

On Track Education Centre Wisbech

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

Inspection date

16 March 2018

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

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

- At the previous standard inspection, teaching methods and the management of class time were not effective. Pupils' aptitudes and needs were not taken sufficiently into account in the planning of lessons. Staff did not use effective strategies to improve pupils' attitudes to learning and to encourage pupils to act responsibly.
- In the action plan, the directors and the headteacher undertook to improve the planning of lessons and to introduce a new assessment system to help staff understand pupils' capabilities and needs. The directors and the headteacher specified that they would provide staff with further training to ensure that pupils behaved well in class.
- Staff are aware of pupils' behavioural and emotional needs. Relationships in class are positive. Where teaching is effective, teachers ask probing questions and pupils respond willingly and politely. Pupils are keen to explain their work, and behaviour is better as a result.
- The new headteacher acted rapidly to improve the planning of lessons. Staff understand the school's assessment policy and, as required by the policy, they provide prompt feedback to pupils so that they can improve their work.
- Despite these new strategies, the quality of teaching and learning is still not good enough across the curriculum. In some subjects, expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Activities are not planned consistently well to accelerate pupils' learning and build upon their ability and interests.
- There is a framework in place to assess pupils' progress, but it is not yet effective. Teachers are not using the information gleaned from assessment to provide challenging work that extends pupils' learning. There is insufficient evidence of pupils' progress over time, particularly from activities that pupils undertake when educated off site and at home.
- While the headteacher has made some progress towards improving the management of behaviour, the standard in relation to the quality of teaching is still not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 9, 9(b)

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because staff did not challenge poor behaviour consistently well. Consequently, pupils' behaviour was not improving rapidly enough.
- In the action plan, the directors and the headteacher undertook to provide all staff with specific training on the effective management of behaviour. They also stated that they would track pupils' pattern of behaviour more closely and that they would improve the support for and communication with families and carers.
- The number of pupils currently on roll has dropped considerably since the previous inspection. This means that staff can usually provide one-to-one support to help pupils improve their behaviour and keep them and others safe. The behaviour policy has been revised and staff apply the school's procedures to maintain good behaviour at all times.
- The behavioural and emotional needs of pupils are shared promptly with staff as part of the induction programme for new staff and when new pupils join the school.
- The behaviour patterns of individual pupils are carefully checked and recorded. The headteacher monitors trends of behaviour to inform families and offer support when required.
- As reported in the previous inspection, safeguarding arrangements continue to be effective. The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. Staff are vigilant in safeguarding pupils. They ensure that pupils behave well and are always fully supervised. Leaders and staff work closely together to create a safe culture in the school.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is now met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 27, 27(b)

- This standard was not met at the previous standard inspection because the directors had not provided external lighting to ensure that people could enter and leave the school premises safely.
- In the action plan, the directors stated that new floodlighting would be erected. This was completed in July 2017.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the previous inspection in February 2017, the directors had not ensured that all of the independent school standards were met. The school's overall effectiveness had declined due to weaknesses in teaching, assessment and governance. The directors did not have an accurate view of the school's performance. Some staff did not know what they were expected to do or how they would be held to account for their performance. The

progress of groups of pupils was not analysed effectively because pupils' assessment records were not sufficiently detailed.

- The school revised its action plan to incorporate all of the modifications required by the Department for Education (DfE).
- In the school's action plan, the directors endeavoured to strengthen their evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They stated that they would appoint an experienced headteacher to lead the school. They also said that they would monitor the quality of teaching and learning through more frequent visits. They said that they would update job descriptions.
- A new headteacher was appointed to lead the school in September 2017. She has a good understanding of the independent school standards. She has updated all the job descriptions and staff know exactly what is expected of them. She is following a clear schedule of observations to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The headteacher has the knowledge and skills required to improve pupils' outcomes. She works well with the directors, who are kept informed of developments.
- All members of staff who completed the staff survey as part of this inspection are positive about the new leadership. They feel that the headteacher holds them to account and supports them well to manage the challenging behaviour of some pupils. In this respect, leadership has been effective.
- Despite these positive developments, the new leadership has not yet improved the quality of teaching across all areas of the curriculum. The high turnover of staff and some redundancies, resulting from the drop in the number of pupils on roll, have slowed developments. Pupils' progress is not rapid enough. Leaders do not have sufficient evidence of the work that pupils complete when they are educated at home or off site.
- The school applied to the DfE for a material change to admit pupils from seven to 11 years of age. In agreement with the DfE, the material change was not considered during this monitoring inspection because leaders and directors have not ensured that all of the standards for independent schools have been met.
- This standard is not met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietors must ensure that teaching at the school:
 - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
 - involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - 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 (paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d)).
- The proprietors must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(b)).

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- The proprietors must ensure that teaching at the school utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly (paragraph 3(h)).
- The proprietors must promote good behaviour among pupils by ensuring that the written behaviour policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 9(b)).
- The proprietors must ensure that external lighting is provided in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises (paragraph 27(b)).
- The proprietors must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1)(a)).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 133570 |
| DfE registration number | 873/6041 |
| Inspection number | 10048704 |

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.

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| Type of school | Other independent special school |
| School status | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 5 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | On Track Education Services Ltd |
| Directors | Jane Cox, Penelope Harris |
| Headteacher | Jane Wilson |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £35,758 |
| Telephone number | 01945 580898 |
| Website | www.ontrackededucation.com |
| Email address | jwilson@ontrackededucation.com |
| Date of previous standard 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 runs the school, which was opened in 2006. The directors provide the governance for the school.
- Currently, there are five pupils on roll aged between 14 and 16 years. All five pupils attend on a full-time basis.

- All pupils have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- Pupils often present challenging behaviour. Many pupils have experienced personal traumas and disruption in their previous education.
- Local authorities fund pupils' placements at the school.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged not to comply with at its previous inspection.
- The school applied to the DfE for a material change to admit primary-aged pupils from seven to 11 years of age. The material change will be considered once the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection following 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.
- This inspection was conducted without notice.
- Prior to arriving on site, the lead inspector reviewed the school's application for a material change and other documentation, including that available on the school's website, such as the safeguarding policy.
- Inspectors undertook observations in lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and checked the current premises. In addition, they held meetings with one of the directors and the new headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspectors considered documentation relating to the school's policies and procedures with respect to the management of behaviour. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a parent.
- The lead 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 lead inspector took into account four responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.
- The DfE commissioned Ofsted to conduct this inspection, focusing particularly on the unmet standards in connection with the quality of teaching, the management of pupils' behaviour, outdoor lighting of the school's premises and the quality of the school's leadership and management.

Inspection team

Marianick Ellender-Gelé, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mary Rayner

Ofsted Inspector

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