

Get U Started Training

1 Haldane Street, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 8SF

Inspection dates

19–21 January 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders strive to make sure pupils can succeed at the school. Good teaching and pupils' outcomes clearly demonstrate the school's improvement since the last inspection.
- Leaders relentlessly pursue improvements in pupils' attitudes. Parents and carers praise the leaders for their support.
- Caring staff give pupils the necessary chances to behave better. Boys' and girls' attitudes rapidly improve.
- Good-quality teaching, learning and assessment motivate and engage pupils well.
- The school provides good opportunities for older pupils to gain vocational qualifications on the Get U Started Training project.
- Good leadership has secured good achievement for primary-age pupils attending the Get U Started Together project.
- Younger pupils said that they enjoy mathematics, science and literacy. Older pupils said the subjects on offer are a good incentive to attend.
- More-able and less-able pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from typically low starting points.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is good. Planned activities, such as studying different faiths and beliefs, help to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Staff effectively help pupils consider right and wrong. Pupils learn about rules, laws and respect for others, which promotes British values.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards are met consistently.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders do not provide enough training to enable staff to improve the overall quality of teaching to outstanding.
- At times, staff offer too much help to pupils. As a result, pupils miss out on making the best progress in their learning.
- The attendance of a few pupils remains too low.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by providing training to ensure that each member of staff can make the best impact in promoting pupils' personal development and achievement.
- Ensure staff give pupils every opportunity to complete tasks themselves so they fully benefit from the learning activities.
- Raise the level of attendance for the minority of pupils whose attendance is not as good as it should be.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and deputy have a clear ambition for pupils to improve their achievement and well-being. Boys and girls can study subjects they enjoy at suitable levels for their skills and staff go out of their way to care for their needs.
- Parents and carers unanimously complimented the leaders for their unceasing support. They praised the staff for doing all they can to improve pupils' attitudes, behaviour and learning.
- Leaders and staff gather a wide range of information in order to keep a close eye on how well pupils are learning and behaving. They use this well to ensure improvements in the school over time.
- Leaders recently created the Learning Centre in order to offer the Get U Started Together programme for younger pupils (Key Stages 1 and 2). Records demonstrate that pupils have made marked improvements in achievement and behaviour since starting in September 2015.
- The range of subjects and experiences on offer for older pupils attending Get U Started Training is good. The opportunity to achieve accredited vocational awards broadens the curriculum well, especially for those not wishing to follow a purely academic route.
- Leaders ensure that staff identify those pupils who have gaps in basic skills in mathematics, reading and writing. Staff provide helpful individual support to remedy these aspects.
- Pupils learn about different cultures through planned activities, such as topic work for younger pupils and personal, social and health education for older pupils. They visit places of worship to learn about different beliefs, faiths and cultures which helps to prepare them effectively for life in modern Britain.
- British values, such as the rule of law and respect for others, are frequently discussed by pupils and staff. The close support provided by staff is a key aspect in helping pupils to consider their own behaviour and improve their attitudes.
- Boys and girls benefit from impartial careers education. Staff and visitors guide pupils to consider appropriate options for their next steps and most continue in education or work-based training.
- Leaders provide staff with useful training; staff participate in external programmes to improve their teaching skills. However, not enough staff have the necessary skills, for example in providing the best support for pupils, for teaching to be outstanding.
- Leaders have ensured that the school fully complies with the independent school standards.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The directors are kept fully informed about the school by the headteacher. They ensure that the headteacher is held to account for the improvements at the school during their monthly board meetings. The governance of the school is effective.
 - The directors have ensured that the necessary financial resources have been made available for the headteacher to successfully establish the Learning Centre.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders keep parents, placing authority representatives and those involved in supporting pupils fully up to date. This ensures that there is no delay in taking the necessary decisions to secure appropriate actions for maintaining pupils' well-being.
- Leaders conduct frequent safeguarding checks of the premises and staff quickly carry out maintenance when required. Records show that they carry out the necessary health and safety checks when conducting visits and trips, such as to local sports centres.
- Leaders follow the agreed procedures for carrying out the necessary checks on staff and fully record these. Staff regularly receive training, such as in first aid and safeguarding, in order to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- Pupils, staff, parents and carers said that pupils are kept safe at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Good teaching ensures that older and younger pupils successfully re-engage with learning and make good progress. Leaders and staff provide learning activities that motivate pupils and stimulate their interest well.
- Staff are adept at managing pupils' behaviour and attitudes. They build effective relationships through

determination and persistence which have a significant impact on improving pupils' social and emotional skills.

- Staff make good use of information that they gather when pupils start at the school. The information helps them to plan individual programmes, identify and close gaps in pupils' basic skills and set challenging targets to boost improvement.
- Teaching ensures that less-able pupils and those with special educational needs do as well as others in the school. Learning activities challenge more-able pupils' knowledge and skills well in order for them to access higher levels.
- Teaching ensures younger pupils in the Learning Centre make at least good progress in reading and writing and mathematics. They benefit well from the useful comments and extra tasks provided by staff when marking their books in line with the school's policy for assessment.
- Older pupils make good progress in construction and motor vehicle maintenance in the school's workshop and garage facility as part of the vocational activities.
- Staff were observed giving pupils helpful support to improve during learning activities, such as explaining tasks and asking challenging questions. However, at times they completed pupils' tasks or provided answers so pupils missed out on making the best improvements.
- The school meets the independent school standards for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils do well in the positive learning atmosphere. They thrive on staff's good use of praise and encouragement.
- Parents and carers highlighted how the school's system of rewards had been instrumental in motivating pupils. Older pupils commented that they enjoy the construction and motor vehicle maintenance.
- Staff provide exemplary role models for pupils. Their thoughtful and caring responses go a long way to securing the necessary improvements in pupils' personal development, such as their social skills.
- Pupils are encouraged by staff to quickly learn what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. They are given opportunities to socialise with others, for example at breakfast and lunchtimes.
- Pupils feel safe from bullying in school. Records indicate that bullying is rare and pupils feel confident to share their concerns with staff because they know they will act quickly.
- Staff receive the necessary training to deal with situations which may arise. Records indicate that the school uses exclusions appropriately for those who need to understand the boundaries for unacceptable behaviour.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most boys and girls enter the school with a history of challenging behaviour and often refuse to engage in lessons. Staff are highly effective in managing pupils' behaviour and, as a result, pupils rapidly improve their behaviour when they join the school.
- Evidence in younger pupils' books clearly shows that the quality, quantity, neatness and presentation of work improve well over time. This confirms improvements in their attitudes.
- Nearly all pupils are brought to school in taxis or on the school minibus. This helps pupils to be punctual and ensures staff can keep a close watch on their attendance.
- Many pupils have a record of poor attendance prior to joining the school. While most pupils make significant improvements in their attendance, a few struggle to attend as well as they should.
- The school meets the required standards in regard to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Almost all pupils start at the school with knowledge and skills well below those of others of similar ages in schools nationally. Many have missed out on learning because of irregular attendance at their previous schools.

- Older pupils' basic skills improve as a result of individual support from staff. This helps them to make good progress and ensures that they catch up with missed learning.
- All pupils who left at the end of Year 11 in 2015 gained at least one recognised qualification in English and mathematics. Most pupils gained more than this.
- Younger pupils make good progress and achieve well from their different starting points in reading and writing due to good teaching. The school's records and scrutiny of work in pupils' books indicate that pupils improve even more rapidly in mathematics.
- Accredited programmes in English, mathematics and information and computer technology enhance older pupils' basic skills well.
- Older and younger pupils are provided with books in their classrooms to help encourage them to read frequently. The inspector listened to younger pupils skilfully reading from books they had chosen.
- Planned geography, history, art, sport and language activities broaden the curriculum. These activities ensure pupils gain the necessary experiences in physical, creative, aesthetic and linguistic education.
- The school meets the independent school standards for pupils' academic development.

School details

Unique reference number	137385
Inspection number	10008612
DfE registration number	929/6002

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 status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6–17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Get U Started Training Limited
Chair	Kenneth Cochrane
Headteacher	Philip Gallagher
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,000–£10,000
Telephone number	01670 850943
Website	www.getustartedtraining.org.uk
Email address	admin@getustartedtraining.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 June 2012

Information about this school

- Get U Started Training was established in 2004. The proprietor is Get U Started Training Limited, a not-for-profit charity.
- The headteacher is also a director of Get U Started Training Limited.
- The school's priority is to 'foster the self-confidence, self-esteem and independence of all in a climate of growth and opportunity that will enable us to achieve the highest standards'.
- Get U Started Training is the name of the project for older pupils. Get U Started Together is the project for younger pupils.
- The school is situated in a residential area close to the centre of Ashington, north of Newcastle, in the north-east of England. It occupies a two-storey building formerly used as a training establishment.
- The school caters for pupils who have been excluded or who are at risk of exclusion from other schools.
- Nearly all pupils have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The large majority of pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- There are 32 pupils currently on roll. Two pupils attend part time. No pupil is disabled.
- Pupils of different ages typically join the school at different times during the year. Most older pupils remain on roll to the end of Year 11. Occasionally, pupils continue for a short time after Year 11 to complete qualifications.
- The school does not use alternative providers.
- In the last year, building works have been undertaken by the proprietor to create classrooms and accommodation facilities for the Learning Centre on the first floor for the Get U Started Together project. This new education provision opened in September 2015. There are six pupils attending this project.
- The school's previous standard inspection (also its first inspection) took place in June 2012. It was judged

to be providing a good quality of education and met all of the independent school regulations.

- A material change inspection took place in August 2014 in order to consider a change of premise to the current site. A further material change inspection took place in November 2015 to consider an increase in the number on roll and the age range of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning across different age groups and in different subjects. All observations were undertaken with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspector spoke to staff, leaders and pupils. The inspector met with a local authority representative.
- The inspector spoke on the telephone to parents and carers and local authority representatives. There were not enough responses to the Ofsted online Parent View survey for these to be analysed.
- A number of school policies and documents were examined to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These included the school's prospectus and information about pupils' progress.
- Records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were scrutinised. The inspector checked that the required documents are made available on the school's website.

Inspection team

Jonathan Woodyatt, Lead Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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