

Fairways School

Redhill Road, Birmingham B38 9EL

Inspection dates

5–7 February 2019

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 and senior leaders from Keys Group have had a strong, positive impact on the quality of provision at this new school. In a very short time, they have made sure that all independent school standards are met, and that teaching is effective.
- The headteacher has quickly established a cohesive team of teachers and pastoral workers who have significant skills in teaching and managing behaviour. As a result, pupils settle into school, make good progress and thrive.
- Strong safeguarding practice makes pupils feel safe and secure. Parents and carers greatly value the school's work because it has made such a difference to their children's behaviour and confidence.
- The warm and friendly atmosphere of the school has a significant impact on the pupils' engagement with school life. They behave exceptionally well and are keen to learn.
- The curriculum provides some experiences of history, geography and citizenship. However, it does not yet provide a deep enough experience in these subjects. It also lacks opportunities for pupils to engage in therapeutic experiences.
- Teachers emphasise the promotion of a wide vocabulary across the curriculum so that pupils use more complex words both in speech and writing.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are skilful in making the work relevant to pupils' interests. Good assessment processes ensure that work is closely matched to pupils' needs so that their motivation is high. However, inexperienced teachers have not yet had the opportunity to learn from skilled colleagues.
- Keyworkers have excellent relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils trust them implicitly. However, teachers do not yet plan lessons so that keyworkers understand how best they can support the pupil. They do not recognise the times where pupils could develop more independence by working alone.
- Pupils have good opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) understanding, that prepare them for life in British society. However, they do not have a deep enough understanding of democracy or of world religions.

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 the curriculum, by increasing the number of subjects taught to include, for example, history and citizenship, as well as giving pupils more opportunities for regular therapeutic experiences.
- Improve teaching, by ensuring that:
 - teachers who are less experienced have frequent opportunities to learn from their skilled, experienced colleagues
 - teachers' plans show keyworkers what the teacher requires, and indicates the times when pupils are expected to develop their independence by working alone.
- Improve pupils' personal development, by teaching them about democracy and world religions in greater depth.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. They know the strengths of the school as well as its limitations. They make accurate judgements about how well the school is doing and plan effectively to make improvements. As a result, pupils have positive experiences and make good progress.
- The school does not have a website. An up-to-date safeguarding policy that meets current government requirements is available to parents on request.
- The headteacher is strongly supported in her work by senior leaders from Keys Group. The regional adviser, who visits the school regularly, is skilled and experienced and provides advice in all areas, especially in teaching. Consequently, the new headteacher has enhanced her own leadership skills.
- Although the school has only been open for pupils since September, the work and commitment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher have ensured that all systems are securely in place to promote the personal and academic progress of pupils.
- Staff morale is high. Although the work is often challenging, staff say they find it most rewarding when pupils succeed. They say that the headteacher leads the team exceptionally well, and as a result, they form a cohesive team. They support one another as well as giving significant support to pupils' personal and academic achievements.
- Leaders have put in place systems that provide good support for pupils and their families. A morning call to parents establishes how their child is feeling and helps staff anticipate any issues and deal with them in the best way possible. Evening briefing meetings keep everyone in touch with any difficulties that may have arisen during school time and ensure that the school is prepared to cope with these the following day.
- Leaders have built strong relationships with parents and carers. They keep in regular contact with them and encourage them to talk about their concerns at any time. Parents who spoke with the inspector are delighted with the work of the school. They appreciate the huge difference the school has made to their children's motivation to learn and to their confidence. They were grateful to the staff at the school for the warm and caring atmosphere that is making such a difference to their children's chances in life. One comment made by a parent reflected the view of many: 'My child has come on in leaps and bounds. I feel they really care.'
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have put in place accurate assessment procedures to monitor and record pupils' progress in different subjects. Consequently, they know pupils' starting points and how much progress they have made. This enables teachers to help pupils to fill gaps in their learning and to give them more challenging work. Teachers are quick to intervene when pupils' progress appears to be slowing.
- The school keeps detailed records of all pupils and their individual needs. Education health and care (EHC) plans are well documented and carefully followed. Staff keep detailed records of each pupil's behaviour and starting points. These records provide a reliable basis for discussing their academic and social progress. Before pupils join the school, leaders work closely with parents and other stakeholders to gather information, which assists with the smooth transition process. The school works closely with other

agencies. This supports sustainable improvement in pupils' personal and academic development. The headteacher is extremely diligent in finding out as much information as possible about the pupils from their previous settings.

- The school's curriculum includes English, mathematics, science, food technology, information and communication technology, art and design, and personal, social, health, and economic (PSHE) education, along with a variety of vocational Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) courses. Every pupil is able to work towards success at his or her own level. However, at present, pupils do not have the opportunity to study history, geography or citizenship. Pupils have few opportunities to be involved in therapeutic experiences such as art therapy, music therapy or drama therapy that could help them with mental health issues.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers develop pupils' SMSC awareness effectively. They do this through educational experiences such as the Italian day, alcohol awareness week, anti-bullying week, and visits to a variety of different sporting experiences.
- Staff improve their expertise and practice because of the professional development activities that leaders provide.

Governance

- Keys Group employs highly experienced managers. Their combined expertise has a significant impact on the strategic leadership of the school. They employ a variety of experts, from educationalists to health and safety experts, who respond quickly to the needs of the school.
- The regional adviser gives highly effective support to the headteacher and the team at six-weekly monitoring visits.
- Governors keep themselves well informed about the school's work and performance. They monitor and evaluate provision through the weekly reports from the headteacher. They challenge the school to make improvements where necessary.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are strong. All staff share the responsibility for protecting pupils in every area of the school's work. The designated safeguarding lead and deputy lead are tenacious in following up concerns and ensuring that they inform outside agencies when they believe a pupil might be at risk. All staff are fully trained when they start at the school. Follow-up training sessions ensure that everyone is kept up to date with any changes to government guidelines. Leaders keep appropriate records that detail safeguarding concerns and actions. Staff know how to recognise warning signs of extremism, radicalisation and female genital mutilation, for example.
- The premises meet all the independent school standards and are maintained to extremely high standards of cleanliness. Leaders ensure that the school building is regularly checked for health and safety hazards, as well as fire risks. Risk assessments for all aspects of school life, and for individual pupils where necessary, are rigorously maintained. All venues that the school uses for physical education (PE) are risk assessed. The school's minibus is fully insured, and risk assessed. Several members of staff are insured and qualified to drive the minibus.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The warm and friendly atmosphere in the school ensures that pupils feel secure and therefore able to apply themselves to their lessons. Teachers care deeply about pupils' personal well-being and academic progress. Staff work extremely hard to build good relationships with their pupils, gradually fostering a mutual respect that is the basis of the warm learning environment. All of this helps pupils to work hard and to make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers quickly establish pupils' ability, aptitude, knowledge and understanding on entry because of the school's effective assessment procedures. Gaps in pupils' learning because of missing education are identified using regular progress reviews and diagnostic assessments. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this along with information from assessments to plan appropriately for each pupil.
- Teachers make good use of resources to promote pupils' learning. Teachers use the learning areas well to provide a mix of group and individual activities that meet pupils' needs well and support their progress. Modern foreign languages provision is enhanced by a software programme that teaches listening, speaking and translation skills. The kitchen is a well-equipped learning space for practical work. The learning environment in all classrooms includes effective prompts for learning as well as displaying high-quality work by the pupils, especially in art. Every room has a strong focus on new vocabulary to be learned and used.
- Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress in reading. These assessments are detailed and diagnostic and highlight which area of reading needs the most practice. Teachers are highly motivated to support pupils to improve their reading so that they begin to really enjoy it.
- Pupils are helping to build up the library by letting staff know what books they might like to read. As a result, they know that their reading is important to the staff. Teachers ensure that they emphasise the importance of reading so that pupils increase their motivation.
- Teachers have adopted an agreed format for the planning of lessons and use this consistently. They consistently follow the school's assessment and marking policy.
- Teachers plan effective lessons in which pupils learn to speak, read and write well. Teachers successfully focus on the development of spelling and grammar as well as ensuring that pupils develop a wide vocabulary. As a result, the quality of the pupils' use of language improves.
- Teachers ensure that they emphasise the relevance of the curriculum to pupils' own lives. In a mathematics lesson about time, for example, the teacher successfully emphasised the importance of being on time, relating this to the profession that the pupil would like to follow. This approach helped to build pupils' interest. Individuals were confident to ask questions to clarify tasks and to challenge ideas. This motivational approach is typical of teaching at the school and inspires pupils to progress quickly through increasingly challenging tasks.
- In another mathematics lesson, pupils planned a budget to prepare a two-course meal. They calculated the cost of the ingredients, the cost of the bus fare and found out about bus times so that they could go to the supermarket at the appropriate time. The close

links with the food technology lesson made the lesson particularly meaningful to the pupils, who also cooked and served the meal to staff.

- Learning support assistants, who are the pupils' keyworkers, provide effective support for pupils in lessons. They are well trained to support pupils with behavioural issues. They deflect situations where emotional difficulties could cause disruption and redirect pupils to their learning if necessary. Their effective questioning skills promote pupils' learning. However, on occasion, learning support assistants' time is not used well. This is because teachers do not plan how they and the support assistant should jointly support the pupils' learning effectively. At other times, learning support assistants fail to develop pupils' independent learning skills because they provide too much support and guidance.

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 more confidence with every day that they spend in school. Pupils spoke to the inspector about their social development. They said that they were particularly aware that the staff here have time for them, which was different from their previous schools. A typical comment was, 'I feel safe here because basically I have attention and I trust the adults who are in here.'
- Good transition arrangements when pupils join the school ensure that the views and wishes of pupils and parents are fully considered as they become familiar with the new environment.
- Each pupil's keyworker has the skills to support pupils who have a range of different needs. The pupils very much appreciate the support of their keyworkers and said that they could tell them anything. All pupils who spoke to the inspector had mutually respectful relationships with their keyworkers.
- The school is a secure environment where pupils say that they feel safe. Pupils know that staff care for them, and care about their success and emotional well-being. They speak with pride about their renewed enthusiasm for learning. They said that they are enjoying a variety of different lessons and are interested in finding out, for example about outer space, and about Banksy's graffiti artwork. They enjoy a variety of sporting activities.
- Pupils' personal education plans record their personal and academic needs. This helps anyone working with that pupil to gain a full picture of strategies that work. Pupils have weekly tutorials with their keyworkers so that they can discuss their feelings. They record how they are feeling generally and how they feel about their academic learning. These tutorials build confidence as well as ensuring that the school is aware of any concerns a pupil may have.
- PSHE education lessons help pupils to develop a good understanding of themselves. The trusting relationships they have with adults help them to feel confident to talk about issues that affect their own lives. They know how to keep themselves safe and are fully aware of how to remain safe online, as well as whom to talk to if they have concerns about contact through the internet.
- The school ensures that pupils prepare themselves for life in British society. The school

strongly promotes equality, so that the pupils have open attitudes to diversity and the protected characteristics and a good understanding of equality. A pupil, for example, said: 'No matter what race, what colour, what disability, people are all equal in every kind of way.' However, pupils do not know enough about world religions.

- Pupils are encouraged to let the staff know about their wishes and needs. For example, they put their suggestions for reward visits in a box and then a vote is taken about where they should go. A pupil representative listens to the views of other pupils and reports these to the staff. In this way, they start to understand how democracy works. However, the school's work on democracy is still in its infancy.
- Through their SMSC education, pupils develop their relationships and their understanding of the community and the world. Pupils learn about serving the community when fundraising to support people who use food banks. They regularly recycle paper, tin, plastic and glass. Their visits to the recycling centre support them to appreciate the needs of the wider world.
- Well-organised careers education is provided for pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11. It includes work experience, visits from careers advisers, guest speakers from different trades and apprenticeship providers, and visits to further education providers. By the time pupils leave the school, it is likely that they will be well prepared for the next stage in their education or employment and training.
- Displays in the school's central, open area include a wide variety of stimulating subjects that focus strongly on SMSC development. For example, life-size figures representing 'Sozzled Sam' and 'Sober Sam' represent pupils' work about the damage alcohol can do to the body. Other life-sized drawings illustrate pupils' work on developing kind relationships. A display at the entrance, another example of the pupils' own work, celebrates the school's values: kindness, patience, tolerance, politeness and respect. These values were decided upon by the pupils themselves with guidance from staff. Discussion and agreement are key aspects of the school's emphasis on pupils' social development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Time in this school has enabled them to develop much more confidence. Pupils are calm and friendly, as well as being happy to talk to visitors. No outburst of any kind occurred during the inspection.
- Most pupils now attend well. Pupils' attendance has increased markedly since they started in this school.
- Pupils clearly recognise how much their behaviour has improved. Pupils discussed how to minimise bullying during a recent anti-bullying week. They have taken responsibility to ensure that bullying does not take place in the school. As a result, they are able to say, 'nothing bad happens here'.
- The school building is kept in pristine condition. The pupils are proud of their school, which shows in the way that they take care of the building.
- Parents say that they cannot fault the school. They are exceptionally happy about their children's greatly improved behaviour both at home and at school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Almost all pupils have made good progress in their personal development. They have settled down quickly, and feel secure and enjoy their learning.
- Pupils who would not speak to anyone on arrival at the school will, for example, now engage in spirited discussion with staff. Pupils who could only write a few basic sentences are able to write much more interesting texts, such as a deeply moving, well-constructed poem showing empathy for soldiers during the World War Two. This is because the teaching staff are highly skilled and place great emphasis on challenging pupils to aim for excellence.
- Almost all of the pupils have made good progress, and some have made outstanding progress in one or more curriculum subjects. No pupil has yet taken a public examination. Year 10 pupils will take GCSE examinations in English, mathematics and science in July 2020, along with other vocational subjects. They will take functional skills in English and mathematics in 2019 as well as other short-course accreditations.
- Year 9 pupils will take accreditations in a variety of courses, for example hair and beauty, hospitality and manufacturing, in either the spring or summer of 2019.
- Pupils read well and have good opportunities to read in all lessons. This is because of the strong emphasis that the school places on encouraging pupils to read and the detailed diagnostic assessments that support teachers to find ways to improve pupils' reading skills.

School details

Unique reference number	145417
DfE registration number	330/6036
Inspection number	10082350

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 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	6
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Keys Group
Chair	Nicola Kelly
Headteacher	Michele Woodward
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,805
Telephone number	0121 451 2055
Website	N/A
Email address	michellewoodward@keyschildcare.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school had a pre-registration inspection on 26 June 2018 and first opened on 15 August 2018. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- The school is in a recently fully refurbished, single-storey community centre adjacent to a golf club, in the south-west area of Birmingham. The premises consist of a suite of classrooms, an information technology suite, food technology room, a communal area, first-aid room and an office.
- The school is part of the Keys Group, a care and education provider for children in the UK and Ireland.

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- It is registered to provide for up to 25 pupils in key stages 3 and 4 with special educational needs and/or disabilities, such as social, emotional and mental health issues, autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder and/or dyslexia. At present there are six pupils on roll. All pupils have an EHC plan and are in Year 10 or Year 9.
- Birmingham, Worcestershire and Walsall local authorities place pupils at the school.
- The school does not have a religious character.
- The school offers full-time education for pupils. Pupils study subjects including English, mathematics, science, PSHE education, art, modern languages, design, food technology, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and PE.
- For PE, the school takes pupils to Arrow Valley Country Park, Redditch; Rush Trampoline Park, Birmingham; Cocks Moors Woods Leisure Centre, Kings Heath; Northfield Pool and Fitness Centre, Birmingham; Lickey Hills, Rednal, Birmingham, as well as the neighbouring Golfbug driving range, Kings Norton.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, two regional advisers from Keys Group, the chair of the governing body and all the teachers and support assistants in the school.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in four lessons and conducted one learning walk to gather information about SMSC development. The inspector scrutinised examples of pupils' work in a variety of subjects. She also observed the headteacher and regional adviser giving feedback to staff about their teaching.
- The inspector interviewed four pupils, and spoke to one parent in person and two parents on the telephone.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, for these to be considered.
- The inspector scrutinised several school policies, procedures and records to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards. She reviewed the school's planning and self-review documents, as well as an external review of the school.
- The inspector toured the school's premises to ensure compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Mary Maybank, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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