

Benjamin College

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Sheila Boyle

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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.

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

Information about the school

Benjamin College opened in 2008. It provides secondary education for some students in registered children's homes owned by Benjamin UK Limited. The college was registered in February 2009. The first education inspection of the college was in December 2010. The college is registered for eight students aged between 12 and 18 years. Currently, there is one student on roll. No students currently have a statement of special educational needs. Students are funded by their placing local authorities which include London boroughs and counties in the Midlands and south of England. Almost all students have a history of academic underachievement as well as social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Students' placement is often for less than half a term because they move into mainstream or other education provision, where possible, or they are no longer resident in either of the company's homes. On occasions, the education staff provide learning support and resources for students who live in the company's children's homes but are not enrolled in a school. The college aims to 'provide a consistent and caring environment in which students can develop their full academic, personal and social potential'.

Context of the inspection

This is the first monitoring inspection to take place since the college's first education inspection in December 2010. At the time of last inspection, the college failed to meet a number of regulations relating to welfare, health and safety; the provision of information to parents, carers and others; and the complaints procedures.

An action plan submitted in March 2011 was found to be inadequate. This inspection was undertaken to evaluate the progress made by the college in addressing the failed regulations identified at the time of the last education inspection. No lessons were seen during this visit as the students had not started attending the college.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The college has made inadequate progress overall in implementing its action plan. This is because it has still failed to meet two of the regulatory requirements for independent schools. The areas of non-compliance are noted below.

In December 2010, the college met all but one of the regulations relating to welfare, health and safety. Admission and attendance registers were not kept in accordance with requirements. This inspection found that satisfactory progress has been made in remedying these weaknesses. An admissions register and a daily register of attendance for all students irrespective of their length of stay are kept in line with requirements. Regulation 17 is met.

The last inspection identified a number of security, lighting and ventilation weaknesses relating to the premises and accommodation. This inspection confirms that the college has suitably addressed some, but not all, of the regulatory failures. Security arrangements for the premises and grounds remain inadequate. The college should seek to swiftly address these security arrangements. Ventilation in the classroom is unsatisfactory. The college has installed suitable lighting in the classroom and a new front door with glass panels at the top. These measures have increased the amount of light in the classroom to a satisfactory standard. The classroom is adequately heated by mobile electric heaters. Immediately following this inspection the college has plans to install central heating to improve provision.

At the time of the last inspection, not all of the required information was provided, or made available, to parents, carers and others. The college has made satisfactory progress in bringing about improvement. All of the necessary information is now provided to parents, carers and others in line with the regulations.

In December 2010, inspectors judged that the college did not make parents and carers aware of its complaints procedure and how to obtain a copy. The college now provides information in its prospectus, informing parents and carers about the availability about its complaints procedure and how to obtain a copy. Regulation 25(b) is met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

As a result of this inspection, the school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010¹ ('the Regulations'), as follows:

- ensure that there are adequate security arrangements in place for the grounds and buildings (paragraph 23(d))
- ensure that the ventilation in the classroom is satisfactory and in accordance with Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 23(o)).

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Residential Special School		
Date school opened	2008		
Age range of pupils	12–18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of boarders	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Annual fees	£19,500 (for education provision only)		
Telephone number	01296 483384		
Email address	office@benjamincollege.co.uk		
Headteacher	Jeremy Yelland		
Proprietor	Clodette Deysel		