

Lewis Charlton Learning Centre

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

Inspection dates

13 June 2018

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c) and 3(e)

- At the previous inspection, pupils did not demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers did not plan lessons well enough, or use effective teaching methods, to enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress in their learning.
- Leaders have started a comprehensive programme of training for teachers and educarers (teaching assistants) in English and mathematics. Staff have received training on phonics, spelling, writing and mathematics. All staff are very appreciative of the training and say that it has improved their practice, particularly in the teaching of English. Staff are now clear about the expectations set out by the English department. They appreciate the English guide produced by the English department, to inform them of how to teach grammatical techniques and different genres of writing. All staff now check that pupils use capital letters appropriately, punctuate sentences correctly and provide more detailed answers in all subjects. Pupils now make better progress.
- Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to write fiction and non-fiction. Pupils draft and refine their ideas to produce a final version of which they are proud. For example, pupils were asked to analyse advertisements in magazines. One pupil wrote: 'The font gives a chilled and calm impression to the reader and will make them feel positive and excited about this product.' Pupils' use of vocabulary in their writing is beginning to be more imaginative.
- Pupils correct their spelling mistakes in their books. Pupils learn spellings on a weekly basis and are tested each Friday. However, teachers do not check how well pupils are achieving in those tests to ensure that the spellings are appropriately matched to the pupils' abilities.
- Staff have received phonics training to support pupils' reading and spelling skills. Pupils enjoy reading and some read at home. Teachers are not checking well enough which books pupils are reading to promote further reading.
- Teachers assess pupils' achievements at the end of each lesson. This informs their future planning to meet the pupils' needs. English and mathematics lessons are planned by

teachers in the respective departments. Each week staff receive training on planning to ensure that they know how to teach the concepts and have accurate expectations of how much progress pupils should make. Staff have found this very useful and evidence in books shows that pupils are making better progress. However, pupils still have too few opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills.

- Leaders have ensured that the requirements in paragraphs 3(a), 3(c) and 3(e) have now been met.
- Standard 3 is now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- The standards in this part were met in full at the time of the last inspection. However, the inspection found that leaders were not analysing incidents of poor behaviour to try and improve pupils' behaviour. In addition, leaders were not analysing accidents recorded in the accident book to try and prevent further occurrences.
- Leaders now analyse incidents of poor behaviour in much more detail. They look into a wide range of factors that may contribute to a pupil's misbehaviour and then put in strategies to prevent the poor behaviour from escalating. Leaders identify examples of when this detailed analysis has been used successfully to reduce incidents of poor behaviour for some pupils. Furthermore, incidents of physical restraints have reduced in the current year.
- Leaders also now analyse the incidents logged in the accident book. Their reviews have initiated actions to try to prevent accidents of a similar nature.
- The school staff receive regular training about safeguarding. At the most recent training event, staff looked at how to keep pupils safe. They also received an update on the 'Prevent' training programme to be able to identify if pupils are at risk of radicalisation. Staff also reviewed the school's safeguarding policy, which contains the latest government guidance and is published on the school's website.
- Leaders work closely with external agencies, parents and carers to keep pupils safe. The school's safeguarding records are well maintained, and staff have a good knowledge of the individual circumstances of pupils in their care. Staff know how to report and escalate their concerns if they do not feel the designated leaders for safeguarding are taking appropriate action.
- Many pupils who join the school have not attended their previous school for a sustained period of time. Leaders track pupils' attendance and, if necessary, put support in place to improve pupils' attendance. There are some notable examples of pupils improving their attendance. However, overall attendance has fallen from last year, which is preventing some pupils from making better progress.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c).

- At the previous inspection, the directors did not hold the headteacher to account well enough to ensure that the school continued to improve. In addition, the directors had not put into place an independent system for governance to provide support and accountability to leaders. This had been a point for development following the school's inspection in November 2015. Leaders had not ensured that the school's improvement plans showed how they planned to improve teaching, or how actions would be evaluated. The targets set for staff's performance management were not precise enough to help staff improve their practice. Finally, leaders had not ensured that the staff had the necessary subject knowledge to help pupils make good progress.
- Following the previous inspection, the school has two new proprietors. They have acted swiftly in response to the areas for development from the last inspection. They have used an external company to recruit members for the new advisory board. The advisory board has terms of reference in place, and they are there to support and challenge school leaders to ensure that the school works effectively. The new members bring a wealth of skills, experience and knowledge to the school, and they have started very positively in their new roles. They have visited the school and shared their findings on the governors' portal. The visits are discussed at board meetings and the minutes show that members are asking leaders pertinent questions. For example, the new members have been very keen to know how teachers use baseline assessments to assess pupils' abilities on entry.
- The new school improvement plan contains detailed actions of how leaders intend to improve the quality of teaching. There are measurable success criteria in place for the vast majority of the actions in the plan to enable members of the advisory board to hold leaders to account. The success criteria for the actions to improve mathematics are not as clear as those for English.
- Leaders have put in place a comprehensive training programme to improve the quality of teaching for English and mathematics. In addition, staff have had the opportunity to work collaboratively to plan learning, share best practice and discuss different approaches to teaching. However, teachers in the English and mathematics department have not yet had the opportunity to observe the teaching of colleagues to see how it can be improved further.
- Leaders have ensured that targets set for performance management of staff are precise and measurable. The staff are supported to reach their targets through continued professional development.
- Leaders have ensured that the requirements in paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c) have now been met.
- Standard 34 is now met.

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 that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- The proprietors have ensured that teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach. The proprietors have ensured that teachers use well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods to enable pupils to make good progress (paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), and 3(e)).
- The proprietors have ensured that the independent school standards are consistently met and that the school promotes the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

School details

Unique reference number	134438
DfE registration number	855/6020
Inspection number	10054061

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 status	Independent special 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	56
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	13
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietors	Zaheer Esat and Mark Jolliffe
Chair	Richard Levinge
Headteachers	Kerri Louca-Weston and Georgina Pearson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£51,588 to £74,850
Telephone number	01530 560 775
Website	www.lewischarlton.org.uk
Email address	g.pearson@lewischarltonschool.org
Date of previous standard inspection	12–14 September 2017

Information about this school

- Following the previous inspection, two directors have become the proprietors. The previous proprietor, who was also the headteacher, is now co-headteacher. The deputy headteacher has been promoted to be the other co-headteacher. The proprietor informed the inspectors that they have notified the DfE of these changes, but at the time of the inspection, the details on the Get Information About Schools (GIAS) website were incorrect.
- The proprietors have recently set up an advisory board to hold leaders to account.
- The school has recruited two new deputy headteachers from external organisations.
- 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 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's previous standard inspection took place in September 2017.
- 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

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress that the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection following the school’s standard inspection on 12–14 September 2017.
- Following the previous inspection, the DfE required the school to submit a statutory action plan. Ofsted evaluated the action plan on 28 February 2018 and rejected the plan.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.
- The inspectors met with the co-headteachers, one of the proprietors, the lead for behaviour, a designated safeguarding lead, a group of pupils and members of the teaching staff and educarers. The inspectors also met with three members of the advisory board and spoke to two members on the telephone, including the chair. The inspectors observed lessons and scrutinised pupils’ work. The inspectors looked at documentation related to safeguarding. The inspectors reviewed the school’s self-evaluation, the latest school improvement plan and information related to pupils’ attainment and progress.

Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Deirdre Duignan	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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