

Youth Empowerment Education Programme

CEME, Marsh Way, Havering, Rainham, Essex RM13 8EU

Inspection dates

10–12 October 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	Insufficient evidence

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The proprietor, who is also the headteacher, has ensured that all the independent school standards are met in full. However, pupils do not receive an overall good quality of education.
- Leaders have yet to implement an appraisal cycle and provide training and support for all staff. As a result, the quality of teaching is variable. It is weaker in key stage 2.
- Pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable because assessments are not used well enough to plan work at the right level of difficulty.
- Monitoring of the school's performance has only just begun. Leaders are not sharply focused on key aspects to improve the quality of teaching and learning further.
- Some staff are not equipped or confident enough to teach phonics effectively. This impedes younger pupils' progress in reading and writing.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to practise their handwriting or to apply their writing skills in English and other subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have established strong relationships, and high expectations for pupils. In a short period of time, pupils quickly develop a sense of belonging and self-belief.
- The school is highly successful in re-engaging pupils in their learning. Pupils attend school regularly and usually behave well. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the school's work in this area.
- The headteacher is well supported by a small group of governors who are equally determined to ensure that pupils achieve their potential, academically and personally.
- Pupils' welfare and safety are a top priority for leaders, staff and governors. Pupils say that they feel safe as a result.
- The curriculum is interesting and captures pupils' attention. Activities enable pupils to experience all areas of learning. There is a good focus on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher is outward-looking and beginning to forge positive partnerships with good or better schools.

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 and management by ensuring that:
 - rigorous systems are established to monitor the school’s effectiveness so that leaders know what difference they are making to raising standards in the school
 - leaders provide tailored training and support for staff and implement a cycle of staff appraisal
 - both leaders and staff have the opportunity to observe good or better practice in similar settings.
- Improve the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils’ progress by ensuring that:
 - the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 2 is strengthened as a matter of urgency
 - assessments are used effectively to adapt work to meet pupils’ needs in reading, writing and mathematics
 - pupils’ individual targets in their education plans have measurable outcomes and reflect those in their workbooks
 - younger pupils are taught phonics through a systematic and rigorous programme to improve their reading and writing skills
 - pupils have more opportunities to extend their vocabulary and to write in literacy and other subjects
 - pupils practise their handwriting and formation of numbers regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. However, planning for improvement is not based on a comprehension cycle of checks and balances. While improvement planning and observations focus on improving teaching and learning, there is a lack of evidence and analysis as to what the most urgent strategies are required to achieve this.
- Professional development and training are limited. There is no staff appraisal system to ensure that there is a concerted effort to address school priorities or to improve individual staff's teaching practice.
- As a result, the headteacher and governors are not able to hold staff to account for the impact of their work on the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher's ultimate goal is to reintegrate pupils successfully into mainstream settings. He has started to build good partnerships with similar settings and to maximise the impact of the provision's work in order to achieve this.
- Leaders and staff do not benefit significantly from observing good or better practice. This hinders efforts to secure rapid improvements.
- The headteacher has boosted leadership capacity with the appointment of the new deputy headteacher. She has successfully revised the assessment system to check pupils' skills on entry to the provision and to track pupils' progress regularly.
- The deputy headteacher has developed a broad and balanced curriculum, which follows the national curriculum. More detailed plans, including regular literacy and mathematical activities, are being developed across all the different subjects. Cross-curriculum themes enable pupils to learn and acquire knowledge and skills in relevant and interesting situations. Visits linked to these themes enrich pupils' learning further.

Governance

- The headteacher has been keen to secure a governing body who will support and challenge leaders in equal measure. This has recently been achieved. There are currently three governors who have a broad array of relevant skills and experience.
- Governors' abilities to discharge their responsibilities are set to be bolstered further. Plans are in place to undertake a skills audit and arrange subsequent relevant governor training. The impact of governors' work to date is evident in the effectiveness of safeguarding, which is monitored carefully by the safeguarding governor.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy meets current government requirements. It is available to parents on the school website.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff have a good understanding of the potential risks pupils face. Training is up to date and covers all these

risks. All know of the school's statutory duty to report these to the appropriate authorities. Risks include female genital mutilation, children missing in education and the 'Prevent' duty. Staff know how to spot the signs of radicalisation.

- All safeguarding policies and procedures, including health and safety, risk assessments and safer recruitment, are implemented effectively.
- The headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, works closely with external agencies and parents to make sure that pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The promotion of pupils' literacy skills is weaker than their numeracy skills. Pupils continue to remain reluctant readers and writers.
- Staff in key stage 2 lack the confidence to teach pupils well, including teaching them the basic skills in literacy and numeracy effectively. Adults have not been trained to teach phonics effectively and do not sound out letters accurately. This impedes pupils' ability to read and spell unfamiliar words accurately, increasing their frustration considerably.
- There are occasions when pupils learn new words, but staff do not routinely encourage pupils to appreciate fully their meaning in relevant sentences. This restricts pupils' understanding of grammatical rules.
- Adults miss the chance to promote and extend younger pupils' vocabulary in lessons, accepting one-word answers, rather than encouraging pupils to speak in sentences.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their handwriting and grammar skills in English and in other subjects. Pupils are not expected or encouraged to write numbers accurately.
- Pupils complete the same work in all subjects, including in English and mathematics, irrespective of their different abilities.
- Teachers and adults do not always pick up on pupils' current levels of understanding in lessons. As a result, work is sometimes too easy or too hard, slowing the pace of learning down.
- The deputy headteacher has good subject knowledge in mathematics. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress, particularly so in this subject, in key stage 3.
- Problem-solving and reasoning skills are developed well in key stage 3. Pupils learn about a broad range of mathematical topics, which helps prepare them suitably for their next stage in education.
- Pupils are usually well motivated and want to achieve their best.
- Despite the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, in both classrooms there are strong and effective relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils have quickly re-engaged in their learning. Their confidence is growing and they are beginning to develop the ability to control their own behaviour.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils come to school with a history of difficulties educationally and in their personal development.
- Adults immediately focus on building up pupils' emotional resilience and social skills to help them to overcome barriers in their learning and to mix with others successfully. Pupils make rapid gains in their personal development in a very short space of time.
- Adults champion pupils' needs carefully. There is good partnership work with key external agencies so that pupils receive the right type of support. Good communication with parents ensures that they feel fully involved in their children's education.
- Indeed, parents are full of praise for the work of the school. They told inspectors that they are delighted that their children now want to come to school.
- Pupils are kept safe and they feel safe. The curriculum provides them with many opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils have an awareness of different forms of bullying and the risks of radicalisation.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Many pupils have been referred to the unit having experienced behavioural difficulties in previous settings.
- Adults have high expectations of pupils. They quickly forge strong and trusting relationships with pupils. Pupils are supported, encouraged and guided in small groups and one-to-one situations. This boosts pupils' confidence and self-esteem considerably.
- Pupils' behaviour is monitored and analysed carefully. As a result, adults build up a picture of potential triggers, which can subsequently be avoided or defused swiftly. As a result, learning usually proceeds in a calm and purposeful manner. The close supervision by adults means that there are very few incidents of bullying.
- Topic work and the personal, social, health and economic curriculum enables pupils to explore a range of issues, including democracy, the rule of law, tolerance and respect for others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well because they implement the behaviour policy consistently. Pupils understand the behaviour policy and are quick to point out any injustice. As a result, pupils understand the consequences of their behaviour and usually feel that they are treated fairly.
- Off-task behaviour occurs when activities are not well matched to pupils' abilities and needs.
- Pupils are developing positive strategies to interact well with others. Lunchtimes provide a calm and relaxed atmosphere for pupils to socialise with one another. They also enjoy talking to adults from the training centre, supervised by staff.

- Pupils are developing empathy and an understanding of others' needs, often spontaneously helping one another in lessons.
- Most pupils have either had very low attendance or were non-attenders in previous settings. Pupils now attend this provision regularly, because they enjoy a sense of success. The school has a clear process for following up non-attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The majority of pupils have only attended the provision for a very short period of time. Most pupils had severe anxiety about school settings. The provision has concentrated on breaking down these significant barriers to pupils' learning successfully.
- Assessments confirm considerable gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, including in English and mathematics. All pupils have very low starting points, with attainment levels well below national expectations.
- Pupils are currently not making consistently good or better progress. This applies to all ability groups, including the most able pupils.
- Individual pupil targets are too descriptive, not measurable and do not provide enough information on what pupils are expected to achieve over a period of time. These targets do not relate to the targets in pupils' workbooks. This causes confusion for pupils.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to learn to spell new words. However, pupils' lack of phonic knowledge impedes their ability to spell words accurately, especially the younger pupils.
- Although pupils who read to inspectors did so with good comprehension and fluency, pupils told inspectors that they do not like reading or writing.
- The deputy headteacher has introduced daily reading activities for pupils to practise their reading skills, including small-group reading sessions. However, all pupils read the same book, irrespective of their reading age. This does not provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils.
- The pace of learning in key stage 3 is much brisker than in key stage 2. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that younger pupils are not developing key literacy and numeracy skills strongly enough.
- The primary focus of Youth Empowerment Education Programme is to enable pupils to be ready for the next stage of their education or employment and/or return to mainstream settings. It is clear that the provision is supporting pupils to develop the necessary interpersonal skills and positive attitudes to learning. Nevertheless, more work is needed to secure good progress in all subjects, including in English and mathematics.

School details

Unique reference number	142334
DfE registration number	311/6001
Inspection number	10041270

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	7 to 14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	11
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Euan Macdonald
Headteacher	Euan Macdonald
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000–55,000
Telephone number	020 8596 5400
Website	www.yeep.org.uk
Email address	euan.macdonald@yeep.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November – 2 December 2016

Information about this school

- Youth Empowerment Education Programme is an independent special school registered for up to 12 pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder.
- Following the school's pre-registration inspection in 2015, the proprietor, who is also the school's headteacher, decided not to admit pupils and to request a change to the school's registration. This is because the local demand for placements had changed.
- At the time of the school's first standard inspection in November 2016, there were no pupils on roll. As a result, the inspector was unable to gather sufficient evidence to make judgements about key aspects of the school's performance, including the school's overall effectiveness. The school was granted amnesty.

- This inspection judged that the school was likely to meet all the independent school standards. The school's request for a material change to the Department of Education was considered acceptable. The school now caters for pupils aged 7 to 14 instead of 11 to 16.
- Pupils are currently referred to the provision by two local authorities.
- Pupils have an education, health and care plan or are undergoing statutory assessment.
- All pupils are eligible for the pupil premium funding. There are no pupils looked after.
- The school does not use any alternative providers for education.
- The school's premises are located within one of the buildings at the Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence in Rainham, Essex. The setting comprises two classrooms. There is additional accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils.
- A deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in a range of group activities. Almost all of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- During visits to classrooms, the inspector reviewed pupils' work in a range of subjects and spoke with pupils about their learning. Pupils' behaviour was observed at breaktimes. Pupils also read to inspectors.
- A tour of the school's premises was undertaken with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the leadership team, pupils, parents, the headteacher and the vice-chair of the governing body.
- School documents, policies and records were scrutinised, including safeguarding information, records of pupils' progress, and behaviour and attendance records. The inspector also looked at school improvement planning and premises records.
- Inspectors spoke informally to parents at the beginning of the school day and after a mathematics workshop. There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to enable conclusions to be drawn. Eight staff questionnaires were completed and analysed.

Inspection team

Mary Hinds, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sam Hainey

Her Majesty's Inspector

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