

# Inspection of North Bridge Enterprise College

Eco Power Stadium (East Stand), Stadium Way, Doncaster DN4 5JW

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Inspection dates: 8 to 10 March 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**No**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders' expectations of pupils are not high enough. Many pupils who are registered at the school have been permanently excluded, or were at risk of permanent exclusion, from other settings. In most cases, leaders' efforts to re-engage pupils in their education are not successful. The curriculum is poorly planned. Pupils are not prepared well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

Leaders have failed to establish a safe environment for pupils. Threatening language and intimidating behaviour are endemic. Many pupils do not attend school regularly. Some pupils are disrespectful towards staff and use inappropriate language towards them. Staff do not manage pupils' behaviour well because they have not had clear guidance or suitable training. Pupils' lack of engagement in lessons and frequent poor behaviour mean that classrooms are disorderly and very little learning takes place. Instances of bullying are managed appropriately by staff.

The proprietor body has recently introduced a 'making memories' project. Some pupils have been quad biking and one has been to a skatepark in London as part of this project. These visits provide culturally enriching experiences for pupils.

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

Staff demonstrate genuine care and concern for pupils. However, leaders, including governors and the proprietor body, have failed to ensure that staff have sufficient training to help them to provide the specialist support that pupils, many of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), require. Staff are ill equipped to help pupils to improve their behaviour or support them to access education.

Rates of absence are high. The vast majority of pupils are persistently absent. Those who do attend are often late. As a result, the education that pupils receive is disjointed. Leaders have not put suitable arrangements in place to ensure that pupils attend well. There is a haphazard approach to managing pupils' absence.

A number of pupils attend part time. Leaders have not ensured that part-time timetables are consistently agreed with parents and carers. When a pupil does attend part time, the agreed absences are counted as school attendance in the data analysed by leaders. Therefore, leaders themselves do not have an accurate view of the scale of pupils' absence.

There are errors on the school's admissions register. For example, leaders do not detail when changes to the admissions register are made, or by whom. When pupils move to a new school, staff do not accurately record the destination. Staff record the date on which a pupil leaves the school, rather than the start date, or intended start date, of their new school placement, which is not in compliance with statutory requirements.

The school's curriculum is weak. Subject leaders have not had sufficient training to help them to design an effective curriculum. The curriculum for mathematics focuses narrowly on the most basic content in the examination syllabus, rather than setting out a rich body of subject knowledge for pupils to learn. In English, leaders have not consistently identified the precise subject knowledge that pupils should be taught. Leaders have not established an effective strategy to support pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. The school offers some vocational subjects, such as food technology. In some of these subjects, leaders have not considered how teaching builds on what pupils already know. Pupils complete unambitious, short modules that do not help them to accumulate knowledge and skills over time. Leaders have not ensured that staff have the subject knowledge that they need in order to teach the curriculum well. All of these factors contribute to pupils' poor achievement.

Teachers do not provide effective support for some pupils' individual needs. The assessments given to pupils do not help teachers to pinpoint the precise gaps in pupils' knowledge. This includes pupils at the early stages of learning to read. As a result, teachers do not know how to help some pupils to improve. A small number of pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Leaders transfer the contents of this plan into their own format for staff. However, when leaders do so, they omit significant details. This means that staff do not fully understand pupils' needs and how to help them. As a result, pupils with an EHC plan are not well supported.

A small number of pupils access alternative provision. However, leaders have failed to engage some pupils in courses that might interest them because they do not have an accurate picture of the alternative education provision available in the area.

Staff do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Leaders' expectations for managing pupils' behaviour are unclear. Some staff use rewards and sanctions that are not included in the school's brief behaviour policy. For example, some staff use unhealthy food as a reward. Some staff challenge the use of mobile telephones in lessons, while others do not. The expectations of how pupils should behave are unclear to pupils.

The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is well considered. Teachers promote pupils' awareness and understanding of the protected characteristics. The PSHE education curriculum includes the content set out in the statutory guidance on relationships and sex education. Leaders have adapted the curriculum so that teachers spend more time teaching healthy relationships as they feel that this is important to pupils. However, because of this decision, some content in the school's PSHE education curriculum is not being covered, such as economic education. This limits how well pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils are provided with independent careers advice and guidance. In the past, the majority of pupils have gone on to employment, education or training and have sustained these placements. However, leaders have not enabled some current pupils to demonstrate the behaviour and attitudes necessary to succeed beyond school.

The proprietor body and members of the governing body do not recognise the extent of the weaknesses in the school. There is a lack of urgency in addressing the weaknesses of which they are aware. Governors and the proprietor body have not effectively held leaders to account or supported them to improve the school. Leaders ensure that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Staff confirmed that leaders are considerate of their well-being and take appropriate steps to manage their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders have failed to establish a safe environment for pupils. Pupils' behaviour in the school is unsafe. Pupils do not comply with staff's instructions. Pupils regularly leave the building. The policy and procedure for when a pupil absconds are not well understood by staff. Inconsistencies in the way in which staff record who is in the building mean that in the event of a fire, staff cannot say with certainty who is on site. Fire extinguishers are locked away to keep them out of reach of pupils, making it difficult to use them if they are required in the event of a fire.

The school's safeguarding policy is published on its website. Designated safeguarding leads are knowledgeable about the potential risks to pupils' safety in their homes and wider community. Leaders provide regular training for staff to ensure that they can identify whether a pupil might be at risk of harm outside school. Staff report any concerns quickly. Leaders take appropriate action to ensure that pupils are safe. They keep detailed records of their actions. Staff work effectively with external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe in their homes and in the community. Staff undertake 'safe and well' checks of pupils who are absent to ensure that they are safe.

Leaders ensure that the necessary checks are made on staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with pupils.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The school's behaviour policy does not provide staff with the information they need to help them to manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Staff do not have the necessary skills and expertise to manage pupils' behaviour effectively. Threatening language and intimidating behaviour are commonplace. Because of pupils' poor behaviour, the school is unsafe. Leaders should take urgent action to ensure that an effective behaviour policy is developed and consistently implemented by staff. Leaders should ensure that staff receive high-quality training so that they can support pupils to improve their behaviour.
- Leaders do not comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Leaders lock fire extinguishers away as they are concerned that pupils will set them off due to their poor behaviour. Additionally, daily registers are not

accurately kept, meaning that staff do not know with certainty who is on the school site. Leaders should ensure that fire extinguishers are accessible in case of fire and that suitable attendance registers are kept so that leaders know exactly who is on the school site.

- Leaders do not have full regard for the Secretary of State's 'School attendance' (2022) guidance. The school's admissions register does not include all the information that is legally required under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Leaders should ensure that the admissions register is kept in accordance with the latest guidance from the Secretary of State and complies with the relevant legislation.
- Leaders' management of pupils' absence is ineffective. Rates of pupil absence are high. Very few pupils engage well with the school's curriculum. Leaders should establish a clear strategy for improving pupils' attendance, reduce the use of part-time timetables and improve punctuality in order to ensure that pupils attend well and can fully engage with the school's curriculum.
- The curriculum is poorly planned. Subject leaders do not have the necessary skills to design an effective curriculum. Pupils, including those with SEND, do not develop the knowledge and skills that they need to be ready for their next steps. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the training they need to design a coherent and well-sequenced curriculum that identifies the precise knowledge that pupils should be taught.
- Teachers do not have adequate subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum. They fail to identify precise gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. This includes for those pupils at the early stages of learning to read. There is a lack of effective teaching and support for pupils, including those with SEND. Leaders should ensure that teachers accurately check and identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and ensure effective support for individual pupils so that they are well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment. Leaders should ensure that staff receive subject-specific training to ensure that they have the expertise to teach the curriculum well.
- Leaders do not understand the extent of the school's weaknesses. They do not have the knowledge and understanding to ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met. Governors and the proprietor body do not hold leaders effectively to account. As a result, standards have declined significantly since the previous inspection. Leaders should ensure that urgent action is taken to improve the areas of weakness in the school.

## **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](#).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140816
<b>DfE registration number</b>	371/6001
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212951
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 17
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	35
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	15
<b>Proprietor</b>	Keys Educational Services
<b>Chair</b>	Nicola Kelly
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma White
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£23,790 to £45,270
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 367005
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://education.keys-group.co.uk/school/north-bridge-enterprise-college/">https://education.keys-group.co.uk/school/north-bridge-enterprise-college/</a>
<b>Email address</b>	emmawhite@keys-group.co.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 to 14 December 2017

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection in December 2017, the school has moved to a new site because the previous site was damaged by flooding.
- A material change inspection took place in December 2019.
- The school uses two unregistered providers of alternative provision, Future Pathways CIC and Enhancement Training Ltd.
- A new deputy headteacher took up post in September 2021.
- The name of the proprietor is incorrectly listed on the government's website, 'Get information about schools'.

## 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.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and regional managers. Inspectors also met with members of the governing body and the proprietor body.
- Inspectors visited one of the alternative education providers used by the school and spoke to the other by telephone.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leads. They scrutinised documents related to safeguarding, including the single central record. Inspectors spoke with staff about the training they have received and their understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, food technology and PSHE education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors listened to a pupil read.
- During the inspection, inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the independent school standards and toured the school site.



- Inspectors were aware that, during this inspection, a serious incident that had occurred at the setting since the previous inspection is under investigation by the appropriate authorities.

### **Inspection team**

Tim Scargill-Knight, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tricia Stevens

Ofsted 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 into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan;
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
  - 2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
  - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
  - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 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(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly;

#### **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;

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
  - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively;
- 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].

## **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.

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