

Freyburg School (Keys Group Ltd)

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

DfE registration number	891/6022
Unique Reference Number (URN)	134649
Inspection number	395064
Inspection dates	16 March 2012
Reporting inspector	Fatiha Maitland

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 reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090070.

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

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

No. 090137

© Crown copyright 2012



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 school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Freyburg School is a special school for students with severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties which opened in 2005. It is owned by the Keys Group which owns many similar schools. The school can admit up to 12 students aged 11 to 16 years, including eight residential and four day students. Currently there are three students on roll, ranging from Year 10 to Year 11. All students are residential and in the care of the local authority. There are no students with a statement of special educational needs. Students often arrive at short notice as a result of an emergency placement. One student had been at the school for approximately two weeks at the time of this inspection visit. All students have a history of extremely challenging behaviour, disrupted education and poor or non-attendance at schools previously.

The school aims to provide a safe, secure, positive and supportive environment in which each individual can contribute and feel valued, knowing that their achievements are recognised.

Context of the inspection

Initially, the school was situated in two units ten miles apart; these were Poppies and Duncanwood Lodge. Each unit was on the same site as a children's home in which the students lived. Although there were occasional joint activities, a common headteacher and policies, the two units operated almost entirely separately.

The school was last inspected in July 2011. The quality of education and students' welfare health and safety were inadequate overall because of shortcomings in these at Duncanwood Lodge. Although the written policies and procedures linked to safeguarding complied with requirements, students' well-being was not consistently secured. The quality of education at Poppies was satisfactory and improving rapidly and the teaching and assessment there were good. The school drew up an action plan for improvement in response to the report. The action plan was evaluated in September 2011 and was deemed unsatisfactory.

This visit found that the Duncanwood Lodge site had closed. Accordingly, this first progress monitoring visit took place in Poppies in order to check whether the school has taken appropriate steps to address the regulations that were not met at the last inspection.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The school has made good progress in addressing all the regulations that were not met at the last inspection. The shortcomings reported in July 2011 have been resolved by the closure of Duncanwood Lodge. This inspection visit confirms that all the required regulations are met at Poppies.

The last inspection of July 2011 found that the planned curriculum for both Poppies and Duncanwood Lodge covered all the required areas of experience. However, the detailed planning of the curriculum at Duncanwood Lodge was not sufficiently interesting to engage students and did not systematically support their acquisition and application of skills. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) was not adequately planned. Low attendance, poor punctuality and unsatisfactory behaviour in the home, the school and the community limited students' opportunities to learn in this part of the school. The curriculum did not regularly include all the different subjects that should be covered in line with students' statements of special educational needs, particularly for the younger students, because there was insufficient depth of study of some subjects such as music and modern foreign languages.

At Poppies, the curriculum is built into themes that engage students' interest and support their learning needs. These themes are also carefully linked to the course work for the examinations and qualifications they will take. Students are able to take a range of qualifications at GCSE and entry level, as well as vocational qualifications,

such as bricklaying, catering and sport. They undertake functional skills courses in subjects such as information and communication technology. The school has now devised and implemented schemes of work and plans to support the learning of music and of French as a modern foreign language. Although there are no students in school with a statement of special educational needs at present, the school is now aware of the need to ensure the match of courses to the requirements of students' statements.

The programme of PSHE is adequately planned to meet the differing learning needs of students. The school also involves students and outside agencies in personal target-setting and review. This enables students to take more ownership of their learning including identifying their 'next steps' pathways. The school takes effective steps to ensure that students attend the school regularly and are punctual. In addition there is a consistency of approach to managing behaviour and co-operation between the home and school to ensure that students make sufficient progress in their learning. As a result, students behave well and respond positively to requests.

The earlier inspection reported that, at Duncanwood Lodge, the planned lessons often could not be taught because the repercussions of incidents within or outside the home spilled over into lessons. This meant time available for learning was not used effectively. Students often arrived at school late and not prepared to work. Too much lesson time was lost because of this and students' reluctance to engage in other than self-chosen activities. Through their life skills programme and study of books, students had opportunities to reflect on issues such as drug abuse, relationships, crime and prison life and public institutions, but struggled to use these lessons to adapt their own behaviour.

At Poppies, lesson planning is of a good standard with clear, achievable lesson objectives to meet the different learning needs of the students. Staff are very good role models and expect high standards from the students both in behaviour and the establishment of appropriate social relationships at the school. Both school and home staff are sensitive to the students' individual personal circumstances and learning experiences are often specifically tailored to help them manage the emotional challenges of their current experiences. As a result, students are ready to learn and learning flows with minimal disruption. They willingly take responsibility for their behaviour, appreciate others' perspectives and make a positive contribution to the life of the school and the community.

The last inspection indicated that at Duncanwood Lodge students were not actively safeguarded from harm. The documented procedures were not always followed through within the 24 hour provision, such as in relation to rewards and sanctions and student's inappropriate behaviour. Students' health was compromised through the level of smoking which was permitted. Staffing levels did not take account of the complexity of student's needs and did not ensure they could learn effectively and be kept safe. There were some inadequate security arrangements which were drawn to the attention of the school.

At Poppies, all the welfare, health and safety policies and procedures are reviewed and shared by all members of staff, who consistently apply the agreed policies and procedures to protect students from harm, to support their health and manage their behaviour. A sensible approach is taken to helping students manage and reduce their smoking. Staffing levels are adequate. The school takes reasonable steps to ensure that the site is safe and secure.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

School details

School status	Independent
Type of school	Special school for students with behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties
Date school opened	February 2005
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	3
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils who are looked after	3
Annual fees (day pupils)	£33,540
Email address	davecarr@keyschildcare.co.uk
Headteacher	David Carr
Proprietor	Keys Group Ltd