

Jefferson House

Bridge House, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury SK6 2SR

Inspection dates

26–28 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The director of education, lead teachers and other directors have a strong vision and understanding of what is needed to move the school forward. This is shared by the dedicated staff team who work very hard to ensure good outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils joining the school often have large gaps in their learning because of their social and emotional difficulties. As a result of good teaching over time, pupils make up lost ground to achieve worthwhile qualifications, usually after two years.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress from their starting points.
- All pupils follow bespoke timetables in a range of subjects. Wherever possible, leaders provide courses which match pupils' interests.
- Systems to ensure that pupils are protected and safe from risks are strong.
- The school has an effective behaviour management system and pupils are aware of the boundaries set for them. Pupils learn how to manage their feelings and behave well.
- Teaching is consistently good. However, there are some missed opportunities to promote pupils' literacy skills.
- Provision for pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. The Well-being for Life programme takes pupils through three stages. Firstly, they are helped to feel safe and secure. Gradually, the strategy builds resilience. Finally, pupils learn to become independent and lifelong learners.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values are fostered effectively across the whole curriculum.
- Governance is excellent. The directors have detailed systems for monitoring the quality of the school and know it well. Together with all staff, they ensure that the independent school standards are met.
- The school is currently developing a new tracking and assessment system, which is still in the very early stages. At present, the system does not provide enough information about pupils' progress in different subjects.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' literacy skills by, for example, providing more opportunities across the curriculum for them to write at length.
- Develop and improve the new system for tracking pupils' progress across all subjects so that staff are better able to plan work which matches pupils' abilities and to contribute to school improvement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders are ambitious to build on the success of the school. They are never complacent, striving to further improve what the school offers. Their own evaluation of the quality of Jefferson House is largely accurate. Issues from the previous inspection have been addressed.
- Leaders have high expectations of staff. All staff are enthusiastic and work hard to ensure that pupils make good progress from their different starting points, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The new headteacher has worked in the school since October 2018. This has provided valuable induction time working alongside the previous headteacher, who is moving to another school within the company. The new headteacher has already introduced several innovations to improve marking and the homework system and has set high expectations for the presentation of pupils' work.
- The school is currently developing a new system for tracking pupils' progress, which is in the very early stages. This means that data about progress is not as clear as it could be.
- The company has a very effective performance management system. The director of education sets targets for all staff, who have regular training when needed and annual appraisals.
- The curriculum is limited because of the small size of the school. However, each pupil has a tailor-made curriculum to suit their different needs and interests. All pupils study English, mathematics, science, information technology, food studies and personal, social and health education (PSHE). The school attempts to provide courses which follow pupils' interests, for example some pupils are also studying art, music, history and geography.
- A wide range of enrichment activities, such as visiting sports centres, museums and galleries, support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about British values and other faiths and cultures by undertaking projects such as research on both World Wars, visits to law courts and places of worship, and experiencing food from other cultures.
- The school keeps in regular contact with parents and carers so that they are fully informed about their children's progress.

Governance

- Governance is excellent.
- The headteacher reports weekly to the director of education on what is happening in school in terms of learning, behaviour and attendance. This information is shared at fortnightly directors' meetings. This means that all directors are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses and have a detailed knowledge of the school.
- The directors have a wide range of expertise in education, therapy, business and safeguarding. Consequently, they have the necessary skills to manage the school effectively.

- All the necessary policies are completed to a high standard. These are reviewed annually, and staff have the opportunity to contribute to them. The school does not have a website but all policies are available in school for parents and placing local authorities to examine.
- The directors, working with school staff, are meticulous in ensuring that all the independent school standards are met.
- The administration and oversight of the school's statutory responsibilities are thorough and effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has the highest priority. Staff training on matters relating to safety is thorough and frequent. All directors have completed safer recruitment training. Risk assessments are comprehensive documents and cover different types of activities. The school's safeguarding policy is a model of good practice which includes all government guidelines and up-to-date requirements.
- The school has a well-thought-through plan for dealing with all possible types of emergency.
- All required checks to ensure staff suitability are completed diligently and recorded accurately.
- A director for the premises oversees the health and safety practices in each school and ensures that the buildings and equipment are safe for pupils and staff. The site is exceptionally well maintained.
- The site is safe and secure. Entrance is through locked gates, only opened once a person has been identified.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and other staff establish positive relationships so that they are able to manage behaviour well and ensure that pupils learn in a calm and orderly working environment. There is very effective teamwork between teaching and support staff.
- Staff set high expectations for pupils' concentration, attitudes to learning and presentation of work. Pupils respond well to these expectations.
- Staff use questioning well to check understanding and encourage pupils to think more deeply about their learning.
- Most pupils are motivated to work hard. Pupils work well independently and manage their time effectively. This was illustrated during the inspection when pupils were working on their art portfolios without the need for any supervision.
- Pupils enjoy work in mathematics when it is linked to real-life situations such as planning and costing a package holiday abroad or budgeting from a salary.
- In English, pupils cover a variety of different genres but there are too few opportunities to extend their skills, for example by writing at length.

- Pupils respond well to the high level of individual attention they receive, for example close supervision when conducting science experiments and one-to-one tuition in GCSE subjects.
- Pupils enjoy the social and practical activities which are part of the curriculum. These include working together to cook lunch and visiting activity centres, such as an indoor climbing wall.
- Each pupil has a homework timetable to ensure that learning continues beyond the classroom.
- Individual education plans are helpful documents which identify the support each pupil needs and set challenging but achievable targets for different subjects. All pupils currently in the school have SEND.
- Pupils have a baseline assessment within the first four weeks of joining the school and this is used to measure their subsequent progress. Currently, the new system of tracking progress is underdeveloped.
- Nevertheless, all staff are aware of each pupil's progress through regular meetings between the head of therapy, care and educational staff. Weekly targets are set for each pupil on Mondays and reviewed at the end of the week.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils respond extremely well to the Well-being for Life programme over the two years that they are in the school. Within this programme, they consider their previous experiences and behaviour and learn to become resilient and self-aware and to take responsibility for their own safety.
- The school's very effective provision to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables them to grow in self-esteem, self-confidence and self-discipline.
- Pupils enjoy their work on life skills when they look at topics such as managing money and applying for college courses and jobs.
- Pupils are well aware of the Equality Act 2010 and what is meant by the protected characteristics. One pupil produced a well-researched presentation on the role of the law in protecting the rights of different kinds of people.
- Pupils feel well informed through PSHE sessions about the hazards of smoking, drug abuse and alcohol. They feel less well informed about the safe use of the internet and social media. It is a deliberate school policy that, in the first phases of their therapy, pupils do not have access to mobile telephones or the internet.
- Pupils are enthusiastic in their support for different charities and enjoy taking on responsibility for organising different events. These have included coffee mornings and lunches for families, friends and staff. Pupils send out invitations, make posters and bake cakes for each event.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils confirm that bullying is rare and is usually limited to name-calling. There are very few entries in the school's bullying log.
- Exclusions are very rare and are always internal.
- The school is successful in helping pupils to change their previously challenging behaviour. This means that lessons almost always run smoothly and that the school operates as an orderly community with a pleasant atmosphere.
- Attendance is high. Many pupils have a record of 100% attendance. In the current academic year, overall attendance so far is 99%.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Across the school, in all subject areas, pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly in English, mathematics and science. This is seen in the outcomes of various external examinations and from a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks.
- Pupils achieve a range of qualifications, including GCSE subjects, sometimes at AS level in the case of older students, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network courses and various entry level vocational courses such as first aid, art awards, sport and fitness, and horticulture.
- In mathematics, pupils present their work neatly and their books show mastery of a variety of different mathematical techniques.
- In science, pupils carry out experiments and investigations and make strong progress. Their work is very well presented.
- In English, pupils cover many different genres, such as play scripts and creative writing. However, a lot of work is done on worksheets and stuck into books so there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in producing longer pieces of independent writing.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and most reach the level expected for their age.
- The school provides effective advice on careers, using impartial external providers. In PSHE lessons, they learn how to write effective application forms.
- As a result of the school's therapy programme and the good progress pupils make in their academic studies, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

School details

Unique reference number	142332
DfE registration number	896/6002
Inspection number	10067925

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 for boys with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	5
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Care4children
Chair	Tariq Verpalen
Headteacher	Cerasela Raducanescu
Annual fees (day pupils)	£24,000
Telephone number	03455 215 155
Website	www.care4children.co.uk
Email address	tariq.verpalen@care4children.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 November–1 December 2016

Information about this school

- Jefferson House is an independent school operated and owned by Care4children. The school opened in September 2015. It is one of 11 schools in the Care4children group, based in different parts of the country.
- The school has one full-time teacher and instructor. All other staff, including those who provide one-to-one specialist teaching and pupil support, are part-time.

- The school aims to 'offer unconditional positive regard to all young people, irrespective of their background' and to 'achieve demonstrable and measurable positive outcomes by putting the young people at the centre of everything we do'.
- The school caters for five boys, all of whom have social and emotional difficulties. Some also have behavioural difficulties. All pupils are in the care of various placing authorities.
- Most pupils attend the school for approximately two years. The school offers a two-year education and therapeutic programme. All pupils are currently in the first phase of this programme.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not have a website. However, all necessary documentation, including safeguarding and complaints policies and procedures and admissions criteria, are made available to parents and placing authorities.
- The school occasionally uses outside providers for students who are 16 years and over. No pupils were attending alternative provision at the time of this inspection.
- A new headteacher took over the role in the week of the inspection. Two new part-time teachers began their appointments in the week of the inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed all pupils in different lessons, including English, mathematics, science and careers education. She scrutinised the work in pupils' books in these subjects, as well as work in history, geography and art folders.
- The inspector held meetings with the director of education, the headteacher and other members of staff. She had a telephone conversation with the school therapist.
- The inspector met formally with a group of pupils and had informal conversations with all of them.
- There were no responses to the staff questionnaire but the inspector was able to meet and talk to different members of staff.
- There were no responses to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire.
- The inspector examined a wide range of documents. These included safeguarding policies and procedures, risk assessments and health and safety systems, the school's review of its own performance, checks on the quality of teaching and learning, records of attendance and behaviour, and the school improvement plan.

Inspection team

Judith Straw, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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