

# J.A.M.E.S

The Eric Gibbs Centre, Highfield Garage, Frizinghall Road, Bradford BD9 4JB

## Inspection dates

30 January–1 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The school leadership team and board of trustees have not taken sufficient action to ensure that pupils' good progress identified in the previous inspection report has continued.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in academic subjects is not yet consistently good across the school. This is because some staff lack the skills and knowledge of how to plan learning for individual pupils, particularly those with special educational needs (SEN) and or/disabilities.
- The school curriculum does not have a strong enough focus on academic subjects. As a result, pupils sometimes leave without having gained the level of accreditation of which they are capable.
- Links between different subject areas are not securely in place. As a result, pupils are taught English and mathematics in different areas of the school. This can slow their overall progress in these subjects.
- Leaders' evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses within school is not fully accurate. Leaders and trustees also lack an understanding of the actions needed to be taken to ensure that all of the independent school standards are met.
- The board of trustees do not hold the leadership team to account with sufficient rigour. As a result, outcomes for pupils in some areas of the school are lower than they should be.

### The school has the following strengths

- Staff understand pupils' needs well and form strong and trusting relationships with individual pupils. As a result, support for pupils' personal development and well-being is good.
- Pupils often arrive in school with very low levels of attendance. Once they settle into the school their attendance often rises quickly to close to that of others nationally.
- Parents and carers feel their children are safe and secure in school. Pupils spoken to say how much they enjoy coming to school because they feel staff respect and care for them.
- Pupils make stronger progress in developing their skills in car maintenance.

### 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 the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make accelerated progress by:
  - ensuring that staff who teach academic subjects have good levels of subject knowledge
  - making sure that all staff understand how to accurately assess pupils' skills and knowledge and use this information to plan future learning, particularly in English
  - making sure that staff receive adequate training to be able to recognise pupils' additional needs and support them to overcome barriers to learning
  - developing closer links within the school to ensure that there is a more collective approach to teaching basic skills in English and mathematics to all pupils.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - developing more effective systems to check the quality of teaching and learning which focus on pupils' progress rather than on other aspects of classroom practice
  - increasing the levels of accreditation pupils can achieve within the curriculum to include a wider range of subjects
  - further developing school leaders' skills at recognising the strengths and areas for improvement within the school and ensuring that future planning for the development of the school has a clear focus on increasing pupils' outcomes
  - ensuring that trustees take a more active role in holding leaders to account for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school must meet the independent school standards, as set out in the annex of this report.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Senior leaders and members of the board of trustees have failed to ensure that all of the independent school standards have been met.
- The principal of the school and other senior leaders have a vision for the future of the school. However, leaders do not yet have a strong enough focus within this vision on developing pupils' academic outcomes. As a result, the range of academic accreditation offered to pupils is not sufficiently broad, particularly for those who are not dual registered with their home schools.
- School trustees meet regularly and feel school leaders are supportive of the leadership team. They feel the school has moved forward considerably since the previous inspection. However, they do not offer senior leaders sufficient challenge and, as a result, improvements in, for example, the quality of teaching and learning are too slow.
- Senior leaders, including the principal, carry out checks of staff performance in the classroom. These visits are recorded for staff development. However, the checks carried out are not sufficiently focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning in, for example, reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, improvement in the quality of pupils' academic outcomes is slow.
- School leaders' evaluation of the strengths and areas for improvement within the school is not yet sufficiently accurate. The school's self-evaluation document effectively lists the school's strengths. However, it is less accurate at identifying areas within the school which need improving. This lack of direction slows overall improvement.
- Pupils often arrive at the school disillusioned with education. This is reflected in their very low levels of attendance. Pupils' attendance nearly always rises after they have settled in to the nurturing atmosphere of the school. Case studies presented to the inspection team demonstrated some exceptionally high increases in attendance for individual pupils. Comments from parents, such as 'I find it very hard to get my son to get up in the morning other than on the days he attends J.A.M.E.S, when he is up and dressed before the taxi arrives' and 'My child is now keen to attend school every day,' verify pupils' renewed enthusiasm for attending school.
- The school works hard to enrich the curriculum with a range of different experiences. Developing pupils' vocational skills is a significant strength of the school. Work undertaken in the mechanics workshop leads to accreditation from the Institute of Motor Industry (IMI), which also links closely with courses at a local college. Pupils also develop a wide range of employment and social and emotional skills through the work they carry out with The Prince's Trust. The effect of these enrichment activities has contributed to the higher than average number of pupils who have successfully transferred to college or the workplace last year.

## Governance

- School governance is carried out by a board of seven trustees who represent the school to the charity commission.

- They also meet with senior leaders regularly and monitor closely the school's economic performance.
- Trustees are also made aware of other aspects of the school's performance through feedback from senior leaders. Many have strong levels of understanding of the barriers faced by pupils through their roles as magistrates and members of the police force.
- However, trustees are not sufficiently effective at holding leaders to account for the academic outcomes of pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, improvement in these areas is slow.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy meets requirements and is clearly displayed on the school's website.
- School leaders foster a clear ethos of safeguarding across the school. The school's self-evaluation document demonstrates the school leaders' strong understanding of the issues which face many pupils who attend the school.
- The inclusion of visiting speakers from, for example, homeless and drugs and alcohol prevention teams and the local police ensures that pupils are made aware of the dangers within their locality.
- School staff spoken to during the inspection are exceptionally clear about the school's policies and processes in relation to safeguarding. Regular training ensures that their knowledge and understanding of recent safeguarding issues are kept updated.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Some school staff do not have sufficient depth of understanding within the academic subject areas they teach. For example, work in pupils' files clearly shows that staff knowledge and understanding of spelling, grammar and punctuation, and some aspects of the mathematics curriculum, are not as strong as they should be.
- Staff and the principal plan work for pupils which closely matches the examination syllabus in English and mathematics. However, work set does not take into account the needs of pupils, particularly those who have significant gaps in their previous education. As a result, pupils do not catch up on missing skills and knowledge, for example in the correct use of full stops and capital letters, and continue to make the same mistakes in their written work.
- Pupils are often taught basic skills in English and mathematics in more than one area of the school. For example, pupils may practise their English skills when writing up reports as part of their IMI accreditations. They may also practise writing as part of their off-site work at the city farm, as well as in the classroom area within the school. However, currently, the approach taken by different members of staff to teaching individual pupils is inconsistent as links are not in place to ensure that pupils' learning is developed by all staff. This slows pupils' progress overall.
- Many of the pupils that attend the school have additional needs, such as social, emotional and mental health needs. Some have special educational needs, such as those who have

autism spectrum disorder. While staff are skilled at developing effective relationships with nearly all pupils who attend the school, they do not receive extra training in how to recognise and teach pupils who have special educational needs. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs do not receive the support they need to make as much progress academically as they could.

- Staff in the school's workshop are knowledgeable in their subject area and are proficient at ensuring that learning matches pupils' needs. As a result, pupils make good progress overall in acquiring IMI qualifications.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to foster pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff have developed a good understanding of pupils' needs across the school. Parents describe the school as being a 'safe haven' for their children, where their needs are understood and the development of their self-esteem and self-worth is a clear focus.
- Parents also described staff as being approachable and caring, always ready 'to go the extra mile' to support their children. Parents gave examples of how staff and senior leaders had helped pupils to sort out problems, both inside and outside school.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection confirmed their parents' views and commented how much they enjoyed coming to school now. Several commented on how they now enjoyed learning.
- When asked, pupils commented that they felt safe and well supported by staff in school. They also described how staff brought in outside agencies to help them with any problems they may encounter, including training about the dangers of drugs.
- The personal development and well-being of the very small number of pupils who attend alternative provision is equally good as those who attend the school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour observed during the inspection was polite and friendly to visitors, staff and each other. Rarely was learning interrupted by difficult behaviour. School data shows that, overall, behaviour inside and outside the classroom is good despite the high levels of need of many pupils.
- Should behaviour standards slip, staff immediately become engaged and work closely with the pupil concerned to try and establish the issues currently being faced by the pupil. This approach nearly always diffuses the situation for the pupil. The effectiveness of this approach is clearly shown in the relatively low levels of serious incidents recorded and the lack of any recorded need for physical intervention.
- School data showed that pupils' attendance increases, often from below 10% on entry to the school to close to the national average for secondary schools. Staff carry out rigorous checks on any non-attendance and work closely with parents to improve pupils' attendance overall.

- The behaviour of pupils who attend alternative provision is also good.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **Requires improvement**

- Pupils who attend the school full time make less progress in academic subjects, such as English, mathematics and information technology (IT), than in vocational studies, such as the IMI qualifications offered. This is because staff have too low expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Many pupils who attend full time, and those who attend for more than three days per week, leave with level 1 qualifications in mathematics and English. Some gain an IT accreditation also. However, work in pupils' files clearly shows some are capable of a higher level of achievement, particularly those that join the school in key stage 3.
- The curriculum is organised in such a way that pupils only access subjects other than English, mathematics and IT for one lesson per week. As a result, too little academic time is made available for pupils to study for further accreditation.
- Staff do not always assess pupils' progress effectively and, as a result, their planning for learning is less accurate, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
- The most able pupils are not clearly identified by staff in either English or mathematics lessons, and so the progress of this group is also slower than it should be overall.
- Much of the week's timetable is allocated to vocational-based studies, including motor vehicle repairs and studies through The Prince's Trust. Pupils make greater gains in these areas of the curriculum, particularly in motor vehicle studies.
- All but two of last year's leavers made a successful transition to college or the world of work.

## School details

Unique reference number	140566
DfE registration number	380/6009
Inspection number	10043658

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
Number of pupils on the school roll	33
Number of part-time pupils	21
Proprietor	Mr D Hanson
Chair of trustees	Mr D Hanson
Headteacher	Mandy Lakes
Annual fees (day pupils)	£65 per day
Telephone number	01274 483075
Website	<a href="http://www.jamesuk.org">www.jamesuk.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@jamesuk.org">enquiries@jamesuk.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	13 January 2015

## Information about this school

- The school caters for the needs of up to 45 secondary-age pupils who come from across the Bradford metropolitan area. A small number come from other areas.
- Currently, approximately three quarters of pupils who attend are dual registered with the school and their home school. The remainder are registered to the school.
- Many pupils have additional needs, such as social, emotional and behavioural needs. A smaller number have further needs, such as attention deficit disorder or autism spectrum disorder.

- The school was last inspected in January 2015. The principal and chair of the board of trustees remain the same.
- The school currently uses only one alternative provider, Bradford City Farm.
- The school has no specific specialism or religious denomination.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in both the academic and vocational areas of the school.
- They also visited the one alternative provider used by school, Bradford City Farm.
- Inspectors held meetings with three parents whose children attended the school, three members of the leadership team and staff from three schools who have pupils dual registered with the school.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documents, including curriculum plans, pupils' progress documents, and health and safety and safeguarding documentation.
- Meetings were also held with senior leaders, pupils and members of staff.
- The inspection team took into account responses from five members of staff who completed Ofsted questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Diane Buckle

Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school must meet the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if:
  - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 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(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.

#### **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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