

KWS Educational Services

23–25 & 51 Brunel Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 9TJ

Inspection dates

26–28 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors do not check the effectiveness of the school systematically. Since the last inspection, the school’s overall effectiveness has declined.
- Leaders’ self-evaluation is broadly accurate, but they do not use the information effectively to draw up detailed development plans.
- Leaders do not always secure improvements in pupils’ progress because they do not always link their monitoring of learning to staff training.
- Staff track pupils’ progress, but do not always use the information to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress over time.
- Some teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers do not consistently set work that matches pupils’ needs. This slows some pupils’ progress over time.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- Staff provide valuable support to help pupils who have complex needs re-engage in learning successfully.
- Staff tenaciously follow up pupil absence. This leads to a marked and sustained improvement in pupils’ attendance from their starting points.
- Where teaching is effective, the work set helps pupils fill in the gaps in their learning, helping them to make good progress over time.
- Staff know pupils well. They understand pupils’ needs and build strong relationships that help pupils to develop positive behaviours.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils feel safe. They enjoy coming to school.

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?

- Improve leadership, management and governance by:
 - improving the systems of governance so that there are regular checks in place to assess the effectiveness of the school
 - making sure that any self-evaluation document is used to identify issues which are addressed in a strategic school improvement plan
 - establishing an assessment system that allows staff to identify pupils' starting points and track their progress more efficiently
 - using leaders' monitoring information to inform staff training and thus drive improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all pupils make good progress from their starting points by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and use the information gathered on pupils when they arrive at the school and over time to set work that meets their needs.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked hard to ensure that standards are maintained. However, recent difficulties with governance have undermined their efforts, and they have not been able to monitor the school's overall effectiveness as closely as they previously did. Although the overall effectiveness of the school has declined, leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- In discussion with the headteacher, her view of the effectiveness of the school was accurate. She rightly points out the areas that require further development. Equally, the other proprietor identified the school's strengths and weaknesses correctly. However, they have not used their self-evaluation to establish a useful baseline for the school's improvement and development plan.
- While leaders monitor teaching routinely, they do not always use the information to give teaching staff the individual training they need to help them improve. As a result, they miss some opportunities to drive improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Staff do not use the information gathered on pupils well enough. The headteacher is aware of the need to monitor pupils' academic progress in more detail. A new system is imminent. This will allow teachers to use assessment information in their planning more effectively, and more easily provide support for pupils falling behind. This will help more pupils to make better progress over time.
- Staff are passionate about their work. They treat pupils patiently and respectfully. In this way, they are able to meet the personal needs of young people with different needs especially well. By focusing on positive aspects, they help pupils to re-engage in education. As one parent said, 'The school focuses on positive rewards, rather than punishments.'
- Leaders ensure that pupils rightly concentrate on developing the core skills in English and mathematics. Pupils' personal, social, health and economic education, including community work, is woven into their timetables and daily routines. In addition to the more traditional subjects, pupils have the opportunity to study cooking, art, hair and beauty, motor vehicle technology and physical education. Pupils complete nationally recognised qualifications including GCSEs, entry-level certificates and functional skills qualifications that successfully prepare them for whatever they choose to do next.
- The longer pupils stay at the school, the better they are able to manage their behaviour. Staff from local authorities, parents and coordinators from placing schools spoke about the improvements they see in young people's lives. As one said: 'Some of the pupils who have come here would not have achieved anything elsewhere.'
- Leaders provide a range of activities in pupils' normal daily routines to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Staff continually promote the importance of good manners, respect and being nice to other people. Pupils respond well and the behaviour seen by the inspector throughout the inspection was good.
- Community work helps pupils to appreciate what they do have and how to work together as a team. For example, pupils spoke positively about serving drinks and playing games with homeless people at the local branch of the Salvation Army. Pupils enjoyed their visits

to Hunstanton and Shuttleworth Gardens, saying the experiences were memorable. All of these activities help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

- Parents and carers receive frequent, often daily, updates to let them know how their children are doing. Formal detailed reports each term give them a clear picture of their child's progress. Parents' views of the provision are very positive. As one said: 'The school is amazing. The communication is brilliant. My child feels much happier.'
- All of the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff were positive. Staff feel valued and proud to work at the school. The close-knit team works well together and enjoys coming to school.

Governance

- Governors have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- While governors have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and know what needs to be done to improve the school, the headteacher and proprietor are aware of the need to strengthen governance. They have approached some key people who would add strength to the governing body.
- Governors have ensured that the school has published a suitable safeguarding policy on its website.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All of the school's safeguarding and child protection policies are up to date and provide useful guidance to staff on all types of abuse and the procedures to follow in the event of allegations being made. Staff are quick to report any concerns or niggling doubts they might have.
- Pupils feel safe and are taught how to stay safe. Pupils say that they learn how to keep themselves safe in lessons and during registration. At the healthy breakfast club, pupils eat with staff, discuss the latest news and share any concerns they might have. This constant dialogue and vigilance promote a positive culture of safeguarding.
- Policies for health and safety, fire risk and first aid are all up to date and ensure that the school complies with the regulations.
- The designated safeguarding person has received appropriate training. Referrals are timely and appropriate.
- The inspector noticed that some checks in the single central register had not been recorded properly. Prior to the end of the inspection, the headteacher addressed these issues. The single central register is now fully compliant.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Some teachers' expectations of what all pupils can achieve are not always sufficiently high. Teachers do not always use the information that they record to set work that challenges pupils, especially the most able pupils. This prevents some pupils from making

the progress they could.

- Staff sometimes give pupils information too readily, rather than guiding them to the correct answers. This stops pupils from having to think and means that they do not develop their independent learning skills as well as they should.
- A review of pupils' books showed inconsistencies in the progress pupils make. Some work is difficult to read, incomplete and shows little sign of effort. However, other pupils can calculate ratios accurately in mathematics and use different tenses and registers effectively in English. This represents good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers' effective use of questioning is variable. At times, teachers' questions do not probe pupils' understanding well enough. On other occasions, teachers routinely ask pupils searching questions to help pupils achieve more, so they can make good progress over time.
- Where practice is most effective, teachers employ a range of different activities to keep pupils interested. They use group work and practical experiments well. For example, in a science experiment, pupils remained on task because they were interested to see which of the fresh, frozen or tinned sweetcorn samples would decay first.
- Pupils learn best when teachers use innovative methods that help them understand the work more easily. For instance, pupils practised their estimating and rounding skills more successfully by comparing the price of different foods when they visited a local supermarket.
- Some pupils are confident enough to read aloud in class. They read accurately, but not always fluently. However, from these pupils' different starting points, this represent good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff care for pupils extremely well. Daily diaries, weekly summaries and individual reports help staff check how pupils are coping. They build good relationships with pupils and encourage them to behave well by pointing out the advantages of positive behaviour. As pupils grow in confidence, they behave better and learn more.
- Staff are passionate and committed. They work closely and effectively with other agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met. All agencies were very positive about their dealings with the school. As one said: 'Staff are well prepared for meetings, they know the pupils well and they give pupils with difficult backgrounds a clean sheet.'
- Leaders assess pupils' personal development needs well. They work closely with all parties to ensure that the provision in pupils' education, health and care plans is in place and appropriate. Staff measure pupils' progress against adapted targets every four weeks. Consequently, pupils access the support they need and develop well socially.
- Leaders keep pupils safe by carrying out detailed risk assessments on the site and for all visits. They highlight potential risks and put suitable measures in place to reduce these.
- Staff continually discuss how pupils can stay healthy and keep a close check on pupils'

physical, emotional and mental health. If necessary, the school nurse makes home visits to follow up on any concerns.

- In their personal, social and health education lessons, pupils spoke about how they successfully learn about the misuse of drugs, alcohol and tobacco, as well as about domestic violence, extremism and e-safety.
- Pupils receive useful and impartial careers advice across the curriculum. Pupils gain real-life experience through work placements, taster days and community work. These all provide a valuable insight into their individual strengths, which they record in their 'preparation for working life' files.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day and around the school. They are polite and most pupils willingly talk to guests. Staff challenge pupils' use of inappropriate, derogatory or aggressive language quietly and efficiently.
- Pupils often arrive at the school with significant behavioural issues and negative views towards education. Leaders have created an orderly environment where pupils learn the importance of respect through positive daily interactions. Staff display patience, sensitivity and flexibility to help pupils develop positive behaviours. Consequently, pupils' attitudes towards their learning become more positive.
- Attendance figures are below the national average. However, all staff tenaciously follow up on attendance issues, using a range of strategies, to ensure that pupils' attendance is rapidly improving. Leaders' close links with parents and the educational welfare officer ensure that pupils with historically low attendance records show sustained improvement. The educational welfare officer confirmed the proactive approach of leaders to achieving high levels of attendance. The effective actions of staff lead to a marked and sustained improvement in pupils' attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Not enough pupils develop their skills in English and mathematics sufficiently well. Some pupils do not make consistently good progress from their individual starting points in these key subjects. Leaders' information from summary meetings to discuss pupils' progress, and individual assessments, confirmed this to be the case.
- Staff use the information they receive from previous schools and carry out their own assessments when pupils arrive at the school. However, this does not always give them an accurate picture of what pupils already know and can do. As a result, teachers sometimes set work that is too easy, especially for the most able pupils, meaning that some pupils do not make the progress they should.
- By looking closely at the work in pupils' books, the inspector saw that some pupils make good progress in English and mathematics over time. On arrival at the school, pupils are often capable of minimal unaided writing and their work includes only the most basic skill levels. Later work showed that a number of pupils could adapt their writing depending on the audience, and use paragraphs and punctuation more confidently. In mathematics,

some pupils arrive without the skills required to complete the four basic mathematical operations consistently well. Over shorter periods, pupils are able to calculate more precisely. In time, pupils are able to divide quantities into a given ratio and solve problems linked to area and perimeter.

- Pupils achieve a range of qualifications, including GCSEs, functional skills and entry-level certificates. Last year, all pupils in Year 11, and some in Year 10, achieved functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics, helping these pupils to progress to the next stage of their education when they leave.
- Some pupils who are above compulsory school age attend the school to catch up on work they have missed in key stage 4. The programme equips them well with literacy and numeracy skills that allow them to progress on to suitable courses when they leave. Currently, there are no students following the 16 to 19 study programmes.
- Staff provide useful careers advice and support pupils well by helping them to complete application forms, research apprenticeships and prepare for interviews. Staff accompany pupils on college visits to help them make informed choices. The range of vocational and academic qualifications that pupils obtain help to ensure that any post-16 destinations are sustained.

School details

Unique reference number	136122
DfE registration number	822/6015
Inspection number	10038907

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	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Ms Sarah Nichols-Weaver & Mr Karl Weaver
Headteacher	Sarah Nichols-Weaver
Annual fees (day pupils)	£17,500
Telephone number	01234 358 638
Website	www.kwseducational.co.uk
Email address	Sarah.Nichols-Weaver@kwseducational.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 September–2 October 2014

Information about this school

- KWS Educational Services is an independent day school owned by the proprietors, Ms Sarah Nichols-Weaver and Mr Karl Weaver.
- The school's last standard inspection was in October 2014, when the overall effectiveness was judged to be good and all independent school standards were met.
- Pupils are both referred and funded by their local authority or attend from other local schools on a part-time basis.
- The school caters for boys and girls between the ages of 11 and 18 years, who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are currently 12 pupils on roll, the majority of whom have education, health and care plans. Currently, there are no girls on

roll and no pupils currently receive post-16 provision.

- Often, pupils arrive with histories of poor attendance. Many present challenging behaviour and have been excluded from their previous schools. Many have experienced personal traumas, leading to disruption in their previous education.
- Pupils have a range of complex social, emotional and mental health needs, including obsessive-compulsive disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Teaching is mainly in small groups, led by teachers who are supported by teaching assistants.
- The school does not use agency staff.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned Ofsted to consider the proprietor's request for a material change in January 2015. This inspector judged the school as not likely to meet all of the independent school standards. However, the subsequent action plan indicated that, subject to proper implementation, the school would be likely to meet the standards. As a result, the DfE increased the school's age range to 11 to 18 years, and increased its capacity to 20 pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector scrutinised records of current pupils and those who had attended the school previously. This included folders, class books, displays, examination awards, records of attendance and assessment information.
- The inspector observed learning in lessons and listened to pupils reading.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards required for continued registration.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the leads for English and mathematics and the members of staff responsible for outcomes, attendance and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The inspector also met with the educational welfare officer and a parent.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, on which to report. The inspector took account of the five questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspector met with different groups of pupils separately to gain their views on the effectiveness of the provision. He also spoke informally to staff and pupils during the day, for example during breaktimes and healthy breakfast club.
- The inspector held telephone conversations with parents, staff from placing schools, the principal educational psychologist and the head of school support services from the local authority, the special educational needs and/or disabilities team manager and specialist caseworkers.

Inspection team

John Randall, lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017