

Gable End

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	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that all of the independent school standards are met.
- The new head of education provides decisive leadership and a clear sense of direction. Staff are highly appreciative of the positive changes introduced.
- Teaching is good. Staff prepare learning that is well matched to the needs of the pupils. As a result, pupils make strong progress across a range of subjects.
- Good relationships between staff and pupils underpin a purposeful learning environment.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding pupils. Pupils feel safe and happy in school. Staff provide a nurturing atmosphere that enables pupils to thrive.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils develop positive attitudes towards learning. This contributes to improvements in their attendance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured very effectively. Pupils understand the fundamental British values.
- Pupils make good progress socially and emotionally, often from low starting points.
- Directors are fulfilling their roles well. They are effective in monitoring the quality of education. They provide an appropriate level of challenge.
- Teachers frequently assess pupils' work. However, they are not all following the school's assessment policy, leading to some confusion for the pupils.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is not as rapid as it is in English. This is because there are limited opportunities for them to develop reasoning skills.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to explore careers and develop employability skills.
- Leaders' checks of pupils' progress focus on what pupils have completed rather than the progress they have made.

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 quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that there is consistency in the way that staff assess pupils
 - providing greater opportunities for pupils to develop and apply reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders check pupils' progress effectively across subjects
 - providing opportunities for pupils to explore career options in greater depth and to develop employability skills.

The school's progress towards meeting standards that were not met at the previous inspection. The following independent school standards are now met:

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools.

34 The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-

- 34 (1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- 34 (1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- 34 (1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- This school has been transformed since the previous inspection. The new head of education provides decisive leadership and a clear sense of direction. Staff agree that the school has improved. They enjoy working at the school.
- The head of education works closely with the directors to ensure that all the independent school standards are met, including the standards about leadership and management that were previously unmet. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school. Improvement planning is focused on carefully considered priorities.
- Thorough systems are now in place to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Regular meetings between teachers are used well to review teaching and learning, discuss pupils' progress and identify training needs. Staff are appreciative of this approach.
- Staff have high aspirations for pupils. They are committed to improving the life chances of the pupils in their care. They have high expectations of pupils' work and all pupils are expected to take GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11.
- The curriculum is well matched to the needs of the pupils. It provides pupils with the opportunity to further develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills. It is well aligned to the school's vision and aims because it helps pupils to achieve their academic potential. Pupils develop skills and knowledge in a range of subjects, such as conversational French, physical education and cookery.
- The curriculum makes a valuable contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. For example, pupils were discussing female genital mutilation in English lessons and Martin Luther King in religious education lessons. This element of the school's provision is particularly strong.
- The daily breakfast club provides an opportunity for pupils to read newspapers and discuss international and national events. Pupils select articles of interest and, through discussion, they deepen their understanding of fundamental British values, as well developing their respect for the views of others.
- A system of whole-school pupil progress monitoring has recently been introduced. This enables leaders to identify the progress pupils are making towards completing their examination courses. It allows leaders to intervene to ensure that pupils complete missing work. However, it does not enable leaders to measure the progress pupils are making in each subject.
- Pupils receive good-quality impartial careers advice and have some opportunities to gain experience of work. However, the curriculum does not make sufficient provision for pupils to explore careers in greater depth or to understand and develop a wide range of employability skills.

Governance

- Since the previous inspection, directors have worked effectively with the head to make the necessary improvements to ensure that the independent school standards are met.

They have reacted positively to external advice. Directors carefully monitor the impact of school improvement planning.

- Directors ensure that all the appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on staff prior to appointment. All policies related to the safeguarding of pupils are up to date and meet the latest guidance. Directors regularly monitor safeguarding practices.
- Frequent meetings between the directors and the head of education are well documented. Minutes indicate that directors now challenge the work of leaders effectively. Directors gain first-hand knowledge of the quality of provision.
- Directors have high expectations for the pupils. They have a clear sense of direction and are actively involved in developing and reviewing school improvements. As a result, they know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy meets the current government requirements. It is made available to parents and carers on request.
- Staff know the pupils well. All staff are aware of their responsibility for keeping pupils safe. Staff are vigilant and quick to report any concerns, no matter how small. Referrals are made to the relevant authorities and thoroughly followed through.
- The school provides a safe learning environment. Pupils say they feel safe in school 'as there is always an adult to talk to and support us'. Staff agree that pupils are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan work that is well matched to the needs of the pupils. Resources are used well to support pupils' learning.
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils help to ensure that pupils feel secure to ask questions and make mistakes.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievements. They ensure that pupils use the correct subject vocabulary and use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. Praise is used effectively to encourage pupils to produce high-quality work.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use it well to plan interesting lessons and support pupils' learning. Teachers adapt tasks and explain work in a manner that enables pupils to make progress.
- In English and psychology, pupils are set work that requires them to think hard and use skills such as analysis and evaluation. As a result, pupils produce first-class work.
- Additional adults provide effective support for pupils. They use questions effectively and make sure that pupils are clear about what they have to do.
- Appropriate homework is set as required. It is used well, including to ensure that pupils complete missing work.
- Not all staff consistently follow the assessment policy. This deviation from the agreed

policy can lead to pupils being unsure about what they have achieved or how they can improve their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils often enter the school with low self-esteem and negative experiences of school. Staff have a good understanding of each pupil's circumstances and provide individualised support, resulting in most pupils quickly re-engaging in education.
- Pupils are taught to respect one another and accept that everyone is different. As a result, relationships between pupils are positive and they listen to and respect the views of other pupils and adults. Pupils feel their views are listened to by adults and they are treated with respect. One pupil described this when she said, 'Even when staff don't agree with my ideas, I always feel they have been respectful and listened to me.'
- Personal, social and health education is delivered by the pupil's key worker. They are able to provide each pupil with a personalised programme in addition to the general course. As a result, pupils' emotional and social welfare is promoted well. Staff provide opportunities for pupils to talk about personal issues in a safe, caring environment. These discussions are valued by pupils.
- In mindfulness sessions, pupils reflect on their thoughts and feelings and their preparation for the day. These sessions make a good contribution to pupils' mental well-being. The school works well with relevant external agencies to support pupils' welfare and safety.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online and in a variety of situations. Limited access to the internet and appropriate restrictions ensure that pupils are safe online. Staff are very vigilant when pupils are using technology to ensure that they are safe. Incidents of bullying and racism are rare.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils receive effective support to manage their behaviour. Staff are quick to identify signs that may suggest a pupil is struggling to control their behaviour. Swift action is taken to prevent incidents occurring and, as a result, behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Rewards are used consistently by staff to encourage appropriate behaviour. The system is valued by pupils.
- Pupils take care and pride in their work. Work in books is nearly always neat and well presented. Pupils appreciate the opportunities the school provides for them to gain qualifications. Many pupils arrive with a history of poor attendance or non-attendance at school. All pupils are expected to attend school and all staff encourage full attendance. Attendance for most pupils is close to the national average. For others, it is improving rapidly.

- Pupils who attend alternative provision attend regularly and behave well. This is due to the effective support provided by the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- On arrival at the school, most pupils have gaps in their learning. As a result, the attainment of many pupils is below that of pupils of a similar age. Staff are skilled at identifying the gaps in pupils' learning and addressing them.
- Progress in English is strong because pupils know exactly what they are expected to achieve. Interesting and challenging activities are chosen so the pupils concentrate well. Pupils' abilities to write extended pieces are growing.
- Mathematics lessons give pupils plenty of opportunity to grasp and apply basic calculation skills and formulae. However, outcomes are not as strong as they could be because pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop their reasoning skills through problem-solving activities.
- Pupils' work indicates that good progress is being made across all subjects. The inspector saw some high-quality GCSE art and design work. Pupils showed enthusiasm for their chosen topics and used their research thoughtfully to choose an appropriate style for their work.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to apply their reading, writing and communication skills across subjects. All are encouraged to read a wide range of books. Most pupils read fluently.
- In 2018, all pupils who left Gable End attained six GCSE qualifications. Some pupils attained the expected grade 4 in English. These pupils all progressed to further education.
- As part of the transition programme, pupils are offered the opportunity to attend college. These pupils achieve well, and many choose to continue with their courses post-16.

School details

Unique reference number	130855
DfE registration number	935/6085
Inspection number	10056560

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	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	5
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Care Focus Limited
Chair	Not Applicable
Head of education	Gary Cotter
Annual fees (day pupils)	£60,424
Telephone number	01449 744 928
Website	www.carefocus.co.uk
Email address	ninacampbell@carefocus.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–9 February 2017

Information about this school

- Gable End is a small independent special school owned by Care Focus Limited. The school opened in 2005. The school opened a second site, Birchbrook House, in 2013.
- In February 2017, the school was judged inadequate at the standard inspection.
- In November 2017, a progress monitoring inspection took place. The school did not meet all of the independent school standards.
- The action plan originally submitted by the provider in June 2017 did not meet requirements.

- The directors appointed a new head of education in April 2018.
- The school is registered with the Department for Education to admit seven boys and girls. Currently, all pupils are girls.
- All pupils have complex social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils' behaviour can be challenging due to the personal traumas they have experienced, along with disruption to their education. A small number have an education, health and care plan.
- The two proprietors, alongside two appointed directors, are responsible for the governance of the school.
- The school currently uses Suffolk New College as an alternative provision for some pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by one inspector over three days.
- The inspection consisted of a full standard inspection and a progress monitoring inspection. This was the second progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged to be inadequate in February 2017. The first progress monitoring inspection was in November 2017. At this inspection, the school was found not to be compliant with section 8 of the independent school standards.
- The inspector visited both of the school's sites.
- The inspector held conversations with the head of education, all four directors of Care Focus Limited, social workers and teaching and non-teaching staff.
- The inspector observed the breakfast club and spoke to pupils informally in lessons and at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector observed learning and behaviour in lessons. She scrutinised pupils' current and previous work and looked at teachers' plans and assessment information.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents relating to attendance, safeguarding, behaviour and the curriculum. She checked the single central record of pre-employment checks for current staff.
- Telephone calls were made to three local authorities.
- The inspector considered the four responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Parry, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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