

# Inspection of On Track Education Wisbech

Enterprise House, Oldfield Lane, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 2RJ

---

Inspection dates: 14 to 16 March 2023

---

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
------------------------------	-------------

---

The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	<b>Good</b>
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
--	------

Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
--	------------

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils who attend On Track have typically had difficult experiences with education in the past. Some pupils have had long periods out of school before coming to On Track. Careful transition arrangements help pupils to settle in quickly. Pupils access a well-planned curriculum that takes account of their specific, individual needs.

Pupils appreciate the learning environment provided for them. For example, the 'football cage' outside is a much-loved play area that pupils value greatly.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They know that the staff like them and are there to support them. This helps pupils to manage their own emotions and behaviour. Pupils say that bullying is something that does not happen. The high numbers of staff help pupils to feel safe in this respect.

Pupils know that leaders have high expectations of them and want them to do well. Pupils understand that leaders are determined that they will leave school with the skills they need to become successful citizens when they reach adulthood. Pupils typically leave school with a range of appropriate qualifications, reflecting their hard work.

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

Leaders have focused well on developing the curriculum. Leaders have defined what is to be taught in each subject and year group across the academic year. This means that teachers are clear about what is to be taught and when. Pupils learn the curriculum well, from their individual starting points. Leaders have ensured the breadth of the curriculum content takes into account the knowledge pupils need to achieve well.

Teaching staff adapt the curriculum well to meet individual pupils' needs. They know pupils' strengths and the areas that they find more challenging. Staff know that most pupils have had difficult educational journeys before reaching the school. They recognise fully the impact this has had on pupils' interest in learning and education.

Teachers think carefully about how best to deliver the curriculum to pupils. They deliberately choose activities that pupils are likely to engage with. For example, when teachers know that pupils enjoy being active, they try to include activities involving moving in lessons.

The curriculum around helping pupils' emotional development is particularly strong. A therapeutic approach is taken to help pupils to learn to manage their feelings. Pupils are taught ways to cope with their anxieties and other emotions. They are given the time and space they need when emotions become overwhelming. Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong. Pupils trust staff and know that they can talk to them. As a result, pupils' behaviour improves greatly during their time at the school. This helps them to learn academically.

Leaders have taken positive steps to improve the way reading is taught at the school. However, there is more to do. A small proportion of pupils struggle to read fluently. They do not have the phonic knowledge they need to be able to identify the sounds in words and blend them together to read efficiently. This also has an impact on pupils' ability to spell words correctly.

The curriculum is sometimes too focused on what leaders want pupils to do rather than what they want them to learn. Small steps of learning are not routinely identified well enough. This is particularly so in mathematics and the 'secretarial' aspects of writing, which are handwriting, punctuation and spelling. These are not always taught methodically enough. Where this is the case, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils are prepared well for their next steps after leaving the school. They receive regular careers advice and guidance. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to learn about different careers and college courses. Their needs and interests are followed up and acted on. For example, pupils have visited a football club, an ambulance station and a Royal Air Force base to find out about the jobs and careers available in these establishments.

Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities beyond the curriculum. They go on frequent visits to a range of places of interest. Many pupils regularly visit the local community farm. This complements their work across the rest of the curriculum. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught well. Pupils learn about all aspects of PSHE, including how to keep themselves mentally and physically healthy.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards are met consistently. The proprietor checks leaders' work regularly. Prompt action is taken, where necessary, to address any health and safety issues that arise from time to time.

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The proprietor has also ensured that the statutory guidance around relationships and sex education and health education is followed fully. Leaders are continuing to develop this area of the curriculum.

Staff say that they are happy and proud to work at the school. However, some staff say that they feel that their workload is difficult to manage. Leaders take appropriate actions to support staff in their work and to reduce workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture. Staff are well trained to identify possible signs of abuse and neglect. They report their concerns promptly. The designated safeguarding leads understand the role well. They respond quickly

to the concerns raised by staff. The designated safeguarding leads have a strong determination to act as advocates for pupils whenever necessary.

Systems for checking the suitability of new staff are robust. All the required pre-appointment checks are carried out before staff are allowed to start working at the school. The PSHE curriculum helps pupils learn how to keep themselves safe.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The curriculum is not fully developed in some areas. Where this is the case, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should take action to ensure that the small steps of learning are identified fully in all subjects, particularly in mathematics and in the 'secretarial' aspects of writing (handwriting, punctuation and spelling).
- Phonics is not taught systematically enough to the small proportion of pupils who require it. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they could in reading and spelling. Leaders should take action to ensure that:
  - an accredited systematic synthetic phonics programme is identified and adopted
  - all relevant staff receive appropriate training to enable them to deliver the programme well
  - pupils who still need this body of knowledge receive daily phonics lessons until they are able to decode fluently at a level appropriate to their age.
- Some staff feel that their workload is too heavy. This leads to a degree of dissatisfaction among the staff body. Leaders should take action to reduce negative perceptions so that the vast majority of staff feel positive about their workload.

## **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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133570
<b>DfE registration number</b>	873/6041
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10254648
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent special school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	19
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	4
<b>Proprietor</b>	On Track Education Services Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Penny Harris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claudette Scoffield
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£38,665 to £57,475
<b>Telephone number</b>	01945 580898
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ontrackededucation.com/wisbech">www.ontrackededucation.com/wisbech</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:wisbechoffice@ontrackededucation.com">wisbechoffice@ontrackededucation.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 to 13 December 2018

## Information about this school

- On Track Education Centre Wisbech is a small independent special school for boys and girls aged between 11 and 16 years.
- On Track Education Services Limited operates the school, which opened in 2006. The directors provide governance for the school.
- There have been two changes of headteacher since the previous inspection. The previous headteacher left the school at the end of the spring term 2022. The school's education manager and pastoral manager have jointly led the school since September 2022.
- All pupils have education, health and care plans related to their social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils also have other diagnoses, such as autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- Pupils often present challenging behaviour. Many of them have experienced personal traumas and severe disruption in their previous education.
- Local authorities fund pupils' placements at the school.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the proprietor, the education manager and the pastoral manager, subject leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the alternative provision, Open Road, on the telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, PSHE and cookery. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also listened to pupils reading, scrutinised a range of school documents and visited the school's open afternoon for parents.
- In order to check the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of pre-appointment checks, looked at records of child protection

concerns and spoke with parents, staff and pupils.

- There were too few responses to Ofsted Parent View for results to be available. Inspectors took account of the three free-text comments that were received. They also took account of 17 responses to the staff survey. Inspectors spoke with parents during the school's open afternoon on the second day of the inspection.
- In order to assess whether the independent school standards were met, inspectors checked the school premises, reviewed a range of documents and checked the school's website.

### **Inspection team**

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Isabel Davis

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023