

Inspection of Employability Solutions Independent School

52 Wellington Street, Garston, Liverpool, Merseyside L19 2LX

Inspection dates: 6 to 8 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe at this school. Leaders have established a friendly and supportive environment. Pupils appreciate the wealth of support that leaders provide. Before they join this school, most pupils have experienced some challenging events in their lives. Added to this, many pupils arrive at the school low in self-esteem and confidence. They told inspectors that they feel valued and understood by staff in this setting. Teachers help pupils and students to gain confidence and believe in themselves again.

Pupils know that adults will help them if they have any worries or concerns. On the very rare occasions when bullying occurs, pupils are confident that they can tell staff and that it will be resolved swiftly. Leaders deal with any incidents of bullying effectively.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from an education that is carefully designed to meet their needs and aspirations. Pupils learn how to manage their emotions and behaviour. Staff manage incidents of challenging behaviour very well to ensure that learning time is not lost. This enables pupils to achieve well.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities that promote their wider development and enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils enjoy equine therapy and martial arts to support their physical and mental health.

Parents and carers value how much staff care about their children and the positive impact that this has on pupils' experiences of school.

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

Leaders have designed an inspiring curriculum. In many subjects, they have successfully supported subject leaders and teachers to ensure that the curriculum is well thought out. Subject leaders have thought carefully about the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and the order in which this content should be delivered. This helps pupils to learn well.

In a small number of other subjects, developments to the curriculum are at an earlier stage. In these subjects, leaders are in the process of defining, and organising, the essential knowledge within the broad topics outlined in the curriculum. From time to time, this affects how widely and deeply some pupils learn.

In the majority of subjects, teachers use assessment strategies effectively to check what pupils have understood and remembered. Teachers are aware that some pupils have gaps in their learning. Teachers ensure that they identify and address these gaps quickly. They check that pupils have the prior knowledge required to understand any new learning.

Leaders are ambitious for every pupil to read confidently. They have appropriate systems in place to quickly and accurately identify pupils who find reading more difficult. Staff know how to help these pupils to catch up quickly. Most pupils read fluently and with strong comprehension. Leaders also foster a love of reading. Pupils said that they enjoy listening to staff read and reading books that have been selected for them by leaders.

Leaders ensure that the additional needs of pupils with SEND are identified early. Teachers skilfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND can learn well alongside their peers.

Some pupils' behaviour when they first arrive at the school can be influenced by their previous experiences. Therefore, some pupils require additional support to manage their varied behavioural needs. Staff quickly get to know each pupil individually. They support pupils to develop strategies which enable them to manage their behaviour more successfully. As a result, pupils learn to regulate their own behaviour and develop more positive attitudes to learning. Despite this, a small number of pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. These pupils miss out on important learning.

Leaders provide pupils with effective careers advice. Even though some pupils are only at the school for a relatively short period of time, they leave better prepared for their next steps. Pupils gain a range of vocational qualifications, but they also gain communication skills and confidence. This means that they have more options available to them when they move on.

Pupils' wider personal development and preparation for life are prioritised by leaders. Pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values, including the rule of law and democracy. They learn about diversity within British society. Pupils also learn why discriminatory behaviour, such as racism and sexism, is unacceptable. Leaders ensure that pupils learn relationships and sex education appropriate to their age. Leaders make sure that this programme meets statutory requirements.

Leaders are passionate about providing a range of enrichment experiences for pupils beyond the classroom. For example, pupils stay behind after school to engage in cookery events, which allow them to create meals to take home to feed their families. Pupils also spoke enthusiastically about an enterprise event that they organised where they collected and recycled Christmas trees to make Christmas crafts and decorations.

The proprietor is passionate about the importance of building pupils' self-esteem so that they are confident enough to consider ambitious next steps. Pupils are well prepared for adult life.

Leaders are conscious of staff workload and consider appropriate ways to help them to manage this. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being.

The proprietor ensures that the independent school standards (the standards) are met fully and consistently. For example, the school premises are clean and well maintained. The proprietor has a robust understanding of the quality of education provided by the school. The proprietor provides effective support and challenge to school leaders.

The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff have up-to-date and relevant safeguarding training. Staff are keenly aware of the dangers that pupils may face. Staff know how to respond to any signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm.

Leaders make sure that staff have a strong understanding of the safeguarding risks that pupils may face within the community. Staff work closely with several external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the help that they need in a timely manner.

Pupils learn how to manage potential risks to their safety, including the dangers of drug and alcohol misuse and county lines drug transportation.

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

- In one or two subjects, leaders are in the process of finalising the essential knowledge that pupils should learn. On occasion, this hinders how deeply pupils learn in these subjects. As they finalise their curriculum thinking, leaders should ensure that these subject curriculums are designed well. This is so that pupils can acquire a rich body of subject knowledge.
- A few pupils do not attend school as often as they should. As a result, these pupils miss out on important learning and the enrichment opportunities that the school has to offer. Leaders should ensure that they put effective strategies in place to improve the attendance of these pupils.

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

Unique reference number	145463
DfE registration number	341/6013
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10267686
Type of school	Other independent school
School Category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Number of part-time pupils	6
Proprietor	Claire Cook
Headteacher	Gayle Worswick
Annual fees (day pupils)	£11,001
Telephone number	0151 427 4193
Website	www.employabilitysolutions.com
Email address	gayle@employabilitysolutions.com
Date of previous inspection	4 to 6 December 2018

Information about this school

- The previous standard inspection took place on 4 to 6 December 2018. An emergency inspection was carried out on 16 March 2021.
- The school is located at 52 Wellington Street, Garston, Liverpool, L19 2LX.
- Currently, there are no students on the roll in the sixth form.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

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 meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in 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 their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and a wide range of staff. The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of directors.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation. This included information relating to the standards, the school's curriculum, leaders' improvement priorities, leaders' approach to safeguarding pupils and the checks that leaders carry out on newly appointed staff. Inspectors also spoke to staff to check how well they understand safeguarding procedures.
- There were no comments submitted via the Ofsted Parent View free-text facility. The lead inspector spoke with some parents to gather their views.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes, during lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, personal, social and health education and physical education. They met with subject leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors also considered the curriculum across some other subject areas and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents and information

relating to the standards. She also made a tour of the school premises.

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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