

Prospect House

Birch Cottage, Moss Lane Off Eight Acre Lane, Yealand Redmayne, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 9TG

Inspection dates

30 April–1 May 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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The proprietor and director provide strong strategic direction. They ensure that all school standards are met.
- The headteacher is a skilful teacher and leader. She plans an individual curriculum for each pupil that meets their needs well.
- The school provides a safe, nurturing environment. Pupils thrive and participate in education with renewed enthusiasm. They feel entirely safe.
- Staff's positive relationships with pupils are key to the school's success. Pupils feel valued and grow in confidence.
- Leaders work closely and productively with a range of partners. This ensures that pupils' personal, welfare and academic needs are met fully.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is excellent. Staff support pupils to experience success and develop a positive frame of mind.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They develop increasingly positive attitudes to learning and respect the school's behaviour code.
- Pupils sometimes find it difficult to sustain concentration on tasks they are given but they respond well to direction.
- Good teaching is founded on the headteacher's detailed planning and thorough subject knowledge. She deepens pupils' learning with probing questioning and clear explanation.
- Teaching staff support pupils to complete their work effectively. However, because some teachers have limited subject knowledge, their teaching is not always successful in explaining new learning.
- Teaching is enriched with a range of interesting activities, inside and outside of school.
- The curriculum is broad and interesting. It supports pupils to achieve a range of useful qualifications. Pupils say they would also like opportunities to develop their skills further and take qualifications in computing and art.
- Good teaching and a highly personalised curriculum support pupils to make good progress from their various starting points.
- Pupils develop ambitious plans for their futures and are well equipped to achieve them.

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 teaching and learning further by:
 - making sure that all teaching staff are equipped with the subject knowledge and skills to explain new learning to pupils clearly and to address any misconceptions
 - sharing the good practice in teaching, as exemplified by the headteacher
 - supporting pupils to concentrate for more sustained periods of time during lessons
 - developing pupils' skills in computing and art progressively and, where appropriate to pupils' aspirations, supporting them to take qualifications in these subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The proprietor and director provide clear direction for the school, based on their mission statement. They successfully 'provide young people who have become disengaged with mainstream education an informal, safe, encouraging environment to support them to participate in education, develop a passion for learning and gain independence'. Leaders ensure that all the independent school standards are met.
- The headteacher is a skilful leader and teacher. She plans individual learning packages that meet each pupil's needs and supports their aspirations successfully.
- The positive culture in school is highly conducive to learning. Staff are motivated and committed to the school's vision. They establish positive and affirming relationships with pupils. The pupils are increasingly enthused by learning, often following long absences from education.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and plan for improvement thoroughly. They manage the performance of staff effectively.
- Teaching and learning are planned and partially delivered by the headteacher, who is a skilled teacher. She plans the curriculum carefully to build on each pupil's prior learning and to support their specific needs. The headteacher has high expectations for pupils' achievement and checks their progress thoroughly.
- Teaching staff participate in a wide range of training to support pupils' personal development. Training supports staff to use positive strategies to engage pupils in learning, taking account of their specific learning needs. However, training is not as effective in supporting staff to understand how to develop pupils' subject knowledge over time. Teaching is not always successful in deepening pupils' understanding.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and covers all requirements of the independent school standards. Pupils' needs and prior learning are assessed thoroughly when they enter the school. Gaps in learning are addressed by skilful adaptations to the curriculum.
- The key stage 3 curriculum is based on the national curriculum and supports pupils to develop their knowledge and skills in a range of subjects. Where necessary, learning from previous key stages is reinforced effectively.
- Pupils are supported to take useful qualifications at key stage 4, appropriate to their abilities and aspirations. They can complete GCSE courses in English, mathematics, sciences, history, religious education and languages, and/or functional skills qualifications. In addition, pupils are supported to access a range of vocational courses at Lancaster and Morecambe College.
- Information technology is used to support learning across the curriculum and artwork is linked to topic work. However, computing and art are not currently offered as subjects in their own right and pupils say they would like opportunities to take qualifications in these subjects.
- Extra-curricular and enrichment activities have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and academic progress. Learning is enlivened by trips, for example to museums, places of worship for different faiths, places of historical significance and field

trips.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a great strength. Typically, pupils have suffered trauma and significant challenge in their lives. They are helped to grow in confidence and develop effective social skills in a safe and nurturing environment. They discuss moral issues with maturity.
- Pupils are prepared well for life beyond school. They have a good understanding of diversity within society and show respect for different cultures and faiths. British values are promoted effectively. Staff support pupils in understanding and challenging prejudicial views.
- Pupils are taught about groups with protected characteristics, as identified in the Equalities Act 2010. Pupils are respectful of difference and supportive of each other.
- Partnership working is highly developed and is another major strength in the school's work. The school works in close partnership with a number of agencies and services, including: Lancaster and Morecambe College; health services; therapy services; virtual schools; and social care services of local authorities who place pupils in the school. These partners are extremely positive about the work of the school. They report that 'Communication from the headteacher is excellent.'

Governance

- Governance is provided through the proprietor and company director. They have a strong moral purpose to improve the life chances of the young people in their school. They ensure that each pupil's needs are known and everything is done to minimise barriers to learning.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance and a clear vision to develop it further. They are knowledgeable about statutory requirements and have the skills to quality-assure the work of the school.
- Governors manage finances effectively and make sure that local authorities receive regular reports on pupils in their care.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff meet requirements.
- The safety and well-being of pupils are the prime concerns of leaders and all staff at the school. Staff support pupils to overcome past traumas and to move forward with their lives positively.
- All staff have completed the required training in safeguarding. They have also completed a wide range of additional training, including supporting young people who have attachment disorders, who self-harm or who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation.
- Engagement with other agencies is integral to the work of the school. Leaders work closely with virtual school leaders, placing local authorities, social workers, health services, therapy services, children's services, the police and child sexual exploitation workers. Close partnership working ensures that pupils' safety is assured.
- The safeguarding and related policies take account of current government requirements.

Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities. Staff are trained in health and safety, first aid, fire safety, crisis intervention and physical restraint.

- General information about the school can be found on the company's website. The school makes the safeguarding policy and all required policy information available to placing authorities and other stakeholders when a pupil enters the provision.
- The school premises are well maintained, safe and secure. Pupils feel safe and are safe in school. Regular thorough risk assessments, fire safety and health and safety audits are completed.
- Leaders engage effectively with carers and stakeholders to make sure that all pupils are supported and safe. Their engagement in education on the school site and at alternative provision is tracked carefully and followed up if necessary.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Positive and reinforcing relationships between staff and pupils are central to the school's success in re-engaging pupils in education. Staff know the pupils extremely well. They minimise pupils' potential barriers to learning and adapt teaching to take account of pupils' specific needs.
- Pupils typically have had long periods of absence from school and have negative attitudes to learning. They often feel that they have failed previously in education and are anxious about learning. Their prior learning is assessed through careful observation and a number of assessments in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher plans teaching carefully to enable pupils to experience success and reinforce what they know and can do. Each pupil's individual plan is guided by clear and ambitious targets from their personal education plan and their education, health and care (EHC) plan. Pupils start with work that is well within their capability. Further challenge is added gradually as pupils gain in confidence and reassess their own abilities.
- Teaching is enhanced with investigative and practical activities that are motivating and engaging. Pupils enjoy baking, for example, and reinforce their understanding of measures and fractions as they bake.
- Pupils' communication, literacy and mathematical skills are developed successfully in dedicated lessons and various subjects across the curriculum. Pupils are increasingly able to articulate their learning and gain the confidence to work independently in these subjects.
- The headteacher provides skilful teaching and pupils say that they learn very effectively when she is teaching them. Her teaching is supported by strong subject knowledge, effective questioning and clear explanation, which deepen pupils understanding.
- Teaching staff support pupils to complete work that is planned by the headteacher effectively. However, teaching is not always as effective as it could be in helping pupils to deepen their understanding and address their misconceptions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' physical and emotional well-being are prime considerations in the work of all staff. Staff are highly skilled in helping pupils develop confidence and self-belief. Pupils grow in self-esteem because staff help them to experience success.
- Staff and pupils participate together in groupwork focusing on building self-esteem, developing a positive frame of mind, keeping safe, maintaining good health and developing healthy relationships. The school's structured programme is highly effective in supporting pupils to manage their anxieties and develop positive strategies to support their learning and behaviour. Pupils conduct themselves with maturity and show respect for each other in these sessions.
- Pupils say that they feel entirely safe and are safe in school. There have been no incidents of bullying or serious misbehaviour in three years. Pupils are confident that any incidents would be dealt with fairly if they did occur.
- Pupils develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They are well informed about risks, for example those associated with substance misuse, extremist views and when using social media.
- Pupils make an excellent contribution to local communities. For example, pupils' work at a local food bank was acknowledged by an award for outstanding voluntary work from a local authority.
- Pupils receive excellent careers education in school and high-quality impartial advice, information and guidance from an independent consultant. The school has strong links with Morecambe and Lancaster College, which extends pupils' access to vocational courses. Leaders have developed positive relationships with local businesses and services, which provide pupils with a range of work-experience opportunities. Pupils have access to work experience with local charities, hair salons, shops, cafes and kennels.
- Excellent communication with Lancaster and Morecambe College ensures that pupils' safety and welfare are sustained to the same high standard when they attend college. The college is kept fully informed of any issues that may have an impact on pupils' welfare or engagement in learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders' expectations for behaviour are clear and respected by staff and pupils. Pupils are fully aware of the sanctions if they choose not to participate in learning activities. Pupils respect the behaviour code and do their best to uphold it.
- Pupils develop increasingly good attitudes to learning during their time at school as they begin to appreciate the need for qualifications and experience success. Pupils sometimes struggle to concentrate on their work for sustained periods but they respond to direction well.
- Pupils are friendly and supportive. They behave with consideration towards each other. They look after the school environment and resources carefully.
- Pupils have excellent and above-average attendance at school. This is a significant

achievement, given their high rates of absence in previous schools. Pupils also have very high attendance at college and work placements.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Good teaching and a highly personalised curriculum support pupils to make good progress from their various starting points. Pupils typically start at the school after long periods of absence from education and have significant gaps in their prior learning.
- Pupils' communication, literacy and mathematical skills are developed particularly well. Pupils' starting points in these areas are assessed thoroughly and pupils build on their skills progressively. Where there are gaps, pupils are helped to fill them successfully.
- Pupils also make good progress in sciences, languages and humanities. Pupils who are able to complete full courses are supported to take GCSEs in these subjects, in addition to English and mathematics.
- All pupils, who leave the school in Year 11, gain useful qualifications during their time at school. Those who are not able to access GCSE courses achieve qualifications in functional skills and various awards from the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network and Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.
- Pupils talk about their learning and aspirations for the future with confidence. They have ambitious plans for their futures and are well equipped to achieve them. Pupils' range of qualifications, excellent careers advice and renewed confidence prepare them well for their next steps in education, training or employment.

School details

Unique reference number	139426
DfE registration number	888/6058
Inspection number	10092584

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 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Christopher Kennedy
Chair	Christopher Kennedy
Headteacher	Eve Elliott
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,740
Telephone number	01524 784 924
Website	www.abccare.co.uk
Email address	eve@abccare.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–26 January 2017

Information about this school

- The school is a small special school that is located in a detached house in a rural setting. It is registered for up to four young people aged 11 to 16 years.
- All pupils are in the care of local authorities. They have typically experienced disrupted education and significant periods out of school.
- All pupils who attend the school have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Most pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school uses off-site facilities for some physical education lessons at local leisure

centres and sports facilities.

- The school uses Lancaster and Morecambe College to provide part-time vocational courses for pupils.
- The school accesses virtual learning for some pupils in a range of subjects from Academy 21.
- The school aims 'to empower and praise young people for positive behaviour, to encourage and support them in times of negativity and to enable students to reach their full potential by accessing education in line with the requirements of the national curriculum'. The ultimate aim of the school is to enable pupils to return to mainstream education when appropriate.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning and carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work. She spoke with pupils about their work and their views of the school.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, director, headteacher and teaching staff.
- The inspector examined the premises and checked compliance with all the independent school standards.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including action planning, self-evaluation, monitoring of teaching and learning, tracking of pupils' progress, safeguarding policies and procedures, health and safety checks and risk assessments. School policies were seen.
- The inspector spoke by telephone with representatives from Lancaster and Morecambe College, virtual schools, local authorities with children placed at the setting and social workers.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed by seven staff who returned questionnaires. There were no responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jean Olsson-Law, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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