

Gable End

Inspection dates

7–9 February 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Some of the independent school standards are not met. Governors do not have a sufficient grasp of the most recent independent school standards.
- The arrangements to safeguard pupils are not effective. Leaders do not ensure that all of the pre-employment checks for staff are carried out or recorded precisely.
- Staff do not receive sufficient information about their responsibilities to protect children. Many school policies are out of date. The school's safeguarding policy does not reflect the latest statutory guidance.
- Governance is weak. Governors do not check leaders' work closely enough.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness is not sufficiently detailed and the school's improvement plans do not address all the areas that require improvement.
- Some staff are unclear about their role and they do not have up-to-date job descriptions.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough. This means that they are not aware of the training or support that staff need.

The school has the following strengths

- Teachers plan work that meets pupils' differing needs well.
- Teachers' high expectations enable pupils to make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Pupils behave well. Staff understand pupils' needs, which leads to strong working relationships between staff and pupils.
- The broad and balanced curriculum gives pupils a wide range of experiences that meet their individual needs 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 ('the independent school standards' and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently address the weaknesses in the school's systems for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being by making sure that:
 - all of the necessary checks are carried out for existing staff and new staff, especially the prohibition from teaching checks
 - all staff are familiar with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2016) and are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard children
 - the single central record of recruitment checks is maintained accurately and is compliant with current requirements.
- Improve leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring that all of the independent school standards are met and well understood
 - implementing effective systems to regularly evaluate the school's effectiveness
 - establishing a suitable strategic school improvement plan that sets clear goals, identifies responsibilities and details how success will be achieved
 - ensuring that all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are equipped with the necessary skills and strategies to fulfil their role effectively
 - reviewing school policies frequently to ensure that they reflect the latest statutory guidance and best practice.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietors must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
 - The proprietors must ensure that, for staff employed at the school, 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 (paragraphs 18(2) and 18(2)(b)).
 - The proprietors must keep a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question. The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed (paragraphs 21(1), 21(3) and 21(3)(b)).
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- The proprietors must ensure that the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) 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, to include the particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language (paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(b), 32(3) and 32(3)(b)).

- The proprietors 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; actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The school does not meet all of the independent school standards, including those relating to pupils' well-being.
- Arrangements to ensure pupils' safety are not sufficiently robust. Leaders have not ensured that policies and procedures are in line with current requirements. Those responsible for governance have not held senior staff to account for pupils' well-being.
- Leaders and proprietors have overseen a decline in the school's effectiveness since the previous inspection. They have not been aware of the changes to either the independent school standards or Ofsted's current arrangements for inspecting independent schools.
- Some staff are not clear on what they are expected to do or how they will be held to account for their performance.
- Leaders' strategic planning for improvement is underdeveloped. Leaders' assessment of the school's effectiveness is not sufficiently evaluative. Leaders do not measure the school's effectiveness in relation to the standards against which it will be judged. Their findings do not inform precise school improvement planning with clear timescales and success criteria.
- Leaders do not monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment with sufficient rigour. Records of monitoring are incomplete and leaders have not given teaching staff the training they need to help them improve. Leaders have recognised the weakness and plans are in place to provide additional time for staff to improve their practice.
- Leaders make sure that homework, which has been a problem in the past, is now set and completed regularly, according to the school policy. A new policy, a homework club and personal tutors to support pupils are all proving highly successful.
- The new 'key team' system means that one of the three members of staff assigned to each pupil are always available so that pupils will always have access to a member of staff with whom they work closely. Pupils appreciate and value this approach.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to support pupils' social and academic development. Pupils have benefited from extra-curricular activities and additional study support materials. Leaders are proactive in working with the heads of virtual schools to complete pupils' personal education plans, which provides leaders with further ways in which funding is used to support pupils' education effectively.
- Pupils have access to a wide range of subjects and benefit from a curriculum tailored to their ability and interests. Pupils study conversational French, alongside their examination subjects. This is a real strength in such a small school.
- Leaders have created an atmosphere where staff enjoy coming to school. They are proud of their work and appreciate the care and support that their employer provides. As a result, staff morale is high.
- The breakfast club works well to get pupils to take an interest and reflect on current affairs. By discussing newspaper articles in depth, pupils learn to respect other people's different views.

- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils' fundamental British value books helps pupils to appreciate other beliefs and cultures, while reflecting on their own experiences.
- Staff work closely with a range of external professionals to ensure that pupils' needs are met well. Local authority officers, staff from the virtual school and the alternative provider are all complimentary about the positive impact that the school has on pupils' attitudes.

Governance

- The directors lack sufficient knowledge about what it takes to meet the independent school standards and provide a good standard of education.
- The directors do not ensure that all statutory safeguarding employment checks for staff are completed. Prohibition checks have not been completed for teaching staff.
- The directors do not check the quality of leaders' work closely enough. They are not aware that leaders do not ensure that staff are familiar with the latest statutory guidance for safeguarding children.
- The directors are very proactive in improving some aspects of the provision to meet the needs of pupils, such as successfully gaining accreditation from three examination boards. This means that pupils do not have to cope with the additional anxieties of travelling to other centres to sit their examinations.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The safeguarding policy is available on request. However, it is out of date and does not refer to the latest statutory guidance.
- Staff are not familiar with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2016), and so do not fully understand their roles and responsibilities in how to keep children safe.
- Leaders have not ensured that the register for recording safeguarding checks is maintained and accurate, or that all of the pre-employment checks are completed.
- Leaders carry out health and safety checks regularly and act appropriately upon any concerns raised. The school carries out detailed risk assessments on all aspects of school life.
- Staff are familiar with their responsibilities to protect pupils from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and, as one said, 'I know I can rely on all the staff to help.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils often arrive at the school with a history of disrupted education. Teachers have a precise understanding of each pupil's needs and knowledge of their barriers to learning. Teachers use the assessment information well to help pupils to catch up and make further progress, which prepares pupils well for the next stages of their education.
- The daily 'lesson commentaries', half-termly progress files and individual plans that are

updated monthly enable leaders to track pupils' progress closely. Teachers use the regular updates to ensure that the tasks they set pupils are sufficiently challenging. This helps pupils, including most-able pupils, to make good progress.

- Teachers skilfully plan learning that interests and challenges most pupils. The work is highly personalised, and teachers expect pupils to work hard. Pupils say that the work is challenging, but helps them make progress.
- The tasks set in mathematics do not challenge pupils consistently well. As a result, learning in numeracy is less effective than in literacy.
- Teachers provide many good opportunities for most-able pupils to achieve well, such as access to higher programmes of study to ensure that the work meets their needs.
- Through teachers' accurate assessments in lessons of what pupils know, pupils are able to increase their knowledge and develop a better understanding of the topics taught.
- Teachers make good use of their subject knowledge to help pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make good progress.
- Learning time is often used very effectively so that no time in lessons is lost. Pupils in English lessons respond well to the teacher's constant reminders that 'every second counts' and work tirelessly at the work they are set.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate because of the ineffective arrangements to safeguard pupils.
- Many aspects of pupils' personal development are strong because staff know pupils extremely well. As one pupil said, staff 'care, they focus on my needs, they have followed up on the things I need, and the things I want to do.'
- There are good relationships between staff and pupils, and pupils grow in confidence and display good attitudes to learning as a result.
- Staff meet regularly to discuss pupils' well-being, and have an in-depth knowledge of each pupil's particular needs. Staff can usually spot pupils' 'trigger points' and so are able to refocus pupils on their work. When pupils do have occasional outbursts, staff deal with them sensitively; consequently, pupils are learning to manage their anxieties, fears and frustrations well, and are developing the skills to become effective learners.
- Leaders track the progress and welfare of pupils well and, in this way, leaders are able to spot any issues and address these quickly.
- Staff model good social and team-working skills, and provide a friendly, family environment. Mealtimes are highlights of the day. Staff prepare the meals and everybody eats together. Staff and pupils celebrate pupils' birthdays together, making these significant social milestones. Pupils value these activities and say that it makes them feel happy, valued and cared for.
- Staff liaise with a range of agencies effectively to meet pupils' medical, physical, emotional and social needs. Pupils' targets are reviewed regularly and the targets help to

prepare pupils for the next stage in their lives. Staff assist pupils with college applications and interviews. Each pupil receives independent and impartial careers advice and guidance, which successfully helps pupils to access a wide range of courses.

- Pupils appreciate, and are aware of, the impact the extra-curricular activities have on their development and future. Pupils speak very positively about the opportunity to attend cadets and horse riding, and to study conversational French. Staff support pupils who attend alternative provision well.
- Staff use the breakfast club to encourage pupils to reflect on the potential dangers they face. Teachers complement the conversations with formal activities in lessons.
- Access to the internet is appropriately limited and suitable restrictions are in place to ensure pupils' safety. This helps pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils feel very confident to talk to key members of staff about any concerns they might have.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance is improving quickly and for some pupils it is approaching the national average. Pupils who have a history of low attendance in previous settings attend well.
- Pupils typically behave well in lessons and around the site. In some lessons, pupils can take a while to settle, but once on task, they enjoy learning and work well. While there remain some incidents of poor behaviour, the longer pupils attend the centres, the better their behaviour becomes.
- Pupils develop self-discipline in response to the strong incentives provided for positive behaviour. Staff encourage pupils to talk about their feelings and encourage them to reflect on how they act. This helps pupils to regulate their behaviour successfully.
- Leaders provide activities that help pupils become well organised. Leaders carefully design procedures to support pupils with their everyday routines, which gives the structure they need to become increasingly independent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils often arrive at the school with significant gaps in their learning, and present challenging behaviour. Pupils' starting points are sometimes very low, as are their aspirations. The school's work ensures that pupils make good progress over time, which raises their own expectations of what they can achieve.
- Pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning, and achieve qualifications. Pupils' confidence grows and they develop the skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education. This is a considerable achievement.
- Many pupils leave with nationally recognised qualifications. As one pupil who is studying six GCSEs said, 'I had no future. Now I want to go to work. I want my own home. I want to have a family, and be able to provide for my children.'
- The school is accredited to permit pupils to sit examinations from three examination boards, which helps provide good opportunities for pupils to sit nationally recognised qualifications across both core and foundation subjects. The number of examinations

pupils take is increasing year on year.

- Pupils make good progress in literacy because of the quality of the teacher's feedback. Pupils receive specific advice on how to improve their work. This, coupled with close reference to the examination board criteria, help pupils to make rapid gains in their learning.
- Pupils' examination results are not consistently high across all subject areas. The progress pupils make from their starting points in mathematics, and some of the humanities subjects, does not match pupils' achievements in other subjects.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision attend well and make good progress.
- Most pupils read fluently and confidently and can use their skills well across the curriculum.

School details

Unique reference number	130855
DfE registration number	935/6085
Inspection number	10006121

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	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10–17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	6
Proprietor	Care Focus Limited
Chair	Not applicable
Education manager	Val Petch
Annual fees	£54,600
Telephone number	01449 770690
Website	www.carefocus.co.uk
Email address	valpetch@carefocus.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 May 2012

Information about this school

- Gable End is a small independent special school owned by Care Focus Limited. The school opened in 2005. The school acquired a second site in 2013.
- The school is registered with the Department for Education to admit seven boys and girls. Currently, all pupils are girls. All pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs. Two pupils have education, health and care plans.
- The two proprietors, alongside two appointed directors, are responsible for the governance of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour can be challenging. Many have experienced personal traumas and disruption in their previous education.

- One student currently attends Suffolk New College full time.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited both of the school's sites.
- Inspectors observed teaching and breaktimes, scrutinised pupils' current and previous work and looked at teachers' plans, assessment information and curriculum documents.
- Inspectors scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks for staff, together with the school's procedures and policies, including those for safeguarding pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with the education manager, the operations director, teaching and non-teaching staff, a social worker, and one of the proprietors of Care Focus Limited.
- There were no responses on Parent View. Phone calls were made to three local authorities and Suffolk New College.
- Inspectors had informal discussions and conversations with pupils.
- Inspectors considered 22 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

John Randall, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Clare Fletcher

Ofsted Inspector

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