

Phoenix Academy

2 November 2016

Brook Farm, Newton Road, North Petherton, Somerset TA6 6NA

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- As part of the progress monitoring inspection, inspectors also considered the school's request for a material change to extend the age range to include pupils in key stage 2 on its current site.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum policy, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work to meet the ages, aptitudes and individual needs of pupils aged seven to 11. These include detailed and comprehensive long-term and weekly plans to teach skills in English and mathematics by year group and ability. They also include an appropriate emphasis on speaking and listening. Plans to teach a range of subjects across the curriculum are also detailed and appropriate for this key stage. Scrutiny of these plans confirms that they are suitable to ensure pupils have the opportunity to learn successfully and make progress. The planned curriculum is broad and balanced and reflects the school's aims and ethos as well as the aspirations leaders have for their pupils. Furthermore, leaders have included information in the curriculum policy about how the school will assess pupils' learning and achievement.
- Suitable schemes of work are in place to teach personal, social, health and economic education to pupils in key stage 2. Plans for each age group cover a range of topics, including building self-esteem, e-safety and managing finances.

Paragraph 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4

- The inspectors were not able to observe teaching and learning during the inspection. However, the comprehensive schemes of work, supported by long-term and weekly planning, confirm that the school has a planned curriculum in place for pupils in key stage 2. Staff have considered and planned the range of resources that will be required to deliver lessons to the younger age range.
- The school has introduced a clear framework to assess pupils on entry and to track their progress.
- The school has the capacity and skills within its current staffing to resource this material change. Teaching staff are trained to manage challenging and anxious behaviour. They receive mentoring and regular training to enable them to develop and improve their practice.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements for this standard in relation to the material change requested.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is considered and planned for throughout the key stage 2 curriculum.
- Suitable schemes of work are in place to teach personal, social, health and economic education to pupils in key stage 2. Plans for each age group set out in detail the lessons to be taught to foster the development of British values and to promote the development of respect and tolerance for those of other faiths or with views different from their own. This work is likely to prepare them effectively for life in modern Britain and in the wider world.
- The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for this standard in relation to the material change requested.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 6, 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The inspection in November 2015 found that some standards relating to welfare, health and safety were not met, which raised wider concerns about leadership and management of the school. In particular, the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and related policies were not available to families on the school's website.
- This shortfall has now been remedied. In addition, all safeguarding policies have been reviewed and revised to take account of the most recent government guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education', (September 2016). All staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training. They attend regular staff meetings to develop further their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding. This includes training on the school's 'Prevent' duty to enable staff to identify pupils at risk of harm or radicalisation. In discussions, staff confirm that they understand the school's policies and procedures to safeguard pupils. As a result, they are well placed to implement these policies and procedures successfully. The headteacher has ensured that there is a relentless focus on keeping pupils safe. Minutes from recent staff meetings and those of the governing body meetings held in April and July also demonstrate a renewed focus and rigour in the school's safeguarding practice. As a result, leaders have created a safe culture in the school.

Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10

- On taking up his appointment, the headteacher recognised that the school's behaviour policy was not effective. This policy has now been revised with staff and is available to parents on the website. The policy includes information about rewards which pupils can achieve as well as the sanctions that the school will use in the event of misbehaviour.
- Staff have introduced a 'token economy' system to encourage pupils to achieve rewards for good behaviour. Records of incidents for serious misbehaviour prior to the introduction of this system were numerous and of a concerning nature. Following the introduction of the new system the number of serious incidents, including those requiring physical intervention, have significantly reduced. Pupils' behaviour improved following the implementation of rules to establish clear boundaries. Leaders have implemented successful behaviour management

procedures which will also be appropriate for pupils in key stage 2.

- The school's counter-bullying policy is available to families on the website. This policy sets out the school's strategy to keep pupils safe and prevent bullying. This policy is appropriate to meet the needs of pupils in key stage 2.

Paragraph 11, 15

- The previous inspection found that the protocols for pupils attending alternative provision were inadequate.
- The school immediately took action to ensure that attendance registers for pupils attending off-site provision were created and accurately completed. Governors increased the rigour and frequency of checking attendance registers. The school has now stopped using off-site provision and has no plans to do so in the future.

Paragraph 16

- Leaders have strengthened their approach to drawing up and implementing risk assessments to reduce incidents of risk.
- All pupils have personalised risk assessments, linked to behaviour management strategies. Leaders regularly review and amend risk assessments to support the development of pupils' welfare, health and safety. This effective practice is also appropriate to meet the needs of pupils in key stage 2.
- The standards in this part are met by the school.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraph 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(2)(f), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(2)(e), 19(3), 20(1), 20(2), 20(3), 20(3)(a), 20(3)(a)(i), 20(3)(a)(ii), 20(5), 20(5)(a), 20(5)(a)(i), 20(5)(a)(ii), 20(5)(b), 20(5)(b)(i), 20(5)(b)(ii), 20(5)(b)(iii), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c)

- The previous inspection found that the governors had not ensured that the required medical fitness checks had been completed for staff joining the school. These checks have now been completed.
- The school ensures that pre-employment checks are carried out on all staff, as required in the relevant legislation and guidance.

Paragraph 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)

- The school keeps an accurate and up-to-date single central record which is checked weekly by the school's administrator. This includes checking that no staff are subject to a prohibition order. Since the previous inspection, the school has strengthened its systems to check the suitability of staff and directors. The completed register is kept at the school as well as head office. No supply staff are currently employed at the school.
- The headteacher has completed safer recruitment training.

- The standards in this part are met by the school. The school is likely to meet the standards in this part if required to recruit further staff to teach in key stage 2.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c)

- Governors have ensured that the premises are of a high quality. Since the previous inspection, the learning environment has been greatly improved. Classrooms are welcoming and set up to safely accommodate up to 12 pupils. The premises are well maintained. The recently modernised kitchen provides a homely environment for pupils to eat lunch and socialise with their peers.
- The playground is suitable to meet the needs of younger pupils. It is well maintained and plans are in place to improve the outside environment further.

Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c)

- Accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils is of a high quality and includes a washing facility.

Paragraph 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b)

- The external lighting is now working. The maintenance manager ensures that regular checks are carried out and reports information to the headteacher and directors.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met by the school in relation to the material change requested.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)(j), 32(3), 32(3)(b)

- The previous inspection found that information relating to pupils' welfare, health and safety for those for whom English is an additional language was not appropriately provided to parents. The school has now ensured that parents can contact them to investigate suitable alternatives to provide information when required.
- The standards in this part are met by the school.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The chief executive officer and directors have ensured that the standards not met at the previous inspection are now met.
- Leaders recognised the shortcomings identified at the previous inspection. The new headteacher has led the staff effectively since taking up his appointment in March 2016. Policies and practice have been reviewed and updated. Training has been central to ensuring that staff understand and effectively implement the school's policies and procedures to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety. Increased monitoring by the chief executive officer and directors has ensured that greater rigour is now applied to this aspect of the school's work.
- Following the previous inspection, the placing local authority lost confidence in the effectiveness of the school and took the decision to withdraw the pupils. Since the headteacher took up post in March 2016, the local authority has continued to

support the school's work to bring about significant improvement. They intend to begin to place pupils in the school.

- Standards relating to leadership and management are now met. The school is likely to meet the standards in this part in relation to the material change requested.

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 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.

School details

Unique reference number	135673
DfE registration number	933/6216
Inspection number	10022390

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	Special
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Phoenix Care and Learning Ltd
Chair	Jon Pain
Headteacher	Jon Lloyd
Annual fees (day pupils)	£41,800
Telephone number	01271 318 110
Website	phoenixlearningcare.co.uk
Email address	jlloyd@plcl.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	17–19 November 2015

Information about this school

- Phoenix Academy is an independent special day school which caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- The school is owned by Phoenix Care and Learning Ltd. The directors of this company act as the proprietor.
- Following the previous inspection in November 2015, the headteacher left the school in February 2016. The current director of education took over as interim headteacher until the appointed headteacher took up post on 26 March 2016. There have been no pupils at the school in the period from 1 September 2016 up to the day of this inspection.
- On the day of the inspection, one pupil was admitted to the school on a temporary placement, agreed with the Department for Education.

- All pupils admitted to the school have education, health and care plans or statements of special educational needs and are placed at the school by local authorities.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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 not to comply with at its previous inspection. This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since the full inspection in November 2015.
- At the school's previous inspection in November 2015, some independent school standards were found to be unmet. Following that inspection, the school submitted an action plan which was evaluated on 11 July 2016. This action plan was found to be acceptable.
- This inspection also included a request for a material change. The school is applying for a material change to extend the age range of pupils to include pupils in key stage 2 to be taught on the school's current site. The inspectors focused on evaluating parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8 of the independent school standards to evaluate if they were likely to be met in preparation for the material change.
- This inspection was conducted with no notice.
- During the inspection, inspectors visited classrooms, scrutinised schemes of work and teachers' planning and evaluated the school's systems for assessing pupils' progress. The inspectors spoke with staff and met with the headteacher and the chief executive officer from the Phoenix Care and Learning Company. The inspector also spoke to a representative from Somerset County Council.
- The school's safeguarding policies, procedures and records, including the single central record, were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Catherine Leahy, lead inspector

Andrew Penman

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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