

Right Choice Project

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Michael Best

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.^{1,2}

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Right Choice Project is a small special school for young people whose place in a mainstream school has broken down. It is registered to admit 42 students between the ages of 14 and 16 years and is located in Woolwich, in South East London. The number of students on roll fluctuates each year and currently 11 students aged 14 and 16 years attend, the majority of whom are boys. The school offers either full-time or part-time places; at the present time, all students are attending full-time. All students come from the London boroughs of Greenwich and Bexley and over half are from a minority ethnic background. The very large majority of students have special educational needs associated with learning and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. Three have a statement of special educational needs. Recently the school has admitted students with a broader range of needs, including those with a history of non-attendance at school.

The school was established in 2003 and is in the ownership of a not-for-profit limited company. It aims to give students 'a second chance to discover and realise their potential' by 'equipping them with independent living and life skills to lay firm foundations for future personal, professional and economic success as citizens and future leaders of our community'.

Context of the inspection

The school was last inspected in November 2010 when it was judged to provide a satisfactory quality of education and outstanding quality of care. A number of regulations were not met. The school responded with an action outlining its proposals to address those regulations which had not been met. This was submitted in February 2011 and found to require improvement. A revised action plan was submitted in May 2011 and evaluated in June 2011; this was broadly satisfactory but also required some improvement. This monitoring visit was made at the request of the Department for Education to check the school's progress in implementing its action plan.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The school has made satisfactory progress in implementing its action plan and now meets all but one of the regulations for registration as an independent school.

The inspection in November 2010 found that the school did not meet a number of regulations in respect of the curriculum. The focus on one subject for each day of the week did not allow students to apply their skills regularly throughout the week and thereby maximise their learning; the provision did not include experience in the scientific area of learning; the needs of students with statements of special educational needs were not being fulfilled and the school was not meeting the learning needs of those students who were persistently absent. The school planned to review and improve the curriculum and now meets these requirements. It has reorganised the timetable to provide students with a broader and balanced timetable of daily lessons. From September 2011, the school has offered students GCSE courses in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and citizenship. Together with other timetabled provision, this means that students now have experience of all the required areas of learning. The school continues to provide vocational courses that prepare students for the next stage of their education and the world of work. The needs of students with statements of special education needs have been reviewed in conjunction with the local referring authorities and appropriate adjustments made so that the requirements of statements are fully met. The development of further academic courses has enabled the school to provide a better match of work to students' needs, including those identified as higher attainers. A multi-agency approach to supporting persistent long-term absentees is now in place, with the school providing coursework for students to complete.

There were shortcomings in the quality of teaching and assessment at the time of the November 2010 inspection. Teachers were not making sufficient use of information about what students knew and could do in planning their next steps in learning, and the marking of students' work did not give sufficient guidance on how students might improve their work. There were insufficient learning resources, including computers. The school planned to improve the use of assessment information, to record the verbal feedback given to students so as to improve marking, and to enhance the resources. Through implementing the plan, the teachers' use of assessment information has improved, as has the quality of marking. Comments guiding students as to how they can improve their work are helping both teachers and students improve the pace of learning and the rate of progress in lessons. An increased emphasis on students' use of computers for research and presenting their work, together with the installation of a multimedia interactive board in the main classroom, has increased the range and quality of learning. The increased use of information and communication technology has brought additional teaching and learning resources into classrooms, so that resources are now satisfactory.

The inspection in November 2010 found that there was a lack of outdoor space on the school site where students could play and spend their leisure time safely. The school has been actively seeking alternative premises where there will be sufficient outdoor space available. This has yet to come to fruition and the regulation remains unmet.

Shortcomings in the information made available to parents, carers and others at the time of the inspection in November 2010 have now been addressed in the latest edition of the information documents for parents and the requirements are now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010³ ('the Regulations'), as follows:

- make appropriate arrangements for providing outside space where students can play safely (paragraph 23(s)).

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special school		
Date school opened	16 April 2003		
Age range of pupils	14–16 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 10	Girls: 1	Total: 11
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 3	Girls: 0	Total: 3
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 3	Girls: 0	Total: 3
Annual fees (full-time day pupils)	£10,800		
Annual fees (part-time day pupils)	£90 per day		
Address of school	132-134 Powis Street Woolwich, London SE18 6NL		
Telephone number	020 8854 6229		
Email address	rcpc@rcpc.co.uk		
Headteacher	Banjo Aromolaran		
Proprietor	Banjo Aromolaran and Ursula Grant		