

Hope House School

Barnby Road, Balderton, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 3NE

Inspection dates

2 March 2021

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 11, 12, 16, 16(a), 16(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- At the previous inspection, arrangements made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils were not sufficient. The school's safeguarding policy and practice did not have regard to the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Staff had not received regular safeguarding training. Leaders' safeguarding records were not always accurate. Leaders did not always take timely or effective action to respond to concerns about pupils' welfare. Leaders had not ensured that they were following appropriate health and safety, fire-risk or risk assessment procedures to ensure that pupils were safe, and that their welfare was sufficiently promoted.
- Leaders have ensured that the safeguarding policy, which is available on the school's website, has regard to the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. All staff have read this latest safeguarding guidance.
- Staff have received appropriate safeguarding training in such areas as recognising the signs of abuse, county lines drug trafficking, the 'Prevent' duty and supporting children with additional vulnerabilities. Staff have also received appropriate safer handling training.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new system to record safeguarding concerns. However, staff have not yet received training on this system. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this recently adopted system.
- The proprietor has ensured that an appropriate health and safety policy has been drawn up. However, the policy has not been approved by the trustees. It is too early to evaluate whether the policy is effective.
- Leaders have failed to resolve concerns regarding fire safety that were raised at the previous inspection. During this current inspection, some buildings were found to not have fire extinguishers in them. In other buildings, fire extinguishers were found locked in rooms and therefore not immediately accessible to some staff in the event of a fire.

This practice, which was identified at the last inspection, continues to place both pupils and staff at risk.

- The proprietor has ensured that a fire-risk assessment of the premises has been undertaken. However, it was not clear at the time of the inspection as to what action leaders had taken to resolve the identified risks, one of which was classified as 'high'.
- The proprietor has ensured that an appropriate risk assessment policy is now in place. Leaders have made sure that pupils' individual risk assessments are detailed and are available to staff. However, staff have yet to receive training on how to complete accurate risk assessments for pupils in their own learning groups, to safeguard pupils' welfare.
- The school does not meet the requirements of all the independent school standards in this part.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 21(6)

- At the previous inspection, leaders had not made the necessary checks on staff's suitability to work with children. Due to a lack of training, over time, leaders did not know which checks to make. Appropriate checks had also not been made on the proprietor.
- The proprietor has ensured that leaders have received appropriate safer recruitment training. All the necessary checks are now made on adults before they commence their employment. The single central record meets statutory requirements. Leaders have ensured that the necessary checks on the proprietor have been undertaken.
- The school meets the requirements of all the independent school standards in this part.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 24(1), 24(1)(b), 25, 28(1), 28(1)(b)

- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the toilet and washing facilities were not suitable. There was no washing facility present in the accommodation provided for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils. The premises and accommodation were not maintained to a standard, such as is reasonably practical, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils.
- The proprietor has ensured that a washing facility is now present in the accommodation provided for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils. The toilet and washing facilities are now suitable. The premises are maintained to an appropriate standard.
- The school meets the requirements of all the independent school standards in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(h)

- At the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that all the required policies were available. The proprietor has ensured that all policies are now available.
- At the previous inspection, the proprietor had not ensured that leaders provided local authorities with reports detailing how the school uses the money received for pupils whose places at the school were funded by the local authority. This remains the case.
- The school does not meet the requirements of all the independent school standards in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- At the previous inspection, the proprietor had not ensured that pupils' welfare, health and safety were fully considered. The necessary checks had not been undertaken on some staff to ensure that they were suitable to work with children. The safeguarding arrangements were not effective. Not all relevant policies and documents were made available.
- The proprietor has not ensured that the leaders have a secure understanding of the independent school standards. There has not been sufficient action to ensure that the school now meets all the standards that the previous inspection judged as not met. Many of these standards remain unmet. This includes standards that relate to the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- The proprietor has employed an external consultant to review the progress leaders are making to ensure that the independent school standards are met. The review shows that while leaders are acting to address the failings, these actions have not yet been completed to the extent that the standards previously judged as not being met are now met.
- The school does not meet the requirements of all the independent school standards in this part.

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	135393
DfE registration number	891/6032
Inspection number	10181569

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 special school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Hope House School Ltd
Chair	Brian Jones
Principal	Terri Westmoreland
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000 to £75,000
Telephone number	01636 700380
Website	www.hopehouse.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@hopehouseschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	28–30 January 2020

Information about this school

- Hope House School is an independent special school. The school is situated in Newark, Nottinghamshire.
- The school ceased use of the residential provision in February 2020.

- The school admits pupils aged five to 19 who have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Many pupils have a range of behavioural, social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The members of the proprietorial body, the trustees, took up their roles in February 2020. The chair of the board took up their role in November 2020.
- The school no longer owns a residence that it uses for pupils and students to learn independent living skills.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school's previous inspection took place on 28 to 30 January 2020 and found the school to be inadequate.
- The principal and vice-principal were not present during the inspection.

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 inspection.
- Unmet standards from the previous inspection regarding the school's residential provision were not checked as the school no longer uses this facility.
- The school submitted an action plan indicating how leaders would tackle the unmet standards. This plan was accepted by Ofsted in November 2020.
- I held various meetings with leaders, including the pupil manager, education manager and human resources manager. I held further meetings with the chair of the board, the site manager, five members of staff and held a telephone conversation with the school's educational consultant.
- I met with leaders to discuss safeguarding. I checked staff training records, the single central record and the system for the recruitment and appointment of new staff. I toured the school site to check compliance against Part 5 of the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her 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 un-met at this inspection

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 32(1)(h) where a pupil wholly or partly funded by a local authority (except where funding is solely for free of charge early years provision in accordance with the duty contained in section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006) is registered at the school, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil is provided to the local authority and, on request, to the Secretary of State.

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 20(6) The standard in this paragraph is met in relation to an individual ("MB"), not being the Chair of the school, who is a member of a body of persons corporate or unincorporate named as the proprietor of the school in the register or in an application to enter the school in the register, if—
 - 20(6)(a) MB—
 - 20(6)(a)(i) is not barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that individual is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 of that Act; and
 - 20(6)(b) subject to sub-paragraphs (7) to (8), the Chair of the school makes the following checks relating to MB—
 - 20(6)(b)(i) where relevant to the individual, an enhanced criminal record check.
- 21(6) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation each member ("MB") of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether the checks referred to in paragraph 20(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 23(1)(a) suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils.
- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including—
 - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility.
- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 28(1)(b) toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that—
 - 32(1)(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate.

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