

Luton Pentecostal Church Christian Academy

15 Church Street, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 3JE

Inspection dates

18–20 October 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
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor has not ensured that all the independent school standards are met and has breached the conditions of the school's registration.
- Statutory safeguarding requirements are not met. The school's approach to the safer recruitment of staff is not rigorous enough.
- Risk assessments are not well maintained and do not cover the full range of risks in school.
- Leaders do not monitor the pupils' progress closely enough. As a result, leaders do not know that pupils' progress is insufficient or take action to address the underachievement.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is not accurate and is not sufficiently self-critical.
- Governors are ineffective in holding the school's leaders to account.
- The curriculum does not meet pupils' individual needs. As a result, many pupils are given work that is either too easy or too hard.
- The science curriculum is too narrow.
- Leaders do not actively promote harmony with other cultures or respect for people with protected characteristics well enough.
- Pupils' attainment is below expectations for their age, particularly in writing. Pupils are given too few opportunities to write freely or at length.
- Children do not make good enough progress in the early years. Very few reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are polite, friendly and well mannered. They show pride in their uniform and school.
- Behaviour is good throughout the school and disruption of any sort is very rare.
- The school's leaders are deeply committed to further improvements.
- Pupils attend school regularly and on time.
- The early years environment is bright and attractive and staff use the limited outdoor space well.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As a matter of urgency, ensure that:
 - all statutory safeguarding requirements are met, including pre-employment checks and the recording of the checks on the single central register
 - employment procedures are rigorous and robust
 - risk assessments are reviewed and updated regularly and thoroughly
 - a full range of relevant risks are identified and thorough risk assessments are carried out, including those for keeping animals on the school site.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils' attainment is at least in line with the national average, including the proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year, by:
 - adapting teaching, as necessary, to meet the individual needs of pupils
 - ensuring that pupils are given regular opportunities to write freely and at length
 - implementing and delivering a good-quality science curriculum
 - actively promoting pupils' tolerance and respect for others who have traditions, cultures and beliefs different from their own, and including those with protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 Act.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management in the school by ensuring that:
 - all of the independent school standards are well understood and met consistently
 - there is sufficient separation of duties to allow the governing body to hold the school's leaders to account
 - governors are sufficiently knowledgeable about their roles to be fully effective
 - leaders' self-evaluation is self-critical and improvement planning is sharp and well focused
 - leaders monitor and track the progress of individuals and identified groups rigorously, and use this information to hold teachers to account for the quality of pupils' learning.

The school must meet the following independent school standards:

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively; and the written policy, plans and schemes of work:
 - take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils; including those pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan; and
 - provide full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education
 - provide personal, social, health and economic education which encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 Act
 - ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and

- provide effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(h) and 2(2)(i)).
- The proprietor must 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
 - involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - 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
 - demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught; and
 - demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and uses information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e) and 3(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that principles are actively promoted which:
 - further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; and
 - encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (paragraphs 5, 5(b), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7 and 7(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).
- The proprietor must ensure that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first-aid policy (paragraph 13).
- The proprietor must ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).
- The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than the proprietor and supply staff, by ensuring that:
 - no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;

- no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
 - appropriate checks are carried out to confirm in respect of each such person, their medical fitness;
 - in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining an enhanced criminal record check is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
 - the checks referred to must be completed before a person's appointment, and in light of the information from the checks, the proprietor considers that the person is suitable for the position to which the person is appointed (paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(e) and 18(3)).
- The proprietor must keep a register which shows that all of the required and relevant information is recorded:
- for each member of staff appointed on or after 1 May 2007, whether a check was made to establish whether that member of staff is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - whether a check was made to establish whether that member of staff is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
 - whether a check of that member of staff's right to work in the United Kingdom was made, and whether checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e);
 - whether a check was made to establish whether that member of staff is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed; and
 - in relation to each member of staff in post on 1 August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1 May 2007, whether each check referred to in sub-paragraph (3) was made and whether an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained, together with the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained (paragraphs 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b) and 21(4)).
- The proprietor must ensure that:
- following an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, a copy of the report of the inspection (if it has been sent to the proprietor) is published and maintained on the school's internet website, and provided to the parents of each registered pupil, by any date specified by the body who conducted the inspection; and

- particulars about the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations is made available to parents of pupils, and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate (paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(d) and 32(3)(e)).
- The proprietor must 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 as defined within the meaning of section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004 (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The proprietor has breached the school's registration with the Department for Education (DfE). The school is registered for pupils from the ages of three to 13 years. Eight pupils between the ages of 14 and 16 currently attend the school. In addition, the school is registered to admit a total of 55 pupils but there are currently 58 pupils on roll.
- The proprietor, school leaders and governors have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The proprietor has not kept up to date with the changes to the independent school standards and Ofsted's framework for school inspection.
- The principal and senior leaders have evaluated the school and created a clear record of their judgements. The school's self-evaluation includes consideration of the independent school standards but does not include information to support the school's evaluation of its effectiveness. Leaders' evaluation of the school is too generous and does not accurately identify the school's weaknesses.
- The principal and senior leaders have written a school improvement plan that includes some of the right areas for improvement and some appropriate actions. However, weak self-evaluation means that improvement planning is not yet strong enough to bring about rapid improvement.
- The school's leaders do not focus strongly enough on the progress pupils make. They do not check frequently or well enough that pupils achieve as well as they should. They do not have a clear enough idea of what constitutes good progress. As a result, pupils' inadequate progress is not picked up or addressed and staff are not challenged to improve teaching.
- The school uses a commercially produced curriculum. The curriculum's expectations are too low and leaders' expectations of what pupils could and should achieve are too low as a result. Consequently, the curriculum does not meet pupils' needs.
- The principal has introduced a system of performance management for staff but it is in its infancy. It is not sufficiently focused on improving the weaker aspects of the school, such as the progress pupils make, and therefore has little impact on school improvement.
- The principal is deeply committed to the school and is determined that it will improve. He has created a culture where pupils behave very well and show respect for adults and other pupils at school.
- Many aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are strong. Staff are good role models and their expectations for how pupils should behave are high. Pupils develop good attitudes to work and to one another.

Governance

- Governance is not effective.
- The chair of the governing body is also the school's principal and its proprietor. The lack of separation of duties means that the governing body is unable to hold the school's leaders to account.

- The minutes of governing body meetings show that governors play little part in ensuring that the school meets its statutory responsibilities
- Governors do not understand their strategic role in improving the school.
- Not all of the required information is made available to parents and prospective parents. The previous Ofsted reports and information on the academic performance of pupils is not available as required.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The school has published a safeguarding policy on its website. However, the policy is not fit for purpose because it refers to out-of-date information and does not take into account current government requirements.
- The proprietor has not ensured that the school's single central register of pre-employment checks meets statutory requirements. At the point that the register was checked, it contained discrepancies in the dates that checks had been carried out. Some of these errors had been rectified by the end of the inspection.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all the necessary pre-employment checks of staff's suitability to work with children have been carried out. For example, prohibition from teaching checks have not been done. The approach to employing new staff is lax and relies too heavily on personal connections and the surety of already knowing prospective employees.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all necessary risk assessments are carried out and that they are updated regularly. For example, a seven-foot-long boa constrictor and a number of tarantulas are kept in the principal's office. No risk assessment has been made to ensure that keeping such animals in school does not pose a risk to children. Similarly, the school has a number of pets that enhance the work of the school, but the proprietor has not ensured that the risks of keeping pets are considered or that controls are in place to mitigate the identified risks, as necessary.
- The policy and procedures for fire safety are not thorough enough.
- There is no first-aid policy and the responsibilities and procedures for first aid are unclear.
- The school's admission register does not meet requirements because it does not include all the required information, such as where pupils move on to after they leave the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Too much teaching relies on pupils progressing from one completed work book to the next without any adjustment to meet their individual needs. This means that for some pupils, work is too easy and for others it is too hard.
- Pupils' misconceptions sometimes go unnoticed and mistakes are repeated as a result. For example, when checking his work, a pupil discovered that he had chosen the wrong answer in response to a multiple-choice question. A member of staff helped him to find the right answer and he moved on in his work book. However, the reason he had got the question wrong had not been addressed and his misunderstanding of the tenses of verbs continued.

- In Year 1 particularly, pupils' learning is held back by the structure and delivery of the curriculum. For the first half of Year 1, pupils are taught as a class. No pupil is allowed to move on until all pupils have grasped the concepts taught. This means that the pace is painfully slow for some pupils and the progress that the most able pupils could make is restricted.
- Pupils are taught knowledge and skills that are below what would usually be expected for their age. For example, in the Year 1 class, pupils are required to count the items in pictures (for example, two shoes) and then draw a line to match the number of items to the correct digit. This reflects expectations well below those for the age of pupils in Year 1.
- Pupils have very few opportunities to write freely or at length. As a result, pupils do not develop their writing as they should. Too often, pupils are simply required to select the correct word to fit in the space in a sentence.
- The science curriculum does not provide pupils with sufficient knowledge or enquiry. Creationism is taught as scientific fact and the teaching activities are inappropriate for the teaching of science.
- Teachers do not have sufficiently strong subject knowledge to support pupils' learning across the full range of subjects studied, particularly for the secondary-aged pupils that the school should not have on roll. These pupils are not provided with the opportunity to study for GCSEs or other qualifications recognised by Ofqual (the independent qualifications regulator for England).
- Pupils are used to checking their own work against the correct answers using a key card. Supervisors and monitors carry out assessment tasks, as directed by the curriculum manual. Pupils are required to pass a test before they are permitted to move on to the next task. These assessments do not provide pupils with enough information about how to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Some specially tailored programmes are in place to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These programmes are effective in enabling some of the pupils to be successful members of the school's community.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and they manage pupils' behaviour well. The school's expectations for how pupils should behave when they are in their 'offices' are very explicit and pupils follow these rules well as a result.
- Supervisors and monitors (the adults who support teaching and learning) know the school's curriculum well. They have all received training in the scheme's methods, and staff follow the scheme's manuals closely.
- A range of different approaches to teaching are used in the afternoons, which help to broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, the oldest pupils visited Luton town centre to carry out a survey on business owners' attitudes to immigration. Other pupils worked in groups to learn about a range of topics, such as volcanoes. Pupils benefit from regular physical education at a local sports centre, swimming pool and park.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. Statutory safeguarding requirements are not met and recruitment processes are not thorough enough. Risk assessments do not cover all the areas that they should and have not been kept up to date.
- Some pupils' knowledge and understanding of what bullying is and the forms it can take are limited. For example, Year 3 pupils were unable to describe bullying beyond saying, 'It's when people are nasty to you.' Pupils say that there is some bullying in the school but they all agree that it stops quickly when you speak to a member of staff about it.
- Pupils show respect for each other and for adults. Pupils are welcoming and accepting of others in school and always try to do their best.
- The school does not actively promote tolerance and harmony between different cultures well enough. Although issues are dealt with as they arise, the school's leaders are not proactive enough in preparing pupils to live alongside people, for example, with those with other religious beliefs or none. For example, the curriculum teaches pupils that their role is 'to bring people to Jesus'. Although the proprietor states that his aim is neither to proselytise nor convert, the curriculum does not support this assertion.
- The school addresses issues relevant to protected characteristics as and when they arise but does not actively promote respect for people within the protected characteristics groups. For example, the school's policy statement on personal, social and health education states: 'Whilst we understand that the government has redefined marriage we will actively promote exclusive heterosexual marriage and celibate singles, as God's gift and design; and as such the best way toward human happiness and fulfilment, but will discourage intolerance.' This statement describes an approach that is too far removed from the active promotion of respect for gay and lesbian men and women.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are notably polite, well mannered and friendly. Pupils routinely hold doors open for adults and say 'please' and 'thank you' as a matter of course. Pupils are keen to talk to adults about their work and do so with maturity.
- Low-level disruption is extremely rare. Pupils follow the school's rules and do what is expected of them. Pupils show a marked degree of respect towards both the adults in the school and their peers.
- Pupils show pride in their uniform and they clearly enjoy coming to school. They play well together and care for each other. The school is a happy place where relationships in school are strong and everyone is valued.
- Pupils attend school regularly and on time. Lessons start promptly and pupils settle quickly to their learning. Pupils are well prepared for their lessons and look after equipment and resources well.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The school's leaders were unable to provide assessment information to show the progress pupils make over time throughout the school. The information that was provided, for one class, does not indicate that pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. Staff focus too much on pupils' completion of tasks and too little on whether this means that they are making good enough progress.
- The work that pupils complete in Year 6 is well below the level that would usually be expected for pupils at the end of primary school. This indicates that the progress pupils make is not good enough.
- The school does not identify or track the progress of the most able pupils. Pupils' work is frequently too easy for them, indicating that the most able pupils do not make the progress that they should.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not tracked closely enough. Some pupils have individually designed programmes to follow and their progress appears to be better than that of others. However, other pupils struggle to complete their work and their individual needs are not identified or addressed.
- Pupils' writing throughout the school is well below age-related expectations. The writing samples that were provided for inspectors showed underdeveloped handwriting, weak application of punctuation rules, frequent spelling errors and immature composition. Samples were almost universally short, showing that pupils have not developed the stamina or skills needed to write at length.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- The proprietor has not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. This has a direct impact on children's academic development in the early years as the school has not ensured that children make the progress that they should.
- Children are not sufficiently well prepared for Year 1. Although children enter the school at a broadly typical level for their age, hardly any have reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. In the last two academic years, only one child achieved a good level of development.
- As in the rest of the school, the curriculum does not support staff to teach children the literacy skills that they need in order to achieve well. Children's knowledge of phonics, and their skills in applying that knowledge, are well below those of their peers nationally.
- Staff have created an attractive and well-resourced learning environment. The classroom is bright and attractive and the very small outdoor area is used well. Children play with and alongside each other successfully and for extended periods of time.
- Children behave very well because the rules are clear. Staff model politeness and respect, in the way that they speak to pupils and with each other, and the children copy what they are shown.
- Staff have a good understanding of the social and emotional needs of young children. They ensure that the children are happy and settled, and that their social and emotional needs are met.

School details

Unique reference number	135699
DfE registration number	821/6205
Inspection number	10020921

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	A school with a Christian ethos
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Reverend Chris Oakey
Chair	Reverend Chris Oakey
Principal	Reverend Chris Oakey
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,300
Telephone number	01582 412276
Website	www.luton-pentecostal-church-christian-academy.org.uk
Email address	hotrev41@hotmail.com
Date of previous inspection	9–11 July 2013

Information about this school

- This independent academy is a school with a Christian ethos based on the teachings of the Pentecostal Church. The school is in the heart of Luton town centre. It shares its premises with the Luton Pentecostal Church.
- The school roll currently includes pupils who are older than the upper age limit of its registration with the DfE. In addition, the number of pupils on roll exceeds the 55 pupils for which the school is registered.

- There are no pupils with an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- No alternative provision is used.
- Each morning, pupils work in individual cubicles (known as offices) to complete printed work books. Pupils work alone and are not permitted to communicate with each other. Teachers (known as supervisors) and assistants (known as monitors) interact with pupils from time to time when pupils signal that they require attention by placing a flag on the wall of their booth.
- The school does not use supply staff.
- The school was previously inspected in October 2009 and July 2013.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school in order to judge the quality of teaching over time.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at the work in pupils' books. Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and their views on other matters throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors took into account the views of the 13 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the seven additional comments made. An inspector spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors spoke with members of staff throughout the inspection and took into account the six completed staff questionnaires that were returned.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the early years leader, the deputy headteacher and a member of the governing body.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Patricia MacLachlan

Ofsted Inspector

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