

# Progress Schools - Wolverhampton

The Way Youth Zone, School Street, Wolverhampton WV3 0NR

**Inspection date**

17 March 2023

**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), 2(2), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(h), 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(g)*

- At the time of the previous inspection in July 2022, leaders had not ensured the school's curriculum was well planned and sequenced, particularly in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils did not build secure knowledge in all the subjects they studied. Nor did they sufficiently develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Leaders proposed to review the curriculum and re-write the school's curriculum policy in the school's action plan. They intended to ensure that schemes of work fully set out the subject-specific information that pupils were expected to know and remember. Leaders also planned to introduce a new approach to teaching pupils how to read.
- Leaders have begun work to develop and enhance the school's curriculum. However, this work is still in the early stages. Leaders have ensured that a written curriculum policy is in place and amended the school's timetable to place greater emphasis on teaching English and mathematics. They are aware that there is more to do to improve the quality of education provided by the school.
- Most pupils are currently in Year 11. Staff have identified gaps in these pupils' knowledge, in subjects such as English and mathematics. Teachers teach lessons within broad units of study to address these gaps. For example, in mathematics, pupils have recently studied methods and strategies for long division. However, leaders have not yet ensured that schemes of work are suitably specific. They have not identified the small-step component knowledge that pupils are expected to learn in all subjects over time. Nor have they considered the order in which this small-step content is taught. This limits pupils' potential to make progress through the curriculum.
- Adults use a range of methods to find out what pupils know and remember. They ask useful questions in lessons and review pupils' work, along with information from quizzes and tests, to inform their decisions when planning what to teach. In addition, staff make checks on pupils' attitudes toward, and engagement in, learning. However, as leaders have not yet identified the exact knowledge that pupils are expected to know and

remember in all subjects, staff cannot make precise checks on how securely pupils learn this component knowledge.

- Leaders have recently introduced a commercial scheme to teach pupils how to develop their reading ability. This scheme is in the early stages of being implemented and has not yet fully impacted on pupils' reading as leaders intend. As part of this work, staff are focused on promoting a love of reading. They now use stories and texts as a regular feature of English lessons. In addition, leaders intend to use a phonics approach if pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read join the school.
- These standards are not met.

#### *Paragraph 2(2)(i)*

- At the time of last inspection, pupils did not benefit from meaningful opportunities that prepared them well enough for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have carefully considered ways to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. They have revised the school's approach to personal, social, health and economic education, and introduced projects and sessions to enrich this part of the curriculum. For instance, all pupils now take part in daily 'current affairs' lessons. Staff provide pupils with opportunities to discuss and debate their opinions and beliefs as part of these lessons. In addition, leaders have introduced a number of programmes, some organised by external agencies, to develop pupils' character and independence.
- This standard is now met.

#### *Paragraph 3(d), 3(e), 3(f)*

- At the time of the last inspection, teachers did not have the subject knowledge required to teach the school's curriculum well. Leaders had not placed enough emphasis on developing staff expertise.
- The proprietor reviewed staff's expertise and completed a 'needs analysis' after the previous inspection. This provided them with useful information to help them plan a programme of training for staff. Two new teachers are now employed at the school. These adults are experienced and understand how to meet the needs of pupils who attend the school. Staff build positive relationships with pupils and work effectively to engage pupils in learning.
- Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They provide clear explanations and demonstrations to help pupils understand new concepts and information.
- These standards are now met.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b) and Part 6 (32)(1)(c)*

- Leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy pays due regard to the Secretary of State's most recent statutory guidance. The policy is published on the school's website.

- Staff understand their role in keeping pupils safe. They know pupils well and are alert to spot any potential concerns. They understand how to report these concerns and do so quickly.
- Leaders work well with the group's safeguarding manager to keep accurate records, review safeguarding incidents and involve external agencies when necessary. The proprietor maintains oversight of these arrangements and promotes a positive safeguarding culture at the school.
- These standards continue to be met.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)*

- At the time of the previous inspection in July 2022, the proprietor had not ensured that all of the independent school standards were met. Proprietors had not held leaders to account for the quality of education. There were weaknesses in the design of the school's curriculum and in staff's subject knowledge. In addition, leaders had not done enough to ensure that pupils were well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders put an action plan in place to tackle these weaknesses.
- The proprietor has made changes in the structure of the school's leadership team since the previous inspection. These changes have strengthened leadership capacity. A new director of education, headteacher and quality manager are now in post. These leaders have considerable experience in educational leadership. Leaders now have a clear vision for the school, although this vision is not yet fully realised.
- Leaders have taken steps to address some of the unmet standards identified at the last inspection. They have employed two new teachers and supported these teachers to develop their expertise. They have also made positive changes to better prepare pupils for experiences of life in British society. However, leaders' work to improve the quality of education is not complete. Leaders have not yet ensured that the curriculum is well planned and sequenced in all subjects taught at the school.
- The previously unmet standards in this part remain unmet.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an accessibility plan that fulfils the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **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, as set out in the annex of this report. 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	148643
DfE registration number	336/6008
Inspection number	10278878

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	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	7
Proprietor	Progress Schools limited
Chair	Charlotte Barton
Headteacher	Mr Thomas Green
Annual fees (day pupils)	£12,370 to £30,552
Telephone number	01902 229 923
Website	<a href="http://www.progress-schools.co.uk">www.progress-schools.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:wolverhamptonps@progress-schools.co.uk">wolverhamptonps@progress-schools.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	12 to 14 July 2022

## Information about this school

- The school's first standard inspection took place in July 2022.
- Pupils attending the school have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for up to 30 pupils aged 11 to 16 years.
- A new headteacher started at the school in January 2023. The headteacher is supported by a director of education who was also employed in January 2023.
- Two new teachers have started at the school since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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 inspector held discussions with school leaders and the chair of the proprietorial board to review the progress made against the previously un-met independent school standards.
- The inspector spoke to staff who teach the curriculum and held some informal conversations with pupils to find out about their experiences at the school.
- The inspector reviewed curriculum policies and schemes of work. He also visited lessons and reviewed a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector held a meeting with leaders responsible for safeguarding. He also reviewed the single central record of checks made about the suitability of adults.
- This inspection was conducted without notice.

## Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, 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; 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)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
  - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
- 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(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
  - 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;

#### **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**

*Standards that were not met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to be met at this inspection*

### **Part 1. Quality of education provide**

- 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
  
- 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(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;



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