

Elizabeth House School

Inspection dates

9–10 October 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has established a caring and nurturing ethos within the school. All staff help pupils to reflect upon and amend their challenging behaviour.
- The headteacher ensures that there are high expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- Teachers plan a broad and varied curriculum that is tailored to pupils' needs.
- Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge. They provide a high level of support to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Teachers develop pupils' reading, phonics and mathematical skills well. However, pupils' progress in writing is slower than in other subjects. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their writing skills.
- Pupils progress well to gain qualifications in functional skills. Pupils are presently working towards GCSEs in a range of different subjects.
- Leaders do not fully evaluate the impact of their actions to improve pupils' attainment and progress. Consequently, their plans to improve lack clear and measurable targets for pupils' outcomes.
- The proprietor has refurbished the premises to create a welcoming and purposeful learning environment.
- Leaders' strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is helping pupils to understand other's opinions.
- The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective. Staff are vigilant.
- Pupils understand British values and are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders at all levels have a good understanding of each individual pupil's progress. There is clear communication between the school and the company's head of education.
- Leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards have been met.
- Pupils, and students in the sixth form, do not have opportunities to attend relevant work experience placements. The school's careers advice for pupils is at an early stage of development.
- Pupils develop independent living skills throughout the well-planned curriculum to prepare them well for the future.

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?

- Leaders should ensure that they evaluate the impact of their actions to improve pupils' outcomes in more detail to inform more specific and measurable targets for school improvement.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils' progress in writing is improved by providing further opportunities for them to apply their writing skills in writing for different purposes.
- Leaders should continue to develop the quality of careers advice and ensure that pupils and students have opportunities to gain workplace experience.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have been effective in ensuring that all of the independent school standards have been met.
- Leaders have created a bright, well-organised environment that offers pupils a calm place to learn. The headteacher is a committed and considerate professional who ensures that staff set high expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The headteacher has established a positive culture since the first pupil was placed at the school in March 2018. The central aim of the school is to help pupils to understand how to amend their challenging behaviour. Leaders have been successful in setting up a nurturing environment for these vulnerable pupils. As a result, pupils have re-engaged with their education and aspire to achieve.
- The proprietor provides teaching staff with comprehensive training. The company's head of education provides support for school staff to develop their teaching skills. Staff value the feedback that they receive and they are motivated by the programme of development that is provided.
- Leaders have ensured that schemes of work are flexible, so that they can be adapted to pupils' needs. Pupils have a wide choice of courses. They study towards gaining functional skills qualifications or GCSEs, alongside other qualifications that are relevant to their career aspirations. Leaders cater for pupils by buying in additional support where this is necessary, for example for pupils studying for a GCSE in business studies.
- Leaders place a strong emphasis upon providing pupils with skills to prepare for life in modern Britain. Teachers develop pupils' awareness of British values well. Leaders have carefully planned pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the curriculum to develop pupils' understanding of the beliefs and opinions of others.
- Leaders provide pupils with highly specialised therapy from two psychologists. The psychologists undertake a comprehensive assessment of each pupil's needs. They offer pupils time and space to express themselves. The feedback from each session furthers leaders' comprehensive understanding of each pupil. This helps to tailor work to maximise pupils' progress.
- The school gained approval to extend its age range in June 2018 to cater for pupils between the ages of 16 and 18. This has ensured that pupils can continue learning at the school once they have reached the end of their compulsory education.

The school has come a very long way in a short space of time because of the committed leadership of the headteacher and the head of education. However, school leaders do not analyse the impact of their actions to improve pupils' outcomes in enough depth to inform their plans for improvement. Consequently, the targets that they set to improve the school further lack detail.

Governance

- The proprietor has completed a full refurbishment of the building. As a result, the environment is warm and welcoming.
- The head of education for Hexagon Care Services provides the link between the proprietor and the day-to-day practice in the school. Clear communication ensures that the proprietor knows about each individual pupil and how they are progressing, both in their learning and their personal development.
- The proprietor has established regular meetings between headteachers of the schools within the company to promote school improvement and establish a network of support for leaders. This enables leaders to share ideas and good practice across the schools.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a suitable safeguarding policy that takes into account the most recent guidance from the Secretary of State. The school provides parents and carers with policies, including its safeguarding policy, on request. The school does not have a website.
- The processes for recording pupils' moods, behaviours and engagement are succinct and purposeful. These daily notes ensure that staff identify any changes or patterns in pupils' behaviour, so that any issues can be carefully managed.
- Pupils feel safe in the school. They are taught how to keep themselves safe and how to regulate their behaviour. They like the small setting and the positive relationships that they have with staff.
- The vigilance of staff ensures that pupils are kept safe from harm. Staff receive regular and comprehensive safeguarding training.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The school makes the best use of teachers employed by Hexagon Care Services from its neighbouring sister school to provide specialist teaching in different subjects. For example, in science, pupils benefit from building in-depth knowledge of the different structures of plant and animal cells. Pupils respond positively to the different staff that teach at the school. Pupils are inquisitive. Staff provide expert and detailed answers to pupils' questions.
- Teachers ensure that pupils build upon their existing knowledge. Pupils receive high levels of support to ensure that they progress well. Pupils study subjects in depth. They have a good understanding of the topics they have learned.
- Staff have excellent relationships with pupils. They provide positive role models. This ensures that pupils have good attitudes towards their education and that they commit to improving their work. However, pupils do have a strong preference for mathematics over their written work. They do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills, for example, in extended pieces of written work, so that they can practise the skills that they have learned.

- Pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics is developed well. For example, all pupils engage in art, where they study the styles of different artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe and Andy Warhol.
- Teachers focus on bridging the gaps in pupils' learning, particularly in phonics. The result is that pupils read well because they have an increasing vocabulary upon which they can call. Pupils work hard to make up the lost ground in their education. They commit to completing their homework to help them to consolidate their learning.
- Pupils learn skills for independent living. They have opportunities to write job applications and practise interview techniques. They gain qualifications in food hygiene and learn to cook meals in preparation for independent living. Pupils also study subjects such as website design to support their future career aspirations.
- Pupils' performance is tracked individually. Teachers deliver the next steps in pupils' learning because of the accurate assessment of pupils' achievements. However, pupils' progress in writing lags behind their other subjects because they have limited opportunities to practise and apply their skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils develop their confidence and self-awareness because of the belief that is shown in them by the staff at the school.
- Leaders provide all pupils at the school with therapy to understand the impact of their behaviour on others. This support gives pupils space and time to reflect on their relationships with others. There are clear lines of communication in the school that involve regular meetings between teachers, therapists and those responsible for pupils' care. Pupils speak highly of the support that they receive.
- Pupils have a good awareness of British values because of the way in which teachers promote this through all aspects of pupils' learning. Pupils have opportunities to study units on the law and their rights and responsibilities.
- Leaders encourage pupils and students to discuss their opinions on a range of current affairs. The start to each day looks at developing pupils' understanding of their place in the world by promoting independent thinking through problem-solving and by discussing current affairs. This provides opportunities for pupils and students to express their views. They have learned to be tolerant and respectful of each other's views and opinions.
- Careers guidance supports pupils to understand their career options. However, this is at an early stage of development. Staff support pupils, and students in the sixth form, to make career choices that are based on their interests and strengths. Students understand the need to gain relevant qualifications and they apply themselves well in lessons. The proprietor has already commissioned an external careers adviser to work extensively with students following the successful introduction of this in their other schools.
- Leaders are keen to develop links with businesses to prepare pupils for relevant work experience placements in line with pupils' career choices. However, there has not been an

analysis of the risks around pupils' integration into the workplace. As such, pupils do not attend work experience.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute towards the calm and purposeful atmosphere at the school. As a result, pupils are attentive in class and contribute well to class discussions.
- The central aim of the school is to help support pupils, and students in the sixth form, understand their behaviour. In their therapy sessions, pupils explore the triggers for their behaviour and learn strategies to manage these. Pupils say that their behaviour has improved during their time at the school because of the support that they receive.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are very high. This is a sign that they value their education and the work that is done by staff to help pupils to improve their lives.
- The learning environment is free from clutter. It is clean and crisp. Pupils focus well on their work. Disruption to learning is rare.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good and that there is no bullying in the school. Leaders' records of incidents show that there have been few instances of poor behaviour since the school opened.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school has recently become accredited to award qualifications as an examination centre. Some pupils have been successful in gaining qualifications, such as level 2 hygiene certificates and entry-level qualifications in their functional skills tests. All pupils work towards gaining further functional skills qualifications or towards GCSEs.
- From the time they start at the school, pupils, and students in the sixth form, make good progress in their learning. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' reading through their phonics and vocabulary, as well as their mathematical skills.
- Pupils' work shows that they make strong progress in mathematics from their starting points. However, their progress in writing is not as pronounced as in other subjects. This is, in part, due to the lack of opportunities that pupils have to apply their writing skills for different purposes, such as writing at length in different genres.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading from the point at which they enter the school. This is because of a clear focus on developing pupils' vocabulary and phonics skills.
- Pupils progress well in spelling. They increase their spelling ages, as measured by standardised tests, in a short space of time.
- Pupils' work shows that they make good progress in subjects across the curriculum, especially in science and art.

School details

Unique reference number	145170
DfE registration number	354/6038
Inspection number	10053739

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	Boys
Proprietor	Francis Ashcroft
Headteacher	Susan Jarvis
Annual fees (day pupils)	£30,940
Telephone number	0161 654 4653
Website	The school does not have a website
Email address	caroline.ashdown@hexagoncare.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Elizabeth House School is an independent day school that is part of a Victorian villa situated in Manchester.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school caters for up to six boys who have concerning behaviour, many of whom have been involved with the justice system.
- Pupils are admitted between the ages of 11 and 18.
- The school admits boys who are looked after by Hexagon Care Services on behalf of a local authority.
- The school offers specialists therapeutic support.
- Some pupils have education, health and care plans.
- The school was registered in October 2017. This is the school's first standard inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in two lessons and observed pupils' start to the day in form time.
- The inspector examined a range of pupils' work in mathematics and writing and from across the curriculum.
- The inspector heard two pupils read their own work aloud during class activities.
- The inspector spoke with pupils formally and informally in lessons.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The inspector made observations of pupils' behaviour during lessons and breaktime.
- Meetings were held with the proprietor, leaders and one teacher.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development.
- The inspector looked at attendance and behaviour records and the school's admissions register.
- The inspector undertook a review of the school premises.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding documentation and considered how this related to daily practice, as well as speaking with staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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