

# Flexible Learning Centre

Independent school progress monitoring 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.<sup>1,2</sup>

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: Pype Hayes, Erdington and Hockley. 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.

Seventy five students are currently enrolled. About two thirds of students attend full time and the rest on a part-time basis. A 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 social, emotional and behavioural difficulties that have resulted in them not doing as well as they could at school. Currently, none of the students has a statement of special educational needs and none are looked after by the local authority. The students come from a wide range of different cultures and beliefs.

The proprietor intends to move the Hockley operation from its present accommodation. A material change visit to the proposed new premises was made concurrently with this progress monitoring visit, as detailed below.

## 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 re-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. The second monitoring visit was made in March 2011 to check the progress made by the school in meeting the regulations; the visit

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

found that all but one of the regulations were met. A third monitoring visit was made in November 2011 to check the school's progress in meeting the outstanding regulation, which related to the provision of outdoor space for students' recreation; this remained unmet. This fourth monitoring visit was made at the request of the Department to check the school's progress in meeting the outstanding regulation.

## **Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan**

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 in October 2010 found that this was still the case. Following the visit, the school drew up a revised action plan which involved improving outdoor facilities at the Erdington site and, on the Hockley site, organising the temporary use of external space pending the acquisition of alternative premises with sufficient and secure outside space. The second progress monitoring visit in March 2011 found that the school had successfully implemented its proposed action at the Erdington site but that the regulation remained unmet because there remained no outdoor facilities for students at the Hockley site. The third progress monitoring visit found that the provision at the Hockley site had not changed and therefore the regulation was still not met.

Following the third progress monitoring visit, the proprietor applied to the local authority for permission to use land owned by the authority near to the Hockley premises for students' recreation. The local authority acceded to this request and has made available three suitable grassed areas for students' recreational use during the school day. This provision took effect from 1 January 2012 and it meets the regulatory requirements. The school has put in place suitable arrangements for supervising students during their use of these facilities and when walking to and from the school.

The proprietor intends to move the Hockley operation from its present accommodation to newly-acquired premises from the start of the next academic year in September 2012 and to extend the age range, subject to approval from the Department for Education. It is planned to provide outdoor recreation facilities at the new premises. A material change visit to the proposed new premises was made concurrently with this progress monitoring visit. The material change was not recommended at the present time because of regulatory failures in relation to: the curriculum; provision for students' welfare, health and safety and the premises and accommodation.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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



## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2008
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14-16 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 31      Girls: 18      Total: 49
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 20      Girls: 6      Total: 26
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0      Girls: 0      Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0      Girls: 0      Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£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)
<b>Address of school</b>	204 Slade Road Birmingham B23 7RJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 240 3718
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:shamim@flexiblelearning.org.uk">shamim@flexiblelearning.org.uk</a>
<b>Headteacher</b>	Shamim Akhtar
<b>Proprietor</b>	Shamim Akhtar