

# The Fitzroy Academy

Cruckton, Shrewsbury SY5 8PR

**Inspection date**

20 September 2023

**Overall outcome**

**The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

#### *Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i)*

- At the time of the previous inspection in January 2023, the school did not have a curriculum that was well planned and sequenced in all subjects. Pupils did not learn information in a well-ordered or connected way. Staff did not make precise checks on how well pupils made progress through the curriculum. In addition, the school's careers programme was not having a positive impact on pupils.
- Since that time, the school has set about improving the quality of the curriculum. In September 2023, leaders introduced new schemes of work in many subjects, including mathematics and English. These schemes of work are suitably specific about the component knowledge that pupils are expected to know and remember. This means that pupils build their knowledge in a logical order, step by step. However, the revised curriculum remains in the very early stages of implementation. The school is aware that there is more to do to embed changes and improve the quality of education provided by the school.
- The school is developing adults' expertise in finding out what pupils know and remember. As part of this work, the school has introduced a new approach to assessing pupils' progress through the curriculum. This approach includes adults making more precise checks on pupils' knowledge. However, staff are in the early stages of teaching revised curriculum content, and their work to check pupils' understanding is also in its infancy. The school is not yet clear about the impact the curriculum is having on what pupils know and remember.
- Leaders have made positive changes to improve the quality of careers guidance provided for pupils. They have made deliberate links between the school's academic curriculum and opportunities to promote pupils' understanding of commerce and business enterprise. In addition, the school has recently adopted a new careers curriculum. This curriculum is in the early stages of being introduced and has not yet fully impacted as leaders expect.

- The independent school standards (the standards) in this part are not met.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)*

- At the time of the previous inspection, the proprietor body and leaders had not ensured that all of the standards were met. There were weaknesses in the quality of education provided. The school's curriculum was not well planned or sequenced in all subjects.
- The proprietor body and the new headteacher have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They have strengthened structures of leadership, accountability and reporting in order to maintain oversight of their statutory duties. Proprietors now gather more useful information about the quality of the school's curriculum and its impact. This information is beginning to provide leaders with an emerging view of the quality of education at the school.
- Leaders have taken steps to improve the quality of the school's curriculum. These steps have included the adoption of commercial schemes of work in many subjects. The school is now beginning to monitor how effectively the curriculum is implemented and its impact on pupils' learning. Leaders' actions are beginning to make a positive difference, but there is still much to do. Many changes have been introduced very recently. The school is not yet able to demonstrate that all of the standards are consistently met.
- The standards in this part are not met.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an accessibility plan that fulfils the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

## School details

Unique reference number	148831
DfE registration number	893/6044
Inspection number	10300218

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 residential special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Reflexion Care Group Ltd
Chair	Amanda Clarke
Headteacher	Lydia Swinton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£58,500 to £70,200
Telephone number	01939 210040
Website	<a href="http://www.reflexionseducation.org.uk/the-fitzroy-academy/">www.reflexionseducation.org.uk/the-fitzroy-academy/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:Lydia.Swinton@newreflexions.co.uk">Lydia.Swinton@newreflexions.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	31 January to 2 February 2023

## Information about this school

- The Fitzroy Academy is an independent residential special school that caters for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including autism, learning disabilities, and associated social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is registered to admit up to 40 pupils.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- A new headteacher started at the school in June 2023.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous standard inspection in February 2023. This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection.
- After the previous inspection, the Department for Education required the school to prepare an action plan. This action plan was judged to be acceptable on 30 May 2023.
- The inspector held discussions with school leaders and the chair of the proprietor board to review the progress made against the previously unmet independent school standards.
- The inspector spoke to staff who teach the curriculum and held some informal conversations with pupils to find out about their experiences at the school.
- The inspector reviewed curriculum policies and schemes of work. He also visited lessons and reviewed a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector held a meeting with the leader responsible for safeguarding. He also reviewed the single central record of checks made about the suitability of adults.
- This inspection was conducted without notice.

## Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school does not meet the following independent school standards**

*Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection*

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
  - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in subparagraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
  - 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;

#### **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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