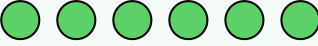


Pollyteach Limited

Address: The Elms, Portland College, Nottingham Road, Mansfield, NG18 4TJ

Unique reference number (URN): 145546

Inspection report: 7 July 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.
- **Insufficient evidence:** Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils make steady progress from their starting points. The work they produce, as well as their responses in lessons demonstrates how their knowledge is increasing over time. The gaps in pupils' learning close and they develop key skills in reading and writing, as well as securing important mathematical knowledge. Significantly, pupils also develop the important personal attributes they need to succeed. Their confidence and ability to overcome adversity improves. Their social skills develop and they learn to manage their feelings and impulses with increasing success.

Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education, as well as adulthood. Pupils leave the school with the qualifications they need to progress to their chosen courses such as animal care, motor vehicle maintenance, childcare, construction and health and beauty. They also develop the skills they need to live independent lives, to behave responsibly and to make a positive contribution to their community.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders clearly communicate to pupils that they expect them to attend school regularly. This message is revisited regularly in 'Talking Wall' sessions and in the conversations that pupils have with their key worker. The school works closely with parents and carers to identify and address the reasons why pupils have found it hard to attend previous settings. The school's welcoming and caring ethos means that the attendance of most pupils improves significantly from a low base. The school continues to work with determination to improve the attendance of pupils with the lowest attendance.

Leaders have established a culture of positive behaviour that is modelled successfully by staff. Staff benefit from specialised training and confidently support pupils to behave well. They are highly alert to the adaptations that pupils may need to manage the school day. For example, as pupils arrive at school, they spot pupils who may need some extra support before they are ready to learn.

Typically, pupils behave well in their lessons and largely engage in their learning successfully. They show respect for one another as well as staff and visitors to the school. Social times are happy and calm and provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to improve their social skills and form positive relationships with their peers.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school has developed a broad and ambitious curriculum that is designed with the school's context in mind. The impact of this ambitious curriculum is particularly evident in pupils' knowledge in core subjects such as English, mathematics and science. These subjects are planned out in great detail so that teachers know what pupils need to learn, and when. As a result, pupils confidently discuss genetics and the solar system in science. In English they identify the features of playscripts and bring specialised knowledge to prepare for their 'spoken language' examination. While the curriculum is planned out sufficiently well

in other subjects, the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember is not as precisely identified.

On the whole, teachers deliver the curriculum with skill. They help pupils to connect new learning with prior learning, provide tasks that activate pupils to learn, demonstrate and model new learning and give pupils time to consolidate their new knowledge. They use 'big questions' to help pupils to make links across subjects. For example, 'Was Romeo and Juliet a healthy relationship?' Teachers check on pupils' understanding regularly. However, sometimes, this information is not used as effectively as it could be to close the gaps in pupils' knowledge with a sense of urgency or to accelerate their learning.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Pupils have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities and face other personal challenges that means they have found it hard to engage in mainstream education. When they join the school, most pupils have not attended school for some time or attended school irregularly. As a result, they have significant gaps in their education.

The school uses the information they collate to ensure they have a clear profile of pupils' needs. They make sure that staff use this information well to understand pupils' barriers to learning, as well as the best ways they can support pupils to access the curriculum. The school sets well-informed targets for pupils that are regularly reviewed and adjusted to ensure that pupils continue to make progress. The school also provides well-chosen additional support for each pupil. These activities help pupils to further develop their academic skills, for example in handwriting, spelling and visual processing. Pupils also receive significant support to develop their personal and social skills through friendship groups and pastoral support.

The school provides a welcoming, calm and comfortable learning environment for all pupils. Pupils quickly come to believe that they are an integral part of the school's positive, caring and inclusive community.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

The current leadership team was established at the start of this school year. During this time, leaders have established a culture of high expectations for all pupils. Leaders are determined that pupils will experience success and reach their potential. They know the school well and have a clear strategic approach for continued school improvement based on their quality assurance activities. As a result of their work, pupils engage more successfully in their education and overcome the challenges they face.

Leaders also have high expectations of staff. They ensure that they have the skills they need to meet pupils' complex needs. Staff benefit from specialised training that allows them to support pupils well. They appreciate the school's professional development offer as well as the opportunity to enhance and develop their skills based on their own professional interests. They agree that leaders support them to manage their workload and their wellbeing.

The proprietor and the governor advisory board work closely with leaders. They share leaders' ambition for the school and ensure that their decisions are in the best interests of the pupils who attend the school. They are suitably experienced and skilled to offer support and challenge. They have a well-founded confidence in leaders to continue their work to improve the school. They have a secure oversight of their statutory responsibilities and ensure that the independent school standards are met.

Parents and carers are positive about the school and recognise the positive difference it is making to their children's lives.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school's key purpose is to prepare pupils for adulthood. Leaders have established a well-considered personal development and wellbeing programme. At its heart is the personal, social and health education curriculum. These lessons are prioritised, as well as running across other subjects. The content is broad and appropriate for pupils' age and stage. For example, pupils learn how to identify the key characteristics of safe relationships, how to stay safe online, how to budget and the importance of sleep. The school does not shy away from challenging topics such as misogyny, extremist views and racism. Staff guide pupils through these issues sensitively so that they learn to think critically and 'fact check' what they have been told. The school provides pupils with plenty of opportunities to make sure that their ideas and opinions are heard. Pupils learn about respect for others, difference and diversity and equality. However, while pupils accept these principles, their understanding of fundamental British values and their knowledge of other faiths and religions is less secure.

The school has developed a work-related learning programme that includes a careers week, mock interview days, volunteering, work experience and opportunities to attend careers fairs and college open days. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their aspirations for their future in tutor time. The school uses this information well to help pupils to make their choices about their futures. The school provides well-considered support and adaptations to help pupils to access their next steps. For example, college interviews can be held at the school where pupils feel more relaxed.

Pupils benefit from daily sessions that provide them with opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Pupils can choose from a range of activities such as sport, animal care, art and crafts and cookery.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

The school provides pupils with a clean slate so that they can re-engage in their education. Pupils seize this opportunity with both hands and increasingly develop the knowledge and skills they need to experience success. With the support they receive, pupils overcome their personal challenges. As a result, their behaviour and attitudes to learning improve and they come to recognise that school can be a great place.

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel safe and cared for. They form positive relationships with the adults in school that are rooted in trust, respect and a sense of fun. Staff know pupils well. They are attuned to pupils' feelings. They are patient and kind and provide a prompt, sensitive response when pupils need help to engage in their learning, or in the routines of the school day. They offer pupils time-out in the sensory room, an alternative activity, a quiet chat with a preferred adult or time with Dottie the school dog.

The school prioritises pupils' preparation for adulthood. Pupils' personal development and wellbeing is central to this work. This is underpinned by the school's core values that pupils will learn to support others with charitable activities, listen and be willing to share new ideas and experiences, look after their mental health, and to care for the world around them. The impact of this work is clear throughout the school day. Pupils strive to meet the school's high expectations of them. Largely they work and play well together and know when to ask for help if they are struggling to get on with their peers. Pupils are confident that the adults in school will step in when they need them to and that they will protect them from bullying, or any kind of discriminatory behaviour.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that the key knowledge pupils need to acquire is identified with the same degree of precision across all subjects.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff use assessment information to provide learning activities or additional support to rapidly close gaps in pupils' learning and accelerate the progress that pupils make.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils demonstrate a deeper understanding of aspects of the personal, social and health education curriculum.
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About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the proprietor body and the chair of governor advisory board. In addition, she held a telephone call with the alternative provider used by the school.

The proprietor is Portland College Enterprises LTD.

The chair of the proprietor is Mark Dale.

The fee currently charged is £57,525.

The maximum number of pupils that the school is permitted to admit is 50.

The school's email address is office@pollyteach.com

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This is an independent special school.

The school caters for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, such as autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and pupils with high anxiety.

The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.

Headteacher: Ellie Wood

Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

1. Quality of education provided	Standards met
All standards have been met.	
2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	Standards met
All standards have been met.	
3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils	Standards met
All standards have been met.	
4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	Standards met
All standards have been met.	

5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

6. Provision of information

Standards met

All standards have been met.

7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Standards met

All standards have been met.

8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

Lead inspector:
Caroline Poole, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Janis Warren, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 7 July 2026

Total pupils

48

School capacity

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

Insufficient evidence

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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