

ST BEDE'S SCHOOL

Bishton Hall, Wolseley Bridge, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST17 0XN

03 MARCH 2017

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Bede's School was founded in 1936 as a boys' preparatory school by the grandparents of the current headmaster. It moved to its present site, Bishton Hall, in 1946. The school is a limited company whose directors are all members of the Stafford Northcote family and are jointly responsible for the governance of the school. St Bede's is now an independent co-educational day and boarding school. The school comprises three sections: children attend the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) between the ages of 3 and 5; the Lower School is for pupils aged from 5 to 8; and pupils aged from 9 to 13 years are admitted into the Upper School.

At the time of the visit, there were 70 pupils in the school, of whom 16 were boarders. There were 8 children in the EYFS. The school has identified 12 pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); and there are three pupils with statements of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. These pupils are provided with support for a range of learning and physical difficulties including dyslexia. There are 9 pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language (EAL), none of whom require specialist support. The previous ISI regulatory compliance inspection was in May 2016.

PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

This was an unannounced progress monitoring visit at the request of the Department for Education which focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and National Minimum Standards for boarding, particularly those concerned with: the welfare, health and safety of pupils, including fire safety; the suitability of staff; premises and accommodation; and the quality of leadership and management.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

Welfare, health and safety – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8 (a) and 8 (b), NMS 11 and EYFS 3.4, 3.5]

The school meets the regulations, standard and associated requirements.

The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, and has full regard to the latest government guidance.

Safeguarding procedures are implemented consistently and effectively to ensure the welfare of pupils, including boarders and children in the EYFS. Those with designated safeguarding responsibilities have appropriate levels of safeguarding training for their roles, which include working with external agencies.

The school liaises closely with Staffordshire's local safeguarding children board, ensuring that suitable early interventions are put in place for pupils in need, and attends any case conferences relating to any children identified as being at risk. These measures ensure that children receive the right help to minimise risks. Suitable procedures are in place to deal with any disclosures from pupils. Child protection records are detailed, held securely and demonstrate that any concerns or necessary referrals are promptly addressed and, where appropriate, reported to local agencies. The school liaises appropriately with parents in relation to safeguarding concerns and ensures that parental wishes do not override the best interests of the child.

All members of staff, including those with boarding roles and with responsibilities for children in the EYFS, have received appropriate safeguarding training, including for Prevent and e-safety, which is regularly updated and in line with locally agreed procedures. Staff induction includes all required safeguarding elements. A suitable code of conduct is provided to all staff ensuring that they understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Suitable training records are maintained by the designated safeguarding lead, which includes confirmation that all members of staff have read *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Part 1 and Annex A* (September 2016) as required. Staff interviewed demonstrated familiarity with both *KCSIE* and the school's safeguarding policy. They know that anyone can make a referral directly to the local children's services or police. They have a clear and correct understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a child protection concern or an allegation against a colleague. The school has a complete record of declarations by those members of staff relating to disqualification from childcare.

Appropriate arrangements are in place to monitor on-line activity by the pupils. The pupils interviewed affirmed that they feel safe at school, receive appropriate guidance as to how to keep safe including on the internet, and feel able to speak to a member of staff should they have any concerns about their safety.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety and fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 11 and 12, and NMS 6 and 7]

The school meets the regulations and standards.

The school has ensured that all appropriate health and safety checks have been made and that there is an effective plan in place for future checks including for both boarding accommodation and EYFS premises. These checks include those related to the maintenance of electrical equipment and the safety of gas appliances.

There is a suitable fire risk assessment in place, and action has been taken to remedy any identified risks. The person appointed to oversee fire safety has sufficient training, experience and knowledge to take preventative and protection measures for fire safety and to ensure that any risks identified by external services are promptly rectified.

The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors and the single central register of appointments [ISSR Part 4, paragraph 17-21 and NMS 14.1]

The school meets the regulations and standard.

The school has carried out appropriate checks to ensure that members of staff appointed and proprietors are not subject to any prohibition orders. All checks, including those for prohibition orders, references, previous employment history and medical fitness, are recorded in a suitable manner on the single central register. Staff files corroborate that these checks and declarations have been made.

Provision of information to parents [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32 (1) (c)]

The school meets the regulation.

The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Premises and accommodation [ISSR Part 7, paragraphs 25 and 30 and NMS 5]

The school meets the regulation and standard.

The school has ensured that the premises including those for boarding and for EYFS are maintained to a standard such that, as far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of the pupils are ensured. The school has carried out a legionella risk assessment and has taken appropriate action on the basis of any identified risks. There is an appropriate plan in place to ensure that further tests and any necessary remedial actions are carried out within an appropriate timescale.

Quality of leadership in and management of schools [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 13]

The school meets the regulation and standard.

The leadership and management of the school demonstrate a good understanding of their safeguarding and related responsibilities. The proprietors provide suitable support and challenge to the leadership on safeguarding matters and other welfare, health and safety matters. The proprietors review policies regularly and, in the case of the safeguarding policy, at least annually, and monitor their effective implementation.

REGULATORY ACTION POINTS

The school meets all of the relevant requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.