

A.R.T.S. Education

167a Ormskirk Road, Rainford, St Helens, Merseyside WA11 8HR

Inspection date

12 June 2024

Overall outcome

The school does not meet 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)(a), 2(2)(h), 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(g), 4

- At the progress monitoring inspection in October 2023, the school's curriculum was incomplete. There was no reading curriculum in place. The school had not set out what it intended pupils to know and remember in reading. Moreover, the school had not set out systems for assessing pupils' learning in reading.
- In its action plan, the school had not included any actions to devise a reading curriculum. The school had not planned to put a reading curriculum in place for teachers to follow or to ensure that teachers designed appropriate activities to teach reading. The school had not planned actions to establish a system to check pupils' progress in reading.
- At the time of this progress monitoring inspection, the inspector found that reading is promoted well. The school has developed an appropriate reading curriculum. The school has plans and schemes of work in place for reading. These set out what the school intends pupils to know and remember in reading. This is helping teachers to design appropriate learning activities for pupils. Pupils have regular timetabled reading sessions. There are well-trained staff available to support those pupils who have fallen behind with their reading knowledge. This helps these pupils to catch up.
- The school has set out clear assessment systems, including for reading. This is helping leaders to know how well pupils are achieving in reading. Pupils develop the reading knowledge that they need to access other parts of the school's curriculum.
- The inspector also considered the school's compliance with the relevant independent school standards (the standards) beyond the scope of the Department for Education's (DfE) commission. This was because, at the time of the inspection, seven pupils on roll at the school were identified by leaders as 'home learners' and these pupils did not attend the school site. These pupils have been out of education for a considerable period of time prior to joining this school. The school sets work for these pupils to complete at home. Also, these pupils receive some face-to-face education at home provided by tutors. The school has reintegration plans in place for these pupils. These plans are

regularly reviewed. Some 'home learners' have been successfully supported to attend school full time, others are being supported to reintegrate into school and a few are due to move on to education other than school.

- The school now meets the previously unmet requirements in this part. The other requirements continue to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The school has appropriate systems and procedures in place to keep all pupils safe. The school has put in place the necessary arrangements to safeguard pupils who are 'home learners'. Leaders work well with external agencies when needed to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need.
- There is a suitable and up-to-date safeguarding policy in place which is published on the school's website. The school provides a copy of the policy to parents and carers on request.
- The inspector also checked the school's compliance with some standards in this part outside the scope of the DfE commission. These were those standards related to the supervision of pupils and risk assessment.
- The school maintains accurate records of attendance for those pupils who are 'home learners'. The school records this attendance information in a timely manner. The school carries out welfare checks on these pupils regularly and follows up on any absences quickly. This ensures that these pupils are kept safe.
- The school has an appropriate number of staff that would enable a suitable level of supervision for pupils if all 22 pupils attend face-to-face education.
- The school has ensured that risk assessments are in place for 'home learners'. Leaders complete regular checks to ensure that any new and emerging risks are quickly identified. Appropriate arrangements are put in place to keep these pupils safe.
- The standards in these paragraphs continue to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22, 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 25, 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- The inspector checked the school's compliance with some standards outside the scope of the DfE commission. This was because, at the time of the inspection, the school had exceeded the maximum number of pupils on roll that it is registered to admit. The school is registered to admit up to 14 pupils. There are currently 22 pupils on roll.
- The school has five well-equipped classrooms with a total of 38 tables and chairs already in place. In addition, there is a dining hall with capacity for up to 30 pupils. The school has sufficient toilet and washing facilities for the total number of pupils on the school's roll.
- The school has suitable outside space for all pupils to play and to take part in physical education.

- The standards in these paragraphs continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the progress monitoring inspection in October 2023, the school had provided some training to governors and line managers to improve the school's quality assurance procedures. Despite these improvements, the school had not taken all the actions necessary to meet the standards consistently. There remained weaknesses in the quality of education that pupils received. There was no reading curriculum in place.
- In its action plan, the school neglected to set out the actions necessary to meet the standards, taking into account the findings from the progress monitoring inspection.
- At this progress monitoring inspection, the school has devised a reading curriculum. It has developed staff expertise to enable them to implement the reading curriculum well. Consequently, pupils are developing their reading knowledge. This enables them to access other parts of the curriculum.
- The school is operating beyond its registration agreement with the DfE. The school is registered to admit a maximum of 14 pupils. There are currently 22 pupils on roll. This is despite a letter sent by the DfE to the school in March 2024 refusing the school's request to increase its capacity.
- Seven pupils are 'home learners'. The school has provided these pupils with work to complete at home unsupervised and some face-to-face tuition. These programmes are developed in partnership with parents and carers and professionals. However, the proprietor has not challenged leaders to take the urgent and effective action needed to support these pupils to attend school. This means that these pupils cannot benefit from the education and wider opportunities provided by the school.
- The standard in this part remains unmet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet 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.

School details

Unique reference number	148840
DfE registration number	340/6006
Inspection number	10337551

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 special school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	22
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	A.R.T.S. Artistic Re-engagement Teaching Strategies
Chair	Annmarie Read
Headteacher	Annmarie Read
Annual fees (day pupils)	£34,200
Telephone number	07749846945
Website	www.artseducation.co.uk
Email address	info@artseducation.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	24 to 26 January 2023

Information about this school

- The school's standard inspection took place from 24 to 26 January 2023.
- The school received a progress monitoring inspection on 17 October 2023.
- The chair of the proprietor body is also the headteacher.
- The school operates from premises at 167a Ormskirk Road, Rainford, St Helens WA11 8HR.
- On 14 March 2024, the DfE rejected the school's request to increase the registered capacity of the school. This was because the DfE was not satisfied that the relevant

standards would be met if the school made this change.

- The school is operating beyond its registration agreement with the DfE. It has exceeded the maximum number of pupils on roll that it is registered to admit. The school is registered to admit up to 14 pupils. There are currently 22 pupils on roll. This is made up of 14 pupils who attend full-time education on site and seven pupils who learn from home full time.
- The school caters for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Pupils' needs include autism and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

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's most recent standard inspection was 24 to 26 January 2023. At this inspection, the school was judged not to comply with the standards.
- The DfE required the school to prepare an action plan. This plan was statutory. Ofsted evaluated this plan on 21 August 2023. The DfE accepted the action plan.
- A second action plan was evaluated by Ofsted on 6 February 2024. This plan was statutory. The DfE rejected this action plan.
- This was the second progress monitoring inspection since the standard inspection in January 2023. It was conducted without notice.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, who is also the chair of the proprietor body, senior leaders and staff. He also spoke with another member of the proprietor body.
- The inspector spoke with leaders about the curriculum. He looked at curriculum plans and at samples of pupils' work. The inspector spoke with staff, visited some lessons and talked with a small number of pupils about their work and wider school life.
- The inspector also examined a wide range of policy documents, including the safeguarding policy, curriculum documents and documents related to leadership and management.
- The inspection also considered the school's safeguarding arrangements, including the single central record of pre-employment checks and whether the school's safeguarding policy is available to parents. These requirements of the standards are met.
- The inspector identified seven pupils on the school's roll who do not receive full-time supervised education. These pupils receive work set by the school to complete at home. None of these pupils had attended the school in person since their admission. The inspector inspected and reported on the school's compliance with some additional standards beyond the scope of the DfE commission. This was to ensure the quality of education and the provision for the welfare and health and safety of these pupils. The inspector also spoke on the telephone with a representative of a local authority and some parents. The inspector also checked the relevant standards relating to the school's premises and accommodation. This was because the school is registered to admit up to 14 pupils and there are currently 22 pupils on roll.
- The inspector made a tour of the premises.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

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.
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

The school now meets the following requirements of the 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; and
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 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(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(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.

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