

Newbury Independent School

Unit 6, Cuckoo Wharf, 435 Lichfield Road, Aston, Birmingham, West Midlands B6 7SS

Inspection date

29 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

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

- The previous inspection in July 2022, identified weaknesses in the curriculum. Pupils' learning was often disjointed in individual subjects and across the curriculum. The curriculum was not sufficiently well planned and coherently constructed to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Leaders have developed schemes of work in some subject areas that now consider pupils' individual needs. Possible adaptations to the curriculum are now outlined in the schemes of work. In subjects such as science, leaders have thought carefully about how to enable pupils to understand complex concepts by relating them to everyday experiences. So, for example, pupils learn about the states of matter through practical cooking experiences.
- Where the curriculum has been planned to meet pupils' needs, is coherently sequenced, and builds from their starting points, pupils make progress. There were positive examples of this for pupils at the early stages of reading and in mathematics.
- However, the curriculum design in other subjects does not consider what is most important for pupils to learn. There are still examples of a disjointed approach to learning where it does not build coherently from one lesson to the next.
- These standards are not met.

Paragraph 2 2(2)(a)

- Some areas of the curriculum on offer, which were in place at the time of the last inspection, are no longer being taught. Pupils are not currently accessing their full entitlement.
- This standard is no longer met.

Paragraph 2 (2)(h)

- At the time of the previous inspection, pupils were not taught well and did not make strong progress in their learning.

- In subjects where the curriculum has been planned to meet pupils' needs, is coherently sequenced and builds from their starting points, pupils make progress. There were positive examples seen in both early reading and mathematics.
- This standard is now met.

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

- At the time of the previous inspection, teaching did not enable all pupils to make good progress according to their ability. Staff did not use assessment well enough to inform their teaching and the prior attainment of pupils was not always considered carefully. Not all staff demonstrated a good subject knowledge of the subject curriculum they were teaching.
- Leaders have ensured that they identify appropriate starting points and pathways based on pupils' assessment. From this information, teachers design their lessons to target specific areas of learning.
- There is now clear evidence of pupils making progress in lessons and over time as the result of the focused and targeted teaching.
- More staff have been employed who have the subject knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum. Training for all staff has been delivered to ensure there is a consistent lesson structure. Lessons are now designed to revisit pupils' prior learning to help pupils remember what they have been previously taught. Staff have also had training on effective questioning. The impact of this was evident in lessons visited.
- Staff use appropriate resources in lessons to support pupils' understanding, and the positive behaviour management strategies used enable pupils to remain engaged in their learning.
- These standards are met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v)

- At the time of the last inspection, the curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education was not well planned and was very new.
- This curriculum has been strengthened and is part of a wider pastoral curriculum which includes regular sessions for pupils with the behaviour and pastoral leader.
- Pupils have the opportunity in these sessions to reflect on their successes and on areas where they could improve. Pupils agree on targets to work towards and the strategies that will be used to help them succeed. This information is shared with all staff who work with the pupils so that expectations are clear, and any consequences are understood from the start. This system helps pupils to take responsibility for their actions and to understand how they can contribute to their community.
- Pupils also experience weekly tutorials that focus on broadening their knowledge and understanding of modern Britain. In these sessions, they explore public institutions and services in England as well as a range of cultures.
- These standards are now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The proprietor has ensured that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place that follow the guidance issued by the secretary of state.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are suitably trained to recognise the signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. Staff know how to report a concern and leaders respond swiftly when issues are raised. Staff work well with other agencies when required to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- These standards are met.

Paragraph 9 9(b)

- At the time of the last inspection, staff did not manage pupils' behaviour as effectively as they could.
- Leaders have reviewed the approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Staff have had training to support them to take a positive approach to managing behaviour. This has led to an increase in the positive behaviour points awarded to pupils and a decrease in negative behaviours.
- Meetings and restorative conversations are supporting pupils to understand more about how to behave and how to manage their emotions. This has also contributed to the reduction in negative behaviours.
- This standard is now 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, it was found that the proprietor did not ensure that all the independent school standards were met.
- The proprietor has taken action to strengthen the leadership at the school. The proprietor has also deployed the services of an external consultant to quality assure the work of leaders.
- Leaders have created an appropriate action plan to address the areas of weakness identified. Many actions taken have led to previously unmet standards now being met.
- There are, however, some standards that are still not met. Time is needed to refine schemes of work and for pupils to be able to make progress in all of the subjects they are entitled to be studying.
- These standards are not met

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	143174
DfE registration number	330/6031
Inspection number	10269577

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 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	13
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	5
Number of part-time pupils	5
Proprietor	Robin Smith and Anthony Walters
Chair	Pauline Young
Headteacher	Antonique Watson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£14,625 – £54,752
Telephone number	01217 944039
Website	www.newburyschool.co.uk
Email address	awatson@newburyschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	26 April to 3 May 2022

Information about this school

- Newbury is an independent day school providing education for pupils between the ages of 11 and 19 years old. It opened in October 2016 and is registered by the Department for Education to accommodate up to 60 pupils.
- Since 2020, the school has also operated from a second site located at Unit 4, Cuckoo Wharf, 435 Lichfield Road, Aston, Birmingham, West Midlands B6 7SS. This site has been in use since 2020.
- The current principal was formerly the headteacher and was appointed in November 2021. There is a newly appointed headteacher who has been at the school for three weeks. The deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2022. The behaviour and pastoral support leader was appointed in October 2022.
- Pupils attending the school have a range of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties. Most pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Most have been excluded or were at high risk of being excluded from their previous school.
- The school's last full standard inspection was from 26 April to 3 May 2022.

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.
- At the school's last inspection, which was a full standard inspection, the school did not comply with all the independent school standards. That inspection took place on 26 and 27 April and 3 May 2022.
- The Department for Education required the school to prepare an action plan.
- This action plan was evaluated by Ofsted on 14 November 2022.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection.
- Leaders were not given any prior notice of this progress monitoring inspection. The inspector arrived at the start of the school day.
- The inspector met with the principal, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the behaviour and pastoral leader and the English leader. She also met with the proprietor.
- The inspector examined several policies, schemes of work and plans, as well as visiting lessons, speaking to pupils, and looking at work in pupils' books.
- The inspector held meetings with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss safeguarding procedures and look at relevant documentation. She also spoke to staff about safeguarding.
- The inspector examined the school's most recent action plan and considered evidence of progress against planned actions. The inspector discussed the progress made against the previously unmet independent school standards with the principal and the proprietor.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, 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.

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.

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

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 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.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- 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(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 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor–
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which–
 - 5(b)(i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
 - 5(b)(iii) encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely
 - 5(b)(iv) enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
 - 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.

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.

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