

Include - Thames Valley

Burford House, Leppington, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 7WW

Inspection dates

15–17 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietors have not been effective in ensuring that the school meets all the independent school standards.
- Current safeguarding requirements do not meet statutory requirements. Leaders have not ensured that all the necessary pre-employment checks have been made on recently appointed staff. Record-keeping of safeguarding cases is not organised effectively.
- Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. Leaders' plans to improve are not precise enough. They do not check the success of their actions sufficiently well.
- Leaders do not make sure that teaching is effective. Teachers' schemes of work and plans do not meet pupils' learning needs. As a result, pupils are not making enough progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and outcomes are inadequate.
- The curriculum is not broad enough. Pupils say they would like the opportunity to follow a wider range of subjects, including vocational courses.
- Leaders do not ensure that staff follow the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Pupils do not attend school often enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have ensured that pupils' emotional needs are cared for well. Staff communicate well with parents and carers. Pupils and parents have a high regard for staff.
- Most pupils go on to successful placements when they leave the school.
- The recently appointed headteacher and executive vice-principal recognise that standards are too low and have started to improve the school. It is too early to see the impact of their work.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the annex to the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve arrangements to keep pupils safe by:
 - initiating fail-safe procedures so that all the necessary pre-employment checks on staff are always carried out and recorded on the single central register
 - sharpening the recording of safeguarding concerns about pupils, to include a chronological evidence base that can be easily retrieved.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - training teachers so they know exactly how to meet pupils' individual learning needs
 - ensuring that teachers plan schemes of work and effective learning activities to provide exactly the right amount of challenge and support to pupils so they learn well
 - ensuring that teaching finds out exactly what pupils know and can do through effective questioning and assessment procedures
 - strengthening the teaching of literacy so that pupils can practise their reading and writing skills across the curriculum
 - strengthening mathematics and science teaching.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - leaders and those responsible for governance maintaining an accurate view of the school's performance
 - leaders developing action plans that set out exactly what steps to take and how to measure the success of their intended actions
 - developing the curriculum so that it inspires pupils through a broad range of subjects appropriate to their needs.
- Improve behaviour and attendance by:
 - ensuring that staff apply the behaviour policy consistently
 - continuing the unrelenting focus to reduce pupils' absence.
- The school must meet the independent school standards, as set out in the annex of this report.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders at all levels have not acted quickly enough to stem the decline in standards. Recommendations from the last inspection have not all been acted upon. Until very recently, leaders did not have an accurate view of the standards at the school. Leaders' plans to improve the school lack sufficient detail to be effective. Leaders do not measure the results of their actions well enough.
- Recent turbulence in staffing at teacher and leadership level has contributed to uncertainty and instability. A core of loyal permanent staff has made sterling efforts to provide a suitable education for pupils. These staff recognise that recent changes to leadership, in the appointment of a headteacher and assistant vice-principal, have improved matters. However, for too long they have been left to cope without sufficient guidance and support.
- Leaders do not keep a close enough eye on the quality of teaching, or gather evidence to see what is working well and what needs to improve. Staff do not receive the training that they need to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Performance management arrangements have not been effective in identifying staff members' training needs to carry out their role effectively.
- The curriculum is not broad enough for pupils. Pupils do not have access to or choice of a wide variety of subjects, despite the curriculum policy on the website stating that an extensive range is available. Some pupils study no science, or study a limited amount comprising of mainly biological topics. Vocational education is underdeveloped. Pupils voice concerns that they do not have access to courses that are of interest to them. While there are plans to increase the range of courses on offer, for pupils currently at the school the curriculum is still too narrow and does not serve the pupils well enough.
- At the last inspection, the inspector asked the school to develop creative and artistic accredited courses. Pupils take part in art therapy, and while this provides opportunity to explore their emotions and behaviours, it does not provide a range of accredited creative opportunities in the arts.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through an effective personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education accredited programme. Pupils benefit from a number of extra-curricular trips and visits, recently visiting a concert venue in London. They also can choose to experience cooking and gardening activities. On the day of the inspection, pupils shared lunch with staff in a local restaurant.
- Leaders' work to support pupils' emotional development is effective. Through regular discussion about each pupil, staff have a good working knowledge of how to support pupils. Effective communication with parents means that pupils are supported well on a day-to-day basis.
- Newly appointed leaders recognise aspects of the school that are deficient, and are keen to improve the school. They have started to raise expectations and implement their ideas. It is too early to see the impact of their work.

Governance

- Governance arrangements are ineffective. While information about the performance of the school is collected and discussed, it does not give an accurate enough indication of the quality of education that pupils receive. The proprietors have not kept a close enough eye on the impact of the school's work on pupils' learning. Newly appointed staff at governance level have not had time to have enough impact on improving standards.
- The proprietors' checks on the quality of safeguarding are inadequate. While the recently appointed safeguarding lead at proprietor level has a good understanding of current safeguarding requirements, there has not been time for new safeguarding procedures and plans to be embedded. Current arrangements do not ensure that all statutory requirements are met consistently.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have not ensured that records of concerns about pupils are organised sufficiently well. The school completes reports about major safeguarding issues for checking at governance level. However, leaders do not keep an easily scrutinised chronological record of what action was taken, when, and by whom. As a consequence, there is not an organised way to check for emerging patterns to keep a pupil safe from harm. Furthermore, such chronological records cannot be easily shared if they were to be needed urgently.
- The arrangements to ensure that suitable checks are made on new staff are deficient. Not all the required checks have been carried out and recorded on the single central register.
- The school has a safeguarding policy on the school's website. During the inspection, the safeguarding policy was updated to meet the most recent government requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching is inadequate. Teachers do not expect enough of pupils and fail to tailor work provided to pupils' specific educational needs.
- Teachers' planning does not identify exactly what pupils need to learn. The special educational needs coordinator's (SENCo) helpful advice is not communicated effectively to teachers; consequently pupils' individual learning needs are not met. As a result, tasks sometimes lack sufficient challenge for the most able pupils or are too hard for those requiring additional support. Because their learning needs are not being catered for, pupils are often despondent, lack enthusiasm, and are reluctant to engage.
- Teachers do not find out what pupils know and what they can do. Teaching does not sufficiently assess progress against pupils' targets in their individual education plans. Leaders have identified that assessment is weak and have provided training, yet teachers still do not follow the school's assessment policy consistently.
- Typically, teachers' questions do not explore in sufficient depth what pupils already understand. Therefore, teachers' explanations or planned activities can sometimes be too easy or too hard. As a result, pupils are either not challenged or they fall behind. Pupils

make slow progress.

- English teaching is beginning to develop pupils' literacy skills. However, pupils do not receive enough support to improve their reading and writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils' grammatical and spelling mistakes often go unnoticed. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in all subjects.
- In mathematics, teaching does not support pupils well enough. Pupils who struggle with numeracy do not have access to equipment or models to help them understand mathematical concepts. Furthermore, there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to explain how they tackle problem solving in mathematics, especially in real-life scenarios.
- The teaching of science does not provide pupils with exciting content to promote a wonder of the biological, material or physical world. The curriculum is mostly focused on biology, and opportunity for practical experimentation is rare. Teaching does not inspire pupils to learn about scientific matters or develop their investigative skills.
- Teachers' subject knowledge and teaching skills are not sufficiently developed. Teaching in English is stronger because pupils' precise needs are beginning to be recognised. Teachers are keen to hone their skills and would relish the opportunity for more training.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Leaders have not ensured that safeguarding practice keeps pupils safe. Procedures to keep pupils safe are not carried out with sufficient attention to current government statutory requirements. Consequently, pupils' welfare is not sufficiently provided for.
- More positively, work by staff in the school to support pupils' emotional well-being is effective. Pupils join the school with a range of challenging behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. Staff understand their pupils' emotional needs well and provide appropriate support. Pupils learn to manage their frustrations and to express their emotions more appropriately over time. Parents speak positively about the care their children receive from staff. Staff work hard to foster positive working relationships with pupils and their families. Pupils also say they are looked after well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Leaders have developed a workable behaviour policy, but staff do not implement it consistently. Because of adults' variable expectations about standards of behaviour, pupils do not always behave appropriately. Staff do not always challenge pupils' swearing, nor are sanctions for other behavioural issues applied in a consistent manner. In lessons, staff do not always correct pupils should they call out.
- When pupils are managed consistently, they generally behave well. They can be courteous and polite. When being taught well, they readily engage in discussions.
- Should a pupil be absent, prompt action is taken by support staff, and they do everything they can to encourage pupils to attend school. Nevertheless, leaders acknowledge that

attendance is not good enough. On average, one day a week is lost through pupils' absence, and this affects pupils' learning and progress.

- Leaders maintain effective communication with Reading Football Club, which provides additional educational experience for some pupils. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance and behaviour well at this alternative learning provider.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The progress of current pupils, including those who are most able and those eligible for pupil premium funding, is too slow. This is because teaching is not strong enough to meet their individual needs.
- Pupils enter the school having experienced interrupted education. Some pupils arrive with a negative view of education, having been excluded from previous schools. While pupils' emotional needs are met effectively, their learning needs are not catered for sufficiently well, and pupils do not make fast enough academic progress.
- In 2017, pupils did not have the opportunity to achieve a range of accredited qualifications. A number of pupils did not receive an English qualification at all. The majority of pupils obtained a level 1 qualification in mathematics. Leaders did not have any records of pupils achieving wider qualifications. Pupils did not gain qualifications to set them up sufficiently well for their next steps.
- Current pupils are now preparing for a wider range of qualifications, and leaders have plans to extend the curriculum even further in the next academic year.
- Teachers measure pupils' progress through carrying out tests in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology. Progress in science is measured through teacher assessment, although decisions are not moderated with other schools. While these tests give some indication of how well pupils are doing, they do not precisely provide information about pupils' progress towards their individual education-plan goals. Leaders have not identified or tackled pupils' weak progress in basic skills well enough.
- Pupils' literacy skills are underdeveloped. They have weak writing skills, including in formulating sentences and extended pieces of writing, and their spelling is often inaccurate. Too many pupils cannot do well in other subjects because their difficulties with literacy have not been sufficiently addressed.
- Pupils' work shows that they make weak progress in their mathematical skills. This is because teaching does not address pupils' needs precisely enough.
- The few pupils who attend Reading Football Club are making good progress in their sporting and social skills. Pupils say they achieve well at this provision.
- Nearly all pupils go on successful placements after they leave the school. Leaders monitor pupils after leaving and most pupils are successful in sustaining their placement in further education, apprenticeships or other educational placements.

School details

Unique reference number	134415
DfE registration number	867/6035
Inspection number	10044144

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 category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Catch22
Headteacher	Claudia Giarrusso
Annual fees (day pupils)	£15,686 to £60,929
Telephone number	01344 428 931
Website	www.catch-22.org.uk/services/include-thames-valley
Email address	Claudia.Giarrusso@catch-22.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–12 February 2015

Information about this school

- Include – Thames Valley is an independent day special school which opened in 2003. The school is owned by Catch22, a not-for-profit social enterprise business that, among other services, runs seven schools across the country. Since the last inspection, the school has moved premises from Wokingham to Bracknell.
- The school provides full-time education for up to 25 pupils in the age range 13 to 16 years. Pupils have typically been excluded from mainstream schools as a result of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are currently 12 pupils on roll, all of whom have an education, health and care plan.

- The proprietor has set up governance for all Catch22 schools through a central executive principal, executive vice-principal and a senior team.
- The headteacher, appointed in April 2018, is responsible for three schools over four sites. The curriculum and learning leader runs the school on a day-to-day basis.
- The school uses Reading Football Club as an alternative learning provider.
- The school's previous inspection was in February 2015.

Information about this inspection

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the curriculum and learning leader, the executive vice-principal, the SENCo, and a number of other staff. The inspector held a telephone call with the executive principal, the Catch22 safeguarding lead and the school improvement adviser.
- The inspector toured the school site with the headteacher. Pupils and staff were observed working in lessons and around the school. Pupils' work from a range of subjects was scrutinised. The inspector spoke with a number of pupils.
- The inspector held telephone conversations with parents.
- A number of documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, safeguarding documents, and minutes from meetings. The inspector looked at the Ofsted parent and staff surveys.
- The inspector reviewed the school's website.

Inspection team

Sue Child, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory statements.

The school must meet the following 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, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work 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 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 teaching at the school–
 - (3)(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so they develop their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - (3)(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
 - (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)(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
 - (3)(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use that information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietors promote good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

- (18)(1) The standard in this paragraph relates to the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than proprietor and supply staff.
- (18)(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - (18)(2)(b) that no such person carries out the work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction.
- (21)(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
 - 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff (“S”) appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether–
 - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
 - 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff (“S”), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

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

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