

Inspection of Lewis Charlton Learning Centre

North Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1HU

Inspection dates:

22 to 25 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils feel safe in school and get on well together. Most pupils know how to report any concerns they have. Many pupils told inspectors that staff care about them. They talk about how staff help to resolve issues of bullying. A few pupils are not sure what to do when the behaviour of others makes them feel unsafe. Leaders have not made sure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective. They do not pay close enough attention to the possible risks when pupils do not attend full time or do some of their learning elsewhere.

Some pupils improve their attendance after joining the school. Others rarely attend and do not engage fully with their learning. They do not benefit from the wide range of experiences planned to support their personal development. Others, including post-16 students, only come to school for part of each week.

The poor behaviour of some pupils prevents others from learning. Occasionally, poor behaviour makes pupils feel unsafe. Some pupils who struggle to control their behaviour do not get the specialist support they require.

Staff do not consistently take pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities into account when planning the curriculum. Not all pupils who find reading difficult get the help they need. Many pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy contributing to the local area, for instance, through the local arts festival.

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

The behaviour of some pupils is poor. Pupils who struggle to control their behaviour are withdrawn frequently from lessons. They miss out on valuable learning. Staff sometimes struggle to manage pupils' behaviour. The number of incidents of physical restraint is increasing. A few pupils are excluded from school. Too many pupils do not attend school full time, including some post-16 students. These pupils are not receiving the education they are entitled to. Leaders' use of part-time timetables to help pupils to re-engage with education is not always effective. Leaders are not providing some of these pupils with the support they need to improve their conduct and attitudes.

Leaders do not have a clear oversight of pupils' attendance. Pupils' attendance is not always recorded consistently or accurately.

The quality of education is not good enough. In many subjects, the curriculum is poorly organised. Leaders do not make good-enough use of assessment information. Pupils' next steps in learning are not planned carefully enough. Some pupils struggle to recall what they have been taught.

Leaders do not pay close enough attention to meeting pupils' specific needs. They do not effectively use the targets on pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. Leaders do not ensure that pupils receive the therapeutic support specified on these EHC plans.

Many pupils start at the school having missed significant periods of school. Pupils often miss learning due to absence, poor behaviour or because they only attend school part time. Staff do not always identify or address the precise gaps in pupils' knowledge. Some staff do not adapt learning when pupils find work too easy or too difficult. Pupils' mistakes are sometimes left uncorrected. The work given to pupils is sometimes not demanding enough.

Staff have thought more carefully about what pupils learn in mathematics. In this subject, pupils learn new knowledge in a logical order. They revisit this content to deepen their understanding. In English, leaders are beginning to review what pupils should learn and when.

Staff have not had the training necessary to help pupils to read. Pupils who struggle to read do not always get the help that they need to read fluently and accurately. Pupils are not encouraged to develop a love of reading. This prevents pupils from learning effectively in other subjects. Staff are beginning to provide pupils with more opportunities to read widely and often.

Many students in the post-16 provision follow courses that are well matched to their needs. Some students take courses at local colleges. Others enjoy appropriate work placements. These opportunities help students to develop their social skills and explore career choices. Students learn how to live and care for themselves independently. When students leave the school, most move on to further study at college or into supported living arrangements.

The personal development programme is well planned. Pupils appreciate the need to respect people who have views, beliefs and opinions that are different from their own. Pupils consider healthy lifestyles and relationships. Pupils in key stages 4 and 5 benefit from independent careers advice. Work to develop pupils' character is less well developed. Pupils attending part time do not have the same opportunities as others.

The proprietor has not made sure that the school meets the independent school standards. They have an inaccurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have not challenged leaders to improve pupils' behaviour, attendance, or the quality of education.

The proprietor has not fulfilled its statutory responsibility to keep pupils safe. Pupils' risk assessments lack detail. Some do not include information about particular risks known to affect individual pupils. Staff do not have the information they need to reduce the chance of pupils harming themselves or others. Some risk assessments for pupils who attend education off site are not appropriate.

The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. It reflects the latest statutory guidance. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not monitor well enough the pupils who attend alternative provisions unaccompanied. They do not have a rigorous enough oversight of pupils who attend school on a part-time basis. Procedures to check that these pupils are safe when they are not attending school are unclear. Errors in the recording of pupils' attendance when they are not on a school site put pupils at risk of harm.

Leaders work closely with external agencies. However, it is not clear that leaders always take the right actions in response to safeguarding concerns.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know how to raise a concern that a pupil may be at risk.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have not made sure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are secure. There are too many weaknesses that leave pupils potentially unsafe. Leaders cannot be certain that all pupils are safeguarded when they are in the school's care. Leaders must ensure that there are adequate safeguards in place for all pupils at all times, including up to date and accurate risk assessments, and precise records of attendance.
- Pupils often behave poorly. When this happens, pupils miss out on valuable learning, either because they are withdrawn from lessons or because they follow part-time programmes. Pupils' poor behaviour has a negative impact on their own and others' learning. Leaders and staff need to raise their expectations of pupils' behaviour. They need to provide pupils with the right support so that the occurrence of poor and disruptive behaviour is minimised.
- A significant proportion of pupils follow part-time programmes. These pupils do not all follow suitable programmes and do not have the same opportunities for learning and development as their peers. Leaders should ensure that there are secure plans in place to enable all pupils to benefit from full-time education.
- Pupils with low attendance miss out on learning that helps them to prepare for their next steps. These pupils are missing important aspects of their education. Leaders need to work closely with parents and carers and external agencies to improve pupils' attendance.
- The quality of education is weak. Leaders have not thought carefully enough about what they want pupils to learn and when in many subjects. They do not

ensure that the planned curriculum considers gaps in pupils' knowledge. They do not pay close enough attention to targets on pupils' EHC plans. The work given to pupils is often not demanding enough. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders need to ensure that each subject is well sequenced and appropriately demanding. They need to ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively to meet different pupils' needs.

- Leaders have not prioritised reading. Staff are not well trained to teach pupils how to read. There is not a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Pupils who struggle to read well are not getting the right support. Others do not choose to read willingly. Leaders need to ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills so that they can support pupils to become accurate and fluent readers. Leaders need to provide all pupils with opportunities to develop a love of reading.
- Staff sometimes do not make the most appropriate pedagogical choices. They do not have the necessary skills to be able to adapt the curriculum well in response to pupils' needs. Leaders need to ensure that staff have secure subject and pedagogical knowledge so that they can deliver the curriculum successfully.

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

Unique reference number	134438
DfE registration number	855/6020
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10194713
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	13
Number of part-time pupils	20
Proprietor	Lewis Charlton Limited
Chair	Zaheer Esat
Headteacher	Malcolm Kerridge
Annual fees (day pupils)	£67,350 to £107,850
Telephone number	01530 560775
Website	www.lewischarltonschool.org.uk
Email address	Natalie-kong@lewischarltonschool.org
Date of previous inspection	20 to 23 May 2019

Information about this school

- Lewis Charlton Learning Centre is an independent special school. All pupils have an EHC plan. Most pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils have a diagnosis of autism.
- The school is located across six sites. Five sites are found within the centre of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. These are: Abney Hastings, South Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, LE65 1BR; The Village, South Street, Ashby-de-la Zouch, LE65 1BR; The Haven

Project, North Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, LE65 1HS; Space City, North Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, LE65 1HS; and The Lantern, North Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, LE65 1HS. Lewis Charlton College is where most of the post-16 provision is based, located on Moira Road, Donisthorpe, DE12 7QE.

- Leaders started using the site at Abney Hastings at the beginning of this academic year. Space City and The Lantern are not used currently as part of the provision. During the on-site inspection, leaders informed the Department for Education (DfE) that they no longer want The Lantern registered as a site used by the school.
- At the time of the inspection, inspectors established that there are 20 pupils who are part time. The school confirmed this at the time of the on-site inspection. Subsequent to the end of the on-site inspection, leaders have asserted that there are fewer than 20 pupils who are part time.
- Pupils travel to the school from several local authorities.
- The school uses five unregistered alternative providers for pupils to receive some of their education. The school also uses two registered alternative providers.
- The school's most recent standard inspection took place from 20 to 23 May 2019. A monitoring inspection took place on 7 October 2020 to check the progress the school had made in meeting the independent school standards.
- Since the previous standard inspection, a new leader has taken responsibility for safeguarding.

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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and the head of school.
- The lead inspector met with safeguarding leaders to examine safeguarding records, the school's system for recruiting staff and the school's single central record. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors did deep dives in four subjects: English, mathematics, history and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with teachers of the subject, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke with pupils. Inspectors reviewed

information about the curriculum pathways that a small sample of pupils study. Inspectors listened to some pupils read.

- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils during social times and spoke with some pupils.
- Inspectors met with a group of support staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietor board.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of three of the school's alternative providers on the telephone.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plans, information about pupils' attendance and behaviour, examples of pupils EHC plans, individual risk assessments for pupils and information about the use of physical restraint by staff.
- Inspectors took into account responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View and to the staff survey.
- Inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed the facilities at each site, in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Long

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)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- 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(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; and
 - 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; and

- 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 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.
- 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 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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