

J.A.M.E.S

Highfield Garage, Frizinghall Road, Frizinghall, Bradford, BD9 4JB

Inspection dates

13–15 January 2015

Overall effectiveness

Good

2

Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This is a good school

- The proprietor has established effective arrangements to ensure that the quality of teaching and students' achievements are good.
- As a result of thorough self-evaluation, senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths. They have ensured that areas for improvement are identified and acted upon and that all the regulations for independent schools are met.
- The school provides a safe environment in which students respect each other and the adults with whom they work. Senior leaders ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are given a high priority.
- Students who have had no previous interest in education are motivated to attend regularly and to cooperate with the expectations and instructions of staff. They are being prepared well for the responsibilities of adult life.
- As a result of interesting and engaging teaching, students make good progress, particularly in English, mathematics and vocational areas of learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school does not have a sufficient understanding of how the courses they provide contribute to a full curriculum for students who are dual-registered with their placing schools.
- The school's procedures for the assessment of students' progress are not precise enough to readily measure students' rates of progress against national expectations.
- The management committee has a limited knowledge of the extent to which further improvement is required against particular independent school regulations.
- The attendance of a minority of persistent absentees requires improvement.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- Discussions were held with members of the school's senior management team, their human resources adviser and a representative of the management committee. Discussions also took place with the representatives of placing schools and a group of students. Additional, informal discussions took place with a number of members of staff and students.
- The inspector observed five lessons taught by three teachers. Three of these observations were conducted jointly with the school's operations managers.
- A number of school policies and procedures were scrutinised, together with records of attendance, incidents and sanctions, and students' academic and vocational progress.
- Consideration was given to eight questionnaires submitted by staff and a small number of written submissions by parents and carers. There were no responses to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Young, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- J.A.M.E.S (Joint Activities and Motor Education Services) was registered as an independent school in January 2013. Prior to this it had operated as a registered charity providing a range of services for disaffected and disadvantaged young people.
- It is registered to admit up to 45 students in the age range 11 to 18 years. There are currently 22 students on roll aged between 14 and 16 years; these students are dual-registered with their placing schools and the majority attend part-time.
- Students are placed at the school as a result of their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties in mainstream schools. They are placed at the school by their individual base schools or through the local authority pupil referral unit. Four students have a statement of educational needs or an education, health and care plan. There are no disabled students.
- The school makes use of no additional providers.
- The school is registered to admit students of sixth form age, but since its registration has not admitted any in this age range.
- This is the school's first standard inspection since its registration.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the timetable provided for each student fully meets their individual needs by:
 - further clarifying the respective contributions to be made by J.A.M.E.S and the placing school
 - obtaining precise information about students' previous levels of attainment
 - securing more precise continuous measurement of the extent of students' progress throughout each Level 1 course studied.
- Further develop the role of the management committee by:
 - improving their awareness of the school's performance against the independent school regulations
 - ensuring a sharper focus on the analysis of students' progress from their various starting points.
- Further improving the attendance of the small number of persistent absentees.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

are good

- School leaders have established and communicated a clear vision for what disaffected students can achieve and how their attitudes may be turned around. They ensure that the school's aims are implemented consistently through high expectations for all students.
- There is an effective focus on the quality of teaching, and the achievement of students, in both the academic and vocational aspects of the curriculum. The staff ensure that students are provided with secure opportunities to improve their learning and personal development, despite the difficulties which all students have faced or created in previous schools.
- Students know what is expected of them, the standard of behaviour required and the opportunities to achieve success in external assessments. The staff work effectively to ensure that students are appropriately prepared for further education or employment on leaving the school.
- Senior leaders have established excellent procedures for the monitoring of attendance and punctuality. Daily communication with placing schools, parents and carers ensures that any absence is identified immediately. As a result, placing schools report that the attendance of the majority of students improves in comparison with their previous experience. Despite these diligent arrangements, the attendance of a small number of persistent absentees remains too low.
- All staff, including senior and middle leaders, are aware of their individual duties and lines of accountability. Good support is provided to less experienced members of staff, including good opportunities for further training. All members of staff who completed the inspection questionnaire stated that they are proud to be members of staff at the school.
- Senior leaders have ensured that the school provides a balanced range of academic and vocational subjects and learning activities. All students are dual-registered with their placing school. There is not always sufficient clarity about how students' full entitlement to a broad curriculum will be shared between J.A.M.E.S and each student's individual placing school.
- The school has established strong links with local colleges, employers and placing schools. The vocational courses provided by the school are planned effectively to provide a smooth pathway to further study and higher level qualifications in students' chosen areas. Excellent use is made, in collaboration with placing schools, of the local careers and guidance service. As a result, students are well prepared, through effective dialogue and planning, for the transition to further education or employment.
- Placing schools, parents and carers who provided views during the inspection, indicate that they are pleased with the improvements in students' attitudes to school and the progress which they are making with their learning.
- Senior leaders have ensured that good attention is given to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. The school has high expectations of students' attitudes to learning and staff work tirelessly to reinforce those values and behaviours which will enable students to make a success of their adult lives.
- The school, through its policies and actions, ensures equality of opportunity for all students. Senior staff have a good understanding of potential areas of discrimination and ensure that all the school's activities are accessible to all students.
- The school links in with the local 'Prevent' agenda and all members of staff are trained to recognise and manage potential extremism. Students are enabled to consider fundamental British values, including the local democratic process, through opportunities to share their views on matters of local importance.
- The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that all aspects of students' welfare, health and safety are given a high priority. This is achieved through the continuous assessment of risk, suitable arrangements for the appointment of staff, the training of all staff to the required levels in safeguarding, and careful monitoring of all aspects of safety in workshops and classrooms.
- Regular and accurate self-evaluation is a feature of the school's leadership. Senior leaders know the school well and have identified appropriate areas for further improvement. Their success in the year since the school registered demonstrates good capacity for continued improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The proprietor has established an effective management committee consisting of a range of well-qualified and experienced individuals, each of whom contributes suitable skills to support the school. The committee has rapidly developed appropriate procedures to fulfil their responsibilities to support and challenge the school's leaders.
 - Members of the management committee provide good advice and support in areas such as staff

management, health and safety, and the prudent management of finance.

Each member of the senior management team reports regularly to the committee on their areas of responsibility. Committee members ask appropriate questions, seek clarification about the development of this new school, and hold the management team to account for their work.

The management committee is appropriately informed about the quality of teaching, the training of staff, the behaviour and personal development of students and their attendance. They have a sound awareness of the school's procedures for managing the performance of staff.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The management committee's analysis of areas for further improvement is at an early stage of development. Similarly, the committee does not yet have clear procedures for scrutinising the extent to which students are progressing at an appropriate pace with their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good and shows a strong improvement on their attitudes to their previous education. This results from the good quality of relationships developed between staff and students, characterised by mutual respect and a 'can do' attitude to learning.
- Students are placed at the school because they have failed to attend, to cooperate or to behave appropriately in previous school settings. J.A.M.E.S is chosen as an alternative provision by placing schools in recognition that these students will benefit from a strong emphasis on practical and vocational education.
- The great majority of students demonstrate a positive attitude to their experience at the school. They improve their attendance, cooperate well with the staff and with each other, and accept the standards required by the school.
- Students work well together and teamwork is an important feature of learning both in the classroom and in the workshops. Students understand the different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe. Students' views and the school's records of incidents indicate that bullying is not a problem within the school. Levels of staff supervision are high and students demonstrate a high level of trust and respect for the adults with whom they work.
- The overall attendance of students is below the national average but demonstrates a positive improvement on their attendance at previous schools. The majority achieve attendance rates close to, or above, the national average. Persistent absence by a minority of students has a negative impact on the rate and extent of their progress.
- Students state that the school has a positive impact on their attitudes to learning and their willingness to cooperate. Placing schools endorse these views. Students comment positively, in particular, on the practical nature of the activities in the workshops. They appreciate that staff adjust the pace of learning in English and mathematics lessons to enable them to keep up and to complete the tasks set.
- Students show a pride in their work, particularly in the motor vehicle workshops. They follow staff instructions, work safely and develop an impressive range of practical skills. In lessons in English and mathematics they concentrate well and sustain their efforts in order to complete tasks successfully.
- Good attention is given to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. Students gain confidence and positive self-esteem. They recognise that their aspirations have been raised and that there are future opportunities in education and employment which are worth striving for.
- The school's equal opportunities policy is implemented effectively. Students are helped to address any racist attitudes and to respect the variety of beliefs and cultures represented within the school and the local community. In addition, they have, for example, organised a coffee morning in support of a national cancer charity.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Senior leaders have ensured that the welfare, health and safety regulations are all met. Excellent attention is given to the security and safety of the site and to safe working practices, particularly in the workshops. Students demonstrate an excellent understanding of the routine procedures required to work safely with large items of equipment and potentially hazardous materials.
- All aspects of safe staff recruitment and training are given a high priority. All staff are well trained to the required levels in safeguarding and child protection. Appropriate numbers of staff are trained in first aid

and health and safety, including in fire safety. All aspects of students' welfare are addressed through suitable policies and senior leaders work diligently to ensure consistent implementation.

- A number of themes in the personal and social development programme contribute effectively to students' emotional and physical welfare. Visitors from the local police and health services raise students' awareness of crime prevention, substance misuse, sexual health and healthy diets.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. Appropriate courses are in place to motivate students and to provide them with success. All students have access to an appropriate range of courses which prepare them well for life beyond school.
- Most students attend part-time and continue with additional aspects of their learning in their previous school. J.A.M.E.S has a flexible approach to the creation of individual timetables which meet the needs identified by placing schools. The school is aware of the need for greater clarity in the dialogue with placing schools to ensure that the contributions of both partners always provide sufficient breadth in students' areas of study.
- The motor vehicle experiences provided in the workshops are excellent. Externally accredited courses are offered at Entry Levels 2 and 3, and at Level 1. These are well taught in line with the specification of the awarding body, enabling those students to progress to Level 2 courses in further education if they so wish.
- Students develop good teamwork skills in addition to sharing the responsibilities of working in a realistic adult environment. Students listen well to instructions and contribute effectively to the maintenance and repair of working vehicles.
- The majority of students also study functional skills courses in English and mathematics, mostly working towards success at Level 1, which is required to secure their desired courses in further education. Students have the opportunity to progress to Level 2 courses in these subjects, together with information and communication technology. The school has not yet been operating for long enough for students to have completed courses at these levels.
- Students develop increased confidence in speaking and listening, and the majority are confident enough to demonstrate their understanding, for example in mathematical calculations, to other students and the staff. The staff present learning in ways which students understand and through activities in which they can demonstrate success. The students also make good progress in their reading; they are encouraged to read and many choose books from the library to read for pleasure.
- Students also have good opportunities for practical learning through the use of off-site sports facilities or, for example, taking part in active demonstration of first aid skills. Additional learning opportunities, for example in science or creative subjects, are available but dependent upon the individual timetables requested by placing schools.
- Good account is taken of the requirements of any statements of special educational needs, or education, health and care plans, agreed for individual students. However, a number of students enter the school with very limited information about the standards achieved in basic skills in their previous school.
- The school has set in place appropriate arrangements for the assessment of students' progress in academic and vocational courses. Baseline assessments are used to establish each student's standards in English and mathematics on entry to the school. These enable appropriate decisions about whether students should start on Entry Level or Level 1 courses.
- A programme of regular assessments has been established in vocational subjects and in English and mathematics. In motor vehicle studies, for example, students are assessed on their progress in practical workshop activities. In addition, they each build up an individual e-portfolio of assessed work. These assessments provide an accurate assessment of students' progress which is verified both internally and by external assessors appointed by the accrediting body.
- All students are also assessed regularly in English and mathematics against the specification laid down by the awarding body. External verification includes effective assessment, for example, of students' progress in speaking and listening. In this first year of implementation, students are preparing for entry to Level 1 qualifications in English and mathematics later this year.
- As a result of regular assessment, teachers build up a clear picture of each student's achievement and areas for further learning. These assessments enable sound judgements to be made about students' readiness for final assessment at the level being studied. However, the breadth of the Level 1 award requires a more precise continuous measurement of how well each student is progressing compared to

expectations for their age and starting points. This is in order to ensure that they progress quickly enough to any higher level study of which they may be capable.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The achievement of students is good. Students who have previously refused to engage seriously with education, or whose unsatisfactory attendance has restricted their progress, settle quickly into the school's expectation that they can achieve.
- The information received from placing schools does not always present a sufficiently clear picture of students' levels of attainment in basic skills on entry to J.A.M.E.S. All students complete a baseline assessment to determine the level at which they should start their studies in English, mathematics and vocational subjects.
- The school's assessment records demonstrate that all students, apart from a small number of persistent absentees, are making good progress towards their external accreditations in vocational subjects and in English and mathematics. Students' placing schools are responsible for any additional accredited learning for these dual-registered students.
- The majority of students on roll were placed at the school during the current school year. Local admission arrangements are in a state of flux. Placing schools and the local authority have mostly sought relatively short-term placements at present. However, the school ensures that each student is presented with the opportunity to study accredited courses leading to external awards which will prepare them for further study or employment with training. Students respond positively to the opportunities provided and are working effectively to achieve the available qualifications.
- The current cohort of students does not include any more-able students. The majority enter the school during Years 10 or 11 with standards of attainment well below those expected for their age and with gaps in their previous learning. The school has, in a short time, demonstrated the ability to motivate most of these students to attend regularly and to engage seriously in accredited learning.
- Almost all those students who left the school at the end of the summer term 2014, having followed part-time courses at the school, went on to further study in schools or colleges, or into employment with further training. The majority of these students studied the motor vehicle course and achieved a Level 1 award or certificate which represents good progress from their assessed starting points on entry to the school.
- A minority of students enter the school with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The school ensures that the requirements of these statements and plans are taken into consideration when agreeing a timetable with a placing school. These students are making progress at a comparable rate to others in the school. In the short time since entering the school, they have begun to close the gaps in their learning compared with other students nationally.
- Students with complex emotional and social needs demonstrate success in managing their difficulties and settling to appropriate, accredited courses of study. In addition, they take an active part in a variety of sports and a range of creative and aesthetic opportunities. In the short time since the school has been registered, there is limited evidence of students' achievements in these additional areas of learning.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook.

School details

Unique reference number	140566
Inspection number	447291
DfE registration number	380/6009

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	Day special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–18 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	22
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Number of part time pupils	16
Proprietor	David Hanson
Chair	David Hanson
Headteacher	Mandy Lakes
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55 per day
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Fax number	01274 497760
Email address	mandy.lakes@jamesuk.org

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