

Phoenixplace

Redcar Street, Camberwell, London SE5 0NA

Inspection dates	4–6 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Sixth form provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and managers have not checked the work of the school closely enough. The plans for improving the school do not show how leaders will measure the effectiveness of their work.
- Leaders have not implemented strategies to ensure that pupils attend regularly. Nearly half of the pupils are failing to attend school on a regular basis. This is having a significant impact on their achievement.
- Leaders have not ensured high standards in relation to the quality of education provided. Thus, all the independent school standards are not met.
- There are too many incidents of poor behaviour. While the school records these incidents it does not provide effective strategies for pupils to improve their behaviour.
- The quality of teaching and resources for all subjects are inadequate and the systems for managing teachers' performance are undeveloped.
- The sixth form provision is inadequate. Students' attendance is very low and this hinders their progress.
- Leaders have not personalised the curriculum to meet pupils' needs and interests. The activities offered are not stimulating or interesting enough for pupils to want to come to school.
- Some teachers' expectations of the standard of pupils' work are too low.
- The school's assessment procedures are new. Teachers do not sufficiently evaluate the work of pupils or plan lessons that meet their learning needs.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have met the requirements for the specific independent school standards considered in the material change inspection.
- The school provides good careers guidance. Those pupils who attend regularly benefit from the advice given.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils are aware of the dangers of radicalisation and extremist views.
- The school has been successful in promoting fundamental British values. Pupils learn about British institutions when they visit places such as the Bank of England and the Guildhall.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulation 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take urgent action to improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - devising and implementing individual action plans for pupils to improve their attendance
 - putting support systems in place to raise attendance levels
 - working effectively with pupils on strategies to improve their behaviour.

- Improve the quality of the leadership and management of the school by ensuring that:
 - statutory requirements relating to the quality of education, and leadership and management are met
 - teachers have high expectations and plan activities to match pupils' ages and abilities
 - the quality and quantity of learning resources is improved to support pupils' learning in all curriculum subjects
 - monitoring of the quality of teaching is robust and ensures that strengths and areas for development identified are accurate
 - the curriculum meets pupils' interests and abilities appropriately
 - assessment information is used to plan lessons that help pupils make good progress in their learning
 - the school improvement plan clearly states how leaders will measure the effectiveness of their work
 - procedures for checking the performance of staff are developed and implemented so they are held to account for the progress of their pupils.

- The school must meet the following independent school standards.
 - Ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress (paragraph 2(2)(h)).
 - Ensure that the teaching at the school enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 3(a)).
 - Ensure teaching fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves (paragraph 3(b)).
 - Ensure teaching involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (paragraph 3(c)).
 - Ensure teaching shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3(d)).
 - Ensure teaching utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range (paragraph 3(f)).
 - Ensure teaching demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3(g)).
 - Ensure teaching utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly (paragraph 3(h)).
 - Ensure a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour (paragraph 9(b)).
 - Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(a), 34(b), and 34(c)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Leaders have not made sure that all the independent school standards are met.
- Staff have not been able to motivate pupils to attend school regularly. They monitor attendance and make calls to the parents of those pupils who are absent, within half an hour of the start of the school day. This helps to ensure that pupils are safe at home. However, there are no strategies in place to encourage pupils to attend school. Consequently, absence rates are too high. Nearly half of all pupils have attendance rates that are less than 50%. Only one third of the pupils have attendance rates in the region of 90%.
- The high staff-to-pupil ratio is not used judiciously to support pupils to attend more regularly. During the inspection days, only five to six pupils were present. This has dire consequences for pupils' progress and learning.
- Leaders have not ensured that policies and procedures to improve pupils' behaviour are taking effect; no planned action is taken or targets set to improve the behaviour of these pupils.
- The school's policy to evaluate pupils' work is not consistently applied. Pupils' books in some subjects are appropriately assessed, but pupils do not always act upon the advice given by teachers. As a result, they repeat mistakes and this slows their progress.
- Leaders monitor teaching, but they have an overgenerous and inaccurate view of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders have not provided sufficient resources for teaching. There are no other resources available for teaching science except a few worksheets. Similarly, there are no resources available in mathematics, art or music. The school has the use of a kitchen for food technology. This lack of resources has a negative impact on pupils' learning.
- The school has new assessment systems in place. Pupils are assessed when they start school and their progress is tracked. However, the information gathered is not analysed rigorously to use it for planning future learning or to provide additional support for those who underachieve or make slower progress. For example, the school's performance information indicates that only three pupils have made the progress expected of them, with all others making inadequate progress.
- The curriculum is not personalised to meet the needs of many pupils. It does provide an emphasis on teaching reading, writing and mathematics. However, the curriculum is not effective in helping many pupils to attend regularly or in engaging some pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour.
- The provision for pupils who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans is inadequate and, consequently, they do not make enough progress.
- Leaders' plans aimed at improving the school identify priority areas such as improving attendance, behaviour and pupils' academic progress. However, it is not clear how leaders evaluate the impact of their actions. Leaders have not established procedures for evaluating staff performance.
- The provision for sixth form students is inadequate. They do not attend well enough to benefit from the curriculum on offer.
- The school has promoted fundamental British values through visits to places such as museums, theatres, Buckingham Palace and the Bank of England for those who attend regularly. Pupils understand how a democracy works, and discussed the voting system for the Mayor of London's election.
- Pupils who talked to the inspector showed good understanding of how to safeguard themselves against any type of bullying, including online and homophobic bullying. They are well aware of the dangers of radicalisation and extremist views. The school has established links with the local police and invites speakers to talk about equality of women, drug misuse and how to keep London safe.
- All pupils are given appropriate impartial careers guidance. An independent careers adviser visits the school and provides one-to-one guidance to pupils. However, the majority of pupils miss these opportunities because they are not in school to receive this good support.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governance of the school is weak. The proprietor is also the headteacher and wants to improve the school. She has started getting guidance by engaging with local authorities and is planning to visit other similar schools.
 - The proprietor has established a seven-member 'senior advice panel' to support and challenge the school's work. The panel has not yet had any meetings. The chair of the panel is very enthusiastic,

knowledgeable and keen to improve the provision for pupils. However, he has not yet been involved in plans aimed at improving the school.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school now meets all of the requirements of the welfare, health and safety standard. The safeguarding policy takes account of the most recent statutory guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education (July 2015)'. The school has policies on preventing radicalisation and online safety including cyber bullying. All the required checks on staff before they start work in school are now in place and staff have received appropriate safeguarding training.
- Admission and attendance registers meet requirements.
- Drinking water is available during the school day and is clearly labelled as such.
- Health and safety policies are implemented well. Fire checks and evacuations are conducted termly.
- The school has an appropriate medical room that meets requirements, and an adequate number of staff are trained in first aid.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- The school's assessment information indicates that most pupils make inadequate progress. Teaching is not stimulating and activities offered do not motivate pupils to attend school regularly. The inspection findings confirm this.
- Teachers do not use assessment information to plan lessons effectively. In some lessons, work is not appropriately matched to pupils' ages and abilities and consequently they make inadequate progress. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations confirm this.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in English and mathematics, and pupils who attend these lessons make reasonable progress. However, teachers' subject knowledge in other subjects is not good enough to help pupils make appropriate progress in their learning.
- Most pupils' learning is inadequate because teaching does not capture their interest and make them want to come to school.
- Most teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high and they accept shoddy and half-completed work. They do not always use strategies and methods to develop pupils' interests. As a result, pupils do not have high expectations of their own work.
- There are insufficient resources in all subjects and this significantly hinders pupils' progress. This is particularly true in mathematics, science, art, music, and design and technology. Furthermore, very few books for reading or textbooks are available.
- Teachers follow the school's assessment policy but their implementation of the policy is variable. They write comments on pupils' books to explain what is good about the work and how to improve it. However, pupils do not act upon teachers' advice, and repeat the mistakes made. This slows their progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- The few pupils who attend regularly know how to keep safe from any type of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying. Pupils were observed discussing these issues in the assembly. A small number of pupils who met the inspector said that there is no bullying in school; they know how to support each other and if necessary go to a member of staff.
- Pupils are developing a good understanding of fundamental British values, including respect for people from different cultural and religious backgrounds. This prepares them well for life in Britain.
- A small minority of pupils take part in fund-raising for different charities such as Comic Relief. They volunteered in a local soup kitchen for the homeless.
- Leaders have ensured that all regulatory requirements for welfare, health and safety identified in the material change inspections have been met. Policies and procedures are fully implemented.
- Risk assessments for when pupils go on trips are good. Levels of risk are calculated and barriers to risk are identified. All required equipment such as medical kit and mobiles are taken on the trips by staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour for learning are negative. The relationships with adults and with pupils are not always pleasant. The number of challenging behaviour incidents indicates that pupils

frequently show defiance to staff and refuse to obey rules and regulations.

- A large number of incidents of poor behaviour are recorded and analysed, but the information from the analysis is not used to set targets for improvements. Leaders are not using the large number of pastoral care staff effectively to bring about improvements in pupils' behaviour.
- Most pupils who come to this school have poor experiences of education. The school has not provided support strategies to meet their needs. Pupils do not modify their behaviour and attitudes to learning quickly enough. This is because the school has not implemented strategies to motivate them or individual behaviour action plans that set targets for them to achieve. The headteacher has recently set up a system and has completed a behaviour plan in consultation with a pupil. It is too early to assess its impact.
- During lessons, pupils get disengaged quickly and this disrupts their own learning and that of others. However, behaviour around the school is generally adequate as adults keep a close eye on pupils.
- The attendance rate is very low and this has a very negative impact on pupils' learning and achievement. During the inspection, three quarters of pupils were absent.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Most pupils of all abilities, including those who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan make inadequate progress.
- The majority of pupils fail to attend school regularly and, as a result, they do not make enough progress in their learning and do not achieve well. A few pupils who do attend regularly make slow progress because teaching is not consistently good.
- The curriculum offered is not personalised to the needs of pupils and they are not given opportunities to discuss their interests and choices to motivate them in their learning.
- The school's performance information indicates that some pupils who are preparing for GCSE examinations are on track to achieve functional skills accreditation.
- Pupils have low levels of attainment when they join the school, as many have been disengaged and have missed education. However, the school has not been successful in re-engaging most pupils back in education and so they are not adequately prepared for their future education or training.

Sixth form provision

is inadequate

- The provision for the sixth form is inadequate. The strengths and weaknesses outlined in the other sections of this report apply equally to the sixth form provision. There are too few students to comment in detail on their outcomes.

School details

Unique reference number	141701
Inspection number	10006183
DfE registration number	210/6007

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	Specialist education provision for girls
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	19
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Sophie Nelson
Headteacher	Sophie Nelson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£23,750–£32,000
Telephone number	020 7703 7189
Website	www.phoenixplace.co.uk
Email address	info@phoenixplace.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Material change inspection November 2015

Information about this school

- Phoenixplace School provides specialist alternative provision for girls who experience learning, emotional, behavioural and social difficulties and issues of mental well-being and cannot continue their learning within a mainstream education setting.
- Currently 19 pupils are on roll, funded from four local authorities.
- Most pupils have been either permanently excluded or were in danger of being excluded from their school. There are six pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- The school opened in November 2014 in the London Borough of Southwark. The school was registered with the Department for Education (DfE) in January 2015 to admit a maximum of 28 pupils aged 11 to 16 years. The school asked the DfE to change the age range to 11 to 18 years. The material change inspection took place in November 2015 and found that the school was unlikely to meet the relevant independent standards if the material change was implemented. The inspection also recommended to the DfE that with immediate effect the school roll was to be reduced to 24.
- The school does not have any religious affiliation. It works from Brandon Baptist Church and has the sole use of the premises during the week. The church uses the building during the weekends.
- One of the school's aims is 'to support pupils, with improving their skills in literacy and numeracy, communication, self-esteem, life skills and employability through programmes that develop pupils' emotional, behavioural and mental well-being, improving their future prospects'.

- The school does not make any use of alternative providers. It uses the local youth club for sporting facilities and a local park for breaktimes. The school has its own outdoor area for play. The school is owned by a sole proprietor who is also the headteacher. The school has recently appointed a seven-member 'senior advice panel', but they have not yet had any meetings.
- The school is providing education for students above compulsory school age. It aims to support them to leave the sixth form with GCSE in English and mathematics and a range of vocational accreditation.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons and four tutorial groups. She conducted three learning walks through all classes. The majority of these were conducted jointly with school leaders.
- Teachers' planning and assessment records were scrutinised. Pupils' work in their books was evaluated.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, pastoral manager and the chairman of the 'senior advice panel.' Meetings were also held with pupils.
- All the independent school standards were checked.
- The school policies and other documentation were analysed on the website and through hard copies made available in the school.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons and at breaktimes. Records of pupils' behaviour were examined.
- No parents expressed their views on Ofsted's online questionnaire. The inspector considered the views of 12 staff expressed in the staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Kanwaljit Singh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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