

# K-HQ

Loyalty Hall, Dulford, Cullompton, Devon EX15 2BY

## Inspection dates

21–23 May 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The head of education has developed an effective team that shares his high expectations. He has created an environment where everyone is valued and all talents are celebrated.
- The proprietor has ensured that there is an effective system of governance in place to support this new school's development. All independent school standards (ISS) are met. However, in some areas there is an absence of established systems to ensure that the school continues to meet the standards over time.
- Staff build warm relationships with pupils and develop a deep knowledge of each individual. This leads to rapid gains in pupils' personal and academic development.
- School leaders have established an effective curriculum. Pupils are interested and motivated to learn and make strong progress to gain qualifications.
- Teaching is good. Staff across the school work together to help pupils achieve important next steps set out in their individual learning plans.
- Some aspects of school improvement plans lack precision.
- Pupils behave well. They respect staff and each other, the school environment and the work they produce.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for. Staff support pupils' understanding of what it is to be safe. Tutorial time and citizenship lessons support pupils' understanding of how to keep safe and develop a healthy lifestyle.
- Staff use their good subject knowledge and understanding of the pupils to make learning interesting. Nevertheless, on occasions, teachers do not use their assessment information well enough to tackle gaps in pupils' learning.
- Staff ensure that pupils receive the high-quality careers advice and guidance they need in order to continue to further education or training.
- Leaders ensure that staff are kept up to date by providing training, including that related to safeguarding. Effective communication channels mean that school leaders are able to liaise closely with external agencies to support pupils when needed.

### 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 leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - school improvement plans are more sharply focused to secure more rapid and demonstrable improvement in those areas leaders have identified as most pressing
  - the proprietor ensures that the systems are established to ensure that the ISS are maintained.
- Raise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by strengthening the use of teachers' assessment so that deep-seated gaps in pupils' learning are tackled.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- In the first year of the school's operation, the proprietor has taken demonstrable action to ensure that there is capacity in the leadership and staffing. The proprietor, through the appointment of a director of education and head of education, has ensured that the ISS have been met. Leaders know their school well. They take an honest, objective and accurate view of their work.
- The head of education demonstrates strong leadership and a deep commitment to care for each pupil. All of the pupils have had negative prior experiences of education and have missed a lot of their schooling. Pupils arrive at different points during the school year, often because they have been permanently excluded from previous schools. Staff re-engage pupils with education and help them to achieve qualifications. This is made more difficult because of the limited time many pupils have in school. Nevertheless, despite these issues, staff never give up on pupils.
- The head of education encourages staff to have high expectations of pupils' academic, social and behavioural development. He has acted on the understanding that academic qualifications are vital to securing better opportunities for pupils in later life. Consequently, the school makes good use of accredited courses.
- The school's curriculum is effective in boosting pupils' self-esteem as they make strong progress in their studies. The school offers GCSE and functional qualifications as a minimum offer. Close links with local colleges and work placements support pupils in gaining a greater understanding of the world of work. Nonetheless, leaders are not complacent and have plans in place to develop the curriculum to provide more vocational qualifications to meet pupils' individual interests.
- The head of education supports staff well in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. Staff are proud to work at the school. They benefit from a wide range of training to help them improve their own effectiveness.
- The school premises are well maintained and organised. Pupils take care of and show respect for their school.
- Through careful planning, leaders have integrated opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development into the curriculum. Pupils are able to explain the teachings of different religions about issues such as respect, tolerance and law.
- The proprietor and leaders have ensured that the ISS are met. However, as a new school, systems to maintain compliance with these standards are not yet embedded.
- Leaders' perceptive self-evaluation enables them to identify clearly the key areas for improvement of K-HQ. However, school improvement planning does not demonstrate clearly enough how improvements to the quality of education and pupils' care will be made. Consequently, it is difficult for the director of education and the proprietor to consider the extent of the effectiveness of the school's work. Procedures for carrying out and reporting checks on compliance against the ISS lack coordination.

## Governance

- The proprietor demonstrates an understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Through the director of education's weekly monitoring of the school's work, the proprietor is able to direct funding precisely to continue to develop the quality of education and the school's premises. As a result, this new school is well maintained, resources are of a good quality and funding makes a positive difference to the pupils the school serves.
- The proprietor and director of education know the school well because leaders provide them with detailed and comprehensive information. This information is corroborated with information from other sources. Furthermore, effective use is made of the proprietor's and director of education's relevant backgrounds and skills, namely social care and education, to ask probing questions of the head of education to hold him to account. Together, the director of education and proprietor ensure that policies are in place and are implemented in the day-to-day running of the school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) take their responsibilities seriously and liaise closely with parents and carers and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the care they need when they need it.
- The proprietor ensures that the requirements of the ISS regarding safeguarding are met, including the publication of the school's safeguarding policy, which is made available to parents on request. The arrangements take into account the latest guidance from the Secretary of State, including those for checks on the suitability of staff. Staff are appropriately trained to take the right action to keep pupils safe.
- The importance of safeguarding threads throughout the organisation. The proprietor and director of education have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and hold DSLs to account effectively.
- Pupils are taught well about the risks they may face. Tutorial sessions provide effective opportunities for pupils to learn how to express themselves and engage in appropriate discussions around topical issues.
- The few carers who spoke with the inspector and who provided Ofsted's free-text responses were unanimous in their appreciation of the school's efforts regarding their children's learning and welfare.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers' expectations of pupils are well matched to pupils' learning requirements. Most pupils are set work which challenges them and deepens their thinking. It is pitched at a suitably challenging level, which enables many pupils to achieve GCSE qualifications.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they use this to plan effective learning. As a result, pupils work with positive attitudes and focus well on the tasks they are given.
- Pupils benefit from positive relationships with teachers and supporting adults. These relationships are a significant strength, considering pupils' high levels of disengagement

and disinterest when they start at the school. Pupils trust staff because staff treat them with patience, tolerance and respect. This has a very positive impact on their learning.

- Teachers and supporting adults help pupils in their understanding by asking appropriate, well-constructed questions. Consequently, pupils are drawn into the subject matter, engage with their learning and deepen their thinking.
- Teaching staff make effective use of opportunities in the curriculum to challenge stereotypical views. They ensure that pupils have a good appreciation of a range of cultures and understand how these affect pupils as they live in multicultural 21st-century Britain.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is secure. Teachers are aspirational and teach to the required examination specification. They provide pupils with feedback that helps pupils to celebrate their strengths. However, teaching staff do not routinely help pupils to tackle the gaps they have as a result of missing school when they were younger. This has a detrimental impact on the depth of knowledge and understanding pupils have in English and mathematics in particular.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident that staff will help them if they have concerns. Pupils know that staff work hard for them. A weekly one-to-one meeting between pupils and their key member of staff ensure that pupils are given time to reflect. It also encourages pupils to consider the challenges and successes they have faced during the week. Over time, this supports pupils' resilience and understanding of themselves as learners.
- Staff keep pupils' best interests at heart. Debrief sessions at the beginning and the end of each school day support pupils' transition between home and school. Consequently, staff structure the school day so that pupils can make best use of their time in school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are provided with high-quality careers advice and guidance. Pupils benefit from work-related learning and activities which provide an insight into the world of work. Through these, pupils identify possible careers that interest them and are clear about pathways to reach their goals.
- Risk assessments are in place for a wide range of activities, premises and individual pupils. Consequently, pupils are able to take part in external visits and activities and extend their knowledge beyond the classroom. For example, a recent trip to a local art exhibition at a museum supported pupils' understanding of the work of Doris Hatt, a local artist.
- Pupils say that they like school, are happy and enjoy their learning. Staff ensure that pupils understand how to relate to each other and support them to develop friendships. They also ensure that pupils behave safely and appropriately towards each other so that bullying is extremely rare.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- The school's behaviour policy is having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour. Leaders ensure that staff know and understand the triggers that cause pupils to feel anxious and plan to minimise these.
- Staff support pupils in understanding their feelings. Consequently, pupils learn to manage their behaviour. One pupil's comments, typical of many, explain this, 'I've learned that being angry with the world doesn't help but that talking to people does.'
- The proportion of serious behavioural incidents is rare and reduces significantly for each individual as they settle into school.
- Pupils have high levels of attendance. Rates of absence are well below those of other special schools nationally.
- Staff, rightly, have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils show respect for each other, listen well and take turns during lessons. For example, in tutorial time, pupils showed high levels of respect and were able to listen to other pupils' ideas about dental hygiene.
- The school is an orderly environment. Pupils are polite to staff and visitors and conduct themselves well during the school day, including during breaks and lunchtime.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- Pupils join the school at different times of the school year and have complex needs. From their varied starting points, they make good progress across the curriculum.
- Over time, pupils' behaviour improves significantly. Staff take the time to get to know their pupils well and plan and provide support that enables pupils to meet and exceed teachers' high expectations.
- The school supports pupils to acquire skills for life particularly well, including ensuring that pupils are ready to learn. Pupils benefit from dedicated personal, social, health and economic education and citizenship lessons, and through day-to-day interactions with staff.
- Most pupils are making good progress against the targets that staff set in their individual learning plans. The very large majority of pupils meet their targets. Staff set pupils appropriate goals and ensure that they receive the right amount of challenge and support across the school to achieve them.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of subjects across the curriculum. Effective use of trips and visits deepens pupils' understanding.
- Pupils make strong progress against the objectives of the GCSE syllabus in English and mathematics. However, the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding caused by long periods of absence from previous schools remain a barrier to pupils making substantial progress.

## School details

Unique reference number	146287
DfE registration number	878/6076
Inspection number	10086581

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 special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	6
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Generation 21 Ltd
Executive director of education	Ronnie Gleeson
Chair	Stephen Brunskill
Headteacher	Ryan Swiggs
Annual fees (day pupils)	£36,140
Telephone number	01725 552839
Website	None
Email address	<a href="mailto:sbrunskill@aol.com">sbrunskill@aol.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- K-HQ is an independent special school that is registered to provide education for girls with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The proprietor is Generation 21 and it currently has two directors.
- The school opened in November 2018 and is currently registered for up to 10 pupils aged between 11 and 16. Currently, six pupils attend; most have education, health and care plans.

- Pupils join the school throughout the year, with few starting at the beginning of Year 10 and finishing at the end of Year 11. Most pupils join the school having been excluded or failed at a number of mainstream and specialist schools. Many have been out of full-time education for more than a year.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This is the first inspection since the school opened in November 2018.
- The inspector observed pupils' learning in English, mathematics and tutorial time. In addition, the inspector looked at pupils' work and information kept by the school about pupils' learning and progress.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, staff members and leaders throughout the inspection. She held a telephone conversation with the proprietor. The inspector also held meetings with the proprietor, the director of education and the head of education, as well as discussions with teaching staff.
- The inspector scrutinised the curriculum plans and other resources provided by the school. She also scrutinised records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. School policies and documentation, including risk assessments, were also examined. In addition, the inspector undertook a tour of the premises.
- The inspector considered the views of two carers who responded to Parent View and met with one carer.

## Inspection team

Tracy Hannon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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