

Inspection of Want2Achieve The Academy

Unit 1, Trent Walk, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 3HE

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have experienced a number of previous placements prior to starting at Want2Achieve. They often arrive disillusioned about education. Most staff work hard to build strong, trusting relationships. These relationships support pupils' social and emotional development. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy school because teachers 'understand them'. Staff resolve any issues if bullying occurs.

Leaders set high expectations for behaviour. However, these are not applied consistently by all staff. This results in disruptive behaviour and persistent use of unacceptable language. This has a negative impact on the calm running of the school and other pupils' learning.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of English and mathematics. However, pupils' individual needs are not considered well enough. Leaders have not thought about important content to teach and when to teach it. Therefore, pupils experience disconnected learning that does not build on what they already know. As a result, pupils do not achieve well.

Broader aspects of the curriculum are not taught in sufficient depth. This means that pupils' knowledge of a wider range of subjects is limited.

The proprietors have not ensured compliance with a number of independent school standards, including those relating to fire safety.

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

When pupils start at the school, they have significant gaps in their learning. This is often because they have not attended school for some considerable time. Leaders focus on the teaching of basic skills in English, mathematics and information communication technology (ICT), recognising that these are important core skills. These areas of the curriculum, however, are not designed and delivered well. Teachers have not considered the important content that pupils need to learn, and when they need to learn it. As a result, pupils experience a series of disconnected lessons. This results in learning that does not build on what they already know. The curriculum is not fit for purpose as it does not enable all pupils to learn more and remember more. Pupils' engagement in learning is poor.

Learning is based on pupils' interests and does not contribute towards a specific educational outcome. In English, for example, lessons were based around designing car adverts and football teams. The intended learning was not clear resulting in off-task conversations related to the cars and football, as opposed to clear learning outcomes. In mathematics, teachers do not use assessment effectively. Pupils complete a series of practice papers to prepare for examinations. These are often varied levels and are not used to inform future learning.

Pupils do not study a broad enough curriculum. There are limited opportunities for pupils, particularly those in key stage 3, to engage in scientific experiences and to learn about the wider world. This is essential as these pupils have missed long periods of learning prior to joining the school. Leaders have not given these aspects of the curriculum high enough priority.

A number of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and also have an education, health, and care (EHC) plan. While some teachers are familiar with the content of these plans, this is not the case for all. Strategies to support pupils' learning needs are not consistently applied. This means that learning does not take into account pupils' needs and aptitudes. Consequently, pupils with SEND do not achieve well.

Pupils are not sufficiently prepared for their next steps. A small number of pupils have accessed careers advice and guidance, but this is not in place for all. Pupils are not provided with the information they need to make informed future choices.

The curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) teaches pupils about healthy relationships, mental health, nutrition and budgeting. Pupils learn about fitness and engage in a range of sports. Pupils also learn about different religions, cultures and festivals, including Ramadan and Chinese New Year. These sessions are enhanced with one-to-one mentoring sessions that focus on specific aspects relevant to individuals. Pupils value these sessions and speak highly of their positive relationships with staff.

Leaders analyse behaviour incidents and produce detailed support plans for pupils. Strategies to manage behaviours, however, are not consistently followed by all staff. A small number of pupils display negative attitudes towards their learning, staff, peers and the environment. Pupils use derogatory language, and this is not always challenged effectively. This results in persistent, low-level disruption that impacts on the learning of others and affects the calm running of the school.

The proprietors, one of whom is the headteacher, are aware of their statutory duties. They have implemented the appropriate guidance on relationships and sex education (RSE). A detailed accessibility plan also meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Proprietors have not, however, ensured that the school complies with the independent school standards consistently. These standards relate directly to pupils' welfare, health and safety. The building, in its current state of repair, does not comply with fire regulations. Leaders took decisive action during the inspection to address this. They also have detailed action plans that identify the right areas for improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding policy is written with due regard to current guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This policy is publicly available.

Leaders and staff know pupils well. They are quick to spot when something is wrong. Staff are trained to recognise the signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. They take swift, appropriate action, and inform relevant professionals. Records are well maintained. Pupils are taught how to keep safe online and in the community.

At the time of the inspection, the school did not comply with the independent school standards relating to fire safety because fire doors had been temporarily removed while awaiting replacements.

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

- The curriculum is not fit for purpose. Pupils access a limited range of experiences that do not prepare them well enough for their next steps. Leaders need to revise the curriculum breadth, to enable pupils to access a full range of learning in line with the independent school standards.
- Teachers have not thought well enough about what pupils need to learn and when they need to learn it. This means that pupils experience a series of disconnected lessons that do not build on what they know and can already do. Leaders need to review the curriculum to make sure that learning is well sequenced so that it builds knowledge over time.
- Pupils with SEND do not achieve well. This is because staff do not take into account their individual needs. Leaders need to ensure that all staff are sufficiently trained in appropriate strategies to support pupils to successfully access their learning.
- A number of independent school standards are unmet. These standards impact directly on pupils' welfare, health and safety and their learning. The proprietor has not taken appropriate action to ensure that the standards are consistently met. Those responsible need to ensure that they monitor all aspects of the school's work. Proprietors need to make sure there are mechanisms in place to check compliance with regulations, including ensuring compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

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School details

Unique reference number	148829
DfE registration number	861/6031
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10254701
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Number of part-time pupils	4
Proprietor	Daniel Rochester and Sharon Murphy
Headteacher	Sharon Murphy
Annual fees (day pupils)	£29,250 to £43,875
Telephone number	01782 205479
Website	www.want2achieve.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@want2achieve.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Want2Achieve The Academy is a small independent day school, situated in Stoke on Trent. The school is housed in former industrial premises and offers places to pupils aged 11 to 18 who have social and emotional difficulties. A number of pupils have EHC plans. The school also occupies learning space at Port Vale Football Club.
- Pupils are placed at the school by local authorities, including Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire.
- The school was registered by the Department for Education in December 2021. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the proprietors, one of whom is also the headteacher.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, PSHE and ICT. 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 looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads and examined the school's record keeping. Inspectors spoke with other staff about safeguarding processes. The school's single central record of checks made on staff was also reviewed.
- A number of key documents were also checked, including policies relating to safeguarding, curriculum, behaviour, complaints, and health and safety. The lead inspector also had a tour of the school premises to check for compliance with part 5 of the independent school standards.
- Inspectors visited the alternative provider and the additional premises used by the school.

Inspection team

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Janet Satchwell 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; and
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
 - 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;
 - 2(2)(g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;
 - 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

- 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; and
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

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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