

Centre Academy East Anglia

27 April 2017

Brettenham, Ipswich, Suffolk IP7 7QR

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h)

- The previous progress monitoring inspection found that the curriculum continued not to meet pupils' needs as identified in the school's previous full inspection. The range of curriculum enrichment activities was too narrow, especially for boarding pupils. The weighted caseloads of therapists identified at the previous standards inspection had not been eased and it remained unclear how all the needs stated in pupils' statements of special educational needs or education, health and care (EHC) plans were met.
- In the action plan, the proprietor undertook to extend the curriculum by increasing the range of enrichment activities and to ensure that the needs of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or with an EHC plan were met, particularly in relation to speech and language therapy.
- The school now provides enrichment activities which include planned theatre trips, science trips, a school band, a school choir, a drama society and visits to museums. Pupils provide public performances during parent days, holidays and half-term breaks. Pupils participate in 'camp-outs' two or three times per year which are linked to the Forest School programme. Pupils also support a range of charities such as Jeans for Genes and Operation Christmas Child. Pupils work with the Greenlight Trust, which helps them to develop skills in risk-taking in supporting the wider community. Pupils are pleased with the extended programmes on offer, which include stronger ties with the local community, an increase in after-school clubs and a wide range of trips and visits to support their learning.
- Schemes of work are now in place which take account of the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A coordinator of therapies and an additional speech and language therapist have been appointed. The changes are ensuring that the therapy needs of all pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an EHC plan are met according to the provision specified on their statements and plans.
- Students above compulsory school age are now accessing a range of additional subjects and activities, such as media studies and photography. The school is providing relevant

work experience programmes. Some students participate in work experience in a law firm and within local authority departments.

- Although improvements have been made to the curriculum, the curriculum plans and schemes of work are not implemented effectively. Not all pupils of primary and secondary school age have the opportunity to learn and make progress because weaknesses remain in the delivery of the planned curriculum.
- Leaders have not ensured that this independent school standard is met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g)

- The previous progress monitoring inspection found that the school was not accurately monitoring the progress of pupils over time, taking into account their ages and different starting points. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment continued to be too variable across the school.
- In the action plan, the proprietor did not provide enough information about how teaching and assessment would be improved. The proprietor undertook to implement new procedures to assess pupils' starting points and use this information as a basis for further regular assessment of pupils' progress.
- Regular monitoring of teaching has been introduced and the school provided additional training and support for staff. New teachers have been appointed. During the inspection, seven teachers were observed jointly by an inspector and a senior leader. However, some ineffective practice identified during the previous progress monitoring inspection remains and is limiting the progress pupils are making and their learning.
- Teaching does not consistently enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability. Some lessons are not planned well enough. Not all teachers show that they understand the aptitudes and abilities of pupils, and some do not have a good understanding of the subjects being taught.
- Teachers are not assessing pupils' work regularly or thoroughly enough. Assessment systems have been improved but are not yet implemented well enough. Teachers are not consistently using the information from assessment to plan teaching to ensure that pupils of different abilities learn effectively and make progress. Baseline assessments have recently been introduced and are being used effectively to set smart individual education plan targets for pupils with EHC plans or statements of special educational needs. However, too often, teachers are providing pupils with the same tasks to do, despite the wide range of pupils' ability and learning needs. As a result, some pupils find their work too hard and others find it too easy. In discussions, pupils said that the work was either too hard or too easy.
- There are some strengths in teaching. Pupils are confident and happy with their surroundings. They are fully engaged with tasks and activities because relationships are positive and nurturing. Questioning is sometimes used well to deepen pupils' thinking. Teachers manage behaviour well.
- The range of activities for pupils above compulsory school age has increased to include photography and media studies. All students leave school to go on to university or colleges of further education. Parents of older students are very pleased with the progress their children are making. A small number of students have been invited to join the 'national geographic' magazine as apprentice photographers.

- Leaders have not ensured that this independent school standard is met.

Paragraph 4

- At the previous progress monitoring visit, school leaders were unable to illustrate how well all pupils were doing because there were no systematic, rigorous procedures in place to monitor and evaluate progress.
- A framework of assessment is in place and new assessments on entry have been introduced. These include the use of standardised tests for reading, spelling and mathematics. The school has begun to moderate teachers' assessments of pupils' abilities. Individual education plan targets have been improved so that they are more specific and measurable. Parents have good opportunities to participate in reviews and all parents receive reports on pupils' achievements.
- Leaders have ensured that this independent school standard is met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i)

- At the previous progress monitoring inspection, the school did not meet the standard as they did not provide sufficient information to parents about pupils' EHC plans. The school also failed to provide information to local authorities about the annual account of income received and expenditure incurred for pupils funded by local authorities. Senior leaders were not providing local authorities with a full breakdown of how the funding they received for each pupil with EHC plans or statements of special educational needs had been spent.
- The action plan stated that arrangements are now in place to gather the required information about the monies received and spent on individual pupils. However, it did not address the improvements required for the quality of information within the EHC plans.
- The school has now taken effective action to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The school invites each parent to the annual review of their child's EHC plan. Within three days of this annual review, the school provides parents with detailed information about the outcomes and the additional provision, including therapies, the school is making to meet their child's needs.
- The school has now produced detailed accounts of the income and expenditure for each pupil with an EHC plan, which it sends to each child's local authority.
- Leaders have ensured that this independent school standard is now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- At the previous progress monitoring inspection, following the school's previous integrated inspection, senior leaders were not ensuring that all of the independent school standards were met. This remains the case.
- Although there has been some improvement in meeting some of the independent school standards, some remain unmet, and self-evaluation remains inaccurate and is overgenerous. School leaders are not monitoring the school's work rigorously enough to

ensure that they have an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. They have not ensured that all pupils throughout the school are making good progress or that teaching is sufficiently good.

- The reorganised governing body consists of the proprietor and headteachers of London and East Anglia Centre Academies. At their monthly meetings, they discuss teaching and learning, but the minutes of the meetings demonstrate little challenge to ensure that the independent school standards are met. The proprietor and principal agreed that the previous governing body structure was not effective, but see it as more effective now. However, statements made in governors' minutes are not supported by evidence of strategic planning. Governance is not strategically driving improvements forward in meeting the independent school standards.
- Leaders have not developed a clear format for observing or monitoring teachers' performance. Their monitoring is not effective enough in improving teaching and learning. The local authority visit accurately identified weaknesses in assessment and in teaching and learning.
- The school's safeguarding policy is up to date and made available on the school's website, and procedures are in place to check the suitability of staff. Although the recent local authority audit on safeguarding arrangements identified no actions for the school leaders, governors are not monitoring this aspect of the school's work rigorously to ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding permeates the school's work.
- Leaders have not ensured that this independent school standard is met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively, so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(h)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
 - 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
 - involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and the management of class time
 - 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
 - demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
 - 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(paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that a framework for pupils' performance to be evaluated by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both is in place (paragraph 4).
- The proprietor must ensure that:
 - where a pupil wholly or partly funded by a local authority (except where funding is solely free of charge early years provision in accordance with the duty contained in section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006) is registered at the school, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupils is provided to the local authority and on request to the secretary of state; and

- where a pupil with an EHC plan wholly or partly funded by a local authority or other body through public funds is registered at the school, such information as may be reasonably required for the purpose of the annual review of the EHC plan is provided to the responsible local authority

(paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i)).

School Details

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|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 124890 |
| DfE registration number | 935/6058 |
| Inspection number | 10033782 |

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.

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| Type of school | Independent school |
| School status | Independent residential special school |
| Age range of pupils | 5 to 21 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 44 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 10 |
| Number of boarders on roll | 15 |
| Proprietor | Mr Michael Murphy |
| Chair (CEO) | Dr Duncan Rollo |
| Principal | Dr Duncan Rollo |
| Headteacher | Ms Kim Salthouse |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £16,000 |
| Telephone number | 01449 736 404 |
| Website | www.centreacademy.net |
| Email address | admin@centreacademy.net |
| Date of previous standard inspection | 9–11 February 2016 |

Information about this school

- Centre Academy East Anglia is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) to take a maximum of 50 boys and girls, including 29 places for boarders. The school's

registration allows for a maximum of eight pupils between the ages of four and seven years. There are currently no pupils within this age range.

- Pupils' special educational needs include dyslexia, dyspraxia, Asperger syndrome, autistic spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The vast majority of pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an EHC plan, and most pupils are funded by their local authorities.
- The school received a standard integrated inspection in February 2016 and its first progress monitoring inspection in September 2016.
- The school uses no alternative provision for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This inspection is the second consecutive progress monitoring inspection since the previous standard inspection in February 2016 and was carried out with no notice. A full inspection of the provision for boarders was carried out by Ofsted at the same time as this progress monitoring inspection for the education provision. A separate report for the residential provision is published on Ofsted’s website and is available from the school.
- At the school’s previous standard inspection for education in February 2016, the school’s effectiveness was judged inadequate and 12 of the independent school standards were not met.
- Ofsted conducted the first progress monitoring inspection on 14–15 September 2016, aligned with a full welfare inspection of the boarding provision carried out by social care inspectors.
- The progress monitoring inspection in September 2016 judged that five of the independent school standards inspected at that time remained unmet. The welfare inspection judged that six of the national minimum standards were unmet.
- On 4 November 2016, the DfE issued the proprietor with a warning notice and required the school to prepare an action plan to address the unmet independent school standards and national minimum standards.
- The school submitted an action plan to the DfE, which was rejected in January 2017.
- Inspectors visited classrooms with senior leaders to observe the impact of teaching and use of assessment on pupils’ learning and progress. Inspectors looked at pupils’ work and spoke to them about their learning during lessons.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including the arrangements and policies to safeguard children, the school’s self-evaluation and action planning, monitoring records, minutes of governing body meetings and the local authority review of the school’s work.
- Meetings were held with the principal, the headteacher, the coordinator for special educational needs and the examinations officer.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and held conversations with individual pupils who asked to speak with them.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents from the 12 responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View survey and from telephone discussions with seven parents.

Inspection team

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Declan McCarthy, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Tracy Fielding | Her Majesty’s Inspector |

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