

Inspection of IMPACT

Daleacre Campus, Daleacre Drive, Bootle, Liverpool, Merseyside L30 2QQ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school have usually had a history of educational failure. Many of the vulnerable pupils who moved to this school for a 'second chance' have been let down. This situation is starting to change, but it is still very early days. Nevertheless, some pupils enjoy coming to school. They like the small classes and positive relationships they have with some staff.

Over time, leaders' and staff's expectations of pupils' academic and personal achievement have been low. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Although there are some signs of improvement to the quality of education, many pupils do not make up for the considerable gaps in their learning. While most pupils in key stage 4 gain a few relevant qualifications that enable them to move on to further education and training, pupils' outcomes overall are poor.

Pupils feel safe in school. They trust adults to listen to any worries they may have. Leaders and staff deal with any bullying incidents effectively.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school has improved recently. However, some pupils do not conduct themselves consistently well. Other pupils do not regulate their own behaviour as well as they should. A few staff struggle to manage the behaviour of some pupils.

Pupils enjoy the trips and visits to local places of interest that leaders have begun to introduce. Key stage 4 pupils access some careers advice and guidance. These pupils also benefit from work experience opportunities. A few pupils attend the boxing sessions after school. Some have taken part in competitions. Nonetheless, pupils do not experience a coherently designed programme of enrichment opportunities to promote their personal development fully.

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

Since the appointment of new senior leaders and new members of the management committee, some aspects of the school have begun to improve. For example, leaders have taken some positive steps to improve pupils' behaviour. They have also successfully overhauled the arrangements for safeguarding pupils. In addition, leaders have enhanced the opportunities for pupils' wider personal development. Leaders know that the quality of education that pupils receive is not good enough. They are beginning to tackle these weaknesses. However, it is still early days. This means that pupils' achievement remains stubbornly low.

The school's curriculum is not currently fit for purpose. It does not fully meet pupils' needs, aptitudes or interests. While new leaders are beginning to address these issues, the curriculum is limited by the lack of staff expertise. For example, some subjects in the curriculum are determined by what staff can provide rather than

what is in pupils' best interests. The school's curriculum is narrow. Conversely, at key stage 4, most pupils access some suitable alternative provision to supplement the limited school curriculum. However, as a result of the deficiencies in the main curriculum, pupils are not well prepared to move back into their mainstream school or to move on to another school, post-16 education, employment or training. This is because, for some pupils, gaps widen in their learning and development.

Leaders have not fully defined what they want pupils to learn. In key stage 3, teachers decide what should be taught without any reference to what pupils should know and be able to do. Leaders do not capitalise on teachers' subject specialisms in key stage 4. This is because the curriculum is driven by examination specifications rather than ensuring that pupils build up a secure body of knowledge that sets them up well for later learning.

Leaders' systems to assess pupils' starting points when they join the school provide teachers with some useful information. However, this does not help teachers to understand what pupils know and can do. Consequently, most pupils are set the same learning activities as their classmates because teachers are unclear about what knowledge pupils have of curriculum subjects. The deficiencies in the design and delivery of the curriculum also result in weaknesses in teachers' ongoing assessment practice. This means that pupils' gaps in learning, and their misconceptions, go unchecked.

Typically, many pupils struggle to read accurately and fluently when they join the school. To address this issue, new leaders have ensured that they assess all pupils' reading knowledge on entry. Leaders have introduced a catch-up programme for pupils at the early stages of learning to read. However, these sessions are infrequent, and the support is not well matched to what each pupil needs to learn. As a result, several pupils do not catch up quickly enough.

Leaders have not prioritised developing pupils' love of reading. Pupils have few opportunities to read for pleasure. Pupils have limited access to high-quality fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils told inspectors that they do not enjoy reading.

Leadership capacity is strengthening in relation to the quality of education for pupils with SEND. Leaders' systems for identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of pupils with SEND are developing. Recently, leaders have drawn up appropriate support plans which reflect more fully the barriers to learning that pupils with SEND are facing. Nevertheless, the achievement of pupils with SEND is hampered by the poor quality of education that continues to hinder all pupils across the school.

Most pupils have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools. Leaders have successfully written a new behaviour policy. However, staff's implementation of this policy is inconsistent. Some pupils remain overly reliant on adults to support and manage their behaviour. Occasionally, these pupils disrupt the learning of others.

Most pupils have a history of poor school attendance. A significant number of pupils have been out of school for a long time before coming to IMPACT. While the majority of pupils improve their attendance to some degree, some pupils do not improve their attendance to a sufficiently high rate. For example, some pupils who improve their rates of attendance lose the impetus to attend school, and their attendance rate begins to decline once again. Some other pupils are not punctual to lessons or to school.

New leaders have set up a range of activities to enhance pupils' personal development. These have included visiting speakers and trips to local places of interest. Despite this, leaders have not fully formed the personal development offer. This means that there is important learning that is not covered well, such as pupils' spiritual development. Leaders have recently adopted a new curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE). This curriculum includes relationships and sex education. However, some aspects of this curriculum are not being delivered as intended. Pupils do not have a sufficient understanding of some important content, such as the different types of relationships, including same-sex relationships.

At key stage 3, pupils do not receive suitable careers advice and guidance. Sometimes, these pupils do not access important information to help them plan their next steps.

Following a period of turmoil, the school's leadership has begun to stabilise. The new management committee has the relevant experience and expertise to support and challenge school leaders. Other key leaders and staff have been appointed from September 2023. This is as a direct result of the actions that new leaders have taken to improve the quality of education for pupils.

The majority of staff support the new leadership team and the changes that they have put in place. Most staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff have regular safeguarding training. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities well. Staff report and record concerns meticulously. Leaders are alert to the particular risks to individual pupils. Leaders follow up assiduously on any concerns.

Leaders work well with external agencies so that pupils and their families can access the help and support they need.

Leaders' work with local and national groups to provide information to pupils about relevant topics, such as gangs and knife crime.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not currently fit for purpose. Pupils experience a narrow, poorly structured and ill-considered curriculum. Pupils do not achieve well. Leaders should develop an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum that supports pupils to build their knowledge across a range of subjects.
- Leaders have not considered the content that pupils must learn in the different subjects that make up the curriculum. Pupils do not securely build their subject knowledge and skills over time. This hinders how well pupils achieve and limits their options in key stage 4 and in post-16 education. Leaders must determine the important knowledge that pupils should learn and how this should be organised in the different subject curriculums.
- There are weaknesses in the teaching of reading. Some pupils at the early stages of reading struggle to access the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that these pupils get the help and support they need to learn to read accurately and fluently.
- Leaders' assessment systems are underdeveloped. This includes those assessments systems that leaders use to establish pupils' starting points when they begin at the school. As a result, staff do not respond well enough to gaps in learning or pupils' misconceptions. Leaders should ensure that their assessment systems help staff to check on pupils' learning and that they inform the next steps in teaching.
- Some staff do not support pupils to improve their behaviour to the standards that leaders expect. Some pupils disrupt their own learning and that of their peers. Leaders should ensure that all staff follow the school's behaviour policy consistently well. Leaders and staff should support pupils to better manage their own behaviour in school.
- Many pupils are routinely absent from school, or they arrive late. These pupils disengage from education, which causes them to fall further behind in their learning. Leaders should ensure that they have effective systems in place to make sure that pupils attend school regularly and on time.
- Leaders have not thought out how they will fully support pupils' wider personal development. Some pupils are not prepared well enough for their adult lives in modern Britain. Leaders should finalise their thinking about the different elements that make up the personal development offer so that pupils learn all that they should.
- Leaders' careers programme for pupils in key stage 3 is underdeveloped. It does not support some of these pupils to make well-informed choices about their futures. Leaders must fulfil their statutory responsibilities to provide effective careers information, education, advice and guidance for pupils in key stage 3. This includes compliance with the provider access legislation.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	104849
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10255959
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Tracy McKeating
Headteacher	Jason Webb
Website	www.impactsefton.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and chair of the management committee have been appointed since the previous inspection. All members of the management committee have been appointed in the past 12 months.
- This school is a pupil referral unit. The majority of pupils are at risk of or have been excluded. A few pupils are dual registered with a mainstream school. Most pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs. A few have education, health and care plans.
- The school operates on two sites, which are approximately seven miles apart. The two sites are at Daleacre Campus, Daleacre Drive, Bootle, Liverpool, Merseyside L30 2QQ and Oakfield Centre, Gores Lane, Formby, Liverpool, Merseyside L37 3NY.
- The school uses two registered and four unregistered alternative providers.
- The school does not meet the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- 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, other leaders and staff.
- Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority and members of the management committee, including the chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, food technology and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record. The inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation documents, minutes of management committee meetings and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Pippa Jackson Maitland, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jane Holmes	Ofsted Inspector

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