

Inspection of Felixstowe International College

Maybush House, Maybush Lane, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7NA

Inspection dates:

15–17 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. It is a friendly, safe place to be. Its small size means everyone knows each other well and takes care of one another. Pupils attend regularly and behave well. They feel free from bullying and harassment. They told inspectors 'in other schools pupils of different ages don't mix, but we do here'. Small class sizes ensure they receive regular, one-to-one support to help them learn.

The school is inclusive. It welcomes international students as boarders, and pupils who have not had a positive experience in their previous school. This year, the school has focused on accepting day students, and has increased the range of subjects taught. Staff help them to feel safe and ready to learn. Pupils and parents who provided their views during the inspection would recommend the school to others.

The curriculum has been changed to provide pupils with more choice and give them a broader range of experiences. These arrangements are new. Leaders have begun to monitor these changes. More time is needed to gauge their full effectiveness.

Pupils do not build on their learning across all key stages because coherent planning is not fully in place. Some staff do not have sufficient specialist knowledge to lead improvements in their subjects.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school teaches mathematics and sciences to international students who speak English as an additional language. This year, new pupils have joined the school in key stage 3. A broader choice of GCSE courses has been introduced this academic year.

Teachers with specialist knowledge lead their subjects well. For example, in mathematics, where standards are consistently high, staff identify the different starting points of pupils. They carefully plan the order in which they want pupils to learn, enabling them to build on what they already know and can do. They correct pupils' misunderstandings. Assessment is used well to identify gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

However, subject leadership is not consistent. Coherent and well-chosen curriculum design across all subjects and key stages is not fully in place. In humanities, leaders lack a firm understanding of what they want pupils to learn and how their subject will be taught. They have not had enough training. Therefore, learning is not suitably planned and ordered for pupils to achieve as well as they could.

Leaders provide pupils with a nurturing environment. Pupils learn in small, mixed-age classes and receive regular attention and suitable support from teachers. Pupils enjoy learning. They behave well and are able to focus independently for sustained periods. At times, work is too easy, particularly for those pupils studying GCSE courses.

Recently, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have joined the school. Leaders use the information received from pupils' previous schools and from meetings with them and their parents to identify the help they need. Additional support is provided to pupils with SEND in English and mathematics. This is not fully consistent in all subjects.

A small proportion of international pupils attend for a short period of time to broaden their understanding of English culture and language. Teachers and other pupils work together to help them develop their understanding and use of English language. However, in some lessons teachers are not ensuring that pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully involved in learning. Outside of lessons, these pupils integrate well. There are good opportunities for pupils to socialise at breaks and lunchtimes, which help them overcome language barriers.

Pupils are taught about relationships and sex education through regular and well-taught personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils show a firm understanding of different relationships and lifestyles, British values and the protected characteristics. They told inspectors that 'it's okay to be different in this school'. Pupils commented favourably on the opportunities to participate in after-school clubs and do volunteering in the local community.

Students enjoy the sixth form. They feel free from bullying and harassment in the school and in the boarding house. PSHE lessons teach them how to keep safe and manage the risks attached to being online. They say enough time is allocated to learning so they can gain the qualifications they need to progress onto university. Regular English conversation lessons ensure students who speak English as an additional language are prepared for the next stage. Leaders provide an enrichment programme to teach students the skills they need to live independently. They feel very much part of school life. Students mix well with younger pupils. They volunteer to support those who need help with their literacy and numeracy skills.

Senior leaders work well as a team to make improvements. The proprietor does not ensure that all the independent school standards are met. There is not a suitable room provided to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policy and procedures are published on the school's website. All the necessary checks are made when appointing adults to work with children. A few minor errors in recording this information were rectified during the inspection. Staff are trained to be vigilant and know how to raise a concern. Records show that safeguarding matters are followed up appropriately, in a timely way. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. A governor makes periodic checks of the actions taken to keep pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- New pupils of mixed ages and abilities have joined the school. A new, broader curriculum is now in place to meet their needs. These arrangements are new. Leaders should thoroughly monitor and evaluate the impact of these changes this year to ensure that the curriculum is working and is enabling pupils to learn well enough.
- Subject leadership is too variable. Curriculum planning across all key stages is underdeveloped in some subjects. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the training they need to lead improvements to their subjects.
- The proprietor does not ensure that all the independent school standards are met. There is no systematic way of checking these standards. The proprietor should put in place robust procedures to check periodically that all independent school standards are fully met. The proprietor should take prompt action to ensure that the independent school standards identified during this inspection as not met are met.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

How can I feed back my views?

School details

Unique reference number	124899
DfE registration number	935/6076
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10220782
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	9 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	9
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Su Yeun Yu
Chair	Andy Byford
Headteacher	Rebecca Mainprice
Annual fees	£33,000 (boarding) & £17,589 (day)
Telephone number	01394 282388
Website	ficedu.org
Email address	registrar@ficedu.org
Date of previous inspection	14–16 May 2019

Information about this school

- Felixstowe International College is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) as a day and boarding school with a Christian ethos.
- The school operates from the boarding school site in Maybush Lane, Felixstowe. There is no intention to return to the previous Garrison Lane site.
- A small number of pupils are currently boarders. Most speak English as an additional language and are at different stages of learning English. The school also runs a short-term English language and culture 'winter programme' for selected pupils.
- A small number of pupils have SEND or an education, health and care plan.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school entered lockdown in March 2020. Teaching resumed online in June 2020. Pupils returned to school from September 2020.
- At the school's previous standard inspection in May 2019, all the independent school standards were met.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Material change

The proprietor has requested a material change to the school which was carried out as part of this standard inspection. The school wishes to reduce the capacity of the boarding facility from 48 to a maximum of 24 pupils. They also wish to admit up to a maximum of a further 24 pupils who attend the school on a daily basis. Leaders are requesting to increase the overall school capacity from 32 to a maximum of 48. Overall, the number will not exceed 48.

Leaders have already implemented some of these changes. There are now more pupils who attend the school on a daily basis without boarding and there are no more than 24 beds in the boarding accommodation. They have not exceeded 32 pupils.

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change is implemented, when the school meets all the relevant unmet standards identified in this inspection.

- The inspection was a standard inspection.
- The school has also applied to the DfE to change the proprietor. This is currently being assessed by the DfE.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, teachers, a group of pupils and a group of sixth-form students, the governing body and the current proprietor.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including policies and procedures, behaviour and attendance records, self-evaluation and school improvement planning and information relating to safeguarding.
- An inspector met with the designated leader for safeguarding to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements. The school's single central record of employment checks was scrutinised.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, geography and history. This included meetings with the subject leader, teachers, and pupils, visiting lessons and scrutinising pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the views of 20 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire Ofsted Parent View, and 15 free-text responses sent by parents. They considered 26 responses to Ofsted's survey of pupils' views and 20 responses to Ofsted's survey of the views of staff.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Wilson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

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 account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of (2)(1)(a) the matters are–
 - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- 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(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.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including–
 - 24(1)(a) accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils
 - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility.
- 24(2) The accommodation provided under sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b) may be used for other purposes (apart from teaching) provided it is always readily available to be used for the purposes set out in sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b).

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 32(1)(a) the information specified in sub-paragraph (2) is provided to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector [14], the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate [15].

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022