

# Young Women’s Hub

308 Brownhill Road, London SE6 1AU

## Inspection dates

25 to 27 June 2019

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	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders, including trustees, have not ensured that all of the independent school standards have been met. Trustees do not provide enough challenge to senior leaders.
- Strategic improvement planning is at a very early stage of development. Systems to routinely monitor, evaluate and review the school’s effectiveness are not yet in place.
- The quality of teaching is variable. Teaching does not routinely take account of the needs of pupils in the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are unaware of their targets.
- Pupils’ outcomes are not yet consistently good due to the inconsistent quality of teaching. Pupils do not enjoy reading.
- Systems to assess pupils’ progress are at an early stage of development and are not secure.
- Although the curriculum content meets requirements, there are not enough extra-curricular activities for pupils.
- Some staff say they would like more training to develop professionally.
- Some pupils’ punctuality is not good enough. Too many arrive late to school.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a clear understanding of how she wants the school to develop and has the full support and confidence of parents, trustees and staff.
- Pupils are well cared for in the school and they are kept safe. They develop their resilience and leave the school as confident young women.
- Pupils typically behave well in lessons. Many have markedly improved their attendance since joining the school.
- The school promotes pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values.

### 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?

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - adopting a more strategic approach to school improvement planning
  - evaluating the school’s overall effectiveness by sharpening procedures for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the school’s work
  - equipping the trustees with the essential skills to hold senior leaders to account
  - developing the extra-curricular provision
  - devising effective strategies to improve pupils’ punctuality
  - providing more opportunities for the professional development of staff.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils’ outcomes by:
  - making sure that teachers consistently implement the school’s chosen assessment policy
  - ensuring that teachers’ planning takes account of pupils’ needs, including those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan
  - ensuring that pupils are aware of the targets set by their teachers
  - encouraging a greater love of reading.
- 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

- Leaders have not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. The unmet standards relate to the quality of education provided by the school and to leadership and management.
- Many of the school's initiatives are new and have not had time to become embedded or to demonstrate sufficient impact. Other initiatives have not yet started and are planned for the start of the new academic year in September 2019.
- There are currently no robust systems in place to monitor, evaluate and review the work of the school.
- The lack of any strategic evaluative processes has hindered improvement planning. The current school improvement plan does not indicate how or when the impact of leaders' actions will be measured or by whom.
- The headteacher does have a clear vision for the school and has the full support of staff and trustees. Responses to the staff surveys and discussions with members of staff show that staff feel valued and that morale is high. Staff value the fact that the headteacher takes account of their workload to ensure a good work-life balance.
- Senior leaders are outward looking. They have wisely formed links with another similar independent school and have already encouraged staff at the Young Women's Hub to visit the school to observe effective practice and share this with their colleagues.
- The curriculum is sufficient to meet the requirements of the independent school standards. It is to be further developed from September 2019 and will include additional qualifications and a discrete course in science. Provision for physical education is also to be enhanced.
- The extra-curricular provision is underdeveloped at present. Beyond offering an after-school facility for pupils to do their homework, little else is offered to enhance the curriculum.
- The quality of teaching is adequately managed by the headteacher. Systems are in place to observe members of staff and to offer them feedback on the strengths and weaker aspects of their practice. However, staff told the inspector that they would like more opportunities, such as training, for their professional development.
- Systems are in place to manage staff's performance. Staff are given an appropriate number of targets for the coming year and progress towards these is measured in the middle of the school year.
- The school's current system for tracking pupils' progress is at an early stage of development. While leaders establish a starting point for pupils in English and mathematics, they do not do this for other subjects. Leaders' tracking does not provide a clear indication as to whether pupils are making enough progress from their starting points. It merely shows whether they performed better or worse from one test to the next.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. This work supports the effective promotion of fundamental British values, for

which there is a policy. Recently, for example, pupils have studied the transatlantic slave trade, done some work on team building and have written to the Mayor of London to express their concerns about the rise in knife crime in the capital.

- The representative of the local authority which places many of the pupils in the school was very complimentary about the impact of the school in improving pupils' life chances.

## **Governance**

- Governance of the school is the responsibility of the board of trustees. The chair of trustees and the headteacher meet weekly. The chair of trustee's evaluation of the school's current effectiveness was frank and accurate.
- Trustees have not held the school's leaders sufficiently to account. Minutes of meetings show that many operational matters have been discussed, but fewer discussions have taken place about strategic matters such as the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes. Minutes of meetings do not reflect a high enough degree of challenge to senior leaders.
- The trustees are rightly seeking to increase their numbers in order to fill gaps in their skills and knowledge. These include expertise in human resources, understanding of achievement data and finance. A few additional trustees have already been sought out with the aim of running subcommittees which have a sharper focus on aspects of school improvement.
- Trustees have ensured that policies are up to date and that safeguarding is effective.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a suitable safeguarding policy published on its website.
- There is a culture of vigilance in relation to all matters related to safeguarding. Staff have received all of the necessary training and documentation in order for them to ably fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. This is particularly important in this setting as many of the pupils are deemed to be vulnerable.
- The school's single central record of checks of the suitability of staff is compliant with current requirements.
- Records relating to child protection matters are securely stored and contain details of conversations, the involvement of external agencies and resolutions. The school is moving to an online system from September and key staff are currently undergoing the necessary training in order to ensure a smooth transition to the new system.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- There is variation in the quality of teaching. The school's chosen assessment policy is not being consistently implemented. For example, teachers do not match work to meet the needs of pupils in order to ensure that all of them are challenged. Assessment data is not being routinely used by teachers when they plan for learning. Schemes of learning do not allow for the needs of pupils who have an EHC plan.

- The school expects pupils to respond to their teachers' feedback, with the aim of helping pupils to grasp a concept they may have misunderstood. Some pupils respond to teachers' comments and some do not.
- Some teaching places too much emphasis on what pupils will be doing in the lesson rather than what they will be learning.
- Pupils were unable to tell the inspector how much progress they were making because they did not know their targets. Hence, they could not say whether the progress they were making was good or not.
- The quality of teachers' questioning is variable. When it is helpful, it probes for understanding and pushes pupils to explain their answers. Less effective questioning failed to elicit clear responses that showed understanding.
- Some teaching does not check at regular intervals whether pupils have understood what they are learning, so that misconceptions go uncorrected and progress slows.
- Teaching develops pupils' mathematical skills reasonably well. There is also a clear emphasis on the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Reading is actively encouraged in lessons and through a weekly afternoon session in the local library, but with limited outcomes.
- Some teaching in the school is based on clearly established routines. This is helpful for pupils because they know what to expect. For example, in an English lesson pupils had to come up as many synonyms as possible for the word 'said' and were given a time limit in which to do this. This activity, at the start of the lesson, motivated the pupils in readiness for the main part of the lesson which followed. Pupils confirmed that such activities were a typical way of starting learning in this subject.
- Some teaching helps pupils to make progress by requiring that they recall previously acquired knowledge. Learning is sequenced from one lesson to the next and pupils are able to put what they are learning into context.
- Additional adults in the classroom are usually deployed well to work alongside pupils. They help them to understand what they are being taught. They are also used to re-engage pupils in their learning on the odd occasions when they become distracted.
- Pupils are set homework, which they record in their planners. The homework is typically related to what pupils have been learning in class and aims to deepen their knowledge and understanding.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are kept safe in the school. Pupils confirmed that they feel safe. The school site is secure and procedures for signing in visitors are consistently adhered to.
- The school's accommodation is maintained to a high standard. Checks take place to ensure that any faults with the fabric of the building are quickly addressed. Risk assessments for school excursions are detailed and they identify all possible hazards and

how to overcome these. Pupils are supervised well during their breaktimes and lunchtimes.

- Pupils told the inspector they feel supported by members of staff and that they can approach them if they have any problems.
- Pupils' well-being is supported well through individual counselling and mentoring. Weekly meditation sessions take place, led by the headteacher. These sessions allow the pupils to relax, de-stress and promote a positive work-life balance.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. Bullying in the school is not a common occurrence. There have been very few recorded incidents of bullying since the school opened and these were dealt with appropriately.
- Pupils are taught to celebrate people's differences. They have a good understanding of, and respect for, people who have protected characteristics under the Equalities Act (2010).
- The longer pupils stay at the school, the more they develop their self-esteem and build up their resilience.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well when moving around the school and during their breakout time. They typically behave well in lessons. On the rare occasions when pupils become distracted or disengaged, they quickly respond to their teachers' requests.
- The school makes effective use of a classroom behaviour management system, which is used consistently and fairly by teachers. The system allows pupils to reverse negative behaviour points if they reflect on and modify their behaviour.
- There have been no fixed-period or permanent exclusions since the school opened. This reflects pupils' generally good behaviour and its ethos of inclusion.
- Although overall attendance is below average, a number of pupils have shown a marked improvement in their attendance since joining the school. Many pupils who previously had not attended school for a number of years, or sporadically, have doubled their rate of attendance since starting at the Young Women's Hub.
- Too many pupils continue to be late to school. Pupils' punctuality remains a whole-school priority.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes are not yet consistently good. There is too much variation at present. This is linked to the quality of teaching they experience and the fact that work is not routinely matched to their specific needs.
- The school's own progress tracking information shows that, while some pupils make gains in their learning, others remain static and some pupils' progress goes backwards.
- While pupils with an EHC plan make progress, this is not consistently good, because teachers' planning for learning does not take full account of their needs.

- The inspector's scrutiny of pupils' books and folders across key stages 3 and 4, including a range of subjects, supports the view that progress is not consistently good.
- Pupils make better progress in English than they do in mathematics. However, although pupils recognise the importance of reading regularly, they are reluctant to do so and told the inspector they dislike reading.
- Pupils receive good-quality careers education, particularly in key stage 4. They all do work experience in Year 11 and receive good guidance on interview techniques, writing a curriculum vitae and letters of application. All pupils in the current Year 11 have been offered college placements.

## School details

Unique reference number	146277
DfE registration number	209/6005
Inspection number	10092538

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 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	14
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Philippa Wall
Chair	Emma Moore
Headteacher	Philippa Wall
Annual fees (day pupils)	£105–£120 per day
Telephone number	020 8698 6675
Website	<a href="http://www.ywh.org.uk">www.ywh.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@ywh.org.uk">info@ywh.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Young Women's Hub is registered by the Department for Education (DfE) as an alternative provision independent day school for up to 15 girls aged between 11 and 16. The school opened in November 2018. This was the school's first standard inspection.
- The school is led by the headteacher, who is also the proprietor. A board of trustees is in place to monitor the work of the school. The school does not use supply teachers.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- Pupils are referred to the school either by the local authority or by a pupil's host school.

- Some pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number have an education, care and health plan.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher (proprietor), and other members of the senior leadership team. He also met with a group of staff, a representative of the local authority, the chair and one other member of the board of trustees, and with a group of pupils. A telephone conversation took place with one parent.
- The inspector looked at a range of school documentation, including the school development plan, policies, records of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, records relating to behaviour and attendance and trustees' minutes of meetings.
- A tour of the school was undertaken. The inspector observed pupils' learning in lessons and also looked at the work in their books. Two pupils were invited to read to the inspector.
- The inspector considered one free-text response to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and five responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupils' survey, but the inspector took account of three responses to a pupils' survey conducted internally by the school.

## Inspection team

John Daniell, lead inspector

Ofsted 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–
  - 2(1)(b)(i) 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(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
  - 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(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

#### **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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