

# Progress Schools - Wolverhampton

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

**Inspection date**

17 October 2023

**Overall outcome**

**The school meets 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), 2(2), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(h)*

- At the time of the last progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, the school had begun taking action to improve the quality of education that it provided. However, the curriculum required further development as it was not supported by appropriate schemes of work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were not sufficiently supported to access the curriculum. In addition, the approach to teaching pupils to read was not fully implemented.
- Since that time, leaders have acted quickly to make necessary improvements. This work has included introducing revised schemes of work in all subjects. Leaders have identified the precise knowledge and skills that they expect pupils to know and remember. They have carefully considered the order in which this content is taught. Pupils now build their knowledge logically over time. For instance, in creative art, pupils study the use of colour. They learn how to complement and contrast colours. They practise mixing colours. Pupils then use this knowledge when completing more complex pieces of artwork.
- The school has been effective in its work to improve the teaching of reading. The curriculum now places greater emphasis on pupils building their comprehension skills. For example, pupils study the concept of 'comparison'. Staff teach the meaning of this concept and share examples within stories and texts. Pupils then apply their knowledge when making comparisons between settings and characters. In addition, staff promote pupils' love of reading. Pupils study a range of carefully selected texts as they progress through the curriculum.
- Teachers make appropriate adaptations to ensure that pupils with SEND access the curriculum. Leaders manage the provision for these pupils well. Pupils with education, health and care plans are well supported. Leaders ensure that pupils' small-step targets are directly linked to the knowledge and skills that they expect pupils to build through the curriculum.
- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are met.

*Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(g)*

- At the time of the last progress monitoring inspection, the school had begun to develop the expertise of staff. However, as the knowledge that pupils were expected to learn had not been clearly identified, staff were not making precise enough checks on pupils' progress through the curriculum.
- The school has taken action to develop staff's expertise. Adults now have a better understanding of how the curriculum builds pupils' knowledge logically over time. Staff teach new content clearly. They provide useful explanations to help pupils learn well. They emphasise key vocabulary and teach pupils how to use it. Teachers recap on prior learning to assist pupils to remember their previous knowledge. All this helps pupils to make progress through the curriculum.
- The school has introduced revised approaches for assessing pupils' knowledge. Staff now have a stronger understanding of pupils' starting points. Adults make regular and precise checks on what pupils know and remember. This provides them with an accurate view of pupils' learning. They use this information to address misconceptions and adapt the curriculum to meet pupils' needs.
- The standards in this part are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

*Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)*

- At the time of the previous progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, the school had begun taking steps to improve the effectiveness of leadership. Nevertheless, weaknesses remained and not all of the standards were met. In July 2023, the Department for Education judged the school's action plan to improve the quality of provision as being acceptable. The plan was suitably specific about the steps that leaders planned to take to improve the quality of education.
- Since this time, leaders have acted quickly to implement the action plan. Leaders have maintained a sharp focus on improving the quality of education. They have revised the school's curriculum offer and ensured the curriculum is well planned and sequenced. They have also worked successfully to develop staff's expertise.
- The proprietor body has supported leaders in improving the school. This has included recruiting expert staff to help improve the quality of the school's curriculum. The proprietor has clear systems in place to gather information about the success of this improvement work. This information provides them with an accurate view of the school.
- The standards in this part are met.

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 meets 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. 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.

### **The school now meets 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 subparagraph (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
- 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
- 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

## School details

Unique reference number	148643
DfE registration number	336/6008
Inspection number	10305746

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	1
Proprietor	Progress Schools limited
Chair	Charlotte Barton
Headteacher	Robert Perks
Annual fees (day pupils)	£17,500 to £54,000
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

- Progress Schools – Wolverhampton is an independent school that caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in July 2022.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for up to 30 pupils, aged 11 to 16 years. The number of pupils on roll has decreased since the time of the previous inspection.
- The previous headteacher was replaced by a new head of school in June 2023.
- 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 school had a previous progress monitoring inspection in March 2023. This inspection was the second progress monitoring inspection.
- After the previous inspection, the Department for Education required the school to prepare an action plan. This action plan was judged to be acceptable on 13 July 2023.
- The inspector held discussions with school leaders and the chair of the proprietor board to review the progress made against the previously unmet 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

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