

Phoenix Academy

Brook Farm, Newton Road, North Petherton, Somerset TA6 6NA

Inspection dates

19 October 2017

Overall outcome

The school does not meet the independent school standards relevant to the material change. The material change has already been implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii)

- While pupils have specific and complex needs, they also have high aspirations for their future career pathways and wish to continue their education, training or employment after leaving this setting. Leaders have not planned a curriculum that includes the range of subjects that are needed to meet pupils' aspirations. As a result, pupils do not experience linguistic, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education in the depth they need to fulfil their aspirations.
- Although there is no evidence of any intention to undermine fundamental British values, such as mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs, there are no written plans to ensure that pupils are taught about a range of faiths and beliefs.

Paragraphs 2(2), 2(2)(a)

- The planned curriculum is narrow. The headteacher has every intention to provide a good quality of education. However, much time is given to therapeutic care to address the pupils' complex needs. The timetable includes mainly mathematics, English and science. Leaders have not yet developed plans that ensure that pupils have both their entitlement to a broad curriculum and to the therapeutic care that they need.
- The standards in these paragraphs are not met.

Paragraph 4

- The school's aims include providing individualised learning programmes and the provision of individual support, using highly trained counsellors and therapists. There is a framework in place to evaluate the performance of pupils in accordance with the school's own aims, although this framework is only in place for the subjects being taught, namely English, mathematics and science.
- The standard in this paragraph is met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(v)

- The proprietor has not ensured that there is adequate provision to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that will prepare pupils well for life beyond school. This is particularly with regard to developing tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- There are no well-developed plans to ensure that pupils develop an appreciation and respect for the differences between cultural traditions.
- The standards in these paragraphs are not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b)

- The school has a highly developed culture of safeguarding. School leaders and staff have a good understanding of how to keep pupils safe. Leaders ensure that staff receive a wide range of safeguarding training and that regular updates are shared. There is a culture of vigilance, which ensures that pupils' safety is at the heart of all decisions. The policy is available on the school's website.

Paragraph 11

- The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy to ensure that the relevant laws are complied with. The policy is available on the school's website. It is implemented effectively with suitable and comprehensive additional risk assessments in place to ensure that pupils are safe.

Paragraph 12

- The school complies with the relevant fire safety regulations. The school's appointed fire wardens are suitably trained. They undertake regular checks on fire safety equipment and procedures. Regular audits of fire hazards take place in order to ensure that hazards have been identified and actions put in place to minimise risk. For example, the fire alarms are tested on a weekly basis. Regular fire evacuation drills take place. Appropriate maintenance of items such as fire doors and emergency lighting ensures that they are in good working order.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are well supervised at all times, both during lessons and at social times. Staff display a good understanding of pupils' additional needs. Relationships are respectful.

Paragraph 16–16(b)

- The school's policies on risk assessment and risk management are up to date and thorough. Individual risk assessments are very detailed and ensure that staff are equipped with a comprehensive range of strategies and procedures to help minimise risks to pupils' welfare, health or safety. Suitable controls are in place for the identified hazards to ensure that risk is carefully managed.
- The standards in these paragraphs are met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25

- The school's premises and facilities are maintained to a high standard, ensuring that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are well catered for. The school has sufficient space to accommodate the proposed increase in numbers without this being compromised.

Paragraph 27–27(b)

- The lighting in all rooms is suitable. Automatic external lighting is in place outside all the school's buildings.

Paragraph 28(1)–28(1)(b)

- Pupils have access to drinking water at all times. Washing facilities are available in all toilets with an adequate supply of hot and cold water.
- The standards in these paragraphs are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- Overview by the proprietor, directors and governors is not fully developed. There are currently two pupils receiving education on the additional site. However, use has not yet been approved by the registration authority. Leaders have not ensured that all of the standards are met. There is no well-developed system in place to ensure that the independent school standards are being fully met.
- The standard in this paragraph is not met.
- *Paragraph 34(1)(c)*
- Along with the staff team, the leaders of the school actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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 are relevant to the material change.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

- Part 1 Quality of education
 - paragraphs 2(1)–2(2)(a)
- Part 2 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
 - paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(v)
- Part 8 Quality of leadership in and management of schools
 - paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(b).

School Details

Unique reference number	135673
DfE registration number	933/6216
Inspection number	10035565

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Special
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Phoenix Care and Learning Ltd
Chair	Jon Pain
Headteacher	Jon Lloyd
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,000
Telephone number	01271 318110
Website	www.phoenixlearningcare.co.uk
Email address	JLloyd@plcl.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	17–19 November 2015

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 16	7 to 16	7 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	11	16	12

Reason for inspector's recommendations

- The proprietor has not ensured that there are well-developed plans for a broad curriculum. There has not been consideration of how to balance pupils' therapeutic needs with the need for a rich, developed curriculum that will prepare pupils for their future lives in society. There is insufficient inclusion of education that will develop pupils' respect and tolerance of different faiths, beliefs and cultures.

- The proprietor has not ensured that there is a system in place to check that the independent school standards are fully met.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	12	16
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	12	16
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	12	16
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	12	16

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	12	12
Number of part-time teaching staff	2	2
Number of staff in the welfare provision	4	6

Information about this school

- Phoenix Academy is an independent special day school, which caters for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- The school is owned by Phoenix Care and Learning Limited. The directors of this company act as the proprietor.
- Following the previous inspection in November 2015, the headteacher left the school. The current headteacher took up post in March 2016. A monitoring visit took place in November 2016. After a period of no pupils being placed at the school, the local authority has now placed 11 pupils who all attend the main school site.
- The material change was requested by the school. The Department for Education commissioned this inspection as the school wishes to increase capacity from 12 to 16 pupils by using another site at Castle House to deliver provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education following a request from the school to increase their capacity from 12 to 16 pupils by using a second site near Bridgwater.
- The inspection was conducted with two days' notice.
- During the inspection, the inspector scrutinised schemes of work and evaluated the school's systems for assessing pupils' progress. The inspector spoke with staff and met with the headteacher.
- The school's safeguarding and health and safety policies and procedures were scrutinised.
- The inspector observed learning and social times in the proposed new site. Informal discussions were held with pupils at these times.
- A telephone conversation took place with the chief executive officer and the educational psychologist from Phoenix Care and Learning. A meeting took place with the chief operating officer of Phoenix Care and Learning. The inspector also spoke to representatives from Somerset County Council.

Inspection team

Tonwen Empson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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