

Kingsbrook School

Inspection dates

8–10 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and the proprietorial body did not quickly establish clear expectations about academic and behavioural standards when the school first opened. Consequently, pupils' achievement and behaviour are not consistently good.
- Curriculum and assessment systems, other than in English and mathematics, are not well developed. Pupils are not yet receiving a high-quality experience in all subjects over time.
- Poor-quality and out-of-date computer systems and resources inhibit the effectiveness and pace of learning in some lessons.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in some non-core subject areas and qualifications is not well developed. In these subjects, teachers are not confident to pose greater challenge or more demanding questions to pupils when they are ready to achieve more.
- Although improving, staff do not apply consistent strategies to support pupils' lower-level behaviours. When pupils exhibit these poorer behaviours, they are not always well supported to improve their attitudes.
- Leaders have only recently established systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. It is too early to see the impact of this work.
- The proprietorial body has not ensured that there is enough clarity about who is accountable for aspects of school improvement and ensuring the independent school standards are met. For example, despite leaders and governors raising concerns, the school's website remains non-compliant.
- The school does not meet all the independent school standards.

The school has the following strengths

- Action taken by the new head of school is starting to address the inconsistencies in the quality of provision in the school. He has a thorough understanding about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality to the school are improving rapidly.
- The proprietorial body is successfully increasing pupils' access to therapeutic and sporting provision to support their complex needs.

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 full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure leaders, governors and the proprietorial body improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - clarifying roles and responsibilities among them to raise the quality of provision and meet the independent school standards; including website compliance
 - ensuring that all subjects are well developed and there is access to a wider range of qualifications closely suited to pupils' abilities and interests
 - urgently improving the functionality of the computer systems so resources fully support staff and pupils
 - embedding the new systems for monitoring teaching, learning and assessment so guidance to staff further improves the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Further raise standards in teaching, learning and achievement by:
 - providing staff with ongoing training in the wider curriculum subjects and qualifications
 - ensuring that teachers plan work and provide activities that challenge pupils to achieve more, when pupils are ready to do so.
- Further embed behaviour systems so that all adults are fully confident to deal with the needs and varying behaviours of pupils, including during social times.
- Meet the independent school standards, as set out in the annex to this report.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The proprietorial body and governors acknowledge that they did not establish high enough expectations about the academic and behavioural standards in the school when it first opened in 2017. The new governing body established in spring 2018, has acted to address these shortcomings, alongside the new head of school appointed in September 2018. However, the provision in the school remains too varied to be good.
- Leaders, the proprietor and governors have a secure understanding about the strengths and weaknesses in the provision, as evidenced in their current improvement plans. However, they have not developed clarity about their different roles and responsibilities in this. Additionally, not all leaders have a thorough understanding of the independent school standards. Consequently, several of the standards are not met, particularly those related to the school's website and educational standards.
- The non-core curriculum is underdeveloped. There is an appropriate mathematics and English curriculum with clear assessment systems in place. While pupils access a range of other subjects, there is little coherence in these subjects about how lessons fit together over time to give pupils depth in their understanding. The head of school has started to review the quality of the wider curriculum subjects and increase the numbers of qualifications that are available to pupils.
- Leaders and the proprietorial body have opted to use computer-based software and hardware for some of their curriculum coverage. However, the systems are not consistently fit for purpose or up to date. Staff and pupils are frustrated at the functionality of the computer-based resources, which too often hamper the planned learning in lessons.
- The new head of school has quickly implemented systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and performance management. However, it is too early to see the full impact of this work in raising standards in the school.
- The school does not receive any additional funding for disadvantaged pupils or Year 7 catch-up funding.
- Since his arrival, the head of school has established a higher level of expectation about pupils' behaviour. This is starting to improve pupils' attitudes to education and to significantly reduce the number of incidences related to more extreme behaviours. This is also contributing towards significantly improving pupils' attendance at the school and in lessons.
- The dedicated leaders and staff are ensuring that pupils receive regular access to a range of support for their complex social, emotional and welfare needs. This is also supporting their readiness to be citizens in modern Britain and their knowledge of how to establish positive relationships with other people. Most notably, there is a well-considered and planned therapeutic input from a range of professionals.
- The development of sporting facilities and activities within the curriculum is well thought out and improving. Leaders and the proprietorial body have invested in both resources and staff training to ensure that pupils are receiving increasing access to sport and physical activity. Furthermore, these opportunities support pupils' mental

health effectively.

- Numbers of parents, carers, staff and pupils are too small to comment on their responses without identifying individuals. However, collectively, most are positive about the support for pupils and the changes brought about by the new head of school.

Governance

- Governors, mainly made up of employees of the proprietorial body or associated groups, are not working with the proprietorial body to resolve quickly some of the weaknesses in the provision. For example, governors have clearly discussed their worries about the poor provision of computer-based resources. They have also highlighted the long-standing issues around website compliance and a lack of access to resolve this. These concerns remain unresolved.
- Governors, led by the operations director from the proprietorial group, have a good understanding of the overarching strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision. They have provided support for the new head of school to take positive action to address a number of these issues. For example, they have fully supported the heavy financial investments in the therapeutic support for pupils to meet their social, emotional and welfare needs.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The head of school has set higher expectations for staff about vigilance and the recording of concerns about pupils. Although this has increased the numbers of referrals made by staff since September 2018, these reflect a raised awareness about pupils' well-being and safety.
- Leaders are keeping appropriate records, both paper based and in secure online systems, about pupils' safety and well-being. They are using this information to work effectively with external agencies and local authorities.
- The head of school has established robust systems for keeping pupils and staff safe, both on site and in the wider community. Risk assessments are in place both for visits and for individual pupils. The work of the site manager in keeping all checks on fire safety, health and safety and general maintenance of the site up to date is recorded.
- Pupils generally arrive at the school requiring guidance about how to manage their behaviours appropriately. Leaders and staff work with individual pupils in a sensitive way to develop safer behaviours, both for themselves and towards others.
- The single central record of the suitability of staff to work with pupils meets requirements. The records for staffing checks are well kept.
- The school's safeguarding policy was available during the inspection but the most up-to-date version was not published on the school's website.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not consistently plan learning over time, in all subjects, that builds depth in pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the non-core subjects, teachers create tasks for pupils to complete, but there is not enough focus given to how pupils are developing their understanding over time.
- Teachers are not confident in the subject content and assessment systems for some non-core subjects and qualifications. This means the questions adults pose to pupils can sometimes be low level and do not sufficiently challenge pupils to think more deeply about their learning.
- Teachers are not using assessment consistently well to ensure they have high enough expectations about what pupils can achieve. Teachers do not notice quickly enough when pupils are ready to move at a faster pace, or to a higher level. Consequently, teachers do not routinely challenge pupils to achieve more when they are ready.
- Where practice is more effective, teachers have a thorough understanding of the subject and assessment processes. Teachers share the assessment criteria with pupils and guide them to create portfolios of evidence that meet and/or exceed the required standards.
- The support for those who have the most complex social needs is a strength of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers exhibit endless patience and good skills to encourage these pupils to engage with the subject and be enthused by their learning. Teachers are being increasingly successful in their efforts to motivate pupils with reading, for both study and pleasure.
- Music, art, and physical education (PE) are being used with increasing effectiveness to support the therapeutic needs of pupils. The learning environment across the school site provides appropriate facilities for pupils. Most notably, the recent investment in increasing the range of sports on offer to pupils and the subject skills of teachers are resulting in rapidly improving provision for pupils to access sports and PE.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders acknowledge that interacting independently and positively during non-lesson time is a challenge for pupils, and currently requires significant staff supervision and leadership. Staff are developing a variety of breaktime and lunchtime activities to develop these essential social skills.
- Pupils are starting to benefit from a more joined-up approach between therapy and educational staff. Staff are being supported well through the therapy team to trial new strategies with pupils to support their development and welfare. These strategies are starting to be integrated into individual pupils' risk assessments and daily support.
- Pupils are being given increasing opportunities to have a voice in the way the school

runs. Leaders are giving pupils regular opportunities to reflect on their curriculum provision. Leaders use this information to consider how they can develop the curriculum provision further to meet pupils' aspirations and interests. Pupils are also involved with the interview process to support leaders to make decisions about new staffing appointments.

- Pupils say that bullying is not a problem in the school. They say they feel well cared for and they trust staff to deal with any issues appropriately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- There is inconsistency in how pupils are being supported to manage their occasional off-task behaviour or misbehaviour appropriately. Staff and therapy teams have established effective strategies to support these pupils' more extreme behaviours. However, pupils are not always given clear guidance and advice when they exhibit lower-level inappropriate behaviours, including in their attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality to the school have improved considerably since September 2018. Leaders work effectively with families, the virtual school headteachers, local authorities, children's services and children's homes to monitor and improve pupils' attendance.
- Most pupils are punctual to their lessons and ready to learn. Almost all lessons start promptly and positively. Pupils do not become distracted if other pupils go off task.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The school opened in November 2017. No pupils sat examinations in key stage 2 or 4 in 2018. There were no pupils in Year 11 in the school during this time who went on to post-16 destinations.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils' progress across the school is uneven, most notably in the wider curriculum subjects. This curriculum is not fully developed, and leaders have not established thorough systems to assess pupils' progress in these subjects. Leaders are still developing programmes for pupils to gain recognised qualifications in a wider range of subjects as they move into key stage 4.
- Pupils' achievement and enjoyment in the vocational subjects at the school is evident. Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons in car maintenance, farming and animal care. Current pupils talk enthusiastically about what they are learning. They are starting to gain early evidence towards accreditation in some of these areas.
- Pupils' progress in English and mathematics is improving more securely. Leaders use a range of information, including their own early observations, to assess pupils' knowledge and skills and plan lessons over time. Leaders are reviewing this information to try to identify when pupils are ready to move on to more difficult programmes of study in these core subjects.
- Pupils' social and emotional skills are developing securely for most pupils across the school. Leaders rightly identify that this is a priority if pupils are going to be successful in engaging with their learning. Leaders are strengthening the targets set in pupils' personal education plans and their education, health and care (EHC) plans. The aim is

to be more precise in identifying pupils' needs, and subsequently to increase the progress of pupils in the school further.

- Leaders are working with individual pupils to ensure that they receive bespoke good-quality and impartial advice about career opportunities and their next steps. This includes liaison with local colleges about programmes that can support pupils beyond key stage 4.

School details

Unique reference number	145159
DfE registration number	926/6017
Inspection number	10054012

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 school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Proprietor	Priory Children and Education Services Ltd
Chair	Simon Coles
Head of school	Rob Jaina
Annual fees (day pupils)	£62,000
Telephone number	01953 852303
Website	https://www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk/fin-d-a-location/kingsbrook-school-norfolk/
Email address	kingsbrookschool@priorygroup.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in November 2017. This was its first inspection.
- The head of school started in September 2018.
- The school is owned by a proprietorial body.
- The school provides education for up to 15 pupils aged 11 to 18 on site. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils in the key stage 5 provision.
- Admission to the school is through local authority or social services referral. All pupils have an EHC plan. The school caters mainly for pupils who have complex social, emotional and mental health needs.
- At the pre-registration visit in October 2017, it was stated that there would be an advisory board in place to support leaders. The proprietorial body established a formal governing

body in spring 2018. This consists mainly of employees who work for the proprietorial body or associated companies.

- At the time of the inspection, the proprietorial body had not registered the most up-to-date information about the school's proprietorship on the 'Get information about schools' national website.
- Leaders were not clear on who the proprietorial body and chair were at the beginning of the inspection. This was confirmed on the second day of the inspection.
- Most pupils arrive at the school after long periods of absence in their previous schooling, with a weak understanding about positive attitudes to learning.
- The proprietorial body do not currently employ short-term supply or agency staff at the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching, learning and assessment in the school. The inspector also scrutinised pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with school leaders and representatives from the proprietorial body.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation statement, safeguarding records, physical intervention logs, risk assessments, pupil progress information and school policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of four responses from Ofsted's online survey of parents and two responses from the online survey of staff. There were no responses from pupils to Ofsted's online survey.
- The inspector spoke to pupils between lessons and during lunchtime as well as during lessons.

Inspection team

Kim Pigram, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school—
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase 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 information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;
 - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 32(1)(c) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request;
 - 32(1)(d) following an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, a copy of the report of the inspection (if it has been sent to the proprietor) is published and maintained on the school's internet website, and provided to the parents of each registered pupil, by any date specified by the body who conducted the inspection.

- 32(2) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is—
 - 32(2)(a) the school’s address and telephone number and the name of the head teacher;
 - 32(2)(b) either—
 - 32(2)(b)(ii) where the proprietor is a body of persons, the address and telephone number of its registered or principal office;
 - 32(2)(c) where there is a governing body, the name and address for correspondence of its Chair.

- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is—
 - 32(3)(a) particulars of the school’s policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions;
 - 32(3)(b) particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language;
 - 32(3)(c) particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2;
 - 32(3)(d) particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 13;
 - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school’s academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations;
 - 32(3)(f) details of the complaints procedure referred to in paragraph 33, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year; and
 - 32(3)(g) a copy of the report of any inspection carried out under sections 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act or section 87(1) of the 1989 Act.

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.

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