

Auckland Education Centre

Bosworth Wood Campus, Auckland Drive, Solihull, West Midlands B36 0DD

Inspection dates

9–10 October 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

- Leaders and the management committee have not ensured that arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose.
- Leaders do not have an accurate view of the weaknesses in the school. They do not have capacity to drive the necessary improvements.
- The number of exclusions is high and is rising. Leaders sometimes exclude pupils unlawfully. The number of exclusions reported to the management committee last academic year was inaccurate.
- Systems for managing pupils who display highly challenging behaviours are not well organised. This puts staff and pupils at risk.
- Pupils who are internally or externally excluded, or who are absent regularly, are not provided with opportunities to catch up in their learning.
- The management committee has not put a sufficient focus on the quality of education and the safety of pupils and staff.
- Improvement plans lack precise timescales or measurable criteria to judge if actions have been successful.
- Leaders carry out checks on the quality of teaching. However, leaders' suggestions for improvement lack a clear focus on the quality of teaching and learning.
- A high number of staff are temporary. Induction and training for these staff have not had sufficient impact. As a result, they lack the understanding and confidence to manage pupils effectively.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate. Too often, expectations are not high enough and activities do not capture pupils' interest. As a result, outcomes for pupils are not good enough.
- The evaluation of additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport, and for the pupil premium, is weak. The PE and sport premium has not been used well.

The school has the following strengths

- Through a period of instability, leaders have secured a sense of teamwork among staff.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are generally positive. Staff are calm and caring.
- Some established staff teach effectively and manage pupils' behaviour well.
- The majority of pupils' attendance improves during their time at school.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently address the serious weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements by:
 - carrying out and recording all the necessary pre-appointment checks of staff
 - making sure that the school's site is safe and fit for purpose
 - reviewing the safety procedures for the use of the external fire exits
 - ceasing the use of unlawful exclusions
 - ensuring that additional staff with a responsibility for safeguarding have appropriate understanding to lead safeguarding in the absence of the safeguarding lead
 - providing further safeguarding training, so that all staff have an effective understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management and make sure that there is the appropriate capacity to make improvements by:
 - making sure that senior leaders have an accurate view of the weaknesses in the school
 - reviewing senior leaders' responsibilities, so that roles are manageable and swift improvements can be made
 - sharpening improvement plans to ensure that actions have specific timescales and measurable criteria for determining success
 - ensuring that leaders' checks on the quality of teaching provide teachers with meaningful next steps of what they need to improve in their teaching
 - making certain that the management committee puts sufficient focus on scrutinising the quality of education and the safety of pupils
 - evaluating for the use of the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding, and the pupil premium funding, more effectively.
- Improve the management of behaviour and reduce exclusions by:
 - providing further guidance and training for new staff, so that they are able to manage behaviour incidents confidently
 - putting in place a well-organised and safe process for managing pupils who display highly challenging behaviour
 - accurately reporting exclusion rates to the management committee

- making sure that paperwork for recording behaviour incidents is accurate and shows that appropriate follow-up support has taken place
 - continue to improve attendance, so that pupils who are persistently absent do not miss out on their education.
- Secure consistently good teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by:
- making sure that staff, particularly temporary or new staff, have consistently high expectations of what pupils can and should do
 - ensuring that teachers plan tasks that are interesting and challenging for pupils
 - ensuring that pupils who are absent, withdrawn from class for poor behaviour or excluded have an opportunity to catch up on their learning
 - giving pupils opportunities to use practical apparatus in mathematics to help deepen their understanding of number and calculation
 - ensuring that the school library is used to help develop a love of reading
 - making sure that curriculum plans are followed by staff and that they provide pupils with appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Lack of effective leadership, coupled with a lack of continuity in staffing, has resulted in a steep decline in the quality of education and the safety of pupils.
- Interim senior leadership posts, initially only meant to be in place for a term, have been in place for over a year. A new headteacher has only recently been appointed and will start in November 2018. This process has created a period of uncertainty and instability. Leadership is extremely fragile and the interim centre manager's capacity has been overstretched. Several established staff have left the school and have been replaced by temporary staff.
- Leaders are overgenerous in their evaluation of the school. There is no awareness of the serious issues in relation to safeguarding, behaviour and in the quality of teaching. There has been a lack of strategic oversight in these areas, both from senior leaders and from the management committee.
- Improvement plans are not fit for purpose. Some of the outlined priorities are appropriate. However, plans do not have precise timescales outlining when actions will take place. Leaders have no way of knowing if their actions have been successful because plans lack sufficient measurable criteria.
- Although leaders carry out checks on the quality of teaching, the feedback that staff receive is ineffective. Points for improvement are too often focused on the use of resources or behaviour management, rather than the quality of teaching and learning. This contributes to the quality of teaching being inconsistent and showing little sign of improvement.
- The lack of continuity in staffing has been difficult for leaders to manage. The induction and training for new staff have not had the desired impact. For example, some temporary staff have not had sufficient information about pupils' behaviour needs. Due to the highly complex needs of some pupils, this puts pupils and staff at risk.
- The leadership of behaviour is a concern. Leaders are not providing staff with enough support for managing pupils who display highly challenging behaviour. The lack of clear procedures leaves staff and pupils in a vulnerable position. Pupils with the most complex needs are not being managed well and exclusions are rising. Leaders have not reported exclusions from the last academic year accurately to the management committee. Some pupils are being unlawfully excluded and sent home.
- Leaders have not used the PE and sport premium effectively. There is no plan in place to utilise the funding for this current academic year. Leaders did not sufficiently evaluate the impact of last year's funding. As a result, pupils are not getting experiences that they should be getting. For example, there are no lunchtime physical activity or sports clubs. Leaders have not reported the proportion of pupils who can swim 25 meters by the end of Year 6.
- Pupil premium funding is not routinely evaluated for impact. Leaders have put in place some thoughtful strategies for disadvantaged pupils. However, it is not possible for leaders or governors to know if these strategies are proving successful because of the

weaknesses in their approach to improvement planning.

- Under difficult circumstances, the interim centre manager has remained committed to the school. She has helped to sustain a sense of teamwork. Leaders and staff are committed to working with pupils who can present with extremely challenging behaviours.
- Leaders have developed effective systems for analysing pupils' progress. These systems help leaders to become increasingly aware of where pupils are doing well and where others require additional support. They have introduced testing and moderation to support staff to make judgements about attainment and progress.
- Curriculum planning demonstrates a clear progression of skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects. However, sometimes, the curriculum plan does not translate into the actual taught experience for pupils. Due to the inconsistencies in teaching, some pupils' knowledge and understanding do not develop well across the broad range of national curriculum subjects.
- Pupils have some positive enrichment opportunities. Pupils benefit from being taught art and music by specialists. They learn about different artists, such as Michelangelo. Pupils also access music lessons. A range of curriculum visits to places such as the Think Tank Museum, a Roman fort, a woodland area and a donkey sanctuary help to enhance pupils' experiences.
- The teaching of culture is a strength. This is noticeable in pupils' books and in the range of enrichment activities provided. For example, pupils visited a Sikh temple. They also cook food aligned to the different cultures that they study.
- The local authority carried out an evaluation of alternative provision in 2017. This resulted in a 'management of change' process because the proposals would have an impact on pupils, parents, carers and staff at the school. The management committee felt that this process could have been managed more effectively. Consequently, the local authority adapted and improved the consultation procedure.
- Newly qualified teachers must not be appointed.

Governance of the school

- Committee members have not provided sufficient challenge to senior leaders on the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes or safeguarding arrangements. Over the past 12 months, discussions in committee meetings have been dominated by the 'management of change' process.
- Committee members are aware of some the weaknesses in the school. They identified that the school improvement plan needs refining and that aspects of the single central record were not, but now are, compliant with statutory requirements.
- The management committee has not always received accurate information from senior leaders about aspects of school improvement. For example, the centre manager's report on exclusions for the last academic year reported a significantly smaller number of exclusions than the actual number that took place.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. A lack of oversight from leaders and the management committee has led to a weak safeguarding culture. Other leaders responsible for safeguarding have been overstretched with other leadership tasks. There is no one with the depth of understanding to lead safeguarding in the absence of the designated safeguarding lead.
- Leaders' scrutiny of pre-appointment checks of staff has not been thorough. All necessary checks have now been completed and this provides leaders with some assurance about the backgrounds of staff. However, a number of these checks were only completed when the issue was identified by the inspection team. This is unacceptable. The local authority reviewed this aspect of the school's work in the summer but did not identify the full extent of the weaknesses.
- Staff's understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities is inconsistent. While training has taken place, some staff do not have a sufficient understanding of statutory guidance. One member of staff has not been given any safeguarding guidance at all.
- The school site and procedures for using external doors present a safety risk. The use of external fire doors and other internally locked doors led to several unsafe incidents during the inspection.
- Pupils who present with highly challenging behaviours are not managed consistently well. This presents a risk to those pupils and the staff who support them. Leaders have not fully considered the appropriate supervision levels or procedures for managing challenging incidents. Some staff are left alone with pupils who are exhibiting extreme behaviours. Sometimes, temporary staff manage challenging incidents without the presence of more established staff.
- The system for reporting and recording concerns is effective. Where staff have been suitably trained and understand the training, they are quick to raise concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. Her follow-up is appropriate and referrals to the local authority are done in a timely way.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Staff changes, coupled with ineffective leadership, have had a negative impact on the quality of teaching. Leaders are unaware of the extent of the issues and have not provided good enough guidance to staff, particularly those who are new to the school. As a result, the overall quality of teaching is weak.
- Teachers are committed to the pupils. They are calm and sensitive to pupils' emotional needs. There is some stronger teaching, particularly from some established teachers. In these cases, teachers use their assessment information to plan learning that is interesting and suitably challenging for pupils. However, pupils' progress is being hampered by the weaker teaching in the school. When this occurs, staff do not have high enough expectations. Pupils are often given worksheets that lack challenge and increase boredom levels. As a result, pupils switch off and behaviour deteriorates.
- Some pupils miss a lot of learning time because of internal exclusions, external exclusions or from being absent from the centre. There is no current system for

ensuring that these pupils can catch up on any work that they may have missed. Therefore, some pupils move through school with gaps in their learning.

- Mathematics teaching is not strong enough. Work does not challenge some pupils, especially the most able mathematicians. Pupils who are finding number and calculation work more difficult are not given appropriate support to develop their understanding, for example by using practical apparatus.
- There is clear evidence that staff are providing pupils with opportunities to practise their handwriting and spelling skills. Pupils do not apply these skills consistently into longer pieces of writing, but there are signs of their skills improving.
- Reading records show that some pupils receive regular and effective one-to-one support for developing their reading from an adult. As a result, some pupils' reading skills develop well. The library is regularly used for internal exclusions for pupils who have not behaved well. During the inspection, the library was used for exclusions for much of the day. Leaders have not given sufficient thought to how this may be negatively impacting on promoting a love of reading among pupils.
- Teachers use tests, and other assessments, to evaluate how well pupils are progressing in their learning. Some teachers use this information well and plan learning that meets the needs of pupils.
- The four teaching spaces have been well set up by staff. Pupils' work is celebrated on display and the learning environment helps some pupils to settle well. For example, colours of displays and visual timetables have been established to meet the needs of pupils with specific special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is inadequate. Some pupils lack self-confidence and are unclear about how to be successful learners. While there are some thoughtful strategies in place for pupils' personal development, too many pupils miss out on these opportunities due to absence from school, exclusions or by being withdrawn from class for poor behaviour. The use of unlawful exclusion shows little regard for pupils' personal development or welfare.
- Pupils' welfare is put at risk by the school's failure to manage their safety and the weak management of highly challenging behaviour. Some pupils put themselves, or are put, in situations where they could be unsafe.
- While inspectors found no concerns in relation to bullying, leaders have only just implemented a central log of bullying incidents. As a result, there has been a lack of oversight and analysis of bullying incidents over time.
- Pupils' physical development is not as well considered as it could be. There is a lack of organised and purposeful physical activities for pupils to get involved with at lunchtimes. The PE and sport premium has not been used to provide additional opportunities for physical activity and school sport.
- The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about how to keep themselves safe. There are themed weeks on different topics, such as anti-bullying and internet

safety. Local police officers come into school to teach pupils about safety.

- Some pupils with SEND have their emotional needs well met. For example, pupils with autism have been given specific additional support to help them have a better understanding of themselves.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Pupils who display extremely challenging behaviours are not provided with a consistently high level of support. During the inspection, unsafe incidents were observed by inspectors. Several pupils climbed through windows, scaled boundary fences, locked themselves away from adults, or climbed to the top of basketball goals. Some of the new or temporary staff do not have the confidence, or support, to manage incidents before they escalate.
- When learning activities lack appropriate challenge, pupils' behaviour and attitudes deteriorate. Some staff lack confidence in dealing with these behaviours and do not follow the school's behaviour system consistently in class.
- The leadership and management of behaviour are weak. Staff do not receive the support they need. Systems to manage behaviour lack clarity. As a result, incidents of poor behaviour happen regularly and exclusions are rising. Last academic year, there were 49 fixed-term exclusions in addition to several unlawful ones.
- Leaders do not routinely and strategically evaluate behaviour incidents. Consequently, there is a lack of understanding of patterns in pupils' behaviour over time. Some paperwork is disorganised and has information missing. Follow-up support from behaviour incidents for pupils and adults sometimes lacks depth.
- Some established staff manage behaviour skilfully. They use effective strategies to de-escalate pupils' behaviour, including using physical interventions in a timely and safe way. Pupils' behaviour is better in the classes where the teaching is stronger.
- Attendance procedures are managed effectively. Some pupils' absence rates are still quite high. So far this year, overall absence rates have increased compared to last academic year. However, the local authority provided convincing evidence to show that the vast majority of pupils' attendance improves during their time at Auckland Education Centre. Most pupils who have been permanently excluded have better attendance rates than in their previous school. Furthermore, most pupils who are dual registered and attend for a ten-week behaviour placement also show an improvement in their attendance when compared to their other school.
- Leaders have implemented a system for rewarding positive behaviour. Staff complete a behaviour points chart with pupils at the end of lessons. Pupils receive awards in assembly and golden time at the end of the week. This system is proving successful for some pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The school's assessment information and the work in pupils' books demonstrate that too many pupils make inadequate progress over time. Pupils who are excluded,

withdrawn from class for poor behaviour or who are absent regularly make the least progress and miss out on their education.

- Weaknesses in the quality of teaching also have a noticeable impact on pupils' progress. Too often, work is too easy, and pupils' basic skills do not develop in the way that they should. Where teaching is stronger, work is well matched to pupils' prior learning. Therefore, their skills, knowledge and understanding develop well over time.
- Outcomes in mathematics are not high enough. Work is either too easy or pupils do not receive the support they need to develop their mathematical understanding. Gaps in pupils' mathematical understanding have a negative impact on their confidence in the subject.
- Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding do not develop well across the range of national curriculum subjects. The curriculum plan that leaders have put in place does not translate into what pupils experience. This is particularly the case for history and geography. The use of specialists in art and music helps pupils to make better progress in these subjects.
- Pupils' handwriting and spelling skills are starting to develop positively. Sometimes, they do not apply these skills consistently into longer pieces of writing. In classes with stronger teaching, pupils' reading and spelling skills are generally improving well.
- Additional support that is put in place for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is not routinely evaluated for impact by leaders. Therefore, it is difficult for leaders to know if the support is proving successful. Some of the wider assessment information for these groups of pupils shows that their progress is inconsistent.
- There are other outcomes that are positive for pupils during their time at the school. Pupils who have been on part-time timetables at their previous school settle well and attend full-time during their time at Auckland Education Centre. Some pupils who are at the school for a ten-week behaviour placement are reintegrated into mainstream schools effectively. The emotional and social progress for these pupils is positive.

School details

Unique reference number	134534
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10019519

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	18
Appropriate authority	The management committee
Chair	Mrs Deborah Wilson
Interim centre manager	Mrs Annie Smith
Telephone number	0121 779 8049
Website	www.auckland.solihull.sch.uk
Email address	801office@auckland.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 September 2013

Information about this school

- The school is a pupil referral unit that takes pupils from ages 5 to 11. Pupils are either at the school because they have been permanently excluded, or because they are on a ten-week behaviour placement, with a view of being reintegrated into their mainstream school. The school currently has pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The interim centre manager and interim deputy centre manager began their roles in September 2017. Prior to this, they both held other long-standing positions in the school. A new headteacher will start at the school in November 2018.
- There is a much higher proportion of boys that attend the school than girls. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding and the proportion of pupils with SEND are above national averages.
- Most of pupils' education takes place on the school site. However, pupils attend woodland activities and swimming off-site.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all of the key stage 2 classes across a range of subjects. Pupils' books were also looked at for the current academic year and last academic year.
- Meetings were held with the interim centre manager, a staff group and the office manager. The lead inspector had two meetings with representatives from the local authority and a meeting with three management committee members, including the chair.
- Inspectors talked individually with pupils to gather their views about the school, their behaviour and their learning.
- A wide range of school documentation was scrutinised, including school policies, the school's improvement plan and information relating to pupils' achievement. The school's records relating to child protection, behaviour and attendance were also examined.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and no responses to the pupils' questionnaire. There were also no responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Matt Meckin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Lowry	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Ashley	Ofsted Inspector

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