

Inspection of Bridge Training and Development

Unit 2 Hanley Workshops, Hanley Road, Hanley Swan, Malvern, Worcestershire WR8 0DX

Inspection dates: 19–21 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

From the early morning 'Good morning Bridge' session to the end-of-day daily debrief, pupils are at the heart of everything this school does. Pupils are happy. They are proud of their school and say they always feel safe here. This is because the adults know the pupils very well. They understand the pupils' needs and do everything they can to support and help them to make the most of what the school has to offer. Relationships between the teachers and pupils are excellent. The pupils say they feel very well cared for and this is clear to see.

Pupils say that bullying is rare. If it happens, it is dealt with quickly by the teachers. Pupils say behaviour is good. The school's bullying and behaviour logs support this. Pupils are extremely polite and respectful and enjoy their lessons, particularly when they get to work with the animals around the farm. The school's dogs, Poppy and Ralph, are much loved. They provide emotional support for pupils when needed. The school provides very successfully for pupils' academic, emotional, personal and social needs. Because of this, pupils who have found school difficult in the past thrive at Bridge.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are ambitious for pupils to overcome the challenges that have made it difficult for them to learn successfully in the past. Teachers understand pupils' wide range of special educational needs. Teachers use the information about each pupil well to create an individual curriculum for them. This helps pupils to develop their social and emotional skills so that they can work well with others and respond positively when they feel challenged. The school does this very successfully. Many pupils learn successfully and complete a range of qualifications. This is because staff are skilful at helping pupils to manage their emotions if they find learning difficult. Many pupils have developed their confidence, self-esteem and sense of self-worth significantly since joining the school.

The wider curriculum offered to pupils is broad and rich. For example, pupils have opportunities to work with animals, learn how to live an independent life and have access to high-quality work experience and careers guidance. Some pupils also attend local care farms and complete separate qualifications offered by these organisations.

While pupils are very well supported to re-engage with learning, some pupils are not given work that is demanding enough to ensure that they make as much academic progress as they might. This is because leaders have not yet fully developed a core academic curriculum that shows what knowledge and skills pupils need to learn over time. Some teachers are focusing too much on identifying and plugging gaps in pupils' understanding and not enough on making sure pupils learn new information. In addition, some staff do not routinely check pupils' academic progress. Consequently, the few pupils who fall behind are not quickly identified and supported.

Pupils who join the school with reading skills below where they should be are well supported to learn to read fluently and with confidence. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and writing in different subjects.

Pupils behave very well throughout the school day, including in lessons. The systems used by teachers to manage pupils' behaviour are very effective. Many pupils at the school were at risk of exclusion from their previous school because of their behaviour. Bridge has been very successful at supporting pupils to improve their behaviour. Pupils show respect for others, including people who have different beliefs and backgrounds to theirs. They understand the importance of everyone being treated equally and the importance of following rules and the law.

The school's governors and proprietors understand their roles well and support the school to achieve its aims.

The school's sixth-form centre is at the Bridge Business Centre, which is on a separate site. The accommodation includes a catering kitchen, manufacturing workshop and an online sales facility. Students can choose to study within one of three work-related areas. From these courses, students gain the skills and qualifications they need to be able to work in a related business. They are also supported to find work experience placements in other industries. They are encouraged to continue to study other subjects, including functional skills in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT). Students also develop a range of skills to help them be successful in the workplace and learn how to live independently.

Leaders have a good understanding of the independent school standards and ensure that they meet them consistently. Both the Bridge school and the Bridge Business Centre meet all the independent school standards. These standards were also fully met at the school's previous inspection. The school has an equal opportunities policy and ensures that pupils and staff are treated equally. The school is fully inclusive and meets the needs of its pupils well. It complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to increase the maximum age of students it can take from 18 to 24. The new students will have to meet the same criteria as those currently attending the school. That is, they will need to have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The sixth-form centre is currently meeting the needs of its students well. The school is likely to continue to meet all the independent school standards, and meet the needs of prospective students aged from 18 to 24 years, if the DfE approves this material change.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a safeguarding policy that meets government requirements. This is

available on the school's website. A wide range of risk assessments and school policies make sure that adults know how to keep pupils safe. The site is safe and secure.

Staff know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. Consequently, leaders can help pupils who may be at risk of harm. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a range of ways, including the safe use of public transport and asking for help if they find themselves in a challenging situation.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not organised so that it progressively builds on what pupils know and can do. Consequently, pupils do not do as well as they could in these subjects. Leaders and governors need to make sure that the sequence of learning and the intended outcomes for pupils are clear in each subject.
- The work for several pupils over time is not demanding enough. As a result, these pupils are not stretched in their learning. Leaders and governors need to make sure that the intended academic outcomes for pupils are sufficiently ambitious. In addition, the delivery of the curriculum should deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding so that they can achieve the academic standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils' academic progress is not checked consistently. So, pupils who are falling behind in their learning are not quickly identified and supported. Leaders should make sure that they use the school's assessment system to check that pupils are achieving the aspirational targets set for them. Leaders should use the information to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	142833
DfE registration number	885/6044
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10124734
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	13
Number of part-time pupils	4
Proprietor	The Bridge Education Centre
Chair	Barry Austin
Headteacher	Susan Hornby
Annual fees (day pupils)	£34,125
Telephone number	01684 311632
Website	www.bridgetraininganddevelopment.org.uk
Email address	suehornby.bridge@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	13–15 June 2017

Information about this school

- The school was last inspected in June 2017.
- The school uses a range of local care farms where pupils can attend one or two days per week and study for an additional City & Guilds qualification.
- Post-16 students attend the Bridge Business Centre which is situated at Unit 10, Sixways industrial centre, Barnards Green, Malvern WR14 3NB.

- The school admits pupils who have either been excluded or are at risk of being excluded from other schools.
- All pupils attending the school have an EHC plan.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The Department for Education commissioned Ofsted to carry out this standard inspection earlier in the cycle than previously planned in response to a complaint.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. The school has requested to increase the maximum age of students it can accept from 18 to 24. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

The outcome of this part of the inspection is: the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.

- This inspection was carried out by two inspectors over three days. It was quality assured by a senior HMI who attended for one day.
- We met with senior leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the head of the Bridge Business Centre.
- We conducted deep dives into English, mathematics, citizenship, physical education (PE) and physical science. The deep dives consisted of visits to lessons, discussions with leaders and teachers, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' work.
- A meeting was held with the school's designated safeguarding lead. A wide range of safeguarding documentation was scrutinised, including pupils' records and the school's single central record.
- A range of health and safety documents were checked, including the school's health and safety policy, first aid policy, risk assessments and fire safety checks.
- We looked at the school's written curriculum plans and pupils' EHC plans.
- A check of both premises was carried out.

Inspection team

Janet Satchwell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martin Bragg

Ofsted Inspector

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