

Jus 'T' Learn

9-11 Commonside East, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 2QA

Inspection dates 19–21 November 2014

| Overall effectiveness | Good | 2 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Leadership and management | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of students | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of students | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings

This is a good school because

- Students with poor previous attendance are keen to attend school and to take an active part in school life.
- Once students have settled into the school they make good progress with their learning, often from low starting points, as a result of the good teaching. Their behaviour is good.
- The safeguarding arrangements are good and the students confirm they feel safe.
- The leadership and management have ensured that teaching and learning are good. Senior leaders have high expectations for what the students can achieve.
- The school works very closely with the referral agencies who confirm that the students are making good progress and their attitudes have improved now they attend the school.
- Parents and carers hold the school in high regard.
- The proprietors and senior leaders have ensured that all the Independent School Standards are met.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Information on students' progress is not sufficiently refined to show their achievement over time.
- Regular monitoring and evaluating of the quality of teaching are not yet firmly embedded.
- Marking in students' books does not consistently help students to improve their work or consider their next steps.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was undertaken with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons, most of which were joint observations with the senior leader.
- Meetings were held with the school's leaders, teaching staff and students. A range of documentation was examined, including policies, assessment records, the curriculum and teachers' plans. The inspector looked at students' written and other work. The inspector observed students at break times.
- The inspector collected students' views of the school from the many conversations that were held with individual and small groups throughout the two days of the inspection.
- The views expressed by eight members of staff through survey questionnaires were considered.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. However, a number of parents and carers contacted the inspector to express their views on the school. Referral agencies were contacted during the inspection.

Inspection team

Jill Bainton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Jus 'T' Learn was registered as an independent, co-educational special school providing alternative education for 15 students aged 14 to 16 years in November 2013. It was already running as a school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- There are currently 29 students aged 13 to 16 years on roll. There are 17 students who attend full time and 12 part time. Five students have statements of special educational needs and all relate to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are four looked after students. The school provides education for students who are at risk of exclusion from their school. Students are referred by schools and local authorities. The school is held in premises in Mitcham, Surrey.
- The school uses offsite training for physical education at a local sports centre and work experience at various venues.
- The school aims to 'to provide a safe, secure, happy, healthy and stimulating environment ... to encourage students to develop and boost their educational knowledge'.
- The school applied recently to the Department for Education (DfE) for a material change to be considered as part of the inspection. They relocated to new premises on 3 November 2014. They also wish to increase the number of students from 15 to 40 and to extend the age range from 11 to 16 years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and achievement by ensuring that:
 - students' work is consistently marked, with staff providing comments to students on how to improve their work
 - fully implement checking systems so that students' progress over time can be checked more easily.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - monitoring of the quality of teaching so that teachers' skills improve to ensure all students achieve as well as they should
 - devising strategies to increase students' punctuality in the mornings.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal, who is also one of the proprietors, along with senior leaders, has high expectations for what the students can achieve. In a relatively short time, the staff have established a school where students thrive and behave well in a supportive atmosphere. The good leadership, together with a well-planned curriculum and effective teaching, enables the students to behave and achieve well.
- As a result of a shared common purpose, the staff team provides an excellent level of support for students' personal development. The team helps students to enjoy school, often after extended periods of non-attendance and dissatisfaction.
- The school works very closely with parents and carers to ensure their children receive the support they need. Communication is a strength of the school. Parents and carers appreciate the level of personal attention which their children are given. As a group of parents reported, 'This school goes the extra mile. It has helped my child to learn, and as a result his self-esteem is growing daily.'
- Staff ensure that students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. For example, students learn about how democracy works through the school council. Visits outside school, for example to the Science Museum in London, help to enrich students' experiences further and prepare students for life in modern Britain.
- The senior management team and subject leaders have devised a detailed school improvement plan; this, alongside the self-evaluation, identifies the right areas for improvement. The system for setting targets for teachers is used to determine the personal and professional needs of staff. The monitoring of teaching, which has begun recently, is not yet sufficiently embedded to improve teachers' skills to ensure all students achieve as well as they should. All members of staff, in their questionnaire responses, agree that they are proud to be members of staff at the school.
- Leaders have ensured that students are kept safe and the school meets current safeguarding requirements. The school follows safer recruitment procedures for staff appointments.
- The building has been fully renovated and is well resourced. It provides flexible teaching spaces where the students can be taught individually or in small groups.
- All the required information, including a suitable complaints procedure, is made available to parents, carers and referral agencies. Several referral agencies were contacted during the inspection and were all positive about the school and the difference it had made to the young people placed there. They felt very well informed on all aspects of the young person's progress and development.
- The material change application was considered as part of the inspection. The new premises and accommodation meet the regulations for independent schools. The proposed new age range was confirmed as 11 to 16 years. The number of students able to be registered at the school will be set at 25, due to the limited size of the accommodation.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The proprietors are well informed about the school. The Principal, who is one of the proprietors, is an active presence at the school. School leaders are held to account for the administration of the school, including finance. Detailed information is provided to enable those responsible for the governance of the school to understand its strengths and areas for improvement. The governors have a good understanding of the quality of the teaching and information on students' achievement. They have a good understanding of how to improve teachers' performance through setting rigorous targets for improvement.
 - The proprietors and senior leaders have ensured that all the Independent School Standards are met.

The behaviour and safety of students are good

Behaviour

- Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Students arrive at the school with a history of non attendance and poor behaviour. Most have negative attitudes to learning, having experienced difficulties in managing their behaviour in previous schools.
- As a result of the positive relationships with the adults, students' attitudes to school show a marked improvement over time and their attendance improves. These have a positive impact on their successful learning. However, some students still find it difficult to get to the morning lessons on time. The school is adopting strategies to address this.

- Students who still struggle occasionally with their unwillingness to fully engage in classroom activity are managed well by staff. When asked if the good behaviour seen during the inspection was the normal pattern, the students confirmed it was, but added, 'We can all have a bad day sometimes.' This shows that they are realistic in their expectations that some students are still trying to manage their own behaviour.
- Students confirm that they have settled well at the school, making comments such as, 'We learn better here as teachers listen to us ... it's different here, but we like it.'
- Students say that they have no concerns about bullying, including cyber bullying. They do not have their mobile phones with them during the day, which they say is good as they will not be distracted by messages.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students confirm that they feel safe at school and always know who to turn to should they need help.
- All staff have been checked for their suitability to work with young people. The school has appropriate appointment procedures which are accurately recorded on the required single central register of staff appointments. There are good procedures to ensure that students are safeguarded and that all staff are trained to the appropriate levels. The safeguarding policy meets the requirements of latest guidance from the Department for Education.
- Detailed risk assessments on the premises and activities, both on and off site, are completed. These include the local sport facilities and placements for work experience which the students use. The school's information confirms that the students' learning and behaviour at off site training venues is good.
- Students gain an increasing knowledge of their own and other cultures, beliefs and ways of life through personal, social and health education, history and art lessons. Racial harmony is effectively promoted as staff assist students in their growing awareness of those from backgrounds different from their own. Students learn about English services and institutions through outside visits and school events.
- The school does not promote any partisan political views and ensures that any controversial issues are addressed in a balanced way, and no form of extremist views is presented.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The learning is good throughout the school as a result of the effective teaching. This enables students to make good progress over time in both their academic learning and personal development. The high quality of relationships between staff and students is a key factor in their success. As a result, students who previously did not enjoy school life are now develop much more positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers are generally skilled at motivating reluctant learners and involving them in meaningful learning. Students behave well in class, especially if the learning activities interest and engage them. For example, in an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson, students were reviewing podcasts. Here they thoroughly enjoyed analysing the impact of the broadcast.
- Learning activities, especially in English, including reading and writing, and mathematics, build closely on students' previous learning. They are effectively broken down into small steps, so students can understand the work more easily and achieve well. Staff make frequent checks to ensure students understand what they are learning.
- The curriculum is well planned and meets the needs of the students working towards national examinations. Most of the part-time students access English and mathematics at the school and the rest of the curriculum at their mainstream school or college.
- Most staff mark the students' work regularly. However, not all staff give students guidance on what they need to do next to improve their work. This means that marking does not help students to make better progress.
- The skills and abilities of students are checked when they enter the school, to find out what they know and can do. This process helps teachers to provide work at the correct level for each student. Most staff have an understanding of each student's attainment and use this information well to plan learning activities. The students' progress cannot easily be checked, due to the cumbersome system in place, as the information is recorded in several places. The school has recently adopted a commercial tracking system designed to give staff more accurate information on students' progress, both individually and by groups.
- A range of resources, including ICT, is used well to provide activities to develop students' skills.
- Good careers advice is provided by specialist staff at the school. Students are given opportunities for work experience, both on and off site. Parents and carers noted that this was helpful for their children.

The achievement of students**is good**

- Students achieve well as a result of good teaching, a stimulating curriculum and the supportive learning atmosphere present in the school. Students achieve well from often low starting points in terms of skills, knowledge and levels of motivation. Some students return to mainstream education after a short time as they are ready to re-engage in learning. Others request that they remain at the school a little longer as they do not feel ready, or confident, to return.
- The good progress is shown in the quality of work in books, observations of learning in lessons, and through the school's own information about each student's progress. The school successfully re-engages students in education and helps them to improve and manage their own behaviour well. Once they have settled into the routines of the school, the majority make good progress from their various starting points.
- The school use good strategies to help students to read and have renewed confidence to express themselves verbally in the small classes. Their listening skills develop well alongside their speaking skills.
- Students make good progress in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects. Part-time students confirmed that they liked the combination of school and college where they could follow work-related courses and still work towards their examinations. Students follow courses such as construction, childcare and health and beauty care at college, in conjunction with the school provision.
- The most able students are sufficiently challenged in their learning. Staff are good at engaging them in activities in which they have to find solutions to problems and to think for themselves.
- Students who have a statement of special educational needs have suitable individual education plans. These give sufficient detail which identify the small steps which they need to take to achieve even greater success. Annual reviews are carried out and are well documented. Referral agencies commented on how effective the school is at supporting this specific group of students.
- Students have access to a range of subjects accredited with GCSE, BTEC and Entry level awards. It is intended that the range of accreditations will be extended in the next academic year. Most of the small number of students who took national examinations in the last academic year gained their expected grade. In 2014, all Year 11 students proceeded to further education, training or work placements.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | |
|---------|----------------------|
| Grade | Judgement |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 140496 |
| Inspection number | 447231 |
| DfE registration number | 315/6006 |

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.

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| Type of school | Special day school |
| School status | Independent school |
| Age range of students | 14-16 years |
| Gender of students | Mixed |
| Number of students on the school roll | 29 |
| Number of part time students | 12 |
| Proprietor | Jus 'T' Learn Limited |
| Headteacher | Munier Jussab |
| Date of previous school inspection | 29 November 2013 |
| Annual fees (day students) | £15,600 |
| Telephone number | 0203 6173399 |
| Email address | info@justlearn.org.uk |

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