

Inspection of On Track Education – West Yarner

West Yarner, Dun Cross, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6DX

Inspection dates: 14 to 16 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils settle quickly when they join On Track Education – West Yarner. Leaders and staff build strong relationships with pupils and their families. Many parents comment on the ways their children are included and cared for. This results in pupils feeling safe and attending well. Many parents spoke of the school as being 'life changing' for their child, succeeding where other schools had not.

Staff are highly successful in their support of pupils' social and emotional needs. As a result, pupils are able to focus on their academic studies. Staff have high aspirations for pupils. Leaders expect most pupils to progress to qualifications, such as GCSE, when they are ready.

All pupils benefit from a personalised enrichment programme. These weekly sessions support pupils' personal development well. Visits to the zoo, local historical sites or the shops help pupils to gain more confidence and independence. Trips in the school minibus are prized.

In classes and at social times, most pupils behave well. They particularly enjoy playing word and card games with their classmates or adults. A few pupils use inappropriate language and, although staff challenge it, it persists. Nonetheless, normally, the school is a calm and harmonious community.

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

Most of the pupils have not been to school for many months, even years. On Track Education – West Yarner has a strong track record in helping pupils to re-engage in education and almost all pupils attend on a full-time basis within a few months of starting.

Leaders' and teachers' aspirations for pupils are high. The new curriculum is demanding, and pupils are rising to the challenge. This is especially the case in English. Leaders have rightly prioritised pupils' reading and speaking. This is allowing them to read class books and books of their own choosing. Many pupils show a real interest in reading. Leaders have been quick to pick up on some pupils' interest in non-fiction texts and are building on this. Many pupils have caught up quickly and are now reading books that are more closely matched to their age.

In other subjects, pupils show interest and are making some progress, but it is not as strong as English. Teachers have designed a curriculum which sets out the knowledge pupils will gain, but they do not always choose the best ways to teach it. For example, in mathematics pupils rely too heavily on following procedures and 'rules'. Teachers use their assessments of what pupils know in order to adapt their teaching. The central assessment system provides leaders with an insight into how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum.

The personal, social and health curriculum gives pupils a strong grounding in understanding themselves and the part they have to play in society. Staff have a clear focus on preparing pupils for life beyond school and use pupils' interests well to develop their understanding. Leaders have woven the teaching of British values into the curriculum but also through conversations at social times. However, some pupils' knowledge of other religions, cultures and ways of life is not strong. Leaders are aware of the need to strengthen this further so that all pupils show respect and treat others well.

A careers programme is in place for the older pupils. Teachers raise pupils' awareness of the job opportunities available to them and the training routes they can follow. An independent careers adviser has been brought in to provide impartial advice.

Staff members told inspectors that they feel leaders trust them and care for them. Every member of staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire said they were proud to work at the school and that it is well led and managed.

The proprietor has a robust cycle of monitoring in place to quality assure the provision. This includes the use of specialist consultants. As a result, the proprietor has a deep understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards are met in full.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have planned a curriculum that prioritises teaching pupils about the risks they face and how to keep themselves safe. There is significant emphasis on online safety as many pupils enjoy gaming.

The proprietor has ensured that all the pre-employment checks are carried out for staff in good time. Staff receive regular training. Staff are quick to spot when there may be a problem, and they work with other agencies to ensure families receive the support they need. The child protection policy is up-to-date and is published on the school's website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- In some subjects, teaching staff do not adopt the most effective pedagogical approaches. This means pupils struggle to recall the knowledge they have been taught previously. Leaders should ensure that teachers are supported to implement the curriculum effectively.
- A few pupils continue to use inappropriate language towards their classmates. Staff take action to tackle this, but these behaviours continue. Leaders should review the curriculum and other opportunities in order to teach pupils effectively about the use of language and the importance of showing respect to others.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	148805
DfE registration number	878/6088
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10239796
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	On Track Education Services Limited
Chair	Jane Cox
Headteacher	Simon Wood
Annual fees (day pupils)	£49,946 to £91,460
Telephone number	01803 445943
Website	https://ontrackededucation.com/schools/west-yarner
Email address	swood@ontrackededucation.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is the first standard inspection of the school. It was granted registration in December 2021.
- The school is located over two sites:
 - West Yarner, Dun Cross, Dartington, Totnes TQ9 6DX.
 - Seale Hayne, Howton Road, Newton Abbot TQ12 6NQ.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and/or mental health needs. Many pupils also have diagnoses of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or autistic spectrum disorder.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. They are placed at the school by their local authority.
- The school is operated by On Track Education Services Limited. The proprietor has seven other schools, all currently rated as good by Ofsted.
- There is no governing body.
- The school places pupils in three unregistered alternative providers: Esteem Team CIC, Exmouth; The Husbandry School, Bickington; Tubers Academy, Torquay.
- The school does not have any religious character or denomination.
- Since the pre-registration inspection in November 2021, the proprietor has opened a second site on the outskirts of Newton Abbot.
- Currently, there are 26 pupils on roll. This is more than the maximum number of pupils on roll that they are registered to admit.

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 meets 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the director.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, geography, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the lead teacher, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, talked with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, in his capacity as the designated safeguarding lead, the proprietor's human resources lead, and a director to evaluate the school's safeguarding procedures and to check safeguarding records, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors conducted a range of activities to confirm whether the independent school standards were met in full. Activities included consideration of the site and premises, scrutinising the information the school provides to parents, including the complaints policy, and records and considering how well leaders ensure that pupils' health, safety and welfare are protected.
- Inspectors considered responses to the staff survey, emails and correspondence from parents and considered the free-text responses from Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

The school's proposed change to its premises and the maximum number of pupils

- The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, inspectors checked whether the school meets the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.
- The outcome of this part of the inspection is:
 - **The school meets the independent school standards relevant to the material change.**
 - **The material change has already been implemented.**
- The proprietor requested to increase pupil numbers from 24 to 40. They have acquired additional premises which have adequate space and facilities for the increase in pupil numbers.
- The additional premises are well-maintained and have sufficient resources for teaching the school's intended curriculum. Specialist facilities for the teaching of science and design and technology to GCSE will be available. Leaders have ensured that the school's policies have been implemented at this site.

Information about the material change inspection

- This material change inspection was commissioned by the DfE at the proprietor's request. The proprietor wishes to increase the maximum number of pupils by 16. In doing so, the proprietor has acquired additional premises.
- Inspectors were asked to consider the suitability of additional premises and the policies and implementation of them.
- There is no change to the nature of special educational needs that the school will cater for.
- The material change has already been implemented.

- This is the first material change inspection in respect of this particular change that the school has applied to make.
- The lead inspector reviewed policies and procedures. He toured the additional premises and observed the policies and procedures being implemented to check compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Iain Freeland, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Tracy Hannon

Ofsted Inspector

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