

# Lewis Charlton Learning Centre

North Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1HU

## Inspection dates

12–14 September 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders, including the proprietor, have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The directors do not hold senior leaders to account well enough. Leaders have not sufficiently addressed the areas for improvement identified at the school's previous inspection.
- Leaders' school improvement planning is not rigorous enough. As a result, actions to improve the quality of teaching have been too slow.
- The subject knowledge of some members of staff is weak, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Leaders do not systematically analyse the behaviour incident records to try and reduce the frequency of incidents. In addition, leaders do not analyse the incidents in the accident book to identify any patterns and implement any actions to reduce the number of accidents.
- Teachers, including those in the sixth form, do not have high enough expectations in English. Pupils' writing skills are underdeveloped and pupils' spelling ability and punctuation skills are low.
- The performance management of staff and the professional development of staff have not been effective in ensuring consistently good teaching.

### The school has the following strengths

- The curriculum is innovative and enthuses the pupils to learn. It is complemented well through a range of extra-curricular activities.
- The relationships between the staff and pupils are good. Staff know the pupils well and respond well to their needs.
- Leaders are highly committed to ensuring that the pupils achieve well at the school. They organise work experience and college courses to meet the interests of the students.
- The students in the sixth form are motivated and make good progress.

### 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?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that the directors, acting as the governing body, hold senior leaders to account for the standard of education at the school
  - ensuring that the school improvement plans clearly state what actions are to be taken to improve teaching, who is responsible for leading each action, and how actions will be evaluated to show if they have had a positive impact on pupils' progress
  - ensuring that the performance management of staff has precise targets to help staff develop and improve their practice
  - providing a programme of professional development for staff to improve their teaching of phonics, writing and mathematical reasoning.
- Improve the quality of teaching, including in the sixth form, to raise pupils' outcomes by:
  - ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to give extended answers in English lessons
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to compose their own writing
  - improving pupils' ability to construct and punctuate sentences
  - developing pupils' ability to spell and to use phonics to read unknown words.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and pupils' personal development and welfare by:
  - analysing the behaviour incidents to improve pupils' behaviour further
  - analysing the accident book to reduce the frequency of accidents.

### The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching 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. The proprietor must ensure that teaching at the school involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time. The proprietor must ensure that teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught (paragraphs 3(a), 3(c) and 3(e)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently and to actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met consistently. The quality of teaching, particularly of English, does not enable pupils to make good progress. Not all staff have high enough expectations, or the subject knowledge, to teach English well and enable pupils to achieve well.
- Leaders have not addressed well enough some of the areas for improvement identified at the school's previous inspection. For example, leaders have not ensured that pupils' writing skills have improved. In addition, they have not systematically analysed the behaviour incidents or developed governance at the school. The school's overall effectiveness has declined since the previous inspection.
- Leaders' planning to make improvements at the school is not clear. The plans do not say who is responsible for implementing improvement action points or when they will be completed. Furthermore, it does not state how leaders will judge if the actions taken have been beneficial to improve pupils' progress or not. Actions taken to improve teaching since the previous inspection have not been implemented well enough, particularly those actions that would improve pupils' writing skills.
- Leaders do not set clear targets for the performance management of staff. There are no success criteria by which the targets can be measured. This makes it difficult to judge if the actions taken by staff are improving the pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders have recognised that the subject knowledge of 'educarers' (teaching assistants) for teaching English and mathematics is not strong enough. Consequently, some pupils do not make consistently good progress. Leaders have started a programme to improve the staff's subject knowledge in these areas, but it is too early to judge the impact of this.
- Leaders recognised that the school's assessment system did not compare pupils' achievements to other pupils of the same age. Consequently, it was difficult to show if the progress pupils were making was good. Leaders have recently adapted the assessment system to enable teachers to compare pupils' progress to those of other pupils of the same age. This change is too recent to have had an impact on pupils' learning. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher are very committed to ensuring that the pupils are safe and have created a positive learning environment. They know the pupils well and tailor the curriculum to meet the individual needs of the pupils. Older pupils are positive about their future career aspirations and attending college or alternative providers.
- The curriculum is innovative and promotes pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Pupils' creative skills are promoted well in music, art, design technology and woodwork. In physical education (PE), the school uses the local leisure centre and park to ensure that pupils participate in a wide range of sports. At the farm, pupils learn how to look after goats, sheep and pigs, as well as grow their own crops. The curriculum is complemented by a range of extra-curricular activities. These include camping in the Peak District, visiting museums and taking part in team-building activities in a local forest. Pupils enjoy these activities and achieve well in the vocational courses.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The

school's psychotherapists help the pupils to analyse people's body language to develop their social skills and become more confident when meeting people. Adults ask pupils to reflect on their behaviour and to think about the impact of their actions on others to support their moral development. Pupils' behaviour over time improves.

- The very large majority of staff who completed the staff questionnaire felt the school was well led. They were proud to be a member of the school.
- The few parents who spoke to the inspector on the telephone or who sent a text to the free Ofsted free-text service praised how caring the staff are and valued the role of the key worker. However, some parents felt the communication between the school and home could be improved.
- Fundamental British values are promoted well. Pupils have had opportunities to visit a range of places of worship, including churches, a mosque and a gurdwara, to gain a deeper understanding of different religions. In addition, a group of pupils visited Leicester during the Diwali celebrations and were amazed by the colourful celebrations. Democracy is promoted through the election of the student voice. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

## **Governance**

- The headteacher is also the proprietor of the school. There are three other directors who lead the school alongside the headteacher. The directors each have a role to support the day-to-day management of the school. However, the directors do not hold the headteacher to account well enough to ensure that the school continues to improve. At the previous inspection, the directors were asked to implement an independent system for governance to provide support and accountability to senior leaders. This has not been done. As a result, leaders have not tackled well enough all the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection.
- At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to improve pupils' writing across all subjects and in all key stages. The action taken by the school has not been effective and pupils' writing is not as good as it should be. In addition, leaders were asked to analyse systematically the records of behavioural incidents to try and further improve pupils' behaviour. This has not been done. Although pupils' behaviour remains good, there is scope for it to improve further.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy is published on the school's website and takes into account the latest government guidance. If staff have a concern about a pupil, they put it in writing and pass it to one of the school's designated leads for safeguarding. The response from the designated leads is prompt and recorded appropriately. The school's record-keeping of safeguarding concerns is detailed and fit for purpose.
- Staff work closely with a range of professionals from other services, including social care and the youth offending team, to ensure that they are supporting pupils and their families.
- The deputy headteacher is the leader responsible for children looked after. She ensures

that the pupils' personal education plans have clear targets to promote their well-being. She has established good relationships with officers from placing authorities. This has led to staff receiving training on the emotional needs of children looked after.

- The designated safeguarding leads attend regular training provided by the Leicestershire Safeguarding Board to ensure that they are up to date with the latest guidance. The staff demonstrate good knowledge of safeguarding and know the steps to take if they have a concern about a senior leader or another member of staff.
- All pupils have a risk assessment and a behaviour plan. These are useful documents and clearly inform people about the possible signs a pupil may display if they become agitated and require support. The staff follow the plans closely. As a result, staff take pre-emptive action to distract pupils from becoming agitated. This enables the pupils to focus more time on their learning.
- Staff try to use a range of techniques to avoid physically restraining pupils. However, all staff are trained to physically restrain pupils safely. When physical restraint incidents have occurred, they are recorded in detail. The documentation of the incidents includes the responses of pupils, staff and parents and carers. If staff have been injured during incidents of physical restraint, they say they are supported by the school's leaders to help them in their recovery.
- All accidents are recorded in the accident book. However, leaders do not analyse the accidents over time to check if there are any trends to how accidents have happened or when they take place.
- The vast majority of pupils who spoke to the inspectors said they feel safe at the school. Almost all staff who completed the questionnaire said the pupils were safe at the school and no members of staff felt that the pupils were not safe.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- The teaching staff do not have high enough expectations for pupils' writing. Pupils' ability to spell and to punctuate their sentences correctly is underdeveloped. Pupils continue to repeat the same errors and do not make as much progress in their writing as they should across the school.
- In lessons, there are too many occasions when pupils are asked to answer simple questions and are not expected to give detailed answers to more complex questions. Consequently, pupils, particularly the most able, are not developing their analytical skills well enough to reach their full potential.
- The subject knowledge in English and mathematics of some members of staff is not strong enough to promote faster progress by pupils. Staff do not use phonics to promote reading well enough or give examples of writing techniques to help pupils become better writers. In addition, staff do not consistently develop pupils' ability to reason and problem solve.
- When English is taught well, pupils make good progress. One pupil, describing a shark, wrote, 'Like a cat mauling a mouse, a shark is thought to be joyful chasing its prey because it is hunting.'
- The teaching in the sixth form is good overall. For example, pupils in citizenship were encouraged to think about real-life scenarios related to the criminal justice system. The

pupils listened intently to different views and were able to refine their own views, taking account of all the information that was gathered.

- The teaching of the creative arts is good. Pupils are highly motivated. The language associated with art is promoted well. In drama, pupils gain in confidence to participate in miming. Adults' use of praise to reassure the pupils is particularly effective to enable pupils to fully participate in lessons and achieve.
- Pupils achieve well in music. A group of pupils responded well to the teacher's instruction of how to play Taiko drums. Even as the rhythms got more complex, the pupils concentrated very well and kept to the beat.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' self-confidence is developed well by the staff. Pupils mostly arrive at the school with very low self-esteem. The staff get to know the pupils very well and know when pupils need support to overcome their anxieties. As one pupil said, 'The best thing about the school is the staff. They comfort you when you need it.' The pupils respect the staff, which leads to a positive atmosphere around the school.
- The pupils have a strong sense of equality. Pupils learn that everyone is different and that you respect people for who they are. Pupils lead discussions on equality, including issues that transgender people face, and are clear that no one should be judged negatively on the basis of their gender or sexual orientation.
- The school uses psychotherapists who speak with pupils and staff to build individual profiles of the pupils. Staff have said this is helping them to gain a deeper understanding of the pupils' emotional needs. In addition, the psychotherapists also offer support to the staff to support their emotional well-being.
- Pupils say the staff take any incidents of bullying seriously and there are consequences for those who do bully. The school has anti-bullying ambassadors to help prevent bullying. The anti-bullying coordinator regularly analyses any incidents of bullying to try and reduce the frequency of incidents. Older pupils told the inspectors that bullying rarely happens.
- The school promotes pupils' physical fitness through activities in the park and outdoor activities in the forest. Pupils at the farm go on long bike rides.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the potential dangers of the internet. They know not to share personal details or passwords.
- All pupils receive independent careers guidance. Pupils in Year 11 have the opportunity to attend work experience where appropriate. This has included pupils working in an automobile garage, charity shops and at stables.
- The pupils' behaviour in alternative provision is good. Staff accompany pupils and are available to offer support if required.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Over time, pupils make good progress in managing their own behaviour. The staff are consistently positive with the pupils and, as a result, the pupils respect the staff and respond well to their advice. Staff are very alert to changes in pupils' emotions and take pre-emptive action to avoid misbehaviour. For example, if pupils become agitated in a lesson, staff will take pupils out of the lesson for a short period to ease their concerns. Pupils are brought back into lessons quickly to avoid loss of learning time.
- Pupils demonstrate respect for each other. At the end of each day, pupils' reward points are celebrated. In addition, pupils' work is also shared and valued. Pupils respond well to the behaviour reward system and are motivated by the prospect of participating in a visit or a meal out with the staff and other pupils.
- The attendance of pupils decreased in the last academic year. However, leaders knew the reasons for this and took appropriate action. The school works well with pupils, parents and carers of those pupils who are reluctant to go to school. This involves staff visiting pupils in their own homes and tailoring a curriculum to meet their needs.
- There was an increase in the number of fixed-term exclusions last year. The school worked hard to support the pupils involved and to tailor their education to meet their needs. The number of fixed-term exclusions has started to fall. There have been no permanent exclusions in the last two years.
- Leaders keep detailed records of all behaviour incidents. However, they do not analyse the incidents over time to see if there are any patterns as to where or when incidents take place. Leaders are not checking closely enough if the number of behavioural incidents are increasing or decreasing.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in writing. Pupils' spelling ability, construction of sentences and punctuation skills are underdeveloped. Scrutiny of pupils' work over time shows that they do not make the progress of which they are capable in writing.
- Pupils are asked to use a range of techniques to improve their composition of writing, but their work shows little evidence of the techniques being used. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their writing. Pupils' weak writing skills also affect their achievement in other subjects, such as history.
- Scrutiny of pupils' mathematics work over time shows that pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning skills. However, they study a range of mathematical topics and their work shows steady progress over time. Pupils' achievements in mathematics at the end of key stage 4 have been consistently higher than in English.
- The school's assessment information shows that the majority of pupils have made good progress from their low starting points in most subjects. Until recently, teachers were not able to compare pupils' attainment and progress with that of pupils of the same age nationally. They have not addressed the gaps in pupils' learning sufficiently well, so that, in some subjects, pupils' skills and abilities are below those expected for their age.
- Pupils study a range of vocational qualifications, including animal care, dog grooming, hospitality and catering, and sport. Pupils are highly motivated in these subjects and



achieve well in externally accredited examinations.

- Through participating in work experience and studying both academic and vocational courses, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of their education, training or employment.

### **Sixth form provision**

**Good**

- The outcomes in the sixth form are strong. All students who left the sixth form in 2017 got a placement to continue their education. Half of the cohort have been entered on to level 3 courses. This represents very good progress from their starting points at the beginning of the sixth form.
- The curriculum is tailored to meet the individual needs of students. The students receive good-quality careers advice and guidance to ensure that their courses match their future aspirations. The school uses alternative placements to place students on vocational courses to match their interests. These courses enable students to work towards qualifications in music, mechanics, and hospitality and catering. The students are very enthusiastic about attending their courses and have a positive attitude to learning.
- The leader of the sixth form has only been in post since the start of term. She judges accurately the quality of teaching, both the strengths and the weaknesses.
- There is a harmonious atmosphere in the sixth form. At breaktimes, the students are able to talk to the staff in a mature and responsible way. They are very positive about their experience in the sixth form and make good progress with their personal and social skills. This prepares them well for their next steps after school.
- Students benefit from a range of teachers to help them make progress. The music teacher skilfully encouraged a student to add music to accompany a film clip. The student showed great perseverance and skill to complete the task to a high standard.
- All students continue to study English and mathematics to a level 2 qualification. The teaching of mathematics is stronger than the English teaching. Students' writing skills are underdeveloped due to a lack of opportunities to compose their own writing. In addition, adults do not have high enough expectations of students' ability to write.



## School details

Unique reference number	134438
DfE registration number	855/6020
Inspection number	10040612

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	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	15
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Ms Georgina Pearson
Headteacher	Ms Georgina Pearson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£51,588 to £74,850
Telephone number	01530 560775
Website	<a href="http://www.leiwscharltonltd.org.uk">www.leiwscharltonltd.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:g.pearson@lewischarltonschool.org">g.pearson@lewischarltonschool.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	3–5 November 2015

## Information about this school

- Lewis Charlton is an independent day special school located in Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire.
- The school is registered to admit up to 57 pupils in the age range 11 to 19.
- The school has six sites. Four sites are located within the centre of the town. One of these sites had just opened prior to this inspection. The sixth-form building is located in nearby Donisthorpe village. The school uses Lodge Farm, which is approximately a 45-

minute car journey from the main school building. The school uses eight alternative providers for pupils to attend vocational courses on a part-time basis. The providers are: Gaz Autos Limited, North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, Chameleon, YMCA Derbyshire, Baby People Music Programme, South Staffordshire College, Nottingham Community Recording Studios and the Phoenix Centre, Packington.

- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Pupils' needs mostly relate to their social and emotional needs.
- Pupils travel to the school from several local authorities. The school has eight children looked after.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in November 2015.
- The school aims to provide a unique blend of therapeutic education and care for pupils who have experienced difficulties within mainstream or other special education provision.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning at all of the school sites. They looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of year groups.
- Inspectors spoke with two groups of pupils and other pupils on an informal basis.
- Meetings were held with educarers, teachers, senior leaders and directors.
- Inspectors considered the text messages sent to the Ofsted free-text service. In addition, inspectors telephoned some parents to gain their views about the school. There were too few responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) for the results to be published.
- This inspection was brought forward as a result of complaints received by the Department for Education related to safeguarding.
- The inspectors considered the 52 responses from the staff questionnaire. Staff completed the questionnaire anonymously and handed them to inspectors in sealed envelopes.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; notes from directors' meetings; the school's most recent information on pupils' achievement and information related to performance management, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mary Maybank

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

### Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2017