

# Inspection of IMPACT Northwest Schools

Unit 1, Tower House, Tower Road, Birkenhead CH41 1FF

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Inspection dates: 14 to 16 May 2024

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<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at IMPACT Northwest embody the school's aims and values. They develop their confidence and learning resilience well. Typically, pupils follow the school's rules. They manage their emotions effectively and behave responsibly. Pupils are respectful to each other. They value the strong and trusting bonds that they form with staff.

Staff understand that many pupils have not previously had positive experiences of school. Some pupils' individual learning needs have gone unmet. However, staff carefully nurture pupils' skills and abilities. Staff's high aspirations help to ensure that pupils learn consistently well in most areas of the curriculum.

Pupils are happy at school. They enjoy trips to various places of interest. Pupils are especially keen on visits to museums and a local cathedral. They enjoy walks along the river and fieldtrips linked to different parts of the curriculum.

Pupils learn about fundamental British values, including tolerance and individual liberty. They appreciate the culturally diverse nature of British society. Pupils avoid judging people because of where they are from, or what they believe in.

Pupils care about the local community. They are active citizens who regularly plan different charitable events. For example, pupils organised a fun run to raise awareness of homelessness and to collect donations for a local foodbank.

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

In a short space of time, the school has come a long way. The proprietor and senior leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum that they want pupils to experience. The school has created a rich, interesting and engaging curriculum which matches the ambitions of the national curriculum. The curriculum is carefully sequenced so that pupils' knowledge and skills build securely and effectively over time.

In most subjects, teachers deliver the curriculum consistently well. However, a few staff are new to the school and are developing their subject expertise. This sometimes hinders the effective delivery of the curriculum in some areas. From time to time, some pupils do not learn as well as they should in these subjects.

Prior to joining this school, many pupils have been out of education for extended periods of time. Most have significant gaps in their speaking, listening, communication and mathematical knowledge and skills. Staff are skilled at addressing these gaps.

The school provides a range of fiction and non-fiction books which pupils are encouraged to read at lunchtime. Staff share their favourite novels and poems with pupils to stimulate their interest. However, there are insufficient opportunities for

pupils to develop their reading knowledge and skills across the curriculum. In addition, pupils rarely read for pleasure. This means that they are not developing their reading fluency and comprehension as quickly as they should.

The school has a precise understanding of pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For instance, staff design learning activities that enable pupils to achieve the targets in their education, health and care (EHC) plans. Staff work closely with parents and carers and external specialists, including speech therapists and educational psychologists, to make sure that pupils get the support that they need. The school's carefully considered approach to providing for pupils with SEND helps to remove barriers to these pupils' learning and secure their engagement in lessons.

The school's strategies to reduce absence are having a positive impact. Soon after pupils start at the school, their attendance improves. Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Typically, pupils enjoy participating in class and discovering new learning. Those who find it difficult to regulate their own behaviour are supported well.

The school's personal development programme is comprehensive. Pupils regularly attend after-school clubs, including football, table-tennis, badminton, football and running clubs. Pupils learn how to sustain a healthy lifestyle. They understand the importance of regular exercise and a balanced diet. Visitors to the school, including ex-offenders, help pupils to understand the dangers associated with gang affiliation, such as knife crime. Pupils access support for their mental well-being. They know how to maintain safe and appropriate personal relationships. Pupils execute their leadership roles diligently. For instance, they like to demonstrate physical workout sessions for their peers. Pupils also lead sports activities at local events.

Pupils benefit from high-quality external and school-based careers advice and guidance. The school helps pupils to understand the pathways into different occupations, including in the armed forces and commercial airlines. Pupils are prepared well for different qualifications such as functional skills and GCSEs. All pupils are supported well to plan their next steps. For example, all Year 11 pupils have secured places at further education colleges when they leave this school.

Staff feel that the school is mindful of their well-being and workload. They value the time that they have to tailor resources and materials to meet pupils' individual needs.

Parents and carers are very positive about their children's learning and social development. Parents appreciate the help that they receive from the school to enable them to support their children's learning at home.

The proprietor and governors hold leaders to account for the quality of the school's provision. They check that the school meets pupils' academic and social development needs. The proprietor ensures that all the independent school

standards ('the standards') are met consistently well. The proprietor, governors and leaders have ensured that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Pupils' health, safety and welfare are promoted particularly well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In a few areas, teachers lack subject-specialist knowledge. In these areas, some pupils are not developing their knowledge and skills as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers receive appropriate training and support so that they deliver these subject curriculums as intended.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to learn to read with confidence and fluency. Pupils rarely read for pleasure or develop an appreciation of books. This means that pupils do not read as well as they should. The school should ensure that staff receive appropriate support and guidance to deliver the reading curriculum effectively and regularly so that pupils learn to read well.

## **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>	149573
<b>DfE registration number</b>	344/6013
<b>Local authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322523
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent 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>	30
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Impact Northwest Schools Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Holly Cottrell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jayne Jones
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£28,500 - £70,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	07568 060068
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.impactnorthwestschools.org.uk">www.impactnorthwestschools.org.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:schooloffice@impactnorthwestschools.org.uk">schooloffice@impactnorthwestschools.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school was registered by the Department for Education on 30 May 2023. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- Most places at the school are commissioned by local authorities. Some local secondary schools commission short-term placements for pupils at the school. These pupils are dual registered.
- The school operates from premises at Unit 1, Tower House, Tower Road, Birkenhead CH41 1FF.
- This is a special school that caters for up to 30 pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 years with social, emotional and mental health needs including autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and complex learning needs. Some pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school does not make use of 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 of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator and other leaders to discuss pupils' behaviour and personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to the standards and the curriculum.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the proprietor body and the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector held telephone conversations with a representative from a placing authority and a representative from a placing school.
- The lead inspector met with parents and held telephone conversations with parents. He reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey to consider.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: English, science and personal, social, health and citizenship education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector discussed reading with pupils. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning in other subjects.
- Inspectors met with staff to discuss their workload and well-being.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school with the headteacher.

### **Inspection team**

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Tim Sherriff

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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