

# Homeschool

49 Manifold Way, Sandwell, Wednesbury, West Midlands WS10 0GB

## Inspection dates

21 May 2019

### Overall outcome

**The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraphs 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 3(j)*

- At the time of the previous inspection, the proprietor had not ensured that the curriculum provided pupils with suitable experiences in scientific, physical and creative education. Leaders had not done enough to ensure that pupils were helped to develop respect for other cultures, faiths and to have an understanding of the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act. The action plan proposed revisions to the curriculum, including personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, to make it more appropriate for pupils.
- Leaders have revised the school's curriculum to add greater breadth and variety. It now includes providing pupils with more learning experiences in science, physical education (PE) and art. The school's curriculum plans do not undermine fundamental British values. Teachers support pupils to develop their speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills through the different activities that they undertake.
- Through PSHE education, pupils learn about how people are different and why it is important to respect individual differences. For example, older pupils were able to explain their understanding of the word 'gender' and talked knowledgeably about people who identify as non-binary. They showed understanding and respect for other's differences, including the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

*Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i)*

- Leaders have not yet ensured that the curriculum is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for all subjects. Leaders are currently rewriting schemes of work to reflect the revised curriculum. However, this work has only recently started and there is considerably more to do. At present, the school's curriculum plans do not take into account the needs and abilities of all pupils sufficiently well.
- Therefore, standards for these paragraphs remain unmet.

*Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f)*

- At the time of the last inspection, pupils were not making enough progress as a result of teachers' poorly planned learning activities and ineffective teaching. In order to address this, the school's action plan proposed changes to teaching methods, improving teachers' subject knowledge and making more effective use of assessment to plan and deliver lessons.
- Despite the intended improvements leaders have not yet addressed, with sufficient rigour, weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Consequently, pupils continue to make limited progress and therefore do not attain well across many subjects.
- Teachers do not plan effective sequences of learning to enable pupils to build skills and knowledge progressively over time. Work in pupils' books indicates that teachers frequently move from one topic to the next – often on a daily basis - without developing pupils' deep understanding. Consequently, learning is often shallow and not retained.
- Pupils write in different styles for a range of audiences. However, there is little development of their writing skills over time. While books are reasonably well presented, pupils' handwriting is immature and not well formed. Despite this, the work in books demonstrates that pupils show positive attitudes to learning and settle down to their work quickly.
- Teachers often present pupils with a task for completion, but do not provide them with enough direct teaching and guidance to enable pupils to move forward in their learning. Repeated errors in pupils' mathematics books demonstrate that teachers do not offer timely support to help pupils recognise and correct errors. This holds pupils back in their learning.
- Teachers do not consistently plan work that is age-appropriate. For example, pupils find some work too difficult because it is more suited to key stage 4, and they do not have the prior knowledge to be able to make sense of new learning. For example, Year 5 pupils were expected to answer the question, 'what is the difference between a thermoplastic and a thermosetting polymer?' without having the required background knowledge.
- Therefore, standards for these paragraphs remain unmet.

### *Paragraph 3(g)*

- Teachers do not make effective use of pupils' assessment information to plan and deliver effective sequences of learning for pupils. As a result, all too often, teachers set work that is either too easy or too hard. This prevents pupils from achieving well.
- This paragraph was met at the time of the last inspection, but is now unmet.

## Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

### *Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)*

- Previously, the curriculum did not promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development well enough. Inspectors found that pupils' work reflected the headteacher's personal political views. The action plan included proposals to improve provision for PSHE education, and plans to teach lessons about British values, different cultures and traditions. In addition, teachers would highlight the importance of the protected characteristics in relation to the Equality Act 2010.

- Leaders have developed their PSHE provision to ensure that pupils are now presented with a balance of perspectives when discussing political views. Through teaching, pupils are helped to understand that everyone is entitled to their own political opinions. Pupils show an awareness of the major political parties and can discuss, quite maturely, their own views and thinking. Leaders do not promote partisan political views.
- Leaders now promote pupils' SMSC development through different topics as they arise, although there is no clearly planned approach. Despite this, teachers have helped pupils to develop a wider perspective of the world and understand their responsibility as active citizens. For example, pupils undertook a project on homelessness that helped them to make sense of some of the inequalities in society.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraphs 7(b), 13, 14*

- At the last inspection, the school's safeguarding policy did not take full account of guidance issued by the Secretary of State. In addition, the first aid policy was not implemented effectively, and pupils were not properly supervised. The school's action plan proposed that the new policy would have regard for advice from the Secretary of State and that pupils would have an adequate level of supervision.
- Leaders have revised and rewritten the school's safeguarding policy so that it now has regard for the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. For example, there is information about how the school should respond to incidents of sexual violence or harassment. The school's safeguarding policy is published on the school's website.
- Leaders have replenished first aid kits so that they contain contents where the use-by date has not expired. First aid kits are available in the medical room as well as downstairs in the hallway. Leaders report that there have not been any first aid incidents since the time of the last inspection. However, they have made changes to their procedures and plan to record in writing any communication with parents and carers if a pupil receives first aid.
- Leaders maintain an adequate level of supervision for pupils by always ensuring that there is at least one adult in the building.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

#### *Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 11, 12, 15, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- At the last inspection, the proprietor had not ensured that arrangements for safeguarding were effective. The action plan proposed that health and safety issues would be rectified quickly so that pupils were kept safe from harm.
- The arrangements for safeguarding remain ineffective. Several health and safety hazards still exist, which means that pupils are potentially at risk of injury. This includes upstairs windows without restrictors, a loose step leading out of the back door (fire exit) and several appliances that have not had a portable appliance test, and that may pose a fire risk. The button to activate the fire alarm is on the ceiling and too high for pupils to reach. Pupils have not been taught any other way to raise the alarm if they discover a fire. These failings mean that the proprietor has not ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

- The school's deputy designated safeguarding leader (DSL) has recently completed several training courses related to different aspects of safeguarding, including paediatric first aid and a 'working together' safeguarding course run by the local authority. As a result, they have a better awareness of reporting procedures and they have an improved knowledge about other aspects of safeguarding, such as extremism and female genital mutilation.
- Pupils are not taught enough in school about keeping themselves safe. However, leaders have begun to address this through improvements to the PSHE curriculum. For example, staff teach pupils about online safety and help them to understand how to keep their personal details private.
- Not all pupils are included in the school's admission register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. At the time of the inspection, there were three pupils being educated on-site, but only two pupils on the school's admission register. Leaders intend to rectify this and add the pupil to the school's admission register.
- The proprietor has revised the school's risk assessment policy. However, risk assessments for different activities are too generic and do not always adequately consider the risks. Therefore, leaders' management of risk is not effective, and pupils are potentially placed in unsafe situations.
- The headteacher, who is sole proprietor, in his role as DSL has not considered carefully enough how he can discharge his DSL role with sufficient independence, especially in relation to any allegations involving either him or his family.
- Therefore, standards for these paragraphs remain unmet.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

##### *Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 28(1), 28(1)(d)*

- At the time of the last inspection, the pupils' toilet was not solely for their use. It could also be used by others, for example visitors to the school. In addition, the water from the hot tap in the pupils' basin presented a scalding risk. The school's action plan proposed altering the hot tap and only permitting pupils to use the toilet.
- The proprietor has now designated this toilet for pupils only, and this is indicated by a sign on the door. The proprietor has also fitted an infrared sensor mixer tap where the temperature of the water can be controlled so it does not pose a scalding risk.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

##### *Paragraphs 25, 27, 27(a), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)*

- A number of health and safety issues were identified at the last inspection, in addition to some concerns about the appropriateness of the school premises. For example, the classroom on the ground floor did not have adequate levels of light and the outdoor space was not sufficient for pupils to play outside or use for PE lessons. The action plan proposed several changes to the premises to rectify these issues.
- The proprietor has not taken any steps since the last inspection to improve the lighting in the classroom. The classroom is located in a small garage with no natural light or ventilation. The environment is not conducive to learning and the amount of light is

insufficient for typical school-based activities, such as reading.

- Arrangements for outdoor play and space for PE lessons are unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have access to a suitable outdoor space for play. They continue to use a nearby public park for outdoor PE lessons, although they do not have exclusive use of it. Pupils say they sometimes go to the park for breaks. On the day of the inspection, pupils remained in the school's kitchen for both morning and lunch break, despite the weather being particularly warm. The back garden is out-of-bounds due to proposed building work.
- Therefore, standards for these paragraphs remain unmet.

## Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraphs 32(3), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(f)*

- Previously, the proprietor did not provide information to parents in relation to the educational and welfare provision for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans and for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The action plan proposed that this information was made available to parents.
- The proprietor has revised the school's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) policy and included relevant information about the provision for pupils with SEND, including those who have an EHC plan.
- The school's equality policy now includes a section on the provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The information provided is minimal and only states that the curriculum will be adapted to meet pupils' needs.
- Leaders now report the number of formal complaints received. This is displayed on the school's website.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

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

*Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)*

- At the last inspection, leaders had not demonstrated a clear understanding of the independent school standards. They had not ensured that pupils were making sufficient progress in their learning, nor had they provided pupils with a broad enough curriculum. The curriculum did not promote pupils' SMSC development well enough. In addition, leaders had not taken all necessary steps to ensure pupils' safety and welfare. Safeguarding arrangements were ineffective.
- At the request of the Department for Education (DfE), leaders prepared an action plan. However, the plan was vague and gave little clear indication of what actions leaders would take to ensure that each specific standard was met. Consequently, leaders have responded appropriately to some, but not all, of the findings from the last inspection. While they have been successful in widening the curriculum and improving provision for pupils' SMSC development, there are still many unmet standards. Safeguarding arrangements remain ineffective, the quality of teaching has not improved enough, and aspects of the school's accommodation are still not fit for purpose. This means that pupils are left vulnerable and do not receive a good-quality education.
- Leaders have well-intentioned plans to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils who have not succeeded in mainstream schools. However, the school's current development plan is

too generic and does not show, through specific actions, how improvements will be made. It lacks measurable criteria to judge how successful leaders will be in addressing the areas for improvement. This is likely to hinder the school's progress.

- Leaders have not resolved many of the previous unmet independent school standards with a sufficient sense of urgency. Consequently, many of the standards that were unmet at the last inspection remain unmet. Leaders' plan of action for moving the school forward lacks clarity. Leaders are not doing enough to address shortfalls in relation to safeguarding, or taking sufficient action to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Therefore, the standards for these paragraphs remain unmet.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

## School details

Unique reference number	141501
DfE registration number	333/6007
Inspection number	10105624

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	Independent day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Colin Rankine
Headteacher	Colin Rankine
Annual fees (day pupils)	Up to £6,000
Telephone number	07500416635
Website	<a href="http://www.homeschoolsocialenterprise.org">www.homeschoolsocialenterprise.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:homeschool@live.co.uk">homeschool@live.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	20 to 21 November 2018

## Information about this school

- Homeschool is part of the Homeschool Social Enterprise, a registered charity. The school is registered to provide day education for up to five pupils aged between five and 11 years old.
- The proprietor is also the headteacher. The proprietor's wife is a teacher at the school and also the school's business manager. There are no other staff. The school does not have a governing body, but it has one trustee.
- The school is situated on the ground and first floors of a town house in a residential area in Wednesbury. The main classroom is located in a converted garage.
- The school has a Christian religious ethos.
- The school's last standard inspection was on 20 to 21 November 2018.



## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged inadequate at the standard inspection in November 2018.
- The DfE required the school to submit a statutory action plan. The school submitted an action plan detailing its proposals to address the unmet standards. The action plan was evaluated by Ofsted in March 2019. The DfE rejected the proposed action plan.
- Inspectors held discussions with the proprietor and business manager. They scrutinised a range of documents, including school policies, schemes of work, information about assessment, the admissions and attendance registers, safeguarding information, and health and safety documents.
- Inspectors observed pupils working and at play. They talked to pupils about their learning and how to keep safe.

## Inspection team

Tim Hill, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Niall Gallagher	Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school does not meet the following independent school standards**

*Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection*

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
  - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
  - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
    - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
  - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
  - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
  - 3(c) involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
  - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
  - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
  - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
  - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;

#### **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].

- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006[13].
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
  - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
  - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

## **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 27 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
  - 27(a) the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein; and
- 29(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable—
  - 29(1)(a) physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and
  - 29(1)(b) pupils to play outside.

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

- 34(1) 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; and
  - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

*Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection*

## **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school—

- 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;

**The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards**

- Part 1, paragraph 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i) and paragraph 3(i)
- Part 2, paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)
- Part 3, paragraph 7(b), 13, 14
- Part 5, paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 28(1), 28(1)(d)
- Part 6, paragraph 32(1), 32(3), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(f)

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