

Inspection of West Lodge School

23-25 Waterloo Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2NY

Inspection dates: 29 November to 1 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at West Lodge School do not benefit from a well-planned curriculum. They are limited by low expectations of what they can learn. As a result, they do not achieve as well as they should.

The school site does not support a positive experience for pupils. The space is cramped. Because of this, staff work in the same rooms that pupils are learning in. Pupils can be distracted by hearing noise through the walls. The toilets are too small and not fit for purpose. Pupils have nowhere to change or shower for physical education. This does not help them to be happy at school or to be ready to learn.

Before starting here, pupils experienced disruption to their education. Consequently, some of their behaviour is very unsettled. However, pupils learn strategies to calm down and self-regulate. They have supportive relationships with staff. Pupils get regular individual help with their well-being. Therefore, they feel safe.

Pupils do not have a positive view of life in school. While they say they do not experience much bullying, they do not enjoy being around some of their peers. They typically learn and socialise separately. This does not create a culture of respect or friendship.

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

Leaders have not put in place a coherent and well-designed curriculum. Leaders aim to provide bespoke learning to support pupils' individual needs. However, they do not plan this effectively. What pupils are taught does not link to their prior learning. In a few areas, such as science and mathematics, pupils build up a body of knowledge. But in most cases, pupils experience a disconnected jumble of learning activities. For example, staff read with them, but the different reading activities are not connected. This does not help their motivation. Too often, pupils do not see the point of what they are learning. As a result, the quality of much of their work is poor.

Leaders have struggled to recruit teachers. The teachers currently in school have appropriate subject knowledge. However, many of them are new or supply teachers who do not get enough guidance from leaders on planning learning. Teachers are not clear about what content to assess. They do too much of the work for the pupils and do not correct misconceptions well. This means that pupils do not develop knowledge that they can apply in tasks. The fragmented nature of the curriculum does not prepare them for their next stage of learning.

Leaders have not implemented an effective behaviour policy. Staff support pupils well on an individual basis. For instance, staff help pupils understand what triggers lead to poor choices of conduct. Staff create a calm environment. At times, pupils are polite and show positive learning behaviours. While this is the case, leaders have not made the ethos and expectations they wish everyone to understand clear

enough. As a result, pupils do not improve their behaviour as much as they could.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn what they need to be ready for life in modern Britain. The curriculum teaches pupils about life skills, such as cooking. Pupils also show an understanding of key issues such as accepting those with different identities. However, like much of the curriculum, the delivery of this is somewhat disjointed.

Leaders do not provide reliable, effective careers education. They ensure pupils receive information about options, such as by attending open evenings at local colleges. Leaders also talk regularly to pupils about what they want to do in the future. However, this does not happen in a planned way. Pupils do not receive objective careers guidance. Therefore, they do not have the understanding they need when they make choices for their next stage of learning or training.

The proprietor and leaders do not have a rigorous strategy towards ensuring the independent school standards are met. They do not know the standards well enough. There is no policy for relationships and sex education and health education. The medical room is being used as a store cupboard. There is no admissions register. The website lacks the required information for parents about exclusions or provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The proprietor is reflective and knows the provision must improve. The newly appointed board of governors is beginning to monitor leaders' work effectively. The proprietor has increased leadership capacity and engaged outside expertise to address weaknesses. In areas such as safeguarding and governance, this has led to improvements. The proprietor plans to move to a site better equipped to meet the needs of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school provides a safe 'personal' place for very vulnerable pupils. Staff get regular safeguarding training. They know how to spot the potential signs of abuse. Staff understand how to report concerns.

Leaders act promptly when there are safeguarding concerns. They liaise with agencies when they should. Leaders have rigorous health and safety processes and use risk assessment regularly to keep pupils safe. Leaders make the required recruitment checks on new and supply staff.

Pupils learn how to be safe. They get taught about online safety. They learn about healthy relationships, including important issues like consent.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have not put in place a coherent, well-sequenced curriculum. Instead, teachers develop units of work in an ad hoc way, without enough guidance. Because of this, pupils experience a disconnected jumble of learning experiences, have weak knowledge and do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders need to identify and sequence the key knowledge to be taught and assessed in all subjects so that pupils build up a secure body of knowledge that they can draw upon and apply.
- Leaders have not established clear and shared expectations for behaviour. As a result, although staff help pupils improve their behaviour, this work does not have the impact it might. Leaders need to put in place an effective behaviour policy that all staff and pupils understand and follow.
- Pupils do not receive well-planned careers education. They do not get objective careers advice and guidance. Consequently, pupils at all stages do not have the knowledge they need to prepare well for their next steps. Leaders need to ensure they put in place a well-designed plan for careers education and guidance.
- The proprietor has not had a rigorous approach to ensuring the independent school standards are met. Leaders do not know the standards well enough. As a result, features of the site and the provision do not support pupils' education well enough. The proprietor should ensure that procedures are in place to systematically check that the standards are met and that all those with delegated responsibility understand the standards and their roles fully.

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	136434
DfE registration number	935/6229
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10230314
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	4
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Able Health Care Ltd (with a single proprietor, Aruna Kukadia)
Chair	Nish Kukadia
Headteacher	Nicki Jennings
Annual fees (day pupils)	£60,000
Telephone number	01473233350
Website	www.able-healthcare.co.uk/west-lodge-school
Email address	nicki@westlodgesch.com
Date of previous inspection	14 to 16 May 2019

Information about this school

- West Lodge is an independent special school for boys and girls aged between 11 and 16 years. The school provides education for up to six pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- At the time of the previous inspection, the school was called Liberty Lodge. It was granted a change of name to West Lodge School in June 2021.
- The headteacher was appointed in May 2021.
- The school is owned and run by a single person under the proprietorship of Able Health Care Limited.
- In February 2022, the proprietor appointed a local governing board, with a chair of governors, to provide governance for the school.
- The school premises consist of two basement rooms in a large Victorian house in an urban location. Pupils have some lessons at a second location, Eastern Angles, Gatacre Road, Ipswich, 2LQ.
- All current pupils on roll have education, health and care plans. They are all funded by local authorities.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- At the previous inspection, all the independent school standards were met.

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 and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the proprietor and chair of governors, other leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, history, design and technology and personal, social, health and economic 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 also evaluated the curriculum in some other subjects, notably

mathematics and science.

- As part of the evaluation of safeguarding, inspectors checked the school's single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, considered its safeguarding policy and procedures and spoke to leaders, staff, parents and pupils.
- There was a very small number of responses submitted by parents to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to either the staff survey or the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Charlie Fordham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Joanna Pedlow

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)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that-
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
 - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools,
 - 2A(1)(e) makes and keeps up to date a separate written statement of its policy with regard to the provision of education as required by each of paragraphs (a) and (b),
 - 2A(1)(f) consults parents of registered pupils at the school before making or revising a statement under sub-paragraph (e), and
 - 2A(1)(g) publishes a copy of the statement on a website and provides a copy of the statement free of charge to anyone who asks for one.
- 2A(2) Arrangements made by the proprietor for the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(b) must ensure that where a pupil's parent requests that the pupil is wholly or partly excused from sex education provided as part of relationships and sex

education, the pupil is so excused until the request is withdrawn, unless or to the extent that the head teacher considers that the pupil should not be so excused.

- 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(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
 - 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;
 - 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(a) a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour;
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.
- 13 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy.
- 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 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 23(1)(b) separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged 8 years or over are provided except where the toilet facility is provided in a room that can be secured from the inside and that is intended for use by one pupil at a time; and
 - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.
- 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).
- 26 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each room or other space are suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein.

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)(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate;
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 32(3)(a) particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions;
 - 32(3)(b) particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language.

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