

# Pulse and Water College

3rd Floor Block 0, 18-36 Wellington Street, Greenwich, SE18 6PF

**Inspection dates** 17–19 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils	Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings

### This is an inadequate school

- The school's leaders do not do enough to make sure that students are safe at all times. A number of the independent school standards relating to students' welfare health and safety are not met.
- School leaders do not have an effective process to evaluate or to improve the overall quality of the school.
- The school's leaders do not adequately monitor the performance of teachers to bring about improvement in students' learning.
- Students' behaviour is not monitored effectively. Records are not kept in a sufficiently consistent manner and are not evaluated to bring about improvements.
- Systems for rewarding good behaviour or for delivering sanctions for poor behaviour are too variable. This means that students do not know what to expect or how to improve.
- The quality of teaching is too variable and requires improvement.
- Students' achievement, including in English and mathematics, require improvement.
- The proprietor, who is the school headteacher, has not devised suitable arrangements to ensure that the quality of teaching and the achievements of students are good, or that all of the independent school standards are met.

### The school has the following strengths

- A good range of subjects is available for GCSE and other examinations. This enables students who have not succeeded at other schools to complete their secondary education and to gain qualifications.
- The daily 'wellbeing' discussions help students to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world and to develop tolerant attitudes towards others.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school does not meet regulatory requirements and must take action to meet the schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with a day's notice.
- The inspector observed five lessons. He looked at students' work and spoke to them about it. He held meetings with the headteacher, who is also the school's proprietor, and met with staff members and students.
- He looked at documentation including policy statements, schemes of work, teachers' planning and records of students' progress and of staff training.
- Too few parents and carers had responded to Ofsted's Parent View online questionnaire for a response to be published. However, the inspector was able to consider the views of parents and carers who took part in a survey conducted by the school in February 2015.
- The inspector held telephone conversations with two representatives of the local authority that places students at the school.
- Seven questionnaire responses from members of staff were taken into consideration.

## Inspection team

John Gush, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Pulse and Water College is an independent school for up to 25 boys and girls aged 11 to 16 years who have been excluded, or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools.
- The school is led by the headteacher, who is also the proprietor. She is supported by a teacher mentor and has recently appointed a teacher in charge. There are no middle leaders.
- The majority of the students are in Year 11, although a small number of younger students are placed at the school for short periods of between six days and three months. Most of the Year 11 students join the school during the year. This means that they have only a limited time at the school in which to prepare for their GCSE and other examinations.
- Pulse and Water College was established by the proprietor in 2002 to make alternative provision for students from the London Borough of Greenwich. It was registered as an independent school in September 2014 and this is its first inspection. It has recently moved to larger premises located in office accommodation in the centre of Woolwich in south east London.
- The school currently provides full-time education for ten students. Three of these receive home tuition from one of the school's teachers. Seven other students have attended the school for short fixed-term periods during the current school year but are no longer on roll. All are from mainstream schools in the Greenwich local authority area and none has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. No student is in the care of the local authority.
- The school does not currently use off-site training to supplement its curriculum.
- The school aims to 'provide for the intellectual development of all who come through our doors be it to learn or to teach'.

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

- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that the performance of all teachers is monitored and evaluated effectively, so that they receive the support they need to help them raise the quality of teaching and improve students' achievement
  - sharpening the procedures for evaluating all aspects of the school's provision and drawing up realistic plans for improvement
  - ensuring that the school's policies and procedures are fully implemented
  - establishing a system to enable the school's leaders to be held to account for the school's compliance with the independent school standards, the achievements of students and the performance of the teachers.
- Support improvement in students' behaviour by:
  - systematically recording and analysing incidents of inappropriate behaviour in order to identify and reduce any trends or patterns
  - providing effective strategies to increase students' attendance
  - ensuring that a consistent approach is in place to reward good behaviour and to apply suitable sanctions in response to inappropriate behaviour
  - ensuring that staff members receive additional training and professional development to enable them to respond to students' behaviour more effectively
  - providing students with opportunities to contribute to the lives of others.
- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise students' achievement by:
  - ensuring that teachers assess students' achievements consistently and use this information to meet their needs and abilities through effective planning
  - providing more opportunities to encourage reading across the school
  - encouraging students to engage more frequently in physical education and games
  - making effective use of the information and communication technology equipment that is available in the school.
- Improve the impact of the school's work to promote students' safety by:
  - improving the school's arrangements as detailed in the section on the independent school standards

below.

■ **The school must meet the following independent school standards:**

ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b))

ensure that the school's written behaviour policy is effectively implemented - (paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b) and 9(c)).

ensure that the school's strategy to counter bullying is effectively implemented (paragraph 10)

ensure that the school's written health and safety policy is effectively implemented (paragraph 11)

comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12)

ensure that the welfare of students at the school is safeguarded and promoted by drawing up and implementing a written risk assessment policy and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b))

ensure that checks are made, and recorded in the school's single central register, as to whether or not teachers at the school have been prohibited from teaching, and that these checks take place before they begin their work at the school (paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(b), 18(3), 21(1), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(iii) and 21(3)(b))

ensure that the medical fitness of all staff is checked in relation to their ability to carry out their duties (paragraph 18(2) and 18(2)(c)(ii), and 18(2)(e))

ensure that further checks are carried out as to the suitability of any staff member who has been away from the United Kingdom prior to their starting work at the school, that these checks are recorded in the school's single central register, and that they take place before the staff member begins work at the school (paragraph 18(2) and 18(2)(e), 18(3) 21(1), 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(viii))

ensure that suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided (paragraph 23(1)(c))

ensure that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities are maintained safely (paragraph 25)

ensure that those with leadership and management responsibility demonstrate the skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and that they actively promote the well-being of students (paragraph 34(1) and 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)).

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management of the school are inadequate because leaders have not made sure that all the independent school standards are met. This includes a number of standards relating to students' welfare, health and safety. As a result of this, leaders are not able to be sure that students are safe while they are at school.
- Leaders are not thorough enough in making sure that staff recruitment is carried out effectively. This means that students who are already vulnerable are not sufficiently protected from harm. The school has undertaken some, but not all, of the checks that are required to make sure that all staff members are suitable to work with children. The headteacher is the school's designated safeguarding lead and has received the required advanced-level training. However, some staff have not received appropriate training in child protection.
- The proprietor has not ensured that the school's premises meet requirements because no changing or showering facilities are available for those students whose physical education or games lessons take place at school. Also, students' health and safety are endangered by the number of electric cables lying on the floor in classrooms.
- The headteacher has evaluated the quality of the provision at the school informally. She is aware of some of its strengths and some of the areas that need development. However, the evaluation process is not thorough or complete because it does not result in a formal plan for the school's improvement. In addition, it does not reflect the significant failings concerning the safeguarding of students.
- The headteacher and the teacher mentor gauge the quality of teaching and the progress that students make by visiting classrooms during lessons. However, these visits are not structured or regular and do not lead to formal plans for improving teaching and learning. Because of this, leaders have insufficient knowledge of how well teachers are enabling students to learn and make progress. Information about students' progress is kept by the teachers but is not used effectively by the school leaders to make sure that students make as much progress as they can.
- Similarly, leaders do not use information about students' behaviour and their personal development effectively to make sure they have the best opportunities to make improvements.
- The school's leaders, teachers and other staff work well together to create an atmosphere where learning and appropriate behaviour are valued. The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted adequately. The curriculum and the school's approach to students' personal, social and health education help students to understand that in the school, equal opportunities and tolerance of people's difference are valued. As a result, students receive useful preparation for life in modern Britain.
- A local authority careers adviser visits the school and provides helpful information and guidance about future options for the students. This helps students to understand the possibilities open to them when they leave the school. Year 11 students receive support to choose and then to apply for college courses to attend when they leave the school.
- The local authority officers who place students at the school value the contribution that the school makes to the lives of the students. This is especially in view of the work the school does to enable vulnerable and challenging young people to achieve a useful range of qualifications.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governance of the school is provided by the proprietor, who is also the school's headteacher. The proprietor does not make adequate use of the information available to ensure that students make enough progress in their learning or in their behaviour and personal development. Neither has she ensured that the performance of teachers is suitably managed.
  - The proprietor has not established a process by which she is held to account for the progress students make or for their welfare and their health and safety. The proprietor does not ensure that good teaching is rewarded and/or how underperformance is tackled.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Some students respond well to the encouragement and support of teachers, and some help each other to learn by the way they behave in lessons. However, on some occasions students' troubled emotional lives lead to unpredictable and difficult behaviour. Although

students receive support from staff, the way these incidents are managed means that the learning of other students can sometimes be affected.

- Almost all students come to the school with histories of very poor school attendance. The school has a range of strategies for helping them to improve and to attend regularly. For some students these are effective and their rate of attendance increases substantially. Others continue to be persistently poor attenders. The school provides home tuition for some of these. This has proved very successful in some cases, with students re-engaging in education well and returning to the school. Others continue to resist the school's efforts to support them.
- The school uses sanctions and incentives to help students to understand and to improve their behaviour. However, these are not consistently applied. Because of this, these schemes are of limited use in helping students to alter their behaviour.
- Bullying is rare in the school. Students say that this is one of the things they appreciate most about the school. They value the efforts of staff members to ensure that it does not occur, or that it is speedily resolved.
- Students understand bullying and how to avoid it. They have learned that bullying often results from discrimination and they understand the importance of a tolerant attitude towards those who are different. They are aware of homophobia and are keen to ensure that no homophobic bullying takes place at the school. Nevertheless, the school's approach to tackling bullying is haphazard and it lacks a strategic approach. For example, no structured approach ensures that all students are helped to build resilience against the dangers of bullying on social media or of the inappropriate use of text messages.
- As a result of appropriate support for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, students develop self-confidence. They express their thoughts and opinions with clarity. In religious education lessons as well as in the 'wellbeing' discussion each morning, they gain useful understanding of their own and other cultures. They think about how to avoid discrimination and to treat all people with respect. This helps them to develop tolerance and understanding between different sections of the community.
- The 'wellbeing' discussions also provide frequent opportunities for students to develop useful knowledge and understanding of British values, including about the rule of law and democratic principles. However, although students are aware of the value of raising funds to contribute to the lives of others, many of them are reluctant to do so.
- The school has a clearly stated policy that requires all staff members to ensure partisan political views are never promoted.

## Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate. The school is not rigorous in the attention it pays to the welfare, health and safety of students. As a result a number of independent school standards in this area are not met. These relate to safeguarding, the school's policies on behaviour and bullying, fire safety, health and safety, and the way that risks are assessed.
- The school's safeguarding policy is not up to date and does not follow current guidance. No analysis is carried out of the incidents of inappropriate behaviour, and the way they are recorded is inconsistent. As a result, the school is not able to identify any trends or patterns in students' behaviour. This means that it cannot be sure that it has done all that it can to help students stay safe or improve their behaviour.
- The school's policy on keeping students safe from the risk of fire is not effectively implemented. No records were available during the inspection to show that fire safety equipment had been checked or that fire drills had taken place.
- The school has no policy that aims to reduce the risk to the welfare of students. No risk assessments of the school's premises or equipment have been carried out. Assessment of the risks students may encounter on an educational trip was not conducted thoroughly. In addition, risks posed by, for example, trailing wires from laptop computers are not assessed or dealt with.
- Security arrangements are thorough. The identity of all visitors to the school is carefully checked and they are signed in and out. Students are supervised at all times.
- Notwithstanding the school's failure to ensure their safety, students strongly assert that they feel safe in the school. They compare their experience at the school very favourably with that at other schools and centres they have attended. Parents and carers make very positive comments about the way the school cares for the students and provides them with the chance to improve their opportunities and their education.

**The quality of teaching****requires improvement**

- The effect of teaching on students' learning and achievement is too variable and requires improvement. Teachers work hard to provide students with the opportunity to complete the coursework requirements of their GCSE and other examinations. This includes offering Saturday and holiday school sessions. However, the way teachers assess students' work is not consistent across the school and marks are not regularly gathered or analysed. As a result, staff are not able to make effective use of information about what students know and can do when they plan their lessons.
- All students have daily lessons in English and mathematics and they have regular opportunities to extend their skills in speaking and listening. Their discussions can be thoughtful and teachers use this to extend their examination portfolios. In addition to examination preparation, much of their mathematics work is about every day situations. This supports their personal development and helps them to prepare for life after school.
- The quality of the teaching is too variable, and the school's processes to monitor teaching and to bring about improvement require improvement. In most lessons, teachers use their understanding of students' capabilities, together with strong knowledge of their subject, to plan lessons that meet students' needs. However, in some lessons, planning is weak. Because of this some students' emotional difficulties continue to get in the way of their learning.
- In most lessons, two teachers work together in the classroom. This can help the students to receive the individual attention many of them need to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Overall, teachers build good relationships with students. This frequently creates a useful climate for learning, which helps most students to develop their skills and improve their behaviour in school.

**The achievement of pupils****requires improvement**

- Students start at the school having had troubled and interrupted experiences in education. In their short time at the school, many succeed in gaining qualifications and catching up on some of the work they have missed. However, because students' abilities when they start at the school are not consistently recorded, the school cannot tell accurately how well students achieve. This also means that it is not possible to compare students' progress with that of their peers nationally.
- Students are prepared for examinations in subjects including English, mathematics, science, French and child development, and some of these are at GCSE level. Results from last year show that students achieved between one and eight GCSE equivalent qualifications.
- Students are reluctant readers and are unwilling to read aloud or for pleasure. However, some take pride in the research they conduct on-line to support their examination work and their English results show that all improve their reading skills while they are at the school.
- The progress of the school's most able students is not tracked separately from others. Where the school is successful in helping them to resolve their unsettled behaviour, some students make good progress. Others continue to struggle to achieve their potential.
- Some of the students require, and receive, additional support. Evidence from lessons observed suggests that this is effectively provided and that these students make adequate progress from their starting points in their lessons.
- Students make use of information and communication technology (ICT) for research and for presenting their work. Almost all students have access to laptop computers and many use ICT effectively to present attractive work. However, other interactive uses of ICT are not available and this limits students' opportunities to develop their capability in this area of learning.
- A very limited number of educational trips and visits to places of interest take place. These help students to build their knowledge of the history and culture of their local area. They also help to develop their confidence as learners.
- Students are reluctant to take part in games and physical education lessons. This limits the chances they have to develop their self-confidence or their fitness.
- Most students who leave the school progress to a course at a further education college.

## 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>	141315
<b>Inspection number</b>	462907
<b>DfE registration number</b>	203/6004

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>	Independent day school providing alternative provision for students who are excluded, or at risk of exclusion from their secondary school
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	10
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Pulse and Water Learning Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Temi Ladenika
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Temi Ladenika
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	This is the first inspection
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£75 per day
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