

# Chase House School

<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–12 March 2015
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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.

- Leaders have greatly improved the quality of education since their recent appointment. They have ensured that good teaching helps pupils to enjoy their learning, achieve well and make good progress.
- Teachers help pupils build on previous knowledge by providing them with work that is set at the correct level. This helps them to produce good-quality work.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. Systems to keep pupils safe are robust. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe and secure.
- Pupils are provided with a wide range of activities that meet their interests and stimulate their learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are promoted well. They are keenly aware of people's differences and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The proprietor consistently challenges senior leaders to improve. They have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Arrangements for improving the quality of teaching to outstanding are not fully embedded.
- Plans to help pupils learn more about other cultures are not yet fully embedded.
- Marking does not always give pupils clear guidance on areas to improve.
- Teaching assistants do not always actively help all pupils learn.
- Checks on achievement and progress do not have sufficient impact to ensure that pupils make consistently outstanding progress.

### 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

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed six lessons taught by three different teachers. He scrutinised pupils' work and held meetings with senior leaders, the proprietor, staff, a School Improvement Partner and pupils.
- The school's documentation was checked, including schemes of work, teachers' planning, assessment records and records pertaining to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The inspector checked the school's compliance with the regulations for independent schools.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's Parent View online questionnaire. The inspector considered five questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Chanan Tomlin, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school opened in November 2013 and received its first inspection in October 2014. It was closed on the day prior to the inspection being announced. This was because the proprietor decided that it did not provide a suitable quality of education for the pupils. In a letter to the Department for Education, the proprietor stated that the closure would be for a 'short period' while measures were taken to improve the quality of education. No judgements were made during this inspection because insufficient evidence was available.
- The school reopened and a new senior management team was appointed in November 2014. Middle leaders have not yet been appointed.
- The school is located on the outskirts of Walsall in premises converted for educational use.
- The school caters for up to 12 boys and girls between the ages of seven and 16. In May 2014, the company that had previously run the school was taken over by Cambian Group. This company is responsible for similar schools in different areas of the country, as well as other services, including children's homes.
- Eight boys and girls aged between nine and 12 years are on the roll of the school. Six students have a statement of special educational needs associated with their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- Pupils are taught in two groups; one for Key Stage 2, the other for Key Stage 3. Pupils in the Key Stage 3 group are in Year 7 and are not enrolled for external qualifications.
- There are no middle leaders.
- The school does not use any off-site training. Physical education takes place at a local leisure centre.
- The school's aims include 'providing a positive, safe and caring environment within which young people feel happy and secure in the process of learning'.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management further by:
  - providing teachers with a greater understanding of how to achieve outstanding learning and improving the ways that senior leaders check the quality of teaching
  - broadening the ways that pupils learn about other cultures and faiths
  - establishing more effective arrangements for checking pupils' progress in all subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
  - improving the quality of marking to ensure that pupils always know how they can improve
  - ensuring that teaching assistants always actively support pupils with their work in lessons
  - giving pupils in Key Stage 2 clear guidance on how they can improve their writing skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership and management have ensured that all pupils make good progress in all subjects, including English, mathematics and science. Leaders and managers have created a drive amongst staff to help pupils overcome the difficulties they have had in the past, and to achieve good results.
- Leaders and managers have successfully created an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, with pupils keen to grasp new things and make advances in their studies. This is because they give clear guidance to teachers on how to help all pupils achieve good results in all subjects.
- A comprehensive self-evaluation document identifies the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This helps senior leaders to focus on what needs to be done to raise standards of achievement for all pupils.
- Leaders and managers ensure that pupils are well protected and safeguarded. The school works well with external agencies to keep pupils safe and to give them the extra support that they need.
- Senior leaders and teachers maintain regular contact with parents and carers to ensure that pupils succeed in their learning through consolidating what has been learned in school.
- The leadership of teaching is good. The headteacher checks teachers' performance and effectiveness through lesson observations that focus on teaching methods and the strategies used to engage pupils in learning. However, these observations are not always sufficiently challenging to bring about further improvement, to secure outstanding teaching.
- Current systems for tracking achievement and progress are effective for English, mathematics and science. Tracking for these subjects helps teachers and senior leaders to identify any underachievement and to adjust lesson planning accordingly. Checking and tracking of pupils' progress in other subjects is less well established.
- Teachers are provided with high-quality training in many aspects of health and safety. However, this has not been extended to improving teachers' skills to enable pupils to make outstanding progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Staff act as good role models; they work hard to help pupils understand moral issues and how best to act amongst friends. As a result, pupils know what is right and what is wrong, and get along well with each other.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain by learning about British culture, services and institutions during personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) lessons. Recently, pupils were helped to learn about the roles and responsibilities of the police within the community.
- Pupils learn about their own culture well through PSHCE, history and topic work. For example, the local vicar has visited the school and helped pupils to learn about charity and community work. However, pupils have only just begun to learn about different cultures and faiths through religious education and PSHCE lessons. Senior leaders have taken steps to broaden students' appreciation of diversity and help them learn more about other faiths and cultures. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this initiative.
- Pupils receive regular and effective careers guidance. This helps them make informed decisions about their futures.
- The school offers a wide range of subjects and activities that meet pupils' needs and interests well and help them focus on their learning.
- The premises and accommodation are well suited to support the subjects taught. There is an outdoor area for pupils to relax in during breaks. Physical education takes place at a local leisure centre. All areas of the school are well maintained and adequately decorated.
- The school meets the requirements related to the provision of information for parents and procedures for making complaints.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that all of the independent school standards are fully met.

### ■ The governance of the school:

The proprietor has a keen understanding of the quality of teaching, standards of achievement and what needs to be done to help the school improve. Leaders and managers are held to account for every aspect of their work by the proprietor. As a result, they successfully generate a drive amongst staff to secure high standards of personal development and achievement for all pupils.

The proprietor is very committed to raising standards and to helping all pupils overcome any barriers they have to learning. The proprietor and his representatives challenge senior leaders on school

improvement and provide them with high levels of support.

The proprietor has ensured that school policies and procedures follow the most recent guidance and help keep pupils safe at all times. Arrangements for the recruitment of new staff are robust, ensuring that all new staff are safe to work with children. Safeguarding procedures fully meet the requirements.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is not outstanding because at times some pupils present very challenging behaviour and this disturbs the learning of others. Challenging behaviour is always managed very well by teachers and staff; major disruptions seldom happen and pupils that misbehave and leave lessons to calm down are quickly re-engaged in their learning.
- Pupils are pleasant, well mannered and are very welcoming when people visit the school. They are very proud of their school and show how keen they are to learn and achieve by working hard and producing high-quality work.
- Pupils appreciate being part of the school community. They enjoy weekly assemblies to celebrate each other's achievements. During assemblies, certificates that are designed and created by one of the pupils are distributed by the headteacher. Pupils will be electing a 'School Council' in April; this will help them learn about democracy and will give them opportunities to work together towards improving the school.
- Pupils contribute to the wider community through activities such as raising funds for charity during 'Fun Days'. They concentrate and try hard to figure things out for themselves.
- A range of policies is in place to ensure that the promotion of extremism and political views is prohibited, so that all the independent school standards for this aspect are met.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Policies related to health and safety meet current guidance and are fully comprehensive.
- Parents and carers have confidence in the school's systems to keep pupils safe. Pupils say that they feel safe. They know where to turn to if they need assistance and know that they will always be listened to and effectively supported.
- Pupils learn about all of the different forms of bullying and the harm that it can cause through PSHCE and through project work. They have created a display that shows the different forms of bullying and the ways that it should be tackled. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and if it were to happen, it would be dealt with effectively.
- All lessons and the school day always start punctually. Since the school opened, attendance has been below average, but it is steadily improving because pupils are learning to enjoy school and to appreciate the benefits that education has to offer.
- Pupils learn about the differences between people in ways that effectively promote respect and tolerance. This helps them see each other and people that are different to them as equal, regardless of their cultural background, faith or sexual orientation. As a result, all the independent school standards are met for welfare, health and safety.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well and make good progress in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers help pupils to improve their reading skills by providing regular opportunities to read in school and by encouraging them to read at home. Leaders have ensured all the independent school standards for teaching and assessment are met.
- Work is closely matched to pupils' prior attainment and this helps them make rapid progress in all subjects. Teachers very capably adjust the work according to how well the pupils are doing.
- The teaching of less-able pupils is good as they receive the support and individual attention that they need to achieve well in all subjects. The most-able pupils are taught well and make good progress. All pupils receive high levels of challenges and pupils agree that this is the case.
- Teachers manage behaviour that is sometimes very challenging very effectively. They have created an atmosphere that is usually calm and purposeful where pupils concentrate on their studies and are keen to achieve well.

- Pupils' work is usually marked regularly and accurately. However, teaching is not outstanding because pupils are not always shown what they have done well and areas in which they need to improve, in all subjects. This is especially the case with regard to writing at Key Stage 2.
- Teaching assistants are not always fully involved in supporting pupils' learning. As a result, opportunities to support all pupils are sometimes missed.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- The school effectively meets all independent school requirements related to the quality of the education provided. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in all of the required areas of learning. This is because all subjects are supported with good planning and schemes of work, and progress is assessed effectively against pupils' individual targets. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in Britain.
- Pupils are well challenged according to their abilities in all subjects. As a result, pupils that find learning difficult, and those that are more able achieve well, make consistently good progress.
- Considering the difficulties that pupils have had in the past, and the poor attitudes that many have towards learning when they start school, they make good progress in their personal development and academic learning. As a result, they are well prepared to succeed in the future.
- Records of pupils' progress, from the time that the school opened until it closed temporarily in October 2014, show that four of the eight pupils on roll made good progress in English, mathematics and science. Records of progress for the other four pupils are not available. Senior leaders say that the systems in place for tracking progress during this time were not reliable.
- Efficient systems for tracking progress in English, mathematics and science were established when the school reopened in November 2014. At that time, baseline assessments were conducted for all pupils in these subjects that showed that most pupils were working at standards below those expected for their ages.
- Key Stage 2 pupils were reassessed this month and data show that, overall, they have made good progress in English, mathematics and science. Progress for these pupils in writing is slower. Careful scrutiny of their work shows that they have made good progress in all other subjects as well.
- Pupils in Key Stage 3 have not yet been reassessed. However, the volume and quality of their work show that they are making consistently good progress in English, mathematics and science from their starting points. Scrutiny of their work shows that they are making consistently good progress in all other subjects. These pupils are making good progress in writing.
- Pupils make good progress in all subjects as lessons progress. This is because teachers are always careful to ensure that they have a good grasp of what has been learned, before presenting them with more demanding material.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used to good effect to support most of the subjects taught. As a result, pupils make good progress in the ways that they use computers and word processing.

## 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](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140273
<b>Inspection number</b>	456413
<b>DfE registration number</b>	355/6002

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special day school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	8
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Stephen Bradshaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Valerie Talbot
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–23 October 2014
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£31,000–£35,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 378043
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