

Arnfield Independent School

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Michael Best

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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

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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

Arnfield independent special school is situated within two children's homes which are located two miles apart. Both have a classroom. Boys and girls in the age range of 12 to 17 years who are in need of care and accommodation are placed in the homes by local authorities across England. One of the children's home offers short-term placements, often in an emergency, and the other provides longer-term placements to young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The last inspection of the education provision was in November 2010. The social care provision was also inspected in November 2010.

At the time of this visit, five students from one home and six from the other were on the roll of the school. Across both sites, students' age ranged from 12 to 16 years. Two have arrived in the last fortnight. Three students have statements of special educational needs for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Some students attend local schools and colleges for part of their education. Since the last inspection, the school has developed links with a maintained secondary school, sharing expertise and resources in education and outdoor pursuits.

The school, in partnership with the children's home, aims to provide all students with the best educational opportunities possible, irrespective of race, gender, culture or ability. The provision emphasises the importance of outdoor activities in promoting learning, academic achievement and personal development.

Context of the inspection

When it was inspected in November 2010, the school met nearly all of the regulations. The school submitted an action plan to address the shortcomings identified in the inspection, which was evaluated by Ofsted in December 2010 and judged inadequate. The school submitted a revised action plan, which was evaluated and accepted in April 2011. This is the first monitoring visit to the school to check the progress made in implementing its action plan.

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

At the time of the last inspection in November 2010, the curriculum was not implemented effectively. The inspection found that emergency, short-term placements and problems with acquiring up-to-date, accurate information from local authorities made it difficult to incorporate into the curriculum the provision required by students with statements of special educational needs. Inspectors also judged that where students had statements of special educational needs, there was insufficient regard in curriculum planning for the requirements of these statements.

In its action plan, the school set out a strategy to improve the gathering of assessment information on students at an early stage of their admission and to ensure that the requirements set out in statements were fully met.

This progress monitoring visit found that the school has successfully implemented its action plan. Links with placing local authorities have been strengthened and the school can demonstrate that its new systems have been successful in obtaining accurate and up-to-date information about new and existing students. Individual education plans for each student with a statement of special education needs make specific reference to the requirements of the statements in relation to both the education and the social care provision. A senior member of the social care management team now works with the headteacher to oversee the provision at both homes. Regular meetings are held between the headteacher and the social care staff, including this manager, to review and revise the provision made for each student. Scrutiny of the school's weekly planning shows that individual education plan goals, derived from statements, are being reflected in the programmes provided for students.

All the requirements for this standard are now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements.

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
Date school opened	27 February 2007		
Age range of pupils	12–17 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 5	Total: 11
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 2	Girls: 1	Total: 3
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 6	Girls: 5	Total: 11
Annual fees (day pupils)	£137,598 (inclusive of residential care)		
Headteacher	Robert McKenzie		
Proprietor	Paul and Patricia Keenan		