

Bridge Training and Development

Unit 2, Hanley Workshops, Hanley Road, Hanley Swan, Worcestershire WR8 0DX

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The school offers an exceptionally high standard of alternative provision. Pupils who previously had a disrupted education are given a fresh start and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education or employment and training. Great care is taken to meet all of the independent school standards.
- Pupils who have experienced significant disruption and a lack of continuity in their education history flourish, feel cared for and accept the challenges they are offered.
- All pupils on roll are disadvantaged and have special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils currently at the school make remarkable progress from very low starting points in a range of subjects.
- Governors offer outstanding leadership and are thoughtful, sympathetic and challenging.
- Pupils behave impeccably because they are set clear expectations from their teachers and other staff. These expectations are known and understood by all at the school.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are rigorous and responsive to the highly complex needs of pupils.
- Pupils are safe and their welfare is of paramount importance to leaders and staff. Safeguarding is a strength of the school.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that is varied, bespoke and meets pupils' needs. This enables pupils to gain the best possible qualifications and the highest standard of emotional support.
- Outstanding provision for students in the sixth form gives them the best possible chance of success in their later lives.
- Leaders have good relationships with the agencies that send pupils to them. However, a few of these agencies do not transfer funds promptly. As a result, at times pupils do not have all of the resources they need to meet their needs.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that pupils have access to all the resources they need to meet their needs by ensuring that funding is received promptly from funding agencies.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders have the highest expectations of pupils and themselves. Leaders have improved the life chances of each child attending the school. Pupils at the school have previously had a wide variety of disruption and barriers to their learning. Some pupils have not attended school for many years before starting at The Bridge. Leaders promote a nurturing approach through a range of curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities and a variety of therapies. Leaders fully understand the independent school standards and make sure that all are met consistently.
- Leaders believe their mission to be 'changing people's lives'. This is exactly what happens at the school. Leaders and staff give pupils' personal development and development of knowledge, understanding and skills a high priority. Pupils who had no experience of a secure educational setting are shown what it means to learn, to relate to others and to have trust and faith in the world around them. Pupils and teachers have painted the whole side of a classroom unit that greets visitors as they arrive with the word 'Hope'. It is an accurate summary of the provision of this school.
- Leaders work effectively with outside agencies, organisations and carers. As a result, pupils newly arrived in the country have a clear understanding of the values of fairness and democracy. Some of these pupils have direct experience of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Thanks to the nurturing care of the school, they have been able to help others avoid the threat of intolerance and to appreciate what it means to live in an accepting and civilised environment.
- Leaders and staff successfully help pupils who have had their childhood development delayed or reversed. At this school, leaders are giving young people back the childhood some of them have never known.
- Leaders work with families and carers with understanding and persistence. As a result, the wider community deeply values what leaders are doing. Places at this school are highly sought after. Pupils are flourishing and they trust their teachers. They acquire a wide range of skills, some of them for the first time in their lives.
- Leaders inspire their staff and there is a real team spirit in the school. Staff support each other through the planning, delivery and monitoring of their service to the pupils and the wider community. There is a programme of continuous professional development in educational issues, psychology, safeguarding and multi-agency working. This is closely linked to a robust system of performance management.
- Staff are very supportive of their leaders. The responses to the inspection questionnaire reflect this. For example, comments such as 'I believe in everything that the school stands for and wants to achieve. It is an amazing place to work' and 'The team here are the most astute, caring group of people I have ever known, always putting the needs of the students before their own. I feel incredibly privileged to work here' typified the views of all the staff.
- Leaders oversee and evaluate the impact of the funding they receive from charities, private fee payment and public bodies effectively. However, a few of the agencies that place pupils at the school do not transfer funds to the school promptly. As a result,

leaders have to be particularly cautious over resource allocation and, at times, pupils do not have access to the resources they require to meet their needs.

- The curriculum is outstanding. It offers an appropriate range of learning opportunities. Pupils have opportunities to achieve external qualifications, such as City & Guilds and functional skills qualifications. Non-examination experiences develop pupils' social and emotional skills, such as hope, care and imagination. Pupils are taught numeracy through bricklaying, literacy through media work and science through horticulture and car mechanics. In addition, the school offers lessons in basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Most pupils on roll have had seriously interrupted schooling before attending the school but the curriculum is demanding and challenging. Pupils are required to take subjects such as psychology, emotional intelligence and mindfulness. The school recognises that the needs of pupils are for as speedy and as secure a preparation as possible for the next stage of education or employment and training.
- The school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. There are reminders everywhere. Pupils learn in the corridors, entranceways, classrooms and community areas that they have a responsibility for one another. For example, during this inspection, pupils were observed discussing with their teachers the concept of serenity and a teacher celebrated concentration and dexterity with a demonstration of juggling. The pupils paid rapt attention and told the inspector that this approach to learning was usual. Artwork is positioned wherever pupils can access it, and art is key to pupils' literacy and emotional development. Story and song play an important role in the curriculum.
- Extra-curricular opportunities are varied, and pupils are eager to take part. Pupils can experience pottery, horse riding, canoeing, geocaching and skate parking and can spend time at their local gym. Leaders use extra-curricular learning to help pupils rediscover an interest in the world around them.
- The school has a deep commitment to equality and diversity. Pupils learn how different faiths celebrate their beliefs. Because pupils have a variety of faith backgrounds, they teach one another to think beyond stereotypes. Muslim pupils have shared with other pupils the positive virtues of this faith and how damaging it is when extremism corrupts and misrepresents Islam.
- Leaders place safeguarding at the heart of pupils' success. The school promotes personal and community safety as part of pupils' personal development and curriculum provision. For example, when pupils study horticulture, they learn how to keep themselves safe while working with animals or farm equipment. When pupils learn literacy, they are shown how to use the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre website and how this tool can develop their own and others' safety.

Governance

- Governance is outstanding at this school. Governors are completely committed to pupils' acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Governors skilfully oversee the work of the school. Their scrutiny is clear, regular and scrupulous. They constantly seek ways to improve and challenge and support leaders in equal measure. For example, they have recently been reconstituted from a trust to a

charity and redefined each governor's role successfully.

- Governors give considerable time to visiting the school to ensure that accountability is robust. In addition to their oversight, governors volunteer their time to help pupils learn.
- Governors promote safeguarding as the school's most important responsibility. Governors have a clear understanding of pupils' high levels of vulnerability and make sure that leaders and staff are vigilant and attentive to pupils' needs.
- Governors work closely with school leaders and staff to make sure that each pupil is given the best possible chance to develop academically and socially. They know that pupils' often chaotic educational history requires analysis of outcomes much broader than examination results or test outcomes.
- Governors are eager to ensure that pupils leave with as many qualifications as possible. However, governors recognise that pupils need emotional, spiritual and moral development in equal measure and make sure that this is provided through the curriculum.
- Governors take part in fundraising and marketing for the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders prioritise the safety of pupils and staff. Leaders ensure that safeguarding is at the heart of everything the school does. Safeguarding is linked to all curriculum activities through risk assessments and learning plans.
- Leaders monitor pupils who have multi-agency care plans well. Staff support and guide these pupils so that they know how to keep themselves and others safe.
- The school is a vigilant community. Leaders promote safety and welfare through ensuring that all policies and procedures are up to date, reflect the latest national guidance and are implemented effectively.
- Staff are well trained in safeguarding and are clear which procedures to follow should they have concerns. Leaders ensure that safeguarding is a regular part of daily staff training.
- The school has effective links with external agencies. The school does all it can to securely exchange and act on information about the safety of pupils on its roll and those who attend from partner schools. The school's safeguarding policy is published on its website.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Without exception, the inspector saw outstanding teaching, learning and assessment throughout the inspection which reflect the quality of teaching and learning over time. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress, academically and socially, from their starting points.
- Teachers plan learning that is highly suitable for pupils' needs. Each pupil's individual and specific requirements are planned for carefully and their backgrounds considered in

meticulous detail. There are planning meetings at the end of every day. Staff meet together and discuss every pupil. Staff talk with one another about the day that pupils have had and consider strengths and needs for the following day's learning.

- Almost all full-time pupils have a local authority care plan. The school merges these plans with their own lesson planning, intervention and support.
- Teachers have exceptional subject knowledge. This means that they deliver pupils' individualised learning programmes effectively. Pupils have opportunities to learn a range of skills through such diverse subjects as reading, writing, mathematics, horticulture, bricklaying, media work, art, cookery and motor vehicle maintenance.
- Throughout all learning activities, teachers promote pupils' emotional development, resilience and self-confidence effectively. This is based on sound and shared professional knowledge about child psychology. For example, teachers use precise and specific questions to check pupils' understanding and to develop pupils' thinking and problem-solving skills successfully. Pupils learn mindfulness skills so they can become, in time, adept at non-judgemental reflection on their thinking, noticing how their thoughts play a role in shaping emotions.
- The school places a high value on the process of learning and sees making mistakes as a key part of learning. Pupils know that, if they make mistakes, they will be taught how to reflect on these and make progress.
- Pupils make exceptional progress from their starting points. Pupils have typically had very little formal secondary education before attending the school. Teaching, learning and assessment give pupils positive attitudes and a typically resilient attitude to learning.
- The feedback teachers give to pupils is exceptionally effective. Pupils' reading skills, writing confidence and expertise in a wide range of vocational learning are developed well. For example, pupils learn about the skills necessary to work in construction sites, animal care and farming.
- The school has a wide range of information about its pupils. This comes from, for example, rigorous reading assessments on entry to the school that continue throughout pupils' learning. Information also includes that gained from listening to and observing pupils in lessons and conversations with pupils' carers, local authorities, outside agencies and school partners. Staff use the information successfully to identify pupils' needs and to plan appropriate learning, support and intervention.
- The school also provides learning for pupils who visit for short periods from other schools on an afternoon, morning or whole-day basis. This learning is planned typically over half-termly blocks and includes literacy and numeracy, horticulture, cookery and construction. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that these pupils make rapid progress in a range of subjects. Information provided by the school shows that improvements in pupils' emotional development result in fewer incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Observations of pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtime during this inspection confirm that pupils' behaviour is appropriate and managed well.
- The school challenges stereotypes of people with protected characteristics. For example, pupils with learning difficulties are celebrated and treated with exceptionally high regard. Pupils speak of themselves with dignity, confidence and pride. Pupils know that they are deeply valued by all staff at the school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding
- Pupils are confident and self-assured and behave impeccably. They have learned to respect each other and themselves. This is particularly remarkable considering the significant barriers to learning faced by all of these pupils. Teachers and support staff nurture pupils' optimistic attitudes to well-being effectively. As a result, incidents of bullying are rare and staff deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.
- The school has helped pupils develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils maintain their workbooks carefully and with pride. The inspectors saw workbooks, art displays and coverage by the local media that evidenced pupils' growing confidence in themselves, learning and the wider world.
- Pupils are well prepared for their learning. The school encourages these attitudes as essential for their later education, training or employment. Leaders are robust when they challenge pupils' rare lateness to lessons.
- Pupils receive high-quality careers information, advice and guidance. Staff prepare pupils for the next steps in their education or employment and training well. Pupils are hopeful and thoughtful about their futures. As a result, the vast majority of pupils go on with their education beyond the school.
- The culture of safeguarding is at the heart of what the school does. Pupils are shown how to keep themselves and others safe, for example when using social media. Pupils feel safe enough to talk to staff about any problems they face in or outside school. Staff with high levels of professionalism listen to pupils and swift action is taken when necessary.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- In every setting throughout the school, pupils show respect for each other, for the animals they care for, the technology they use and the art they create.
- Attendance for all the pupils on roll is very high. The school works closely with sending agencies and, where possible, with parents to ensure that pupils get to school as often as they can and it is rare that a pupil misses a day of education. There is no persistent absence recorded for any of the pupils on roll.
- Pupils who attend the school part-time from other schools are eager to get to lessons and say that they look forward to the days when they can come to The Bridge. Pupils say that they feel pleased that The Bridge is part of the options they have at their base school.
- There is almost no disruption to learning in lessons or at breaktimes. This is because the staff are highly skilled at identifying potential problems and intervene quickly to deal with issues successfully.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- All pupils achieve at least a level 1 qualification in a vocational area. The school offers City & Guilds qualifications in animal care, horticulture and construction. Pupils are successfully entered for functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. Last year, the first year of the school's operation, all pupils who were entered for these qualifications passed them.
- Pupils currently make exceptional progress from very low starting points. Most pupils on roll have had very disrupted educational histories and some have had almost no formal schooling for many years prior to attending The Bridge.
- All pupils on roll are disadvantaged and have special educational needs and/or disabilities and all make exceedingly strong progress in a range of subjects. Pupils make outstanding progress in their thinking skills and emotional understanding.
- Staff challenge pupils of all abilities with suitably difficult and demanding work. Pupils are motivated by these tasks and frequently exceed their aspirational learning targets.
- Pupils make excellent progress in a range of skills such as problem-solving, team-building, building work, animal care, cooking and motor vehicle maintenance.
- Pupils attend this alternative provision partly because they had very low levels of self-esteem and low aspirations. The school helps them transform these attitudes. As a result of the school's provision, the outlook for pupils in later education, employment and training is dramatically improved.
- Pupils' development of literacy and numeracy skills is exceptional. Staff help pupils progress in these areas by planning focused and specific learning that meets pupils' needs. Leaders weave literacy and numeracy skills throughout the whole range of learning opportunities. This means that pupils' progress is securely and sensitively developed through everything the school does.
- Current pupils make consistently strong progress, developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills academically, socially and emotionally. Pupils make rapid progress in developing and applying vocational skills, such as promoting animal welfare, fixing machinery and planning and creating a meal.
- Last year, pupils went on to learn with providers such as The Prince's Trust, Heart of Worcester College, Mencap works programme and Kidderminster College.

Sixth form provision

Outstanding

- Leaders' expectations are very high. As a result, students make exceptional progress in formal qualifications and in a wide range of thinking and emotional skills. This means that they make a successful transition to high-quality education, employment and training when they leave school. The school works very closely with regional partners to plan students' learning or training.
- The school closes achievement gaps at a remarkable rate from very low starting points. All students have had only sporadic contact with formal education prior to coming on roll. Leaders and staff help students re-engage with education. Leaders give students a faith

in themselves, other people and in the value of learning.

- Students are well prepared for the next stage of their education or employment and training and attain relevant qualifications. The proportion of students progressing to higher and further education establishments, apprenticeships, employment or training is close to or above average. These students do so at a level suitable to meet appropriate career plans. The school provides very effective independent careers guidance.
- The school's tracking information shows that all students make progress towards their targets for functional skills in English and mathematics. Some are achieving better than the school's aspirational targets.
- Students' progress is improving dramatically across most subject areas and in the wider curriculum of personal development. Progress of disadvantaged students and students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving considerably across most subject areas.
- The school has adapted the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes successfully to meet the needs of students. As a result, students learn literacy, numeracy and work experience skills and are successfully challenged by a range of formal qualifications. Students learn about success, opportunity and leadership.
- Students are given opportunities as varied as cooking and eating together, helping to manage the school shop, learning how motor vehicles are constructed and using construction skills to build and maintain parts of the school site. Students' behaviour is impeccable.
- Students learn about their responsibilities to people with physical disabilities. For example, students designed and built an access ramp. Pupils celebrate the achievements of others in a careful and sensitive manner in assemblies and through displays or a quiet word, one to another.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are highly effective. Students develop understanding of the wider environment. They have opportunities to plant trees in the orchard, tend and plant gardens, shear sheep, play music and create artwork that is displayed in the school and around the school site.
- Students attend regularly and punctually. This is particularly good, given the high levels of vulnerability experienced by these students in the past.
- Leaders and staff believe that safeguarding is key to the success of the sixth form. Students are taught with clarity and sensitivity about personal safety and welfare and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Students learn how to take a robust approach to managing their own and others' safety. They are shown how to depend on each other and how to build a thriving, secure culture of safeguarding.

School details

Unique reference number	142833
DfE registration number	885/6044
Inspection number	10033586

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 school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Chair	Helen Atree
Headteacher	Sue Hornby
Annual fees (day pupils)	£32,000
Telephone number	01684 311 632
Website	www.bridgetraininganddevelopment.org.uk
Email address	suehornby.bridge@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school was registered with the Department for Education in May 2016.
- The school offers alternative provision to schools and other agencies throughout the local area and beyond.
- The school is administered by a charity called The Bridge Education Centre, Malvern.
- All pupils at the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- All pupils are defined as disadvantaged.

- There are 10 pupils of secondary age on roll. A small number of these are in the sixth form.
- The school accepts some pupils for short-term provision for other schools in the local area. These schools include Hanley Castle High School, Bredon Hill Academy, Blessed Edward Oldcorne School and Tewkesbury School. These pupils are not on the school's roll.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in 16 lessons through key stages 3, 4 and 5.
- The inspector conducted a joint work scrutiny with members of the middle leadership team in the presence of the headteacher.
- The inspector held a range of meetings with the headteacher and other leaders.
- The inspector met with the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector met with pupils and discussed with them their learning and workbooks.
- The inspector scrutinised the single central record, met with the designated safeguarding lead and scrutinised a range of records of recruitment, welfare plans and actions taken to keep pupils safe.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documentation the school produces as part of its self-evaluation and development planning. The inspector evaluated a range of policies and documents published on the website and made available during the inspection. The inspector reviewed external evaluations of the school's performance.
- The inspector looked at responses from the staff questionnaire. There were too few responses to Parent View and the pupil questionnaire for these to be considered. The views of parents were considered from the school's own questionnaires.

Inspection team

Graham Tyrer, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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