

Epinay Business and Enterprise School

Clervaux Terrace, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear NE32 5UP

Inspection dates

28–29 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The new headteacher, ably supported by his senior team, has a clear vision for the school. He has high expectations, and both staff and pupils rise to meet them.
- The school motto 'ready to listen, ready to learn together' is alive at the school. Pupils are keen to learn and have very positive attitudes in lessons.
- The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding. Teachers know the specific needs of pupils and plan extremely well to engage their interest and develop their skills. As a result, the progress that pupils make is impressive.
- The curriculum focuses on wider skills in addition to subject knowledge. Pupils develop communication skills very well, for example. The focus on enterprise helps them hone the skills they need when they leave school.
- The personalised intervention, targeted support, and therapeutic opportunities programme supports pupils who need additional help in order to focus in class and make progress. This is highly effective in helping to remove any potential barriers to learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They care passionately about their school and respect the needs of other pupils. They participate fully in school life. Pupils appreciate the fact that the expectations of their behaviour are crystal clear now.
- Pupils feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe. Staff create a welcoming and friendly environment, and pupils enjoy coming to school. Rates of attendance have increased markedly.
- Since the last inspection the school now offers provision for sixth-form students. Governors have managed this change well, and students in the sixth form are exceptionally well prepared for life after school.
- Pupils, staff and parents and carers are very proud of their school. They are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education on offer, and are fulsome in their praise of school leaders.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the skills and effectiveness of middle leaders.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher has brought a renewed vigour to the school. He expects nothing less than excellence. The senior team, teachers and other staff have risen to his expectations. Governors and staff have high aspirations for all pupils at school.
- Since the time of the previous inspection some aspects of the school, specifically the behaviour of pupils, fell below the high expectations previously reported. After his appointment in 2017, the new headteacher dealt with these issues with confidence and tenacity. Standards of behaviour have quickly returned to an outstanding level. Pupils, parents and staff overwhelmingly state that the school has improved markedly since the last inspection. Inspectors agree. Pupils receive an outstanding education at Epinay.
- Since the last inspection the school has increased in size, and now offers courses for 16- to 19-year-old students. Governors and school leaders have managed this change well, and sixth-form provision is high quality.
- The headteacher has made sure that systems to check on the quality of education at school are first rate. As a result, the analysis of strengths and relative weaknesses at school is strong, as are plans to further improve teaching, the curriculum and outcomes for pupils. 'Headline documents' are understood by staff at school, and these help them focus on continually improving the school. Improvements are focused and swift.
- The headteacher has made sure that all school leaders know their roles, and holds them to account effectively. School leaders and teachers welcome this clarity. Staff morale is high. Middle leaders are growing in confidence, and know that they have more to learn.
- The deputy headteacher has implemented a clear system to allow teachers and teaching assistants to assess the progress that pupils make across the curriculum, and specifically in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, teachers are able to plan lessons that match the needs of the pupils, and push them on at a pace.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils very well. There is a careful balance between academic learning and pastoral programmes which help prepare pupils for life in the wider world. Pupils learn to be tolerant of each other and grow in their ability to respect each other's differences. These fundamental British values are threaded through school life.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, and for children looked after by local authorities, is used well to provide for additional therapies or opportunities. As a result, the difference in progress that these pupils make compared to their peers is minimal.
- The local authority provides effective support. This particularly helped governors at the time when they were seeking to appoint a new headteacher.
- Parents are delighted with the school. 'The new headmaster has made changes to the way the school is and it is much better. The children in the school all love him for what he has done for the school' is one comment that typifies many.

Governance of the school

- The governing body makes a strong contribution to the school's work and provides strategic direction to the headteacher and leadership team. Governors share leaders' passion and commitment to meet the needs of pupils at school. They are enthusiastic and participate in school life, for example by handing out rewards to pupils in assemblies.
- Governors take their statutory responsibilities very seriously. The governor with oversight of safeguarding has been instrumental in ensuring that the site is secure for pupils, and that policies and procedures are tight.
- Governors support and challenge leaders well. They visit school regularly, speak to pupils about their experience at school, and listen to leaders' priorities. They think about their own effectiveness, and seek training and guidance when needed. The chair of the governing body leads the team very effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that staff are up to date with the latest safeguarding advice, and that all staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding.
- Staff are vigilant and understand the additional risks that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities may have. Pupils confirm that they feel very safe in school. Parents echo this. They agree that their children are well looked after and cared for at school.
- Staff work well with other agencies to make sure that pupils get any additional help that they need. They become insistent when they feel that this support takes too long to be organised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching is characterised by positive relationships between staff and pupils which promote a positive attitude to learning throughout the school. Teachers plan highly personalised sessions for pupils which help pupils do their very best. Adults in classrooms know the specific needs and abilities of the pupils in their care.
- Teachers are skilled, and use a range of approaches to keep pupils focused and to develop their learning. They know what will work with their pupils. During the inspection, pupils in key stage 4 were seen cooking risotto successfully, developing small businesses and honing leadership skills.
- Assessment information is used well by teachers to plan precise next steps in learning for pupils. The way school leaders track the progress pupils are making is sophisticated, and helps teachers meet the needs of pupils well.
- Teachers' subject knowledge and strong use of technical vocabulary helps pupils extend their learning. Teachers help pupils understand how to improve their work. Homework is used well as a vehicle to deepen learning, and pupils enjoy the chance to be rewarded for effort at home.

- Phonics is taught well, and pupils make excellent progress in reading. Many pupils write at length and with increasing accuracy. Pupils right through the school develop their mathematical understanding through solving problems and explaining their thinking, where appropriate.
- Teachers know when individual pupils can become frustrated or angry. They plan for dealing with these situations particularly well, so that learning continues at a pace.
- Classes are organised by ability rather than age. This allows teachers to plan from pupils' starting points. At key stage 1, for example, pupils were enjoying painting while relaxing to music, in order to practise movements that will help when forming letters. This is an example of the way in which the curriculum and school organisation supports pupils to make progress from where they are.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- School leaders think carefully about the additional needs of the pupils at school and seek out experiences to help their personal development. For example, Café Epinay is based on site, and is open to the public at specific times. Pupils have the opportunity to cook for the café and to serve their peers or other visitors. By doing so, they develop a range of interpersonal skills.
- Pupils develop communication and problem-solving skills through the school's focus on enterprise. Pupils work together, negotiate and overcome problems, and this helps them develop as resilient learners. The school is very focused on building self-confidence and independence skills.
- The introduction of the house system has had an extraordinary impact. Pupils talk animatedly about working together for the good of others in their house. One pupil was incisive when he told an inspector that 'We now work as a team rather than for ourselves.'
- Pupils have the opportunity to work with pupils from other schools. During the inspection, pupils at Epinay were observed leading teams from other schools in developing geographical skills as they worked together to develop designs for the school site.
- Assemblies are used very well to promote personal development and a sense of community. During the inspection, singing during assembly was powerful. The challenge to be better each day, encapsulated by school leaders' use of the hashtag '#beEpinayawesome' is helping pupils to develop a strong sense of pride in their school and their behaviour.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are courteous and polite to their peers and to other adults in school. They focus very well in lessons, and want to do their very best. They are sensible when moving around the school, and treat the school environment with respect.

- Pupils, staff and parents all agree that behaviour has improved markedly. Pupils know what is expected of them, and staff are consistent in how they apply the behaviour policy. As a result, pupils are keen to please, want to be rewarded, and understand why it is important to treat others with respect. Pupils understand that they are all different and yet all equal.
- Pupils say that if ever other pupils are being unkind, teachers and other adults sort it out immediately. They say bullying is rare, and always dealt with quickly. Records indicate that more serious behavioural incidents are rare now.
- Rates of attendance have improved since the last inspection, and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen. This is due to improved tracking of attendance and staff following up on any pupils who are absent. Pupils clearly enjoy being at school, and most make every effort to attend.
- Leaders work very well with other agencies to help pupils who need extra support to behave well. The school's multi-agency key worker ensures that this support is effective. Leaders also ensure that pupils studying courses outside of school behave well, because they visit them every day.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils leave Epinay having made excellent progress from their different starting points. Teachers assess the abilities of pupils at school very well, and they identify the specific learning needs of individual pupils accurately. Teachers then plan activities that enable pupils to develop their skills and understanding strongly. This has been the case for several years now.
- Typically, pupils arrive at Epinay with attainment well below that expected for their age. Each pupil is known individually to the adults around them and as they move through key stage 1, teachers tailor individual pupils' timetables and lessons to help them get used to school. As they progress through the school this individualised approach helps them make gains in their skills and understanding. They make strong progress as they move through key stages 2 and 3 very well. By the time they leave Year 11, pupils have developed in confidence and understanding in order to support themselves in the next stage of their lives.
- There is little in-school difference between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and that made by their peers. Leaders use pupil premium funding very effectively to ensure that all pupils have excellent educational opportunities.
- Pupils are given aspirational educational and personal targets. The system that school leaders have developed is linked to the progress that all pupils make nationally, not only those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Many pupils at school rise to meet these aspirational targets.
- The personalised intervention, targeted support, and therapeutic opportunities programme (PITSTOP) is highly effective in identifying pupils' specific emotional or learning needs, and addressing them through a variety support sessions. As a result, pupils are more able to focus on developing their skills and knowledge, and working together constructively.

- Each year more and more pupils at key stage 4 achieve a range of qualifications, linked to their interests and abilities. School leaders are ambitious for the pupils in their care. The range and number of qualifications on offer is high, and the quality of delivery is strong.
- Pupils make very strong progress across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics. Teachers ensure that pupils make strides in their ability to read and in their appreciation of literature. Pupils also have frequent opportunities to develop their skills in dance, performance, singing, and other performing arts. Inspectors saw some of these skills showcased in assembly.
- Pupils can access courses in different schools or with different providers to increase their choice of subjects, or to help them keep stay focused before they leave formal education. They do very well because a member of staff visits the pupils every day to track their attendance, behaviour and effort. Any issues are sorted out immediately.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of learning when they leave Epinay. They obtain appropriate placements in further education settings, and school leaders check on their progress to see that they are doing well. They do all they can to help pupils succeed in the future.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- There was no sixth form at the school at the time of the previous inspection. It was established because school leaders could see that too many pupils leaving Year 11 at that time did not settle well into the next stages of their education or employment. The sixth form has been strikingly successful in ensuring that no pupils leave Year 11, and no students leave Year 13, without concrete plans for their future.
- Students in the sixth form are well supported pastorally. They develop in confidence and self-esteem. Their understanding of the world of work develops strongly. In addition, they make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Each student sits a suite of qualifications according to their ability.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have high ambitions for students. They know their individual needs well and plan lessons that inspire and engage them. They know how to get the very best out of them, both academically and socially. As a result, students make strong gains in their development.
- Students have faith in their teachers to help them develop skills for life. Students in the sixth form are punctual, and attend school regularly. Their attendance has increased substantially, and they now rarely miss school. They see the value of their sixth form experience.
- School leaders have worked hard to widen the opportunities available for students in the sixth form. Many attend college to study different subjects. At school, students learn how to keep themselves safe, and how to live independently. Students can engage with the local community through work experience, enterprise projects, and in supporting the work of Café Epinay. Careers guidance and work experience is high quality and tailored to meet the specific needs of the students.

- Leaders are constantly refining the provision in the sixth form to ensure that it is the very best for their students. For example, the number of qualifications on offer has increased, and some students are on placement with the National Trust and are the first to do so from a special school. Another student won South Tyneside apprentice of the year. These examples show the ambition school leaders have for their sixth-form students.

School details

Unique reference number	108741
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10049016

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	5 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	139
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	13
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Audrey Huntley
Headteacher	Chris Rue
Telephone number	0191 4898949
Website	http://epinay.org/
Email address	sstephenson5@epinay.org
Date of previous inspection	12–13 December 2012

Information about this school

- Epinay Business and Enterprise School provides education for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties. There is also an increasing number who have severe learning difficulties, or autistic spectrum disorder.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils looked after by local authorities and those supported by pupil premium is much higher than average. Most pupils are White British. A small proportion speak English as an additional language.

- Pupils are organised into class groups based on area of primary need and compatibility with their peers.
- Since the previous inspection, sixth-form provision has been added to the school.
- The school uses alternative providers to extend the curriculum opportunities for pupils at key stage 4 and students at key stage 5. These are South Tyneside College, Resources Construction Training, Arts for Wellbeing, Holder House Gardening Project, and Springboard Training Centre.
- The headteacher was appointed permanently in January 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning and groups of pupils working in all key stages at school. Inspectors observed learning jointly with the headteacher and discussed what was seen. Learning in the sixth form was also observed.
- Inspectors observed pupils when moving around the school and at social times. They talked to pupils in lessons about their experience at school and looked at work in their books. They talked to two specific groups of pupils to hear their views about the school, and about the behaviour of other pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle leaders. An inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors took account of the 36 responses to the staff questionnaire, the 63 responses to the online pupil questionnaire and the 62 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documentation including: the school's view of its own performance; monitoring records; information about pupils' progress; improvement planning; and records of behaviour and attendance. They looked closely at records relating to safeguarding and child protection and at policies, including those published on the school's website.

Inspection team

Michael Wardle, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Zoe Westley

Ofsted Inspector

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