

Baston House

Hayes, Bromley, Kent, BR2 7AB

Inspection date

16 October 2013

Reason for inspection

This inspection was conducted without notice to the school. The purpose of the inspection was to look at the effectiveness of policies and procedures to safeguard the pupils. In particular, the inspection focused on the regulatory requirements for welfare, health and safety of pupils.

Conclusions

School staff and the proprietor have not taken all of the required actions to ensure the necessary procedures are embedded in practice in order to keep pupils safe. The policies and procedures at the school are not yet robust enough and pupils' safety is compromised.

Staff share a common understanding of how to be alert to signs of harm. They have received guidance in how to apply the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, behaviour, anti-bullying and e-safety policies. These policies have recently been reviewed and provide most of the required information. The safeguarding and child protection policy omits a clear reference to how allegations of abuse made against members of staff and volunteers are recorded and investigated.

The records showing which members of staff attended safeguarding awareness sessions are incomplete. Not all staff have signed or dated to confirm their attendance. The school cannot therefore be sure all staff will respond in accordance with their guidance. The school's designated officer for safeguarding has had the required training but not all staff working with children have had recent local authority-approved training within the specified timescale. The lack of a clear system for recording who has attended recognised training, and when, is unhelpful in promoting good practice in managing the safety of pupils with complex behavioural and learning needs.

Discussions with staff and pupils, and a scrutiny of policies, show that the day-to-day management of pupils' behaviour is understood. This includes, where necessary, the use of restraining techniques to keep pupils safe. There is a lack of consistency in how staff are recording and reporting incidents that have an impact on pupils' welfare and safety. In some instances, these are reported in notebooks, at other times, on the school's report forms. The process whereby information is shared between staff and managers is not yet secure. One result of this is that pupils' individual behaviour and education plans are not adjusted to reflect analysis of patterns of behaviour.

Although many of the policies for pupils' welfare are being reviewed, some of the policies currently used by staff do not reflect current guidelines as issued to staff, good practice or what actually takes place. Some policies are too general and not helpful in providing staff with the most important things to consider in relation to the particular needs of the students. This is especially the case for policies on health and safety. School leaders recognise the shortcomings but there is no plan for reviewing these policies systematically

or strategically.

Since the last inspection, the school has addressed the need for regular electrical testing and fire safety procedures are now effectively implemented. The daily management of risk is variable. While the individual assessments of what is required to keep pupils safe in school are comprehensive, practice does not reflect this.

The school's systems for checking on attendance are lax. Registers are incorrectly, and sometimes only partially, completed. The system that holds attendance information does not allow for managers and the designated safeguarding officer to respond quickly to any unexplained patterns of attendance.

The school has not shown enough urgency in bringing to the attention of parents and carers how it manages pupils' welfare, health and safety. The website and the school prospectus do not contain the required up-to-date information.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school requires improvement and must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 ('the Regulations'), and associated requirements

Ensure that arrangements made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school are effectively implemented and have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State	Paragraph 7
Ensure that there is a written policy which complies with relevant health and safety laws, and that the policy is implemented effectively	Paragraph 11
Ensure that the attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006	Paragraph 17
Ensure that the required information is provided to parents and parents of prospective pupils	Paragraph 24(1)(b)
Ensure that the safeguarding children policy (as required under part 3, paragraph 7) is published on the school's website and ensure a copy is provided on request	Paragraph 24(1)(c)

Inspection team

Jonathan Palk HMI, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- The school opened in December 2010 and is registered to provide co-educational education for up to 60 pupils between the ages of five and 16 with autistic spectrum conditions, Asperger's syndrome and associated communication and behavioural difficulties. There are currently 31 pupils on roll aged between five and 16 years of age.
- All the learners have a statement of special educational needs and most have had significantly disrupted previous schooling.
- To accommodate the growth in pupil numbers, three new classes opened in September 2013.
- The education at the school was last inspected in May 2011, when it was judged satisfactory. There have been many staff changes since the last inspection, including to the senior management team.

School details

Unique reference number	136265
Inspection number	429905
DfE registration number	305/6082
<p>This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.</p>	
Type of school	Special day school
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	31
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Moorcroft Manor Limited
Headteacher	Mark Birkbeck
Date of previous school inspection	24 May 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	Primary £41,400 pa Secondary £42,800 pa
Telephone number	020 8462 1010
Email address	mark.birkbeck@hillcrestcare.co.uk

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