

Flying High

Independent school standard inspection report

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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 purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Flying High is an independent special school for boys and girls aged seven to 14 years. It provides education for pupils who have experienced severe trauma and have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Many have experienced a disrupted education. Most of the pupils have statements of special education needs. The school's mission statement is 'to improve outcomes for traumatised children through the delivery of specialist education.'

The school is located on the outskirts of Shrewsbury in Shropshire and is owned by the SACCS group. The school is registered for 14 pupils and there are currently 11 full-time pupils on roll. Eight pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Since the last inspection, in March 2009, the school has increased the number of pupils and extended its accommodation by renting an additional building adjacent to the school. A new headteacher was appointed in November 2011. All the pupils reside in a number of children's homes which are also owned by the SACCS group. The children's homes are inspected separately by Ofsted.

Evaluation of the school

Flying High provides a satisfactory quality of education and this enables pupils to make satisfactory progress over time. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory and the school makes satisfactory provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Safeguarding arrangements, including the provision made for welfare, health and safety are inadequate. This is because the designated child protection officer has not undertaken the necessary child protection training and the school's single central register does not contain all of the required information. The school has addressed some, but not all, of the areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection. A number of regulatory requirements associated with safeguarding, provision of information and the complaints procedure are not met.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory and covers all of the required areas of learning. Provision includes all National Curriculum subjects, religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE). The school's curriculum policy is not comprehensive enough as it does not provide an accurate summary of provision,

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

particularly with regards to creative and artistic subjects and it is not implemented effectively. As at the time of the last inspection adequate careers education is not offered to pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4, although satisfactory arrangements have been made for pupils in Key Stage 4 to take part in work experience and to undertake an accredited course in basic motor vehicle servicing at an alternative provider. The school is meeting most but not all of the requirements outlined in the pupils' statements of special educational needs. For example, provision of an occupational therapy assessment for one pupil has not been made.

The recently reviewed long-term curriculum plan, and the sound schemes of work which have been improved since the last inspection, provide a suitable framework to enable pupils to progress adequately in their learning from year to year. Most pupils have significant gaps in their basic skills and therefore the level of study is generally one or two years below the pupils' chronological age. As a result, good prominence is given to the acquisition of skills in English, mathematics and science and pupils enjoy, and benefit from, practical and creative work in subjects such as art, design and technology and food technology. Teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) is integrated well across a range of subjects and all classrooms are adequately supplied with personal computers. Provision for PSHE is satisfactory and covers citizenship, responsibility, lifestyles and relationships. Individual and group music lessons are provided each week by a visiting teacher from the Shropshire Music Centre and provision promotes pupils' musical skills effectively. All pupils have two worthwhile afternoons of physical education each week which is provided away from the school site by an outside provider. Activities include rock climbing, horse riding, badminton and football and this provision helps to improve pupils' fitness and promote exercise. The curriculum is adequately enhanced by visits to local museums and events such as the celebration of World Book day.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. The most effective lessons are well planned and are delivered at a pace that maintains the interest of the pupils most of the time. Activities are set at different levels according to the abilities of pupils. Good questioning from teachers and support staff assist the pupils in achieving lesson objectives. In some adequate lessons the pace is slow and there are occasions when the work is not always pitched at the right level. In all lessons the pupils are suitably supported by teaching assistants and very good teaching resources and equipment are available to promote practical work. The setting and recording of individual targets for pupils has recently been reviewed and new individual education plans and individual behaviour plans are now in place for each pupil. This is an improvement since the last inspection; however, teachers are not always using the targets when planning lessons. Pupils' achievement against the set targets is not always being evaluated or recorded.

Most pupils try hard and make progress although, for some, their progress is hampered by their emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' books show varying levels of interest and engagement with subject material. For example, some books are neat and show good progress in some aspects of the work, while others are less well presented with some unfinished work evident. Pupils' books are marked with encouraging comments and suggestions for improvement; however, greater

attention could be paid to improving pupils' presentation. Since the last inspection the school has introduced a formal process to evaluate pupils' performance each term. However, procedures used to moderate and benchmark their progress are not robust enough; therefore, it is not possible to properly verify their attainment.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory and so are their attitudes to learning. Clear and consistently reinforced school rules enable pupils to know what is expected of them and to gain an understanding of right and wrong. When individuals experience frustration or anger they can demonstrate self-awareness and often respond appropriately to encouragement from staff. Teachers and support assistants make strong and effective efforts to help them acquire confidence in their own abilities and to develop their self-esteem. For instance, regular fundraising events such as Red Nose Day, Bring a Bear Day (in support of Water Aid) and the Children in Need bake sale help pupils gain self-confidence and self-worth and enable them to show responsibility towards their wider community. Religious education lessons provide suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their awareness of other religions and cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony. In the weekly school council meetings all pupils are encouraged to express their opinions and make suggestions for school improvements. For instance, a number of sessions have recently been used to review the school's anti-bullying policy and create pupil led anti-bullying guidance. Pupils gain useful knowledge about public institutions and citizenship in PHSE lessons.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is inadequate. While all staff have recently undergone child protection training, the designated child protection officer has not been trained at the appropriate level. In addition, the child protection policy is not up-to-date and does not pay sufficient regard to national guidance. The school makes efforts to prevent and tackle bullying but its policy is not comprehensive enough. For example, it makes no mention of cyber-bullying. Health and safety risks around the school are assessed and minimised effectively. Risks associated with trips out of school are carefully assessed. An external company has carried out a satisfactory fire risk assessment and fire-fighting equipment is regularly checked to ensure it is operational. Staff and pupils take part in a fire drill twice each term and outcomes are formally recorded. Staff members are suitably trained in first aid and pupils know who they should go to if they are involved in an accident. Pupils are very well supervised at all times. The school maintains an appropriate attendance register but its admissions register does not contain all of the required information. The school has drawn up a three-year accessibility plan and fully complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Appropriate checks have been carried out on all staff and others to ensure their suitability to work with children. Records for most staff are maintained by the human resources department of the school's parent company, but records of recently appointed agency staff are kept by the school. The school's single central register does not contain all of the required information.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school is located in converted farm buildings that have been refurbished to a high standard. The recent acquisition of an additional building for the Key Stage 2 class has resulted in the accommodation that is of a suitable size for the number of pupils on roll. Classrooms are a good size. They are light and airy and are well decorated, maintained and equipped. There is a specialist room for art, design and technology and science. Relevant equipment is suitably stored in the well-organised non-teaching areas. Computer equipment is available in all classrooms, one of which has an interactive whiteboard. Since the last inspection appropriate facilities have been provided for those who are ill. The playground is of an appropriate size for play and recreation.

Provision of information

As at the time of the last inspection, the school's prospectus does not provide, or make available, all of the required information for parents, carers and others. The school does not send the required financial information to all local authorities. Suitable reports are written three times a year including a record of pupils' attainment and progress in each subject plus useful additional comments about pupils' interest and effort. Parents and carers are invited to the school every term for a discussion about their children's progress and to celebrate their achievement.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school has a written complaints policy but it does not contain all of the required information. The areas of non-compliance are noted below.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

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

- produce a comprehensive curriculum policy and ensure that it is effectively implemented (paragraph 2(1))
- ensure that where pupils have a statement of special educational needs the education provided fulfils its requirements (paragraph 2(2)(e))
- provide appropriate careers guidance for pupils receiving secondary education (paragraph 2(2)(g)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure that arrangements made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7)
- produce comprehensive procedures to prevent bullying which has regard to the Department for Education guidance (paragraph 10)
- ensure that the school's admissions register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2006 (paragraph 17).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors (standards in part 4) and must:

- ensure that the single central register clearly indicates the details of all staff and others who work in school and records the date when the required checks were carried out and by whom (paragraph 22(2))
- ensure that for each member of staff appointed on or **after** 1 May 2007, the register shows that the following checks were made, including the date on which each check was completed or the certificate obtained:
 - of the person's identity
 - to establish that the person is not barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (ISA barred list), or there is no direction made under section 142 of the 2002 Act in respect of that person (List 99), or disqualification prohibition or restriction having the same effect
 - of relevant qualifications, if appropriate
 - of whether an enhanced criminal records bureau (CRB) certificate was obtained
 - in the case of any person for whom, by reason of living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, further checks are made which have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State
 - of their right to work in the United Kingdom (paragraph 22(3))
- ensure that for each member of staff in appointed at any time **before** 1 May 2007, the register shows that the following checks have been made, including the date on which each check was completed or the certificate obtained:
 - of the person's identity

- to establish whether the person is not barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (ISA barred list), or there is no direction made under section 142 of the 2002 Act in respect of that person (List 99), or disqualification prohibition or restriction having the same effect
 - of relevant qualifications where appropriate
 - of whether an enhanced CRB certificate was obtained
 - in the case of any person for whom, by reason of living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, the further checks made which have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 22(4))
 - ensure that in relation to staff not directly employed by the school, the register shows whether written notification has been received from the employment business that it has carried out the checks referred to in 20(2)(a) together with the date the written notification that each check was made or certificate obtained, was received. Checks required include:
 - of the person's identity
 - that the person is not barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (ISA barred list), or there is no direction made under section 142 of the 2002 Act in respect of that person (List 99), or disqualification prohibition or restriction having the same effect
 - where appropriate the person's qualifications
 - in the case of any person for whom, by reason of living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, checks in regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State
 - the person's right to work in the United Kingdom
 - an enhanced criminal record bureau (CRB) check or has obtained a certificate in response to such a check made by it or another employment business. The CRB check must have been obtained no more than three months before the date on which the person is due to begin work at the school; or the person has already had an enhanced CRB check from working in a school or further education institution not more than three months previously
- and
- if an enhanced CRB certificate was obtained before the person was due to begin work and if it contained a disclosure, the school obtained a copy of the certificate from the employment business (paragraph 22(5)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- ensure that the proprietor provides to parents, parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or

an independent inspectorate the full name of the proprietor in the school's prospectus (paragraph 24(1)(a))

- ensure that particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations are made available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils, and on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State, or an independent inspectorate (paragraph 24(1)(b))
- ensure that where a pupil at the school is wholly or partly funded by a local authority, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil is submitted to the local authority (paragraph 24(1)(h)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the manner in which complaints are to be handled (standards in part 7) and must:

- ensure that, where a complainant is not satisfied with the response to a written complaint, there is provision for the establishment of a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint (paragraph 25(f))
- ensure that where there is a panel hearing of a complaint there is provision that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 25(g))
- ensure that the complaints procedure allows for parents and carers to attend the panel hearing and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 25(h))
- ensure that the complaints procedure provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and that the procedure stipulates that a copy of the findings and recommendations are:
 - sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, to the person complained about
 and
 - are available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher (paragraph 25(i))
- ensure that the complaints procedure provides for correspondence, statements and records of complaints to be kept confidential (paragraph 25(k)).

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			✓	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			✓	

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development			✓	
The behaviour of pupils			✓	

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils				✓
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special day school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
Date school opened	29 November 2005		
Age range of pupils	7–14 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 8	Girls: 3	Total: 11
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 5	Girls: 3	Total: 8
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 8	Girls: 3	Total: 11
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,500 per week		
Address of school	The Oaks Business Park Shepherds Lane Shrewsbury SY3 8BT		
Telephone number	01743 850840		
Email address	Jason.manley@saccs.co.uk		
Headteacher	Jason Manley		
Proprietor	Mary Walsh		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

10 February 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Flying High, Shrewsbury, SY3 8BT

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly when I visited your school recently. I greatly enjoyed meeting you, seeing you learn and talking to you.

Your school provides a satisfactory quality of education and you make satisfactory progress over time. Safeguarding procedures and arrangements for your welfare, health and safety are inadequate. There are a number of things that the school must do. They must make sure that the designated child protection officer is trained at the appropriate level and that all of the checks undertaken on staff are suitably recorded in a central register. They must also make sure that all of the required information is provided in the school prospectus and that the complaints, child protection and anti-bullying procedures are improved so that government requirements are met.

I was pleased to see the displays of your work in all the classrooms together with the photographs of many you at work. You should be proud of the work you have done. I saw a lot of good work in your books and I liked the helpful comments your teachers and support assistants had written in them. Do not forget to read what they have said and to follow their suggestions. This will help you to improve your work and presentation.

Many of you listen carefully to what you are told in lessons and some of you make thoughtful responses. Well done. Most of you behave in a satisfactory way and you are all learning to control yourselves when you become angry or frustrated. Your teachers and support assistants work hard to help you when things are difficult. Do not forget to listen carefully to what they say. This will help you to improve your behaviour and to learn to the best of your ability.

I hope that you will continue to work hard in school and to prepare well for your future.

Yours sincerely

John Gush
Lead inspector

