

Flexible Learning Centre

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

DfE registration number	330/6128
Unique Reference Number (URN)	135561
Inspection number	367706
Inspection dates	9 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Best

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090137

© Crown copyright 2011



Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.^{1,2}

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Flexible Learning Centre is an independent day school that is located on three sites in different parts of Birmingham. The headteacher is the proprietor and owner of the school. The school, which opened in September 2008, provides an alternative education for students aged from 14 to 16 years. Its main aim is to help students to overcome any disadvantages and disaffection in order to achieve their full potential. Sixty six students are currently enrolled. The number of students has risen rapidly since the start of this school year. About a third of students attend full time and the rest on a part-time basis. A significant number of students are dually registered: they attend the centre and are also on the roll of local secondary schools. Nearly all of the students have personal, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties that have resulted in them not doing as well as they could at school. One has a statement of special educational needs. All the students come from a wide range of different cultures and beliefs.

Context of the inspection

The school was previously inspected by Ofsted in March 2010 when it met most, but not all, of the regulatory requirements for independent schools. The school submitted an action plan to the Department for Education to address the shortcomings identified in the report; this was judged to be inadequate in June 2010. The school revised its action plan in July 2010 but did not submit it to the Department. The first monitoring visit to check the progress made by the school in implementing its action plan took place in October 2010 when some, but not all, of the outstanding regulations were met. The school did not submit an action plan to the Department following the visit. This second monitoring visit was made to check the progress made by the school in implementing its proposals to meet all of the regulations.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The inspection in March 2010 found that the school's child protection policy was out-of-date and not implemented properly. In implementing its action plan, the school revised its child protection policy in July 2010 but a number of omissions were identified during the first progress monitoring visit in October 2010. At that time, higher level training for the designated person and awareness training for staff had been booked but not completed. This progress monitoring visit found that the required training has been completed and participants certificated. In addition, the policy now reflects the Secretary of State's guidance and has been implemented.

When the school was inspected in March 2010, the guidance for safety on activities outside school was neither comprehensive enough nor fully implemented. The first monitoring visit found that, in implementing its action plan, the school had adopted and adapted a suitable policy, but that risk assessments were not being adequately completed. This second progress monitoring visit found that comprehensive risk assessments are now carried out in pursuance of the school's policy.

Although the inspection in March 2010 found that the first aid policy was satisfactory, the school did not ensure a qualified first aider was on each site at all times. The first monitoring visit found that the school had, in implementing its action plan, arranged first aid training for all members of staff but this had not been completed. This second progress monitoring visit found that appropriate training has been completed by seven members of staff and that rotas have been drawn up and implemented.

The inspection in March 2010 found that the Erdington and Hockley sites did not have adequate outdoor space for play and recreation. The first progress monitoring visit found that this was still the case. Following the visit, the school drew up a revised action plan which involved improving outdoor facilities at one site and, on another site, organising the temporary use of external space pending the acquisition of alternative premises with sufficient and secure outside space. The school is working towards implementing the plan, but is at an early stage in doing so. The regulation remains unmet.

At the time of the inspection in March 2010, the school did not make available various items of information to parents and carers, and to prospective parents and carers. The first progress monitoring visit found that, in implementing its action plan, the school had addressed most of these omissions. However, it still failed to advise parents and carers that they can request details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year. This second progress monitoring visit found that the prospectus has been revised and that the required information is now made available.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010³ ('the Regulations'), as follows:

- provide adequate outside space at every school location for recreation and play (paragraph 23(s)).

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made

School details

School status	Independent
Type of school	Secondary
Date school opened	September 2008
Age range of pupils	14–16 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 19 Girls: 12 Total: 31
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 27 Girls: 8 Total: 35
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 1 Girls: 0 Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0 Girls: 1 Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9.50 per hour for full-time students (25 hours per week) £10.00 per hour for part-time students (less than 25 hours per week)
Address of school	204 Slade Road, Erdington, Birmingham B23 7RJ
Telephone number	0121 240 3718
Email address	shamim@flexiblelearning.org.uk
Headteacher	Shamim Akhtar
Proprietor	Shamim Akhtar