

The Retreat

Bridge House, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury SK6 2SR

Inspection dates

3–5 July 2018

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The lead teacher has a strong positive impact on the quality of provision at the school. She works exceptionally hard to improve progress and outcomes for pupils.
- The proprietor and the head of education for Care4Children give strong support to the lead teacher. A three-phase programme, developed by clinicians at the company, is most effective. It provides a clear structure of support that leads to outstanding personal outcomes for pupils.
- A broad, varied and interesting curriculum engages pupils. Its focus on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is most effective. The creative aspects of this curriculum are highly motivating.
- Safeguarding is strong. Leaders ensure that pupils feel safe at all times. This feeling of security adds to their growing confidence.
- A cohesive team of education staff, clinicians and carers make strong relationships with pupils so that they become re-engaged in education.
- Leaders have ensured that all independent school standards are met.
- The head of education for Care4Children visits the school regularly. However, there is not yet an established well-structured programme of monitoring. As a result, monitoring of teaching and learning has not had a strong enough focus on pupils' progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that individuals have the work they need. However, they do not give harder work to the most able pupils when they are ready for it, which can restrict progress.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to write during English lessons. However, they are rarely encouraged to edit and improve their writing so that they fully understand how to write with increasing skill.
- Teachers work hard to improve pupils' spoken language, reading and writing skills. However, pupils' use of vocabulary is limited. Consequently, their spoken language and writing do not improve fast enough and they do not always understand the words they read.
- Pupils have made excellent progress in their attendance and punctuality. However, teachers do not motivate pupils to behave well in all lessons. As a result, their work suffers.

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?

- Improve leadership by ensuring that:
 - the monitoring of lessons and checks on pupils' work have a clear impact on strengthening teaching and pupils' progress.
- Improve teaching by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are challenged with harder work when they are ready for it
 - pupils have good opportunities across the curriculum to widen their vocabularies
 - pupils have opportunities to edit and improve their writing.
- Improve behaviour by ensuring that:
 - pupils are motivated to behave well and concentrate in all lessons.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. They have created a cohesive teaching, learning, clinical and pastoral care team that has a significant and positive impact on the progress of pupils, both academically and personally.
- The proprietor, head of education, lead teacher and clinical therapist have significant skills that contribute to the purposeful management of the school. They provide effective support to the pupils as a result of their experience of education and understanding of care and therapeutic support. They know what they want for the school and make effective plans towards meeting their goals.
- Leaders support staff through a strong programme of professional development. This programme motivates staff to improve their performance. In addition, leaders support and encourage staff to continue to develop their practice both in behaviour management and in teaching. All staff have effective induction programmes that prepare them for working with pupils who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. As a result, staff manage pupils well.
- The three-phase programme of care and support, created by Care4Children clinicians, ensures that pupils have a structured journey from their devastating previous lives to a restored ability to learn and take control of their own futures. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress socially and emotionally.
- A strong culture of safeguarding contributes to pupils' feelings of security. Consequently, pupils, who have come from situations where they have not been safe, are able to settle down and develop confidence in themselves as learners.
- Between them, the team of staff provide significant expertise in safeguarding and behaviour management, clinical care and teaching. As a result, the school has a strong team to cater for pupils' personal and academic needs.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, including an array of opportunities for vocational experiences. Along with a wide range of academic subjects like English, mathematics, science and geography, art and music also have a high priority. Consequently, pupils have experiences that they have never had before and become absorbed in their learning. One pupil said, 'Art and music help me to express myself.'
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have many opportunities to gain accreditations and certificates for their work. This is in addition to their achievements in academic subjects. As a result, pupils have begun to develop confidence in themselves as learners.
- Staff morale is high. All staff who completed the Ofsted inspection survey indicated that they very much enjoy working at the school and that the management are considerate of their well-being. One member of staff praised the new lead teacher who has strengthened the creative work at the school.
- Before pupils join the school, leaders work closely with parents, carers and other agencies to gather information, which assists a smooth transition process. Frequent assessments of pupils' progress, both academically and socially, enable leaders to plan appropriate

individual learning experiences.

- The school keeps good records of all pupils and their individual needs. Records of individuals' behaviour and starting points are thorough and provide a reliable basis for discussing their academic and social progress. Strong leadership ensures that pupils' individual needs are catered for well.
- Parents and carers are highly supportive of the new lead teacher who has made significant positive changes to the school. They very much appreciate the support their children are given to make a new start. The pupils themselves are also highly appreciative. A typical remark was, 'She is dedicated and wants the best for us.'
- Leaders have begun to undertake monitoring of lessons so that they can make sure that pupils are receiving effective teaching. However, they have not yet developed a strong programme of monitoring activities. As a result, teachers do not receive as much support to improve their practice as they could.

Governance

- The proprietor and the head of education ensure that one of them visits the school every week. They maintain very close contact with the school by telephone and email and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school's action plans are suitable and have helped leaders to ensure that the school consistently meets the independent school standards. They know the pupils and their needs exceptionally well and make sure that the school is well resourced. As a result, the lead teacher and her staff provide effective support and guidance for the pupils so that they make good progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders provide the school's safeguarding policy to parents and carers on request. Leaders have created a strong culture of shared responsibility for protecting pupils. As a result, staff are vigilant and highly responsive to pupils' changing needs.
- All staff are appropriately trained in all aspects of safeguarding. Appropriate records are kept that detail safeguarding concerns and actions. Staff are well trained to recognise signs of extremism and radicalisation.
- The school buildings are well maintained with high standards of cleanliness and safety measures. Fire evacuation routes are clearly indicated. The building is regularly checked for fire risk and other safety hazards. Risk assessments for all aspects of school life, and for individual pupils where necessary, are rigorously maintained. The premises meet all the independent school standards.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good. Consequently, pupils make good progress. Pupils have lessons in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT), as well as geography, history, Spanish, art and music. Personal, health, social and economic (PHSE) education lessons include religious studies. Consequently, pupils increase their knowledge and skills from learning a wide range of subjects.

- Pupils gain confidence from being involved in a variety of opportunities like horse riding, dog walking and cooking. Pupils are most enthusiastic about their weekly horse riding lessons. They have become confident and able riders and enjoy working with animals. They make good progress in learning cookery skills.
- Pupils in the sixth form work alongside the other pupils because the numbers of pupils are small. They have mathematics, English, biology, ICT, music and art lessons, as well as a variety of vocational opportunities. They follow Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) courses. As a result, their horizons are widened, and they develop new knowledge and skills to prepare them for their lives as adults.
- A strong emphasis on art and music enhances the curriculum. Because of the good subject knowledge of the new lead teacher, pupils have made good progress in their composition skills. They write melodies and songs using a keyboard with appropriate software. This has enabled pupils to be nominated for music composition awards. All the pupils have been taught to sing well. They are able performers who have gained confidence from these lessons. All pupils have good portfolios of artwork and say that they enjoy the work.
- Teachers make effective links between different areas of the curriculum. During this inspection, for example, music and composition were linked to PHSE education, where the teacher started the lesson with a song known to the pupils about prejudice. They enjoyed singing the song. This then led to a discussion about travelling in a railway coach with people who are different and encouraged reflection about British values.
- The classroom is equipped with good resources which are used well in teaching. For example, the mathematics teacher presented images on the board that made the congruence of triangles clear to the pupils. The lead teacher uses a wide variety of music equipment to enhance music lessons. As a result, pupils have good opportunities to make progress.
- The recent part-time employment of sessional tutors for teaching English and mathematics has ensured that pupils have lessons from teachers with good subject knowledge. Close liaison with these teachers ensures that lesson sequences are followed when the sessional teachers are not in school.
- A strong emphasis on the development of reading skills ensures that pupils read in all lessons. Teachers also encourage them to read outside the school day for homework. Regular reading assessment ensures that their reading progress is tracked. However, it has also shown that the majority of pupils do not know enough words in order to write well and to understand everything they read.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to write about a variety of subjects, in English lessons and in other curriculum lessons. However, they do not ensure that they have opportunities to edit and improve their writing. Consequently, they do not fully understand the skills needed to become a capable writer.
- Pupils arriving in the school take assessments so that teachers can accurately establish their starting points. Teachers can identify gaps in learning, often caused by previous absence from school, so that these gaps can be filled. Pupils often work individually with teachers so that they can catch up in particular subjects. In this way, teachers address the different needs of pupils who all have different starting points. However, when the pupils are working as a whole group, the most able pupils often have to wait before they

can get on to work that is sufficiently challenging.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The opportunities to take part in things they have never done before develop their confidence and enjoyment of school. In particular, the weekly horse riding lessons and the art and music lessons develop a strong enthusiasm for learning.
- A three-phase recovery programme for pupils who have suffered severe trauma drives the work of the school. Phase one concentrates on creating a secure and safe environment for pupils where they can gradually establish a healthy and beneficial routine. Phase two has an emphasis on resilience and building self-esteem. The emphasis in phase three is on preparation for life outside school and life-long learning. The therapeutic counsellor has a key role in each phase. Consequently, pupils are extremely well supported so that they can begin to take control of their own lives.
- Leaders use a clinical tracker to check each pupil's emotional and social progress. As a result, all staff know how pupils are feeling and use this knowledge to develop strong and positive relationships with the pupils. A care outcomes report is created for every pupil. It gives a full record of the pupil's story, relationships, daily structures, resilience, educational activities and relationship building. It includes the pupil's own views. Multi-disciplinary meetings, which pupils attend, take place every week and give pupils the opportunity to express their views. Because of these detailed multi-disciplinary discussions and documentation, leaders can make recommendations for each pupil as they develop and move on.
- The school's counsellor provides exceptional support to pupils. Pupils have regular sessions of therapy with her, either in groups or individually. She is available whenever pupils need support from her. As a result, pupils make good progress emotionally and can concentrate more fully on learning. They make good progress towards living independently.
- All pupils said that they are safe in school and they know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They say there is no bullying at school. They know about healthy eating, how to keep themselves safe online, in face-to-face relationships and in the locality. All pupils have achieved e-safety certificates.
- The lead teacher provides good-quality careers advice and guidance that helps pupils to prepare for their futures. She leads group lessons and works individually with each pupil. She also encourages pupils to use an online programme and to keep personal progress files that include their interests and possible career paths. All of the pupils had good ideas about what they would like to do in the future. They spoke, for example, about being a firefighter, looking after children, working with horses or moving on to further education.
- Pupils in the sixth form have had good opportunities for work experience. They have worked in the riding stables, worked in a school nursery or at the head office of the company where they were given work in the reception area. As a result, they have learned about the world of work.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. As well as learning about this in

PHSE education lessons, pupils benefit from a range of visitors who come to the school to lead workshops. They have learned about the law, in relation to alcohol, from the police. They have learned about alcohol misuse by wearing 'beer goggles' provided by other workshop leaders. An Amnesty International workshop leader talked to them about human rights. They learned about first aid from St John's Ambulance representatives. As a result, pupils are well informed about important issues that affect their lives. One pupil said: 'Everyone has a right to be free, to have a name and a nationality. We have learned enough about equality to make us think about our decisions and actions.' Work on posters that pupils had created after learning about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights showed a variety of slogans, one of which was, 'Be who you want!'

- Pupils have had opportunities to raise money for charities. For example, they had a sponsored silence that lasted for a full school day to raise money for Children in Need. They have also volunteered to help a local farmer with general farm work and to walk dogs for a local dog rescue centre. As a result, they have developed awareness of the needs of others.
- Teachers ensure that pupils have experiences of the democratic process when they vote for their own preferences. For example, they vote for what they would like to do on enrichment days. The lead teacher provides options to discuss. After discussion, they take a vote. This practical opportunity links to what they learn about democracy in Britain.
- Pupils who are ready to do so have good opportunities to involve themselves in teamwork and in taking responsibilities. For example, pupils benefit from opportunities to show initiative and develop leadership skills by attending army cadet training or preparing a memory book of activities the pupils have enjoyed. However, only a minority of pupils feel ready to take such responsibilities.
- Numerous outside visits enhance the curriculum and widen pupils' horizons. Pupils have benefited, for example, from a visit to an electronic music school in Manchester, to a zoo and to the coast.
- At the time of the inspection, all pupils were preparing a presentation of the work that they have done this year, to be presented on 'Learner Day' the following week. The presentation includes a commentary on their work in English and mathematics. It also includes information they have learned about contraception and healthy eating. Additionally, it acts as an exhibition of their horse riding, yoga, sign language, art and textiles skills. In this way, pupils are encouraged to be proud of their achievements and they have the responsibility of presenting the work themselves.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school keeps detailed records of behaviour patterns and analyses these patterns in order to support the pupils. Pupils are rewarded for their good behaviour by praise. Positive behaviour results in points being awarded that lead to pocket money at the end of the week. Negative behaviours involve loss of some of these points. Pupils are also awarded 'pupil of the week' awards for particularly positive behaviour.
- Serious behaviour incidents are recorded with details of how pupils should be encouraged to make amends for their poor behaviour. There have only been two of these incidents since the arrival of the new lead teacher.

- After very poor attendance or long absences from other schools, pupils have made outstanding improvements to their attendance and punctuality since joining this school.
- Pupils were observed behaving with politeness and courtesy to adults around the school and during breaktime. They returned promptly to lessons after mid-morning and lunchtime breaks. They spoke politely to the inspector during interviews and they said that there is no bullying in the school. However, some lessons do not motivate pupils to concentrate and behave well enough. As a result, at such times they make less progress.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- All pupils are cared for by local authorities. As such, they all have personal education plans that detail their personal and education needs. All have made outstanding progress in their personal development. This is because staff are skilled in the management of pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties and because of the highly structured programme of rehabilitation that the school operates. Pupils settle down quickly, feel secure and enjoy their learning.
- As pupils settle into school, they begin to realise that adults care for them and want the best for them. The confidence they gain from this ensures that they become more and more able to self-regulate their behaviour and concentrate on learning. They achieve qualifications and are able to take control of their lives. Students who are in the sixth form have purposeful destinations to go to. When they finish the programme at this school in the autumn, they will have placements either in further education or apprenticeships.
- The vast majority of pupils in the school have made good progress from their starting points in English, mathematics, science and art and music, with some making outstanding progress in individual subjects. This includes pupils in key stage 3, key stage 4 and the sixth form. This is because accurate assessments made when the pupils arrive in the school are used to plan effective individualised learning programmes. Where pupils have made less progress in an individual subject, their progress is linked to emotional upsets that have affected their concentration and motivation. A small number of pupils took GCSE mathematics this term and are awaiting their results.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in a range of vocational subjects. They achieve certificates, for example, in first aid, sign language, horse riding, cooking, Spanish and childcare. Work in music lessons has led to pupils being involved in, for example, a disc-jockey course during the coming summer or being recommended for a looked-after-children award for music composition. These experiences represent subjects they have never learned before coming to this school. They have gained much confidence from their achievements.
- Pupils have good opportunities to read in all lessons and have made good progress, with some making outstanding progress. Pupils enjoy reading themselves or having stories read to them.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to write during English lessons. However, teachers rarely encourage the pupils to edit and improve their writing so that they fully understand how to write with increasing skill. In addition, pupils' use of vocabulary is limited. Consequently, their spoken language and writing do not improve fast enough and they do not always understand the words they read.

School details

Unique reference number	144404
DfE registration number	894/6009
Inspection number	10045271

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 school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	4
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Tariq Verpalen
Chair	N/A
Headteacher	Liliana Modoi
Annual fees (day pupils)	£24,000
Telephone number	01952 540906
Website	N/A
Email address	Liliana.Modoi@care4children.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Retreat is an independent day school for up to four pupils a day aged 11 to 18. The school provides education for girls who have been the victims of trauma. It offers an extensive therapy programme to run alongside the educational provision.
- This is the first inspection of the school. It was registered with the Department for Education in May 2017.
- The director of education oversees provision in other independent day schools operated by Care4Children. He is also the proprietor of the school. Previously, the school's proprietor was described as Care4Children. This is a change to the school details that has

been reported to the DfE by the proprietor.

- The director of education/proprietor is supported in his role by Care4Children's head of education.
- The school is situated in a rural location. It is housed in two adjacent classrooms.
- The aim of the school is to meet the specific needs of their pupils and their educational and personal development. The school's vision statement expresses an aim to be 'persistent in our ambitions for children' and to provide a structured learning programme over 24 months to support pupils' personal and academic development.
- Planned admissions to the school may include pupils who have statements of special educational needs and/or disabilities or those in receipt of an education, health and care plan. Through experience in other schools, the proprietor has established good links with a range of local authorities who fund the provision for pupils.
- Pupils have horse riding lessons at a local equestrian centre and use a local leisure centre for physical education lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed three lessons and scrutinised work in mathematics and English books, as well as observing one session where a pupil's reading ability was assessed. The inspector scrutinised results of reading assessments and the school's progress-tracking record. She also observed pupils at breaktime and when they were learning English outside in the grounds.
- The inspector interviewed all the pupils as well as parents, carers and the head of a virtual school in one local authority. She took account of independent reviews of the school by social workers and responses to the Ofsted survey of staff views. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View.
- The inspector held discussions with the proprietor, the head of education, the lead teacher, and the school instructor as well as speaking on the telephone to the principal clinical psychologist for the Care4Children Company.
- The inspector scrutinised several school policies, procedures and records to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.
- As there are only four pupils in the school; no separate section for the sixth form has been included in this report.

Inspection team

Mary Maybank, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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