

# Inspection of A.R.T.S. Education

167A Ormskirk Road, Rainford, St Helens WA11 8HR

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Inspection dates: 24 to 26 January 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

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?**

All pupils at A.R.T.S. Education have experienced disruption to their education prior to attending the school. When these pupils join the school, they do not catch up quickly with their learning across different curriculum subjects. This is because leaders have not provided pupils with a well-designed curriculum. As a result, many pupils have fundamental gaps in their knowledge. Pupils' achievement is poor.

Leaders have low expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. Leaders have not ensured that pupils are supported well enough to overcome the difficulties that they experience due to their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Most pupils develop increasingly positive attitudes towards school. However, some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This further exacerbates the gaps in their learning.

Although the majority of pupils behave well most of the time, some pupils find it more difficult to regulate their own behaviour. The behaviour of these pupils sometimes disturbs the learning of their peers.

Pupils feel happy in school most of the time. They value the time that staff take to get to know them well. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. Leaders deal with incidents of bullying thoroughly and effectively.

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

Leaders have not thought enough about the varied educational experiences of pupils prior to joining the school. For example, leaders have not defined the key knowledge that pupils must learn to address the gaps in their learning. They have not clarified what it is that they want pupils to learn in each subject or the order in which this knowledge should be taught. As a result, pupils' learning is ad hoc. At key stage 4, pupils do not learn the breadth and depth of subject content that they need to be successful in their GCSE examinations. This means that pupils are not sufficiently well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

The leaders' unclear curriculum thinking means that teachers do not know what content to teach and when this should happen. This hinders teachers' delivery of the curriculum. For example, some teachers design inappropriate learning activities that pupils are unable to access because they do not have the necessary prior knowledge. Other teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough. Pupils fall further behind.

Leaders provide staff with useful information about each pupil's SEND. Leaders also suggest strategies for staff to support pupils to overcome the barriers to their learning. However, leaders do not ensure that teachers use this information consistently well to help pupils with SEND to learn as well as they should.

Typically, most pupils are cooperative in lessons and try hard to complete their classwork, even when they find it difficult. However, leaders have not ensured that teachers implement clear and consistent routines across the school to manage pupils' behaviour well. As a result, at times, some pupils do not behave appropriately in lessons.

Leaders do not prioritise reading. For instance, there is no reading curriculum in place. Pupils have widely differing reading knowledge. Some pupils are at the early stages of learning to read. Leaders have not ensured that these pupils get the support that they need to catch up quickly. That said, other pupils are fluent and accurate readers. However, leaders do not foster a love of reading in these pupils or support them to access a wide range of texts.

Some pupils spend large chunks of time out of lessons. Other pupils do not attend school at all. Leaders have not taken effective action to address these issues. They do not encourage pupils to stay in lessons, and they have not improved the rates of attendance for pupils who are routinely absent from school.

The school's programme to promote pupils' personal development is in its infancy. Pupils benefit from learning about how people might be different to themselves. They learn how important it is that everyone is treated with respect. However, there is no structured programme for careers education. This means that pupils do not have the information that they need to make an informed choice about their next steps to education, training or employment.

The proprietor and other leaders do not have the skills and knowledge required to lead and manage the school. They have not ensured that all of the independent school standards (the standards) are met and they have not implemented some statutory requirements.

Leaders have not met the standards relating to the quality of education. This is because leaders have not ensured that there is a suitable curriculum in place for each subject. Moreover, leaders have not ensured that staff have the required skills or knowledge to design and deliver a high-quality curriculum.

Leaders have not consulted with parents and carers about the school's policy on relationships and sex education. Furthermore, leaders have not made arrangements to manage any parental requests for their child to be excused from sex education.

Leaders do not ensure that the standards for welfare, health and safety are all met. Some of these unmet standards jeopardise pupils' and staff's welfare. Leaders do not have effective systems to identify and manage potential health and safety risks. For example, inspectors found a number of unsafe practices in the kitchen area used by pupils, including the unsafe use of electrical appliances.

Leaders do not carry out appropriate pre-employment checks to reassure themselves that applicants have the required skills and knowledge for the role that they are applying for.

Leaders do not provide the required facilities to meet the standards for the school's premises and accommodation. There is no suitable medical room for pupils to use when they feel unwell. Pupils are not able to access showers or changing facilities. There is no suitable outside play area.

Leaders have ensured that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Staff feel well supported by leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an up-to-date safeguarding policy on the school's website that sets out the school's approach to keeping pupils safe. Leaders ensure that staff are familiar with the most recent statutory guidance.

Staff are aware of the particular vulnerabilities that pupils have as a result of their SEND. Leaders keep in regular contact with those pupils not attending school.

Staff pass on any concerns that they have about pupils to the leaders responsible for safeguarding. Leaders respond to these concerns in a timely manner. This ensures that pupils and their families receive appropriate support.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves and others safe at school and when they are online. Pupils learn about safe relationships and the importance of reporting concerns to trusted adults, including when the behaviour of other pupils causes them to feel worried.

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

- Leaders do not provide an ambitious and well-ordered curriculum. They have not thought carefully enough about the gaps in pupils' prior knowledge or what they want pupils to learn while they are at the school. As a result, pupils do not develop the knowledge that they need to achieve well. Leaders must design a curriculum that addresses the gaps in pupils' knowledge and prepares them well to be successful in their future lives.
- Teachers are not clear enough about what pupils need to learn across a range of subjects, including reading. This prevents teachers from designing learning that enables pupils need to catch up. This means that pupils who already have considerable gaps in their knowledge fall further behind. Leaders should make sure that staff are clear about what pupils need to learn and that staff are supported to deliver the curriculum well.

- Some pupils struggle to manage their own behaviour in lessons. This disrupts their own learning and that of their peers. Leaders must make sure that staff implement routines consistently well so that pupils behave as well as they should.
- Leaders do not provide a structured programme of careers education. This means that pupils are not able to make informed decisions about their next steps. Leaders must provide an ambitious and well-ordered careers education programme to support pupils in deciding on their next steps to education, training or employment.
- Many pupils' rates of attendance are poor. These pupils fall further behind as a result. Leaders must support all pupils to attend school regularly.
- The proprietor does not have the knowledge and skills appropriate to their role. Some standards and statutory requirements have not been met. The proprietor must ensure that their own knowledge and skills are secure so that the independent school standards are consistently met and that the school complies with statutory requirements.

## **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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 148840   |
| <b>DfE registration number</b>             | 340/6006   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | St Helen's Metropolitan Borough Council                                |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10254711   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Other independent special school                                       |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Independent school   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11 to 16   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 13   |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                          | Annmarie Read  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Annmarie Read  |
| <b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>            | £34,200  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 0151 809636/07749 846945   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.artseducation.co.uk">www.artseducation.co.uk</a>   |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:info@artseducation.co.uk">info@artseducation.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- This is the school's first standard inspection. The school was registered by the Department of Education (DfE) on 23 March 2022.
- The proprietor is also the headteacher.
- The school has moved premises since the pre-registration inspection that took place in January 2022. The school no longer operates from the address that is registered with DfE on Get Information About Schools (GIAS): Huyton with Raby Sea Cadet Unit, The Park, Huyton, Merseyside L36 5SU. The school operates from premises at 167A Ormskirk Road, Rainford, St Helens WA11 8HR. Leaders have notified the DfE about this change.
- The school caters for pupils with a range of SEND. Almost all pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Pupils' primary needs include autistic spectrum disorder and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

## 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 spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. This included: the school's central register of staff and visitors, staff training records, safeguarding records and samples of the records kept on individual pupils.
- An inspector carried out a tour of the premises.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation to check compliance with the standards.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in: English, including early reading, mathematics and personal, social and health education. They spoke with the curriculum leaders for these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. Inspectors also considered other subject curriculums.
- An inspector listened to pupils read.

- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. An inspector spoke with some parents on the telephone.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils to gather their views of the school. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Maria McGarry

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)(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)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
  - 2A(1)(f) consults parents of registered pupils at the school before making or revising a statement under sub-paragraph (e), and
- 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(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;

- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

#### **Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
  - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person-
  - 18(2)(c)(iv) where appropriate, the person's qualifications;
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.

#### **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)(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; and
  - 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)
- 29(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable-
  - 29(1)(b) pupils to play outside.

#### **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.

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