

Tracks

21 Owlet Road, Shipley, Bradford, BD18 2LU

Inspection dates

20–21 January 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- There has been a marked decline in the quality of education since the last inspection. Leaders and the management committee have failed to halt this decline.
- Leaders and the management committee have an inaccurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and an over-generous view of its effectiveness.
- The school's improvement plan does not provide a secure starting point for tackling key weaknesses in the quality of education.
- The management committee has not held leaders rigorously to account. The management of teachers' performance has been, and remains, ineffective.
- The curriculum is too narrow and inflexible to meet all pupils' needs or effectively promote their spiritual and cultural development.
- Too many pupils do not make strong progress in English, mathematics and science and, as a result, do not do as well as they could in their GCSE examinations.
- Teachers do not always pitch work at the right level for each pupil. This is because they do not make good use of the information they have about pupils' prior learning.
- Pupils do not sustain the good level of attendance needed to regain the ground they have lost and achieve as well as they can.

The school has the following strengths

- Many pupils overcome the high levels of anxiety that have led to long periods of absence in their mainstream schools. Pupils' social development is well supported.
- Pupils and parents value the careers education and guidance they receive. A high proportion of pupils progress onto further study at the end of Year 11.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As a matter of urgency, improve leadership, management and governance by ensuring that:
 - the management committee provides a clear strategic direction and secures the permanent leadership capacity needed to achieve rapid improvement at Tracks
 - leaders and the management committee have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
 - improvement plans are sharply focused on the school's key weaknesses, include clear and measurable step-by-step targets and are regularly and robustly reviewed and updated
 - leaders and the management committee keep a close eye on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in all aspects of their learning and development
 - performance management is used to drive improvement in teaching, accelerate pupils' progress and hold teachers and leaders more rigorously to account.
 - the curriculum is broad and flexible enough to meet all pupils' needs and promote fast progress in all aspects of their learning and development.
- Raise expectations and accelerate pupils' progress so that they regain the ground they have lost through ill health and long term absence by ensuring that:
 - improvements in pupils' attendance are sustained
 - pupils are set challenging targets in all aspects of their learning and development
 - leaders and teachers monitor closely pupils' progress, identify quickly those at risk of underachieving, and mobilise the additional help and support they need swiftly.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - assessment information is effectively used by teachers so that learning activities are closely matched to pupils' interests, needs and levels of ability
 - pupils know how well they are doing and understand how to improve the standard of their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- The complacency and inaction of leaders and the management committee has led to a marked decline in the standard of education at Tracks. Leaders and the management committee are not demonstrating the capacity needed to secure improvement.
- The areas of strength identified at the last inspection have not been sustained and the areas for improvement have not been tackled. Expectations of pupils are too low and the targets set for pupils' academic progress are not high enough.
- Leaders and the management committee are ill-informed about the strengths, weakness and overall effectiveness of Tracks. Leaders do not check the effectiveness of teachers' practice systematically or rigorously enough. Similarly, they do not track the progress pupils make in academic subjects, or in the wider areas of their learning and development, frequently or precisely enough.
- There are significant weaknesses in the school's improvement plan. The plan does not have clear enough objectives, actions are neither clear nor properly phased and there are no measurable step-by-step targets. The plan does not indicate how leaders and the management committee will check if actions have been taken or whether they have made a difference.
- Leaders and teachers have not been held to account for improving the quality of teaching and ensuring that pupils learn well and make up for lost ground. Current performance management plans do not provide a secure starting point for increasing accountability because objectives set for teachers are imprecise. Not enough consideration is given to teachers' career stage or level of responsibility and, as a consequence, expectations of some teachers are too low.
- The curriculum does not meet pupils' needs because it is too narrow and inflexible. The curriculum is not broad enough to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development. As a consequence, pupils are not fully prepared for the next stage of learning and their lives as citizens in modern Britain.
- Leaders have successfully managed the move into new buildings. Pupils are universally positive about the new classrooms and better learning resources.
- The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have gained the confidence of staff, parents and pupils. Some staff expressed a lack of confidence in the management committee.
- The school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- The local authority has not acted decisively, or with enough urgency, to strengthen leadership, management and governance at Tracks and halt its decline.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The management committee has failed to secure the permanent, high-quality leadership needed to sustain a good standard of education at Tracks. Inaction, and a lack of focus on the improving quality of provision and outcomes for pupils, has led to unchecked decline since the last inspection.
 - The management committee has not kept a close enough eye on the effectiveness of Tracks and over time has become progressively less informed about its strengths and weaknesses.
 - The management committee does not hold leaders and teachers to account. Arrangements for the performance management of leaders and teachers are profoundly weak.
 - The management committee has responsibility for two other pupil referral units. An external review of governance was a recommendation in the section 5 inspection report for one of these pupil referral units. Accordingly, a review of the governance arrangements that support Tracks has been scheduled for the spring term 2016.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils are known well and adults are alert to the risks associated with harm and neglect. Pupils at risk are quickly identified and timely action is taken to protect them from harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has declined since the last inspection and requires improvement in order to be good.
- Teachers do not always pitch the work they set for pupils at the right level. At times, pupils with a wide

range of abilities are given the same work, even when they are in very small class groups. This slows their learning and progress.

- Teachers do not assess pupils' learning and progress frequently enough, or with enough precision, to identify how well they are doing and what they need to do next. For example, few pupils could say how well they were doing in their GCSE courses or describe what they needed to do to improve the standard of their work and achieve their target grades.
- Homework does not make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. Some pupils say that they have enjoyed the homework tasks they have been given and would like to be set homework more frequently.
- Sometimes, teachers ask questions which challenge pupils and help them to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding. Pupils respond positively and, in doing so, gain confidence in communicating their ideas, understanding and opinions. However, at other times, pupils are not challenged or helped in this way and much less is expected of them.
- Teachers have high expectations and clear 'ground rules' for pupils' conduct and behaviour. This promotes positive relationships and pupils' social development. Pupils are expected to, and do, show tolerance and respect for others, even when they have different or strongly held views.
- When learning activities are interesting and closely matched to pupils' different levels of ability, pupils work hard, sustain their interest and concentration and make faster progress. The work in mathematics books, for example, shows that pupils make step-by-step progress from their different starting points. This is because their learning is carefully planned. Pupils say, unequivocally, that this is helping them to gain confidence in their mathematical knowledge and understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are not well promoted because the curriculum is too narrow. There are too few opportunities for pupils to learn about other people's faiths, cultures, beliefs and values or develop their interests in art, music and sport. This limits their preparedness for the next stage of their lives as citizens in modern Britain.
- Equally, pupils' physical development, health and well-being are not well promoted because the curriculum does not include PE, sport or health-related fitness.
- Pupils' social development is effectively promoted. They overcome many, often complex, barriers and develop a growing sense of confidence and self-worth. Pupils talk confidently about the positive difference Tracks has made to them, especially following the move to a new building. They say that the better classrooms and learning resources are helping them to learn and work more successfully.
- Parents value the difference Tracks has made to their children's emotional health and well-being. Some parents say that their children have 'turned a corner' at Tracks. One pupil said with pride that he is 'walking taller' and no longer experiences frequent panic attacks.
- Pupils' growing confidence is evident in their attitudes to learning. However, because the curriculum is too narrow and because there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their independence, pupils do not acquire and develop all the skills they need to learn well and make fast progress.
- The positive impact of careers education and guidance is evident in the high rates of pupils' progression onto further study. Pupils and parents value the individual support, advice and guidance they receive. They say that it helps them to feel better informed and more confident about the next stage of their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because their attendance is not good enough.
- Pupils' attendance improves from a very low level prior to attending Tracks. Much is done to help pupils overcome the anxieties that have led to long periods of absence, often between one and two years, in mainstream schools. However, too many pupils do not sustain this improved level of attendance through Years 10 and 11. Overall, attendance is well below the national average for secondary schools.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day. They are polite and respectful to each other and to teachers and other adults. Pupils say that they 'get along well' at Tracks. They value their friendships, especially because some found it difficult to develop and sustain friendships in their mainstream schools.

- Pupils say that they feel safe and say that there is no bullying at Tracks. The school's records confirm that there have been no recent incidents of bullying or use of derogatory or discriminatory language.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Prior to attending Tracks, almost all pupils have had long periods of absence from their mainstream secondary schools. From this low starting point, pupils make strong progress in their social development in Years 10 and 11. Nevertheless, leaders do not track pupils' progress in the personal, social, physical and artistic aspects of their learning and development and, as a result, they cannot say whether pupils make fast enough progress.
- An increasing number of pupils achieved GCSE qualifications in English, mathematics and science at grades A to C in 2015. However, from their different starting points, this does not represent strong progress for all pupils. In fact, some pupils with high levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 did not make up lost ground and underachieved in their GCSE examinations.
- Current pupils are on track to achieve the targets set by their teachers in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 11. Teachers use a range of baseline assessments, at the beginning of Year 10, to set these targets. Crucially, however, not enough weight is given to pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 and, as a consequence, the targets they are set are not always challenging enough.
- There are no significant differences in the progress made by different groups of pupils, for example the most-able pupils, the least-able pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Careers education and guidance is effective and a high proportion of pupils progress onto Level 1, 2 and 3 courses at school sixth forms and further education colleges.

School details

Unique reference number	130980
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10001390

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	14–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Appropriate authority	The management committee
Chair	Philippa Tomlinson
Headteacher	Susan Sutcliffe (Acting Headteacher)
Telephone number	01274 582995
Website	www.tracks-education.org
Email address	office@tracks-ed.org
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2012

Information about this school

- Tracks is a pupil referral unit for vulnerable young people who have been unable to attend mainstream school because of severe levels of anxiety.
- Tracks is jointly funded by the local authority and the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). All pupils are referred to Tracks by CAMHS and most start at the beginning of Year 10. Pupils can, however, be referred and start at any point during Year 10 or Year 11.
- Pupils attend Tracks for four days each week. The fifth day is for additional activities such as outdoor and adventurous activities, leisure activities and work experience.
- All pupils are aged 14 to 16. There have been no Key Stage 3 pupils since the last inspection and there is no sixth form.
- Historically, very few pupils have been eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority). Currently, no pupils are eligible for the pupil premium.
- There have been many changes to leadership and management since the last inspection. Tracks is currently led by an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher who, along with the management committee, are also responsible for two other pupil referral units.
- Tracks recently moved to a new building with specialist classrooms, teaching and work rooms and social areas for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in four lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the acting headteacher, spoke to pupils and examined the work in their books and folders.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), teachers, the careers adviser, a representative from the management committee, a family therapist from CAMHS and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector examined documents relating to governance, school improvement planning, school self-evaluation, pupils' progress, the curriculum and safeguarding.
- The inspector held meetings with pupils, had discussions with parents, considered the information on Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and took account of nine staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Nick Whittaker, Lead Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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