

On Track Education Centre

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

Inspection dates

31 January–2 February 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The proprietors have not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- The school's overall effectiveness has declined over time due to weak governance, and weaknesses in teaching and assessment.
- The proprietors do not have an accurate view of the school's performance and have not held senior leaders robustly to account.
- Proprietors have not provided sufficient support or training to enable leaders to carry out their roles fully or promote improvements rapidly.
- Some staff do not have up-to-date job descriptions. Some do not know what they are expected to do or how they will be held to account for their performance.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning is not always frequent or systematic enough. The information gathered is not used carefully enough to secure rapid improvements.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress over time.
- Staff do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers do not consistently set work that matches pupils' needs, and time in lessons is not used productively to accelerate pupils' progress.
- Staff do not challenge poor behaviour consistently. Consequently, some pupils' behaviour does not improve rapidly enough.
- Leaders are unable to analyse the progress of groups of pupils effectively because pupils' progress records are not sufficiently detailed.

The school has the following strengths

- The new leadership team has acted quickly to address the school's weaknesses.
- The monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment has improved significantly.
- Where teachers have high expectations and plan work that matches pupils' needs, pupils make good progress over time.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership, management and governance by ensuring that:
 - governors have a secure understanding of the school’s weaknesses and these are reflected in the school’s self-evaluation and school improvement plans
 - leaders record all monitoring of the school’s work rigorously so that they can systematically check whether all of the independent school standards are met
 - all members of staff have detailed job descriptions, know what they are expected to do and are equipped with the necessary skills to fulfil their role effectively.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all pupils make good progress from their starting points by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - information gathered on pupils when they arrive at the school and over time is used well to set work that meets their needs.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by:
 - ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach to help improve pupils’ behaviour
 - encouraging pupils to have pride in their work
 - analysing information about pupils’ behaviour effectively to promote further improvement.

The school must 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
 - utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly
(paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(h)).
- The proprietors must promote good behaviour among pupils by ensuring that the written behaviour policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 9, 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, 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
- fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently
- (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and proprietors have allowed the school's overall effectiveness to deteriorate. The proprietors, who provide the governance for the school, have been slow to act, both in identifying the school's weaknesses and in providing the necessary support to rectify matters.
- Leaders and proprietors do not have a clear understanding of the independent school standards. Consequently, some of them are unmet.
- The school's self-evaluation is not rigorous or accurate. As a result, the development plan does not describe accurately what leaders need to do to make the school's effectiveness good.
- The school's systems for monitoring teaching and learning over time lack clarity. As a result, leaders have not been able to give teaching staff the individual training they need to help them improve.
- The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress are not sufficiently detailed. Leaders do not measure how well certain groups, for example the most able or disadvantaged pupils, make progress. This means that leaders do not have a comprehensive picture of how well different groups of pupils achieve over time.
- Some staff do not understand their role fully because they do not have up-to-date job descriptions. Proprietors have introduced new systems for measuring attendance and behaviour but staff have not had appropriate training so that they can use the new systems effectively.
- Leaders do not have the evidence to hand to show that disadvantaged pupils are making the required progress to match that of other pupils nationally.
- The broad and balanced curriculum gives pupils the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects. In addition to the more traditional subjects, the opportunity to study cooking, design and technology, hair and beauty, art and music helps meet pupils' individual needs.
- All of the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff were positive. Staff work well together. They know the individual pupils very well and work hard to help pupils with a range of complex needs to re-engage in learning.
- Parents and carers receive regular updates to let them know how their children are doing. Parents are full of praise for the work the school does to keep them informed. Daily phone calls home and always being able to speak to a member of staff give parents confidence in the school. Parents appreciate the detailed reports they receive each term updating them on their child's progress.
- Leaders successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils spoke very positively about their experiences when they visited a mosque, a synagogue and a Sikh temple. Activities, including arranging bingo nights for the local community, attending the local cenotaph memorial service and a visit to the Tower of London poppy display, give pupils the chance to reflect on their roles and responsibilities.

- The centre manager and the outreach manager became the new leadership team in September 2016. The actions they have taken are leading to improvements. Leaders now monitor teaching and learning far more regularly and productively.
- Using accurate and reliable assessments, leaders now track pupils' progress more effectively. Leaders now provide timely and accurate information for annual reviews of pupils' progress. Teachers' expectations in terms of what pupils can achieve are increasing, and staff morale is high. Outcomes for pupils are getting better and the school is now in a better position to sustain the improvements than it was last year.

Governance

- The proprietors (governors) have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Proprietors have not held senior leaders to account sufficiently for all aspects of the school's performance. This has had a negative impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Proprietors have not implemented robust quality assurance systems. Consequently, they cannot tell when important aspects of the school's work, for example the provision of information for education, health and care plans, are not completed effectively.
- Proprietors and leaders have an overgenerous view of the school's effectiveness over time.
- The proprietors have ensured that the school has published a suitable safeguarding policy on its website.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders carry out all the necessary pre-employment checks to ensure the safeguarding of pupils, and accurately record these in the single central record.
- Staff receive training in line with the latest statutory guidance, and are alert to potential risks that pupils face.
- Staff receive regular updates about the latest statutory guidance, and know what to do and who to speak to should they have concerns.
- Leaders carry out health and safety checks regularly and act upon any concerns raised. The school carries out detailed risk assessments on all aspects of school life.
- Leaders have successfully built safeguarding into the curriculum. Pupils say they feel safe and are aware of how to keep themselves safe. They mention the key staff they would talk to if they have concerns.
- External lighting is not sufficient to ensure safety at all times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable and, consequently, some pupils do not make good enough progress.
- Some teachers set work that is not sufficiently difficult for pupils. The work that pupils

complete over time shows a significant difference in terms of the quality, dependent on the subject. Too often, work is scruffy, unfinished and demonstrates that pupils are not challenged to deepen their thinking.

- Teachers do not use assessment consistently well to help pupils understand how to improve their work. Too frequently, the feedback is congratulatory without any advice on how pupils could develop their work.
- Teachers do not consistently plan learning that is well matched to pupils' specific needs. Pupils affirmed this to be the case. In some subjects, such as art and cooking, pupils are challenged well and make good progress as a result.
- Not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This means that time in lessons is sometimes not used productively and, in some subjects, teachers do not provide suitably challenging work for most-able pupils.
- Relationships that exist between staff and pupils are often particularly strong. Pupils say that this is because the teachers know them well, get on with them well, and explain the work so that they understand what they have to do.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Until recently, leaders have not provided timely and accurate information for annual reviews of pupils' progress. Since September, the situation has improved greatly. Information sent out by the school is now of a far higher quality and arrives on time. The improvements mean that pupils can access the support they need quicker, which helps them make better progress.
- In the past, leaders have not set academic targets for children who are looked after that are sufficiently robust. The targets have not always been measurable or sufficiently challenging. More recently, the monitoring of pupils' progress is much sharper. Targets and the content of pupils' personal education plans are now far more incisive.
- Leaders' regular and careful monitoring ensures that pupils who are educated in alternative provision attend well and make good progress.
- Support staff often treat each pupil according to their need, and are sensitive to their individual circumstances. Pupils said that the staff 'put pupils first and help them to understand things better'.
- Pupils receive appropriate individual guidance and support with college and job applications. Staff prepare pupils for interviews well, which helps pupils to progress successfully to the next stage of their lives.
- Leaders provide an interesting range of activities that support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The 'Land's End to John O'Groats Cycle Challenge' helps pupils to work together as a team, as do the 'Bingo Nights'. Pupils speak positively about trips, particularly the Mildenhall Sports Day, the recording studio, the Science Museum and Woburn Safari Park. These trips, alongside visits to a mosque, a synagogue

and a Sikh temple, provide memorable experiences for pupils.

- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Teachers talk to them about the dangers they face, guide them on how to use the internet safely, and monitor their usage closely. Pupils say that when incidents of bullying do occur, staff deal with them well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attitudes towards their learning are not consistently positive, particularly when not challenged in lessons.
- Some staff do not show pupils how to develop positive attitudes towards their learning well enough. Consequently, some pupils do not develop the skills necessary to become successful learners.
- Even taking into account the unique characteristics of the school, and pupils' complex needs, pupils' attendance is too low. The school monitors attendance on a pupil-by-pupil basis. While the individual attendance records show that attendance has greatly improved, unfamiliarity with the new electronic system means leaders do not have any detailed analysis or accurate figures for groups of pupils.
- Parents appreciate how the school helps their children to progress. They agree that attendance has been an issue in the past. Parents say that the communication from the school is 'brilliant'. They receive regular updates on how their children are doing, and are pleased with the progress they make.
- Leaders have introduced a new system that focuses on rewards. Pupils are starting to understand the link between good behaviour and positive outcomes. However, recorded incidents demonstrate that a small proportion of pupils present longstanding and ongoing behavioural issues. Leaders do not analyse the findings well enough to enable them to spot patterns, draw meaningful conclusions and help the pupils to improve their behaviour quickly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils make expected progress from their individual starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders assess pupils when they arrive at the school to see what they can do. However, teachers do not always set work that is difficult enough. As a result, not enough pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Leaders' monitoring of how much progress pupils make is not sufficiently robust. Education, health and care plan coordinators said that the information that leaders provide on what pupils can do is sometimes well below what they know pupils have previously achieved.
- A small proportion of pupils lack focus because the work is not difficult enough. On occasions, the pupils refuse to complete the work they are set. As one teacher stated, some pupils 'are not on track due to their reluctance to complete basic tasks'.
- Pupils read confidently, fluently and are able to break down unfamiliar words so that they can pronounce them properly. However, pupils confirm that they are not routinely

encouraged to read in school, and most read little outside school.

- In art and cooking, pupils make good progress. This is because in these subjects, teachers have an accurate view of what pupils can do, have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and set work that pupils find interesting and challenging.
- There are examples of notable success in supporting pupils with complex backgrounds and complex needs to re-engage with learning. Staff take account of pupils' individual interests and help to prepare them for the next stage of their lives well.

School details

Unique reference number	133570
DfE registration number	873/6041
Inspection number	10006070

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	15
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	On Track Education Services Ltd
Chairs	Jane Cox, Jan Grayson, Penny Harris
Headteacher	David Younger
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,606
Telephone number	01945 580898
Website	www.ontrackededucationservices.co.uk
Email address	wisbech@ontrackededucation.com
Date of previous inspection	8–9 November 2012

Information about this school

- On Track Education Centre (Wisbech) is an independent special school for boys and girls aged between 11 and 19 years.
- On Track Education Services Limited runs the school, which was opened in 2006. The proprietors provide the governance for the school.
- Currently, there are 15 pupils on roll aged between 14 and 16 years. Of the 15 pupils, 13 attend on a full-time basis and two pupils are part time.
- All the pupils have statements of special educational needs, or education, health and care

plans. Some pupils have complex medical needs.

- 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.
- Eight of the pupils at the school are children who are looked after.
- The school uses Peterborough Regional College for alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning throughout the school.
- The inspector heard pupils read and looked at pupils' work across a range of subjects.
- The inspector held telephone conversations with local authority officers and a virtual headteacher.
- The inspector toured the school.
- The single central record of employment checks was scrutinised.
- The inspector met with leaders, pupils, the head of centre from Mildenhall, the company director responsible for human resources and other members of staff.
- Twelve responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were considered.
- There was one response to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. The inspector spoke to parents by phone and took account of their views.
- The inspector examined a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, policies, information about the curriculum, safeguarding documents, and information about the progress, behaviour and attendance of pupils.

Inspection team

John Randall, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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