

Inspection of Youth Works Community College

Keystone, 97 Rockingham Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN16 9HX

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 December 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's values of being person centred, responsive, nurturing and empowering are evident at Youth Works Community College. All parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View did so positively. A parent summed up the view of many, commenting: 'I am amazed by what the staff have enabled my child to achieve in such a short space of time: she now has hope for her future.'

Pupils enjoy learning in a safe and welcoming environment. They follow learning programmes designed specifically around their needs and interests. Pupils develop strong working relationships with staff. Staff are skilled at motivating pupils and keeping them focused on their learning.

Staff skilfully help pupils make positive choices. Pupils respectfully collaborate with staff to establish clear boundaries. Pupils know that their opinions are valued. They learn to manage their emotions and feelings very successfully. Almost all pupils see marked improvements in their attendance and behaviour over time.

Pupils are re-engaged with learning. Many pupils have clear plans for their next steps. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive about their experiences. They say that staff listen to them, care about them and give them the confidence to be successful. As one pupil said, 'They get you here.'

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

Leaders enable pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils have not engaged well with their previous educational settings. Staff spend time getting to know each pupil when they join the school. They check carefully what pupils already know and what pupils enjoy doing. Staff then match the curriculum to what will engage the pupils most. Pupils respond positively to this approach. They work hard on the tasks that they are set. They engage well in lessons and use what they have learned to improve their skills. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their achievements in subjects such as bicycle maintenance, hair dressing and horticulture. Their attitudes to education are often transformed. Pupils respond positively to the care and attention given to them by the staff. Pupils try their hardest. They are respectful and accepting of those around them. Although not perfect, in many ways, pupils' behaviour is exemplary.

The school ensures that the curriculum content is well thought out in most subjects. For example, in English and mathematics, the curriculums identify what pupils need to know and when. Staff break this content down into smaller parts. This helps pupils deepen their knowledge. There are opportunities for pupils to revisit what they know, which helps them remember important information. Staff check pupils' understanding regularly and correct any misconceptions before moving on. However, in some subjects, the school has not identified the precise knowledge that it wants pupils to learn and when.

Pupils receive therapeutic support provided by key workers and counsellors. The nurturing and supportive environment ensures that the needs of any pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans are taken into account. The school is in the early stages of ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have accurate support plans in place. Support plans do not contain all of the useful information that staff need to best support pupils. Some pupils' targets are not precise enough to enable them to achieve as quickly as they should.

There are frequent opportunities for pupils to read. Staff use reading material that interests pupils and emphasise key subject vocabulary that pupils need to learn. Pupils who struggle to read accurately and fluently are supported well by staff using an age-appropriate phonics-based programme. However, pupils do not always make the most of the opportunities they are provided. Some do not read widely or often.

The curriculum prepares pupils well for their next steps. Most pupils engage well in enterprise activities and work-based opportunities in the on-site shop. Some pupils benefit from extended external work placements. Almost all pupils secure an appropriate education, employment or training placement when they leave school.

Personal development is a fundamental part of the school's provision. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to build their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are involved in the local community. For example, they plan and provide a Christmas dinner for people connected to Youth Works. They raise funds through various charitable events. There are a range of after-school clubs that some pupils make good use of. Pupils have opportunities to develop their talents and interests. They benefit from a well-developed careers programme that prepares them for the world of work. However, pupils do not have opportunities to gain a thorough understanding of different cultures and faiths.

Staff feel valued and cared for. Their workload is carefully considered. They are happy and proud to work at the school. The proprietor is kept extremely well informed about the school. They visit and check on the quality of all aspects of the provision. Both school sites are well maintained. Policies are up to date and reflect the latest national guidance.

The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The relationships and sex education and the safeguarding policies are available on the school's website.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Not all subject curriculums are as ambitious as they should be. Staff are in the process of identifying what pupils need to know and when in some subjects. Pupils do not learn and achieve as well as they could in these subjects. The school should ensure that all subject curriculums clearly identify the precise knowledge pupils need to know and when. This will enable staff to know what needs to be taught when, and enable pupils to know, remember and do more.
- Some pupils with SEND are not supported as well as they could be. Staff do not have sufficient information to provide these pupils with effective support. The targets staff set do not provide the precise detail needed for pupils to achieve as well as they should. As a result, these pupils' needs are not always well met. The school should ensure that staff have the necessary information, knowledge and skills to make sure these pupils get the support they need to be successful.

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	144377
DfE registration number	940/6003
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10286449
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Siobhan Currie
Headteacher	Arlette Wrighting (also known as Cindy Wrighting)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£14,500 to £19,000
Telephone number	01536 518339
Website	www.youthworksnorthamptonshire.org.uk/community-college
Email address	enquiries@youthworksnorthamptonshire.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 to 4 April 2019

Information about this school

- The school operates from two sites in Kettering, Northamptonshire: The Keystone Centre, Rockingham Road NN16 9HX, and the William Knibb Centre, Montagu Street NN16 8AE.
- The school provides education for pupils who have been or are on the verge of being permanently excluded from mainstream school. Most pupils have behavioural, social, emotional and mental health difficulties and some pupils have experienced trauma. The numbers of pupils with SEND and those with EHC plans at the school are increasing.
- The school uses the services of one unregistered alternative provider.

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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The lead inspector met with the proprietor.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in: English; personal, social, health and economic education; and mathematics. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered curriculum plans and visited lessons for vocational subjects, including horticulture and cycle maintenance.
- The lead inspector reviewed individual pupils' EHC plans and associated education support plans. He scrutinised individual pupil's risk assessments and pupils' behaviour support plans.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school development plan.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and

considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors took note of parents' responses on Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's survey of school staff. Inspectors met with pupils to discuss different aspects of the school's provision.
- Inspectors toured the premises and reviewed the school facilities.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mandy Wilding

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023