

School report

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Northleigh House School

Northleigh House, Five Ways Road, Hatton, Warwick, Warwickshire, CV35 7HZ

Inspection dates

26–28 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor has not ensured that all of the independent school standards are consistently met.
- The proprietor has not ensured that the school and the sixth form meets health and safety requirements.
- School leaders are not fully aware of their responsibilities in ensuring pupils' welfare.
- The school does not comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Staff, including those in the sixth form are not sufficiently trained in fire safety.
- Pupils do not develop their literacy and mathematical skills in other subject areas adequately.

The school has the following strengths

- The curriculum is a key strength of the school. Leaders have developed a broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum is responsive to the needs and interests of all pupils.
- Teaching is good. The majority of pupils are making good progress across all areas of their learning, including English and mathematics.
- Behaviour is good. Pastoral support is effective. Staff know their pupils well and support them fully. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school.
- Outcomes are good. Pupils who left in 2018 achieved a range of qualifications. All pupils made good progress from their starting points. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education or training.
- Good leadership of teaching in the sixth form ensures that students make good progress. Students say they feel prepared for their transition to education or employment.
- Leaders make sure that pupils have lots of opportunities to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Pupils learn about and respect other cultures and beliefs.

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?

- Improve leadership and management by making sure:
 - that all independent school standards are consistently met
 - the school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
 - leaders have a comprehensive understanding of their responsibilities in meeting welfare, health and safety requirements.
- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning, by ensuring that:
 - pupils practise and improve their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The proprietor has not ensured all of the independent school standards are met. In some cases, the unmet standards impact directly on the health, safety and welfare of pupils. Checks on compliance with fire safety have not been carried out sufficiently. Newly appointed school leaders are not fully aware of their responsibilities. At the point of inspection, a fire risk assessment had not been carried out and staff were not sufficiently trained in fire safety. The school premises did not meet electrical safety standards.
- Since the last inspection, there have been changes to the leadership of the school. The school is led and managed by the director of education and the curriculum leader. Both commenced their duties during the start of the current academic year. Staff who met with the inspector and completed Ofsted's staff survey welcomed the changes and said it was positive for the school.
- Leaders have developed a calm, nurturing culture. The vision and ethos of the school is understood by all pupils and staff. Leaders and all staff are aspirational for their pupils. There are high expectations around behaviour and achievement. Pupils who have had previous negative schooling experiences enjoy coming to school and make good progress. Pupils who met with the inspector said that while teachers allowed them to learn at their own pace, they were still expected to work hard.
- Leaders fully understand the needs of their pupils. They have developed a broad and balanced curriculum. Alongside traditional academic subjects, pupils also access a range of vocational options including cookery, art and woodwork. Pupils speak highly of the range of opportunities they can access. Pupils say that if they have a special interest in learning about something, teachers will 'make sure it happens'. The curriculum is personalised and meets the needs of all pupils.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. The vast majority of pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. All pupils have gaps in their learning. The school has a qualified special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). Thorough assessments are completed with pupils, identifying academic and pastoral needs. They produce detailed 'pupil passports' that outline EHC plan aims and appropriate strategies. Teachers make good use of this information when planning lessons to meet pupils' individual needs. Teaching is well matched to the personal needs of pupils.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths of teaching and learning. They carry out regular monitoring and identify areas for improvement. Leaders are not afraid to tackle underperformance. They set appropriate targets for improvement. As a result, teaching is consistently good.
- Pupils arrive at the school with limited experiences. Leaders make sure that there are many opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Pupils access a range of educational visits including those to museums and temples. As a result, they learn about differences in cultures and beliefs. Several pupils regularly visit elderly residential homes where they take cakes they have made and perform dance routines.

The majority of pupils develop their social skills by learning to communicate with a wide range of people.

- Relationships with parents and carers are positive. The school provides regular detailed reports outlining pupils' progress. There are also regular opportunities for visits to the school. Parents who completed Ofsted's questionnaire said they are well informed on how well their children are progressing. They would recommend the school to others.

Governance

- The school is overseen by a board of trustees. Systems to check the work of the school are not routinely in place. A number of the independent school standards are not met. The unmet standards are related directly to the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- The trustees share the vision and ethos of the school well. They are aspirational and want the best for all pupils. They engage support from the community, a team of volunteers and local businesses. They have secured extra resources for pupils including additional classroom spaces and kitchen equipment. They are dedicated to improving the lives of their pupils.
- The chair of trustees has day-to-day involvement with the school. As a result, she knows each pupil and understands their individual needs.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have not made sure that the school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. However, arrangements in relation to child protection are effective. There are clear systems and processes in place.
- The school has a detailed policy that is published on its website. The policy makes clear what to do in the event of a concern about a child.
- There are two designated safeguarding leaders. They are appropriately trained and have a comprehensive understanding of their role. They know what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern and involve external agencies appropriately. Record keeping is thorough. Leaders are not afraid to challenge external agencies when it comes to the safeguarding of their pupils.
- All staff are trained appropriately in how to recognise signs of abuse and neglect. For example, staff know about female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. They are aware of their responsibilities. Staff know their pupils well. They are quick to recognise and report any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- There is a highly personalised approach towards teaching and learning. Teachers use available information effectively to plan appropriate learning opportunities. Teachers re-engage and motivate their pupils. Staff identify pupils' interests and make sure they include as many of these as possible into pupils' learning. Pupils thrive in lessons that

meet their personal interests and academic abilities. Relationships are positive and support the learning experience.

- The vast majority of pupils have not attended school for long periods of time. Teachers plan transition into the school carefully. They introduce learning gradually, at a pace that is appropriate to individual needs. Pupils settle well into the routine of coming to school and attending lessons. Teachers get to know their pupils well. They make sure that teaching engages pupils and inspires them to want to learn. This is significant given that pupils have previously missed a great deal of learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use skilful questioning to probe for extended answers. As a result, pupils learn to substantiate and support their answers. Pupils who met with the inspector said they had learned more in this school than in previous settings.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a focus on extended writing opportunities. Pupils write for a variety of purposes. They use grammatical features well including metaphors, similes and personification to add depth and meaning to their work. As a result, they can construct creative stories as well as persuasive factual arguments. Pupils write convincing letters of complaint including, 'My holiday from hell'. They use a range of expressive language to convey opinion and dissatisfaction. Over time, their writing improves and becomes more sophisticated.
- In history, pupils present balanced viewpoints well. They consider sources and ranges of evidence and draw appropriate conclusions. Pupils, for instance, confidently articulated reasons behind The Wall Street Crash and the impact on the global economy.
- In mathematics, pupils use a range of methods to check their work. They attempt complex tasks that increase in difficulty over time, for example calculating mode, median and mean with increasingly complex numbers and progressing from single to double bracket equations. Teachers systematically make sure that learning is on track. They reshape explanations where necessary and gently prompt pupils to ensure learning is secure. Consequently, pupils develop resilience and perseverance in tackling more challenging problems.
- In science, pupils make strong progress. Teachers engage pupils well through regular practical experiments that enable them to test out theories and draw conclusions. Through effective teacher questioning, pupils develop secure knowledge and consider variables. They immerse themselves into their learning and remain on task.
- Where English and mathematics are taught directly, pupils engage well and make good progress. In vocational areas pupils do not routinely practise literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, they do not consistently apply their learning in practical settings.
- All pupils have missed significant schooling. Many have gaps in their learning. Teachers' planning includes addressing gaps in knowledge and is pitched appropriately to the needs of pupils. Teachers know their pupils well. Over time they use effective strategies to build pupils' confidence, self-esteem and resilience.
- Many pupils experience memory retention difficulties. Teachers help pupils to recall well. They support pupils in revising difficult topics and apply appropriate strategies to boost memory and secure learning. As a result, pupils grasp concepts well.

- Learning environments are stimulating. Learning resources are of good quality. Pupils' work displayed on walls shows a good level of participation. Pupils say they enjoy school. They say the school is different because the teachers understand them better and they do not feel as pressured as in previous schools.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. While there are many positive aspects to the school's work, leaders have not ensured compliance with Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Pupils learn about different types of bullying including homophobic and cyber bullying. Pupils say they are confident that staff would resolve any issues if they arose. There are no reported cases of bullying. Pupils who met with the inspector confirmed this was the case. Pupils who spoke with the inspector said they felt safe at school.
- Staff are aspirational for all pupils. They know that emotional regulation and stability are important factors of being able to learn effectively. Each pupil has a personal mentor. The mentors spend time supporting learning and helping pupils to make choices. Consequently, pupils develop trusting relationships that impact on how well they learn. Typically, pupils describe their school as 'a home away from home'.
- Personal, social, health and economic education is effective. Pupils learn about career and college options. They know what qualifications they need to be able to access further education. Pupils also learn how to keep safe. They know about online risks and dangers. They learn about risks of extremism and radicalisation and how to report any concerns.
- Prior to joining the school, a high number of pupils were taught on their own. Consequently, they arrive with underdeveloped social skills. Staff make sure that pupils have access to a range of social experiences and opportunities to work with their peers. Pupils who met with the inspector said they all remembered 'being the new person' so would make 'an extra effort' to welcome new pupils to the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All pupils have experienced disruption to their learning. Many pupils have not accessed school for long periods of time. For a small number of pupils, attendance is low. The school works well with parents and external agencies to promote good attendance. Where this has been successful, pupils' attendance has increased over time. Even though, some pupils' attendance is low, it is significantly higher than at previous placements.
- The start of the school day is warm and welcoming. Pupils are punctual. They arrive to lessons on time and are ready to learn. As a result of well-established routines and high expectations, pupils are prepared for their learning.
- Pupils told the inspector that their behaviour had improved since joining the school. Many had been excluded from previous schools for negative behaviour. They say this school is different and teachers respect and understand them. Pupils say they are more relaxed

because they can learn at their own pace. As a result, pupils are able to remain in lessons and complete tasks.

- Assemblies are purposeful and focused on key themes. Pupils learn about safety, including how to keep safe online. They also learn about being brave and taking next steps. They engage fully and share their ideas and opinions respectfully. Pupils develop resilience and a wider understanding of new experiences.
- There is a comprehensive behaviour policy that is understood by all staff and pupils. Staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire said that behaviour is managed consistently by all staff. The school records incidents of negative behaviour. These are rare and managed well. Pupils have regular opportunities to work with their mentors who support them with any difficulties. Pupils are reflective. They make positive choices when it comes to behaviour.
- Parents and carers speak positively about behaviour. They have no concerns about the safety of their children. They do not have any concerns about bullying. They have confidence in the staff team to support their children.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils are good. Pupils arrive at the school having missed a significant amount of learning. Pupils who spoke with the inspector said they felt 'let down' in previous settings. Many start the school feeling disillusioned with learning. Pupils can join the school at any point. Transitions into school are carefully planned to meet individual circumstances.
- Pupils are assessed on entry to the school. The school's information shows that most pupils have typically low starting points for their ages. Through personalised learning, teachers quickly identify pupils who are at risk of falling behind. They make sure pupils receive appropriate additional support. As a result, the vast majority of pupils achieve well. Pupils who sat examinations in 2018, on average, achieved five GCSEs including mathematics and English.
- Pupils make strong social and emotional progress. Leaders have developed a system to record and track emotional starting points using a standardised assessment package. They carefully plan opportunities to help pupils develop social opportunities within school and the community. Over time, pupils' self-confidence increases. They develop resilience and teamworking skills which have a positive impact on their self-esteem.
- Each pupil has a personal mentor. Mentors help pupils to identify career goals. They support pupils with visits to local colleges and help them to access appropriate courses. Pupils who left in 2018 all moved successfully into further education at local colleges.
- Many pupils arrive as reluctant readers. Many are operating significantly below age-related expectations. Phonics is used effectively to promote letter sounds and build up word formation. Where this is taught directly, pupils' reading skills improve. In vocational areas where reading is not directly taught, pupils do not routinely have opportunity to apply these skills. As a result, they do not practise reading in all areas of the curriculum.

Sixth form provision

Inadequate

- There are many positive aspects to the sixth form provision. Leaders, however, have not ensured compliance with all of the independent school standards. Students in the sixth form access the school site. Insufficient checks have been carried out within the school to ensure fire safety.
- Leaders are aspirational for all students. They liaise with placing authorities to ensure students can access 16 to 19 study programmes where appropriate. Students value this opportunity. Those who met with the inspector said this helps them as they do not yet feel ready to go to a larger college.
- Students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Learning is personalised and matched to their individual needs. Students can re-sit GCSE examinations and access additional GCSEs, including creative media, computer science and psychology. Students can also access AS levels including photography.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is good. Students display mature attitudes. They are positive towards their learning and know that education equips them for the future. They value their education. One quote that summed up the view of the majority was, 'I wouldn't miss a day.'
- Students are well supported by their personal mentors. They access appropriate careers advice and visit colleges. Some have access to work experience and have made firm career plans. Students are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- All of the students who left the sixth form in 2018 were successful in securing a place at a local college.

School details

Unique reference number	136510
DfE registration number	937/6108
Inspection number	10056219

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 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	30
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	10
Number of part-time pupils	10
Proprietor	Vivienne Morgan
Chair	Vivienne Morgan
Headteacher	Elaine Simmons
Annual fees (day pupils)	£30,000
Telephone number	01926 484203
Website	www.northleigh.co.uk
Email address	elaine.simmons@northleigh.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–14 January 2016

Information about this school

- Northleigh House School is a small independent day school located in Hatton, near Warwickshire. It opened in May 2011 and admitted its first pupils in September 2011. The school is registered for up to 30 pupils, aged 11 to 18 years. The school offer places to pupils who experience high levels of anxiety and social, emotional difficulties. Pupils are

funded by their local authorities or privately. No children are looked after by the local authority. All pupils are white British.

- All of the pupils have significant gaps in their learning as they have not been able to attend school for long periods of time. In agreement with the placing authorities, some pupils attend on a part-time basis while they are inducted into school.
- There are currently 30 pupils on roll, 10 of whom attend the sixth form. The vast majority of pupils have an EHC plan. All have experienced disruption to previous learning.
- Pupils are taught in small groups and also one to one where appropriate.
- The school is well resourced with a range of classrooms. The school also has a photography studio, outdoor hall space, food technology room and an outdoor sports pitch. The school has many small outdoor classrooms including woodwork and a newly established music room.
- The school was last inspected in January 2016 when it was judged to be good in all areas.
- The school does not make use of alternative providers. It does, however, engage with the wider community to provide additional opportunities for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- It was not possible to make telephone contact with the school to provide notice of one day due to the school's telephones being out of order. Contact was made with the director of education on the morning of day 1 of the inspection.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, who is also the chair of trustees and the school leaders. Discussions were held with teachers and a group of pupils. The inspector considered 10 responses to the pupil survey and 23 responses to the staff survey. Eleven responses to the parental survey were also considered.
- The inspector toured the premises accompanied by the director of education.
- The inspector observed teaching across all year groups and in a range of subjects including English, mathematics, science, humanities, history and food technology.
- Several key policies were examined including safeguarding, behaviour, admissions and anti-bullying. The inspector also reviewed the school's attendance and admissions registers. The school's checks made on the suitability of staff were also reviewed.
- The inspector reviewed work in pupils' books across a range of subjects and also scrutinised the school's assessment information.

Inspection team

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that -
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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