

Education and Youth Services Ltd, Carlisle

Independent school standard inspection report

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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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, 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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Education Youth Services Ltd, Carlisle (EYS) is an independent special day school for students aged from 14 to 16 years of age who are at risk of permanent exclusion or have already been excluded from their mainstream schools. Many have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and almost all have experienced disaffection with education and previous low levels of attendance. The school, located in the centre of the city of Carlisle, is part of the nationwide Education Youth Services Ltd and opened in September 2007.

Currently, five students are on roll attending part-time while being also registered at other local secondary schools or at the local authority pupil referral unit. No students have a statement of special educational needs. EYS aims to encourage every student to attain his or her potential by achieving academically and personally through a highly personalised programme of study that can involve associated work experience. Ofsted last inspected the school in March 2009.

Evaluation of the school

EYS provides a satisfactory quality of education, mainly meets its aims and has improved since the last inspection in that it now complies with all the regulations for independent schools. The satisfactory curriculum and quality of teaching are largely successful in encouraging students to attend their educational placements more regularly and to make satisfactory progress. Effective support from staff helps students to demonstrate good behaviour and make satisfactory gains in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and the provision for students' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory.

Quality of education

The satisfactory curriculum provides a deliberately selective range of courses for this particular group of students who have previously been unsuccessful in mainstream education. Between EYS and each student's other school, with which it works closely, all the required areas of learning are covered. The core of the curriculum at EYS is based upon courses from the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Network (ASDAN) but students can opt to study additional BTEC courses such as in childcare and art. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is part of the required learning and throughout all of these areas of study staff develop and enhance students' skills in literacy, numeracy and the use of new technology to aid learning. The small number of students allows for a very individualised style of education. Teachers ensure that lessons are meaningful and interesting. Whenever possible, work experience forms part of students' education. For some, this is particularly motivating and can lead to offers of employment. Other students go on to study in further education having gained qualifications and accreditations. Most have gaps in their learning because of previous low levels of attendance and lack of engagement in education. However, EYS uses ASDAN and other courses to provide a relatively broad and balanced curriculum so that students can gain a knowledge and understanding about the humanities, arts and sciences while improving their basic skills. For example, in one BTEC childcare lesson students were observed improving their vocabulary and writing skills while learning about discrimination in the workplace. If required, arrangements are made for education to take place offsite, such as in a local sports centre. Records indicate that EYS has previously provided satisfactorily for students with a statement of special educational needs.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory; lessons successfully enable students to make progress. In some good quality lessons the teachers challenge students to meet very precise learning targets where they engage very well with their learning and make better than expected progress. However, this approach is not consistently adopted and in other lessons students are not as clear about what is required of them or how to succeed. Teaching is usually effective in ensuring that students develop and express their own thoughts rather than simply copying information from the internet. This was evident in a PSHE lesson where a student was researching the local housing market and staff encouraged self-reliance and independence in learning. Occasionally, however, the adults do too much for the students and the students then miss opportunities to think and learn for themselves. Lessons are planned in great detail. Consequently, there is usually plenty for students to do and the pace is generally appropriate. Teachers mark students' work satisfactorily. However, the procedures for marking and tracking progress have not been fully implemented so that students do not always receive sufficient feedback about how to improve the quality of their work.

Students remain engaged with tasks, but their successes during lessons are not always fully noted and recorded for future reference to show the extent of their progress. Initial assessments are completed when students enter the provision and, subsequently, staff use the information gained to help match courses to levels of ability. All students are set targets for their personal and educational development. However, these targets for improvement and their outcomes do not always show clearly how much progress the students are making on a day-to-day basis. School records indicate that, from usually low starting points, students' overall progress is satisfactory even though their levels of attainment remain much lower than most other students of the same age in mainstream schools. Students enjoy their learning and feel secure in contributing in class. For most, these successes are the first that

they might have enjoyed in education for a long time. For some students, progress is clearly inhibited by low levels of attendance.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is satisfactory. Most enjoy and appreciate their new engagement with education at EYS because the provision is well matched to their needs and ambitions. Students say that they are treated with respect and enjoy the company of each other and the adults. A typical comment made to the lead inspector was, 'The best thing about being here is the teachers'. Students prefer to work together in one classroom so that they can enjoy the mutual support and company of each other. This is evidence of their improving social skills and their ability to get on with others. Serious behavioural incidents and bullying are rare and are quickly dealt with by staff. One parent/carer reported to the lead inspector that their child had so improved in their social and communication skills that they now have a part-time job, something that would have previously been impossible for them. Students understand and accept the organisation's code of conduct. They demonstrate an understanding of right and wrong and this is reflected in their good behaviour. Attendance in an educational setting improves for all following their enrolment in EYS. Students arrived promptly at school and to lessons during the inspection. However, the majority are still absent too often and this curtails their progress and limits their chances of being able to get the most benefit from the placement.

During lessons, and particularly in PSHE, students' ideas are challenged in a trusting environment. They are encouraged to make positive choices, for example, one complained about not being able to purchase cigarettes from a shop; however, a member of staff helped the student to conclude that the shopkeeper had acted in the student's best interest. Through these positive interactions, students come to feel that they are part of a community, albeit a small one. Some take their new-found skills into the wider community and learn to get on with others from different backgrounds in the workplace. Through learning to tolerate and respect each other's opinions, and those of the adults, some go on to employment directly related to their work placements. Others successfully continue their studies in further education. Because of the limitations imposed by the nature of part-time education, EYS cooperates with other providers so that, for example, elements of spiritual and cultural education are covered by attending assemblies in their mainstream schools. The ASDAN curriculum ensures that they all learn about the public institutions and services of England.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The arrangements for students' welfare health and safety are satisfactory overall. The safeguarding and child protection procedures for students are appropriate and meet requirements. All staff are suitably trained, including the designated officer, and know what to do if any matters relating to child protection occur; students in turn know who to go to if they have concerns. Responsible officers for child protection are experienced in working with the local authority in relation to

safeguarding. The management and supervision of students by staff is consistent and their expertise is instrumental in ensuring that students' behaviour improves. Few rewards and sanctions are required because the students are keen to please the adults with whom they work.

Policies relating to health and safety are reviewed annually and are generally thorough and appropriate. They have been improved since the last inspection and now meet all requirements. A small number of minor safety hazards brought to the attention of the school were attended to immediately. All matters relating to fire protection are in order; records are kept of the servicing of emergency fire equipment and of evacuations from the building. Students report that they feel safe. They learn through the curriculum about keeping themselves safe and healthy. However, currently almost all choose to leave the premises at lunchtime because too little is provided for them to do in school during this period. EYS has produced a suitable policy statement and plan to increase accessibility in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has thorough procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and others. All of the required checks on the suitability of the directors and staff have been properly completed. The single central register of these checks is up-to-date and meets requirements.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The accommodation is appropriate for use as a school. It is a terraced property on a busy street and is in a satisfactory condition. There are five floors, including a basement area in which cold lunches are served and breakfast provided if required. The classrooms and private study areas are sufficiently spacious for the range of curricular activities taught and numbers of students using them. There is a specialist art room and sufficient networked computers and printers are placed throughout the building. Classrooms are appropriately furnished and resourced. Although adequate, there is limited outdoor space for the students and EYS also uses a nearby public park for recreational activities. Physical education has been provided at a local sports centre.

Provision of information

The school brochure provides the required information about the aims and organisation of the school for parents, carers and others. Reports are provided for parents and carers about the academic progress and personal development of their children through regular reports. In the event that a student has a statement of special educational needs, an annual review of the statement is undertaken. The school maintains contact with families about absences and the reporting of any incidents. An annual account of income received and expenditure incurred is provided to the local authority.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints policy meets all of the regulations.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- work more-closely with the local authority, students' other schools and their families to promote better attendance
- ensure teachers challenge students to meet learning targets
- accelerate students' progress by improving the tracking and marking of students' work so that they receive regular feedback about how to improve the quality of their work
- encourage students to adopt safer and healthier lifestyles by providing interesting activities at lunchtimes as an alternative to their leaving the school site.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			✓	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			✓	

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development			✓	
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			✓	
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Secondary special school for students with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties		
Date school opened	September 2007		
Age range of pupils	14-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 4	Girls: 1	Total: 5
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,500		
Address of school	7 Victoria Place Carlisle Cumbria CA1 1EJ		
Telephone number	01228 541089		
Email address	k.brooke@eys.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Kelly Brooke		
Proprietor	Mr Richard Atkinson		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 February 2012

Dear students

Inspection of Education and Youth Services Ltd, Carlisle CA1 1EJ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited EYS. I enjoyed seeing you at work in your classes and was particularly impressed with your good manners.

EYS provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. The staff work hard to make the content of lessons enjoyable and appropriate to your needs. As a result, you can gain qualifications and credits in your courses. The teachers ensure that you make satisfactory progress, particularly in developing the important skills that you will need in the future such as in literacy and numeracy.

It was good to see how well you get on with each other and with the staff. Your personal development improves and your behaviour is good. You enjoy being educated here and feel safe. The staff look after you and your attendance improves. Nevertheless, some of you are too often absent and therefore you cannot make as much progress as you should.

EYS meets all of the regulations but I have suggested to the managers that some things could be better.

- The staff could work more closely with others to encourage some of you to attend more frequently.
- The teachers could challenge you more in lessons and let you know how to improve the quality of your work.
- The adults could encourage you to stay on the premises at lunchtime by providing you with interesting activities.

Once again, thank you for your welcome and your interest in the inspection.

Yours sincerely

Terry McKenzie
Lead Inspector