

North Bridge Enterprise College

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

Inspection date

18 October 2022

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

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i)

- At the previous full standard inspection, the parts in this standard were not met. This was because the curriculum was weak and, in some subjects, it was too narrow. For example, the curriculum in subjects such as English and mathematics focused too much on preparation for GCSE examinations.
- Since the last inspection, leaders and staff have worked together to develop the curriculum. The revised action plan outlines in detail the steps that leaders intend to take to strengthen the curriculum. These steps show that leaders have considered how they will train staff to teach the revised curriculum, as well as evaluate the impact of any changes.
- Evidence from this inspection suggests leaders have implemented proposed actions well, and within the timescales outlined in the revised action plan.
- There is a curriculum policy in place, which clearly sets out the overarching aims of the curriculum. Aims include developing pupils' expertise in communication, re-engaging pupils through vocational learning and promoting a love of learning. These aims inform the content of the curriculum. For example, a range of vocational courses are now offered off site.
- Subject curriculum plans are detailed and show how pupils will build up their knowledge and skills progressively over time. For example, mathematics plans show how pupils will apply their knowledge in solving problems.
- There is extra information attached to each subject-specific plan, explaining how the plan can be adapted to meet pupils' individual needs. For instance, for some pupils, adaptations include revisiting content several times.
- These independent school standards (the standard) are now met.

Paragraph 2(2)(b), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- At the time of the last inspection, inspectors found that leaders had not established an

effective strategy to support pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. In addition, the curriculum did not enable pupils to gain knowledge of economics which would assist them in preparation for adulthood.

- Leaders have strengthened the curriculum in a number of curriculum areas. However, some improvements are not embedded. In addition, in some curriculum areas, such as communication and language, developments need refining.
- The content of the curriculum across a number of subjects becomes progressively more complex over time. However, further refinements are required to ensure that pupils read, write and use spoken language well.
- There was evidence in pupils' workbooks of the emphasis that teachers and leaders have placed on reading. For example, in English, pupils now read and discuss short texts.
- The curriculum does not yet enable pupils to gain the knowledge needed to fully comprehend what they read. This includes knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and the world around them. Weaknesses in these aspects are also having a negative effect on the quality of pupils' writing.
- The school has introduced a new programme for teaching phonics which is suitable for older pupils who struggle with their reading. Some staff are now confident about teaching pupils how to match sounds to letters. Within the phonics programme, more focus needs to be placed on developing pupils' fluency.
- Phonics is used to support pupils with reading in English lessons. However, there is not yet a consistent approach to supporting pupils in reading across subjects.
- There have been some improvements to the curriculum in citizenship. Now pupils are taught about managing their finances, government institutions and their civic responsibilities. They have the chance to discuss current affairs.
- These standards remain unmet.

Paragraph 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(h)

- At the time of the last inspection, teaching did 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.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers have developed their practice. However, improvements in the quality of teaching are not consistent.
- Improvements in teaching and the curriculum mean that pupils are gaining more new knowledge than they did before. Teachers take time to explain complex ideas and provide pupils with additional information in order to complete tasks.
- Teachers know what aspects of the subject individual pupils struggle with and how to help them. They provide pupils with one-to-one additional guidance and feedback on how to improve.
- Teaching does not foster pupils' self-motivation and their ability to think and learn for themselves well enough.
- Teachers ask pupils thought-provoking questions but do not always ensure that pupils have the vocabulary knowledge they need to understand and answer these questions.
- Teachers have developed their subject knowledge through attending subject-specific

training, some of which is online. They use this training to select interesting topics to explore in class.

- Teachers do not always take enough account of the prior knowledge that pupils will need to make sense of the topic that they are teaching. This means that pupils cannot grasp the explanations teachers give them about what they are learning.
- These standards remain unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a)

- At the time of the last inspection, safeguarding was judged to be ineffective overall. This was because pupils' behaviour towards each other was aggressive, leading to pupils and staff being unsafe, staff did not understand the policy for when a pupil absconded well enough and there were inconsistencies in the way in which staff recorded who was in the building.
- Leaders have successfully improved these aspects of safeguarding.
- Improvements in the way that staff manage behaviour mean that the number of incidents when pupils abscond from school have declined. Leaders have put new procedures in place for when pupils abscond. Staff make sure that any pupils who abscond from school are supervised by staff. Staff accompany pupils who leave the building without permission so that they can keep a check on their safety.
- Leaders keep a very close watch on pupils who do not attend. They have introduced home visits to targeted pupils on the first day of absence to check on their well-being and safety. There has been a reduction in absence levels, including persistent absences. There has also been a reduction in the number of pupils on part-time timetables.
- Staff have received training in how to manage pupils when they are in crisis. They are using these new methods to support pupils when they cannot manage their own emotions, especially feelings of anxiety and frustration. The number of incidents in which pupils show aggression towards each other, and staff, has declined.
- This standard is now met

Paragraph 9, 9(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, staff did not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Leaders' expectations for managing pupils' behaviour were unclear.
- Following training on managing behaviour, leaders and staff have introduced new approaches to deal with pupils' behaviour when they are in class. New approaches include a system of sanctions known as strikes, as well as weekly rewards. Some pupils are responding well to these new approaches. However, others are not. There are some inconsistencies in the way that staff use sanctions and rewards.
- Evidence from discussions with pupils during the inspection suggests that behaviour has improved but improvements are not consistent. Some pupils' behaviour prevents others from learning.
- This standard remains unmet.

Paragraph 12

- At the time of the last inspection, fire extinguishers were 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 meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Fire extinguishers are on display in a number of classrooms and the main reception area. Records show that the school carries out fire safety checks on a regular basis.
- This standard is now met.

Paragraph 15

- At the time of the last inspection, there were errors on the school's admissions register. In addition, there were inconsistencies in the way in which staff recorded who was in the building.
- Leaders have improved the admissions register so that it details when changes to the admissions register are made and by whom. It is now compliant with statutory regulations.
- There are new tighter procedures in place for registration. Class tutors now register attendance, rather than the attendance officer. This means that pupils who arrive late are included on the attendance register. The attendance register is now accurate.
- Improvements in the system for recording attendance means that staff can say with greater certainty who is on site.
- This standard is now met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)(c)

- The school has an up-to-date safeguarding policy on the website. The safeguarding policy refers to the latest guidance from the government.
- The school has made sure that the policy is bespoke to the school's context. For example, there are detailed sections about criminal exploitation.
- This standard continues to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- At the time of the last inspection, the proprietor body and members of the governing body did not recognise the extent of the weaknesses in the school. There was a lack of urgency in addressing weaknesses.
- The proprietor body has carried out several audits and checks following the previous inspection. These checks have been suitably rigorous.
- Leaders know that despite some improvements there is more to do. For example, leaders need to make sure that new approaches to managing behaviour are used consistently and improvements in teaching are embedded. There are still some unmet standards in these areas.

- Leaders have successfully improved the aspects of safeguarding outlined above. The proprietor body has kept close tabs on the safeguarding developments that leaders have implemented. Safeguarding information is scrutinised by the proprietor body on a regular basis.
- Leaders place a strong focus on pupils' well-being. For instance, they analyse attendance data on a weekly basis so that pupils whose attendance has started to decline are identified as early as possible. The newly formed attendance team monitors the well-being of pupils who do not attend regularly, through home visits and telephone calls.
- These standards 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. 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	140816
DfE registration number	371/6001
Inspection number	10248029

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 special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	14 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Keys Group
Chair	Nicola Kelly
Headteacher	Emma White
Annual fees (day pupils)	£23,790 to £45,270
Telephone number	01302367005
Website	https://education.keys-group.co.uk/school/north-bridge-enterprise-college
Email address	emmawhite@keys-group.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	8 to 10 March 2022

Information about this school

- North Bridge Enterprise College is a school that caters for pupils aged 14 to 16 years with social, emotional and mental health needs. At the time of the inspection, no pupils had an education, health and care plan.
- At its previous full standard inspection in March 2022, the school was judged to be inadequate overall.

- The school uses six unregistered providers of alternative provision, Cirque Skills Pathway CIC, Enhancement Training and Developing Futures, Isle Study Centre LTD, Future Pathways CIC, The Unity Project (South Yorkshire) CIC and Flying Futures CIC.
- The school's age range is incorrectly listed on the government's website, 'Get information about schools'. The school caters for pupils aged 14 to 16 years old.

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 carried out at no notice over one day.
- The inspector met the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the attendance officer. The inspector held meetings with three small groups of pupils, made a telephone call to a company that provides alternative provision for four pupils at the school, met teachers and met the chair of the school's governing body who is employed by Keys Group.
- The inspector visited classes and scrutinised curriculum plans, policies and pupils' work. The inspector reviewed the revised action plan, sent to the Department of Education in August 2022.
- The inspector scrutinised records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance and a number of policies.

Inspection team

Sarah Hubbard, lead inspector

His 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;
- 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;
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 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(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 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.

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 school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 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.
- 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(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 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 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.

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)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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