

Lewis Charlton Learning Centre

9a & 10a Waterloo House, North Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1HS

Inspection date

18 September 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) to 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(h), 3, 3(a), 3(c) 3(d), 3(g)

- At the previous inspection, the school curriculum was not well enough designed to teach pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Pupils with SEND were not achieving well. Too many subjects were not sequenced well enough for pupils to progress from their academic starting points. The curriculum was not ambitious enough.
- At the previous inspection, the school did not have an effective assessment framework. The school had no way to determine pupils' starting points when they arrived at the school. Teachers were not assessing well enough how well pupils were learning.
- Since the previous inspection, the proprietor has restructured the leadership team to bring more capacity to improve the quality of teaching. Those responsible for the quality of education have started to work on ensuring that the curriculum is suitable for an all-through provision. The school has developed subject curriculum plans in a range of subjects. In some of these subjects, including in early reading, science and mathematics, key knowledge is precisely identified and sequenced. However, this is not the case across all subjects. There is a lack of precision in English and some other subjects. Leaders have not yet ensured that all subjects are planned so that pupils can build on their prior learning. Not all plans take into account the pupils' different needs.
- The school has now ensured that subject specialists are in place to teach specific subjects. This has had a positive impact on mathematics teaching and science teaching. Curriculum coordinators are overseeing and monitoring teaching. There has been some training and future training is planned to ensure that teachers use the most effective methods to teach. However, the quality of teaching is variable, particularly where planning is less precise. Teachers do not match work appropriately to pupils' needs, and some learning activities are too burdensome for all pupils to access. Leaders have not yet ensured that effective teaching allows all pupils to make progress.
- The school has employed several leaders who have experience of leading education for pupils with SEND. These professionals have completed work on identifying the

appropriate provision, strategies and targets to support pupils to achieve the outcomes stated in their educational, health and care (EHC) plans. However, the targets for these pupils remain too broad and generic for teachers to use effectively. This means that teachers are unable to adapt the curriculum so that it is well matched to the age and aptitudes of some pupils.

- The school has adopted a reading curriculum that can support pupils who are at an early stage of reading. The school has invested in training all staff to be early reading experts and purchased books that are matched to pupils' reading abilities. However, the training is not yet utilised well enough by all adults to support those at the early stages of reading. The implementation of the early reading scheme is in the early stages and not yet fully embedded. It shows variable impact on enabling pupils to become better and more fluent readers.
- Pupils are now better assessed when they join the school. As a result, teachers know pupils' starting points in core subjects. Teachers have created assessment opportunities for some subjects so that they can determine how well pupils are achieving. However, some of the planned assessments are not precise enough or matched closely enough to curriculum plans. This is further evident when curriculum plans do not identify the knowledge which is essential. There are still occasions when assessment is not purposeful, and/or the outcomes of the assessment are not used well enough to adapt the curriculum so that pupils can progress and achieve.
- These previously unmet requirements of the independent school standards (the standards) in this part remain unmet.

Paragraph 3(e)

- The appointment of expert staff in core subject areas and curriculum training that staff have undertaken have both ensured that all teaching staff have a secure subject understanding for the subjects that they teach.
- This previously unmet requirement of the standard is now met.
- The school continues not to meet all the previously unmet requirements of these standards, apart from the requirement related to teachers' subject knowledge.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The designated safeguarding leader is well supported by deputies. All staff are well trained to manage safeguarding concerns. There is an appropriate system in place for staff to record concerns, allowing leaders to act swiftly to keep pupils safe.
- There is effective communication between the school and the proprietor to analyse safeguarding trends and patterns. The proprietor is made aware of all safeguarding concerns on a weekly basis. The proprietor holds leaders to account and checks the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures at the school.
- On induction, the school trains every member of staff on how to recognise and report the signs that a pupil may be at risk. Staff also benefit from regular safeguarding briefings. As a result, staff have a detailed understanding of how to identify and report safeguarding concerns in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

- The school fully understands its duty to share safeguarding information with external agencies and has protocols to do so. The school is also aware of when and how to engage external agencies such as the police, local authority or social care.
- The school undertakes appropriate checks on staff who are new to the school. These checks are undertaken before staff begin to work with pupils. These checks are recorded on the school's single central record.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They learn about contextual risks they may face in society. Pupils are able to articulate how this learning has shaped their thinking about online safety and risks associated with knife crime.
- The safeguarding policy considers the latest government guidance and is available on the school website.

Paragraphs 9 to 9(c)

- The behaviour policy recognises the specific needs of the pupils who attend the school. Staff training to manage pupils' behaviour is focused on building positive relationships and de-escalation. Physical restraint and suspensions are used as a last resort. Staff are trained to recognise the early signs of dysregulation. The strategies to help pupils self-regulate are identified and followed by staff. The behaviour policy is implemented consistently.
- All staff can speak to leaders of behaviour in the daily afternoon debriefing. This helps staff and leaders share information about any behaviour concerns and understand the triggers that affect how well each pupil regulates their emotions and feelings. This helps staff to manage each pupil's behaviour consistently.
- There are effective systems and processes in place for staff to record behaviour concerns and for pastoral leaders to respond to these concerns appropriately. Behaviour records are analysed to spot trends and patterns in behaviour and to deploy effective support to groups of pupils or individual pupils.

Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)

- There is an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. The policy sets out how risks can be assessed.
- Risk assessments are available for each pupil, for work experience, forest school and educational visits, to name a few. These risk assessments all contain appropriate control measures to mitigate risk. The assessments are regularly reviewed. They are well understood by staff.
- The school continues to meet these standards.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34 to 34(1)(b)

- At the previous inspection, leaders had not demonstrated sufficient knowledge of the standards to ensure that the school consistently met them all.
- The action plan submitted to the Department for Education (DfE), following the previous inspection, was deemed inappropriate. This has now been rewritten to identify more

appropriate strategies to bring about the necessary improvement. This revised plan is being implemented.

- Since the previous inspection, the proprietor has improved leadership capacity and expertise. The school now demonstrates that leaders have a more thorough understanding of the standards. The school improvement plan has identified appropriate actions to remedy the weaknesses at the last inspection. However, not enough rapid improvement has taken place yet.
- The school has engaged with the local authority, other external organisations and experts to further quality assure the school's provision and drive improvement.
- The school can now analyse attendance and behaviour patterns across all the school sites centrally. This has enabled the school to improve attendance and further support a positive behaviour culture for its pupils. There is additional non-teaching pastoral capacity that is supporting pupils' well-being.
- The proprietor has appointed well-trained school leaders to help the school improve. There is now sufficient expertise at leadership level to improve the curriculum and provision for pupils with SEND. The outcomes and improvements desired have not yet come to fruition as implementation of the change is still in its infancy. There is some demonstrable improvement. For example, there is now curriculum ambition for pupils. However, the quality of planning and teaching is too variable to realise this ambition.
- Although there has been some significant improvement since the previous inspection, the school has not ensured that all the standards judged as unmet at that time are now met.

Paragraph 34(1)(c)

- At the previous inspection, the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum did not identify the precise knowledge that pupils needed to acquire. There were limited opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests and pupils did not have the opportunity to learn about different faiths and cultures.
- The school has implemented an age-appropriate PSHE curriculum and trained all staff in how to teach this. On a weekly basis, pupils receive formal PSHE lessons which align with these plans. Pupils most recently learned about online safety and substance misuse. Religious education is a formal part of the curriculum, which gives pupils the opportunity to learn about different faiths and cultures that they will encounter in modern Britain. Younger pupils have visited the local church and older pupils are undertaking work experience in local charity shops. This is helping pupils to contribute to the local community.
- The school has planned regular well-being education and activities to support pupils' mental health, including forest school provision.
- The work undertaken since the previous inspection has ensured that leaders are actively promoting pupils' well-being.
- This previously unmet requirement of the standard is now met.
- The school continues not to meet all the previously unmet requirements of this standard, apart from the requirement related to the active promotion of pupils' well-being.

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, as set out in the annex of this report. 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	134438
DfE registration number	855/6020
Inspection number	10353403

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	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	30
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	5
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Lewis Charlton Ltd
Chair	Zaheer Esat
Headteacher	Malcolm Kerridge
Annual fees (day pupils)	£74,850 to £107,850
Telephone number	01530 560 775
Website	www.lewischarltonschool.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@lewischarltonschool.org
Dates of previous standard inspection	14 to 16 November 2023

Information about this school

- The school's most recent standard inspection was in November 2023, and the school received an overall judgement of inadequate.
- Since the last inspection, the school has employed new leaders and restructured the school's leadership team. A new assistant headteacher has been appointed to support the

executive headteacher. A new SEND coordinator has been appointed. Two new curriculum coordinators to oversee the curriculum have been appointed.

- A new advisory board has been created, with members that have expertise in the independent education sector, to support the proprietor to hold leaders to account and drive improvement at the school.
- Most pupils who attend the school have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has reduced the number of sites it is using. Currently, the school operates the upper school at Abney Hastings and Lewis Charlton Village, which are located on South Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch LE65 1BR. The lower school site is located on North Street, Ashby de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1HU.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative provisions.

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.
- This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since the previous standard inspection. In line with the commission, the inspection took place without notice.
- The DfE required the school to submit an action plan. Ofsted evaluated this plan on 2 May 2024 and deemed it to be not acceptable. The DfE rejected the plan.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher, assistant headteacher, safeguarding leaders, SEND coordinator, behaviour leaders and curriculum leaders. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors visited lessons and spoke with pupils.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents and policies, including those related to the curriculum, behaviour and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector held a meeting to review the single central record, safeguarding records and to discuss how the school safeguards pupils.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Shaheen Hussain

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 unmet at this inspection

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)(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(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.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

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