termly reports to the school board.
- All statutory policies are in place and reviewed regularly.
- Directors have ensured that the independent school standards are met.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest guidance from the Department for Education. Staff training is regular and up to date. Keeping pupils safe is of the highest priority for all members of the team.
- Records relating to safeguarding pupils, including child protection and those linked to safer recruitment, are suitably maintained and meet statutory requirements.
- Staff are vigilant. They know the signs to look out for which might indicate that a pupil may be at risk from harm. Any concerns raised about individuals are followed up quickly and with external agencies as appropriate.
- All the staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire strongly agreed that pupils are safe.
- The school's curriculum appropriately raises pupils' awareness of issues with the potential to influence their personal safety. They know who to go to if they want to raise a concern.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Typically, good teaching enables pupils to learn and make suitable progress. Teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and plan accordingly to meet their needs.
- Effective systems are in place to assess pupils' knowledge and skills when they join the school and to measure their progress over time.
- Teachers use assessment information appropriately to plan individual programmes and interesting activities. The focus on re-engaging pupils in their own learning is very strong and contributes well to the typically positive learning environments seen during the inspection.
- Where necessary, because of severe disruption to previous learning and/or health-related issues, some pupils are supported by staff through outreach sessions away from the school. These arrangements work well to fulfil the overarching aim of encouraging pupils back into learning. Leaders know that this is often a slow process because of the limitations in pupils' previous experiences. Consequently, pupils' individual learning plan targets are routinely checked so that further actions can be taken to help speed up the rate of return.
- In school, teachers provide extensive one-to-one support and small-group activities. They make regular checks on pupils' learning through careful questioning and so encourage them to think more deeply about the topics they discuss.

- Most time in lessons is used productively, and pupils generally get on with the work set. While leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour are very clear, teachers do not consistently challenge some off-task behaviour quickly enough to prevent further escalation.
- In one-to-one cookery lessons, staff help to build pupils' confidence and independence.
- Art and design projects are planned to capture individual interests and pupils' pride in their achievements.
- In citizenship and personal, social and health education, pupils were seen making good contributions as they engaged in mature discussion, for example about individual differences and the importance of tolerance and respect.
- English and mathematics are taught as discrete subjects. These skills are applied appropriately across the curriculum. Pupils who have the ability to succeed in the time available are supported in working towards GCSE qualifications.
- Leaders know that staff do not consistently have the skills they need to facilitate pupils' strong progress in reading and writing. Plans are in place to share good practice and for further training to ensure that the whole team is fully confident in helping pupils to improve these important aspects of learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils arrive with a history of troubled and disrupted schooling. Many have significant gaps in their education and so find it difficult to respond to the expectations of day-to-day life in school. Pupils' personal and social skills are evaluated when they join the provision. Over time, they gain confidence and improve their self-esteem.
- Pupils respond positively to the effective support provided by their teachers. Most pupils learn to listen and begin to value the contribution of others to their learning.
- Staff are skilful in promoting positive attitudes to learning and in encouraging pupils to reflect on the links between these positive attitudes and future success.
- Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and the consequences of making poor lifestyle choices. They trust staff to keep them safe in school and have regular opportunities to consider how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet and social media.
- Interpersonal relationships between pupils are generally good, although some pupils take longer than others to settle into school routines. Staff take swift action to defuse any potential for friction. Supervision levels are appropriately high. Pupils know that they have an adult they can turn to if they have any concerns.
- The recently introduced key worker role has strengthened communication links across the school, and between the school and pupils' home environment. This role is appreciated by pupils, their parents and carers. Regular, individual tutorials with key workers allow pupils to discuss issues of concern and to reflect on the factors influencing their learning and behaviour.

- The British values of tolerance and respect are modelled effectively by teachers. Pupils learn about the importance of these values and show maturity when debating relevant issues and individual differences.
- Although pupils are supported appropriately in making choices towards their next steps in education, leaders are extending the range of opportunities available at the end of key stage 4. This aspect of the school's work is being strengthened by enhancing links with external organisations, including colleges of further education and employers. In addition, programmes of work experience are being introduced to help those pupils who are ready to improve their employability skills in a different setting.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Senior leaders set high expectations. These expectations are made clear to staff and pupils.
- Most pupils make good progress in improving on previous patterns of extensively disruptive and unacceptable behaviour.
- Those pupils who found it difficult to conform prior to joining the school typically develop their capacity to cooperate and respond to instructions. Individual behavioural needs are well understood and appropriately managed by staff.
- For a few pupils, the journey towards willing cooperation takes longer than for others. Nevertheless, all pupils are well supported by the whole staff team in learning how to manage inappropriate behaviour.
- While pupils' attendance typically improves when they join the school, leaders know that there is more work to do to ensure that all pupils attend as regularly as they should.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils typically make good progress, often after a previously lengthy period of disruption to their full-time education.
- Pupils respond well to effective support and teaching. Pupils gain the knowledge and skills they need to complete functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics, alongside a range of accredited courses at entry level and level 1, BTEC awards and, as appropriate, GCSE examinations.
- Pupils who entered the school with little motivation to learn grow in confidence and improve their interpersonal skills. They are justifiably proud of their achievements.
- Pupils' access to suitable, impartial careers information, advice and guidance and links with post-16 education have been strengthened further this year. All current Year 11 pupils have an aspirational goal for the end of key stage 4.
- While pupils typically make good progress, for example in mathematics, art, cookery and personal development, their progress in reading and writing is not as strong. Pupils find it difficult to learn and to write at length. Leaders have plans for further training to enhance staff confidence in helping pupils to catch up quickly on their reading skills, to read more widely and to develop greater capacity to write at length.

## School details

Unique reference number	133570
DfE registration number	873/6041
Inspection number	10056562

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	11
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	On Track Education Services Limited
Chair	Penelope Harris, Jane Cox (directors)
Headteacher	Jane Wilson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,758
Telephone number	01945 580898
Website	<a href="http://www.ontrackededucation.com">www.ontrackededucation.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:wisbech@ontrackededucation.com">wisbech@ontrackededucation.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	31 January – 2 February 2017

## Information about this school

- On Track Education Centre Wisbech is an independent special school for boys and girls aged between 11 and 18 years.
- On Track Education Services Limited operates the school, which opened in 2006. The name of the proprietorial body is not available on the Department for Education's (DfE) website page for the school (Get information about schools).
- The directors provide the governance for the school.
- There are 11 pupils on roll aged between 14 and 16 years. All pupils attend on a full-time basis.

- All pupils have education, health and care plans.
- Pupils often present challenging behaviour. Many of them have experienced personal traumas and severe disruption in their previous education.
- Local authorities fund pupils' placements at the school.
- The school does not use alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- The DfE commissioned Ofsted to consider, as part of this standard inspection, the school's progress in meeting the independent school standards that were unmet at the previous inspection. The unmet standards from the first monitoring visit related to the quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school.
- This standard inspection includes the second progress monitoring inspection since the school's previous standard inspection in February 2017, when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to require improvement.
- The school submitted an action plan which was evaluated by Ofsted in May 2017. The action plan was judged to require improvement. The school submitted a revised action plan which was evaluated by Ofsted in September 2017 and judged to be acceptable. The DfE accepted the school's revised action plan.
- The proprietor had previously asked the DfE to consider a material change to the school's registration so that the age range was extended to admit pupils between seven and eighteen years of age. The DfE asked the inspectors to consider the material change as part of this standard inspection. On arrival for this inspection, the proprietor informed the lead inspector that they have now decided not to extend the age range; the material change, therefore was not considered as part of this inspection. During the inspection, one of the directors contacted the DfE to confirm that the material change was no longer requested.
- This inspection was conducted without notice.
- Prior to arriving on site, the inspector looked at a range of documentation, including the information available on the school's website, for example the safeguarding policy.
- The inspector undertook observations in lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and checked the current premises. In addition, she held meetings with one of the directors and the new headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector considered documentation relating to the school's policies and procedures with respect to the management of behaviour. The inspector held a telephone conversation with a parent.
- The inspector examined the single central register of pre-employment checks made on teachers and other staff. The school's work to promote pupils' safety, health and welfare was checked.
- The inspector considered four responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

## Inspection team

Christine Dick, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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