

Park View Academy (formerly ASD Learning Centre Welling)

146-148 Parkview Road, Welling, DA16 1SR

Inspection dates

5 February 2014

Context of the inspection

This unannounced inspection was undertaken at the request of the Department for Education, the registration authority for independent schools, in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan. The school received its first inspection since registering as an independent school in June 2013. This inspection found that six of the independent school standards for the curriculum were not met. Following this visit, an action plan was submitted by the school which set out how the school planned to address the regulation failures. This action plan was evaluated as satisfactory on 2 September 2013, subject to inspection of its implementation. Her Majesty's Inspector was also asked to establish the effectiveness of the school's record keeping, policies and procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety following concerns raised by parents, carers and others. This included consideration of the independent school regulations for pupils' welfare, health and safety, and the quality of the leadership and management of these areas.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Regulations not met

The June 2013 inspection found that six regulations relating to the curriculum were not met. This was because insufficient time was given to its delivery and to providing purposeful educational activities during the school day to meet the learning needs of the students. It was also noted that, while the curriculum was broad and balanced, the number of lessons that took place and the short amount of time allocated to some aspects of the curriculum, including students' personal development, was insufficient to properly meet pupils' needs. As a result, students' learning was superficial, leading to inadequate progress and achievement over time and they were insufficiently prepared for adult life. In particular, insufficient teaching time was spent on the core subjects of literacy and numeracy due to the shortness of the school day. It was also noted that the education provided did not always meet the requirements of the students' statements of special educational needs to provide an appropriately broad and balanced education.

The school day was restructured in September 2013 to provide more formal taught time with additional time in particular for teaching English and mathematics. At the same time, in line with the school's action plan, the curriculum statement was amended to reflect this change. The new headteacher has further structured the day to ensure that each lesson provides purposeful educational activities to meet students' differing needs. Students' statements of special educational needs have been reviewed. Students have been given the opportunity to reflect on their likes, strengths, areas for development and aspirations

for the future. The current literacy and numeracy levels of almost all students have been reassessed. Using this information, timetables are now tailored to meet each student's current learning development stage, personal aspirations and therapeutic needs. Students are taught both in small groups and individually according to need. A sharp focus is placed on the development of students' literacy and numeracy skills, with opportunities for their development both in timetabled English and mathematics lessons but also in other subjects. The new headteacher is using her own expertise and the subject expertise of staff from the new School Improvement Partnership and other consultants to establish curriculum policies for each subject and to revise schemes of work. New schemes are now in place for the core subjects. These are designed to meet the requirement for mixed age and ability group teaching over time, with links to other subjects, where relevant. Opportunities within subjects for students' personal, health, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are signposted to help teachers maximise their use of taught time. Better use is being made of external providers for older students, to help prepare them for the world of work and adult life. Other opportunities such as mentoring of younger students are also giving older students the chance to take on responsibility. While these developments have yet to have a full impact on students' achievement, both staff and students express the view that they are having a positive effect and resulting in better rates of progress. Inspection evidence would support this view and this inspection has found that all the curriculum regulations are now met.

Teaching and assessment were judged adequate at the time of the June 2013 inspection. The new headteacher is driving improvements in teaching. Strong subject knowledge, high expectations for what students can achieve and lessons planned to meet the needs of individuals in lessons all characterise current teaching. However, the use of assessment to guide students on what they need to do to improve has yet to be established, in part due to the recent staffing changes. Both teachers and the teaching assistants (now referred to as tutors) are fostering students' independence while effectively supporting them in their learning. Behaviour is managed well with the new rewards and sanctions procedures consistently used. Calm and purposeful learning was observed in classrooms during the inspection.

The inspection in June 2013 judged welfare, health and safety to be adequate. However, weaknesses in the systems for safeguarding and in ensuring students' health and safety were found during this present visit. These are being systematically tackled and the students say they feel safe in school and are confident that any concerns will be dealt with. This view is supported by staff and in two telephone conversations with parents.

Child protection training for most staff is out of date, although appropriate externally led training had been arranged to take place in the week following this inspection. Nonetheless, senior leaders and staff are aware of their responsibility to safeguard children and act on concerns, as observed during the inspection. They have been updated on the revised child protection policy and procedures. The designated person has recently undertaken an appropriate level of training following a significant gap in the validity of her training. However, she is not on the school site all of the time and her deputy has not received training at the appropriate level. Since undertaking training, the designated person has revised the systems for child protection record keeping, although this has yet to develop into a robust system with all actions rigorously recorded.

The local authority designated officer (LADO) is now working with the school to help the school improve the child protection systems, for example by arranging training for staff or

giving advice on potential child protection concerns. The recently revised safeguarding policy covers child protection, makes reference to staff recruitment and provides a secure framework for the protection of children. However, there are several shortcomings in the policy which means it does not meet current requirements because:

- although there is specific reference to the current guidance on dealing with allegations against staff, the time frame and the formal reporting of concerns to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) of a member of staff who leaves the school during investigation of an allegation of abuse, or are dismissed as a result of an investigation, are not clearly set out in the main part of the policy
- it is not clear how allegations of abuse against the headteacher or directors or proprietor will be managed
- no details are included about how children will learn about staying safe, or how parents and carers will be informed about the policy
- it does not consider in sufficient detail how the policy will be reviewed and revised
- no links are made to other key policies such as those for bullying and physical restraint
- the training requirements for staff are not set out.

Procedures for the recruitment of staff and checks on their suitability to work with children are in the process of being revised and currently being trialled for the appointment of a new member of staff. Recruitment is now managed by an external company in conjunction with the new headteacher and overseen by the headteacher from the School Improvement Partnership school. The procedures are based on those used by this school, although these have yet to be transferred into the format of a Park View recruitment policy. The new procedures appear to meet requirements, but it was not possible to verify this because staff files and appointment records are kept off-site.

In relation to the suitability of staff, disclosure and barring checks have been carried out on all permanent and on all short- and long-term contracted staff. While contracts are in place for the use of contracted staff supplied by agencies, it is not always clear that these staff have been fully checked for their suitability to work with young people. This particularly applies to the cleaning staff. While checks on all temporary teachers and teaching assistants are recorded on the school's single central register of staff appointments, those for the cleaning staff have yet to be added. Consequently, two of the regulations for the suitability of contract staff and the overarching regulation for safeguarding are not met.

A health and safety policy is in place. However, a recent health and safety audit conducted by external consultants identified a series of shortcomings in the school's arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of students on the school premises. The immediate concerns with respect to the premises have been addressed or are in the process of being addressed. However, there is no fully trained health and safety officer and school staff have not had sufficient training in health and safety and food hygiene. Temporary staff are not informed of the school's health and safety procedures on arrival. Consequently, there is a general lack of awareness amongst the staff of health and safety issues. Incidents and accidents are not systematically analysed for patterns and trends. Day-to-day concerns are recognised and addressed but not systematically recorded with clear audit trails of actions. The school recognises that, while risk assessments for both on- and off-site activities are in place, they need reviewing. Plans are in place for this to be undertaken by an external company. Consequently, while practices are changing, these have yet to be fully

implemented or embedded in school practice, which means that the regulation with respect to ensuring the health and safety of students is not met.

During this visit, it was also noted that there were some shortcomings in the school premises. Separate toilets are provided for boys and girls. A separate toilet with washbasin is provided for male staff. However, the two-cubicle girls' toilet is also used by female staff. While arrangements are in place for these facilities not to be used by staff and students at the same time, this contravenes the current requirements for sole use. There are no changing or showering facilities on the school premises. Students do make regular use of a local sports centre for some physical education activities and can use their changing and showering facilities. However, the school premises, the nearby park and other local leisure facilities are also used for sport and physical activity. On these occasions, students are not able to change or shower. The provision for unwell, injured and sick students is inadequate. The current arrangement is the use of a temporary bed in a senior leader's office. The office does not have a sink and the school toilets are not nearby and would not provide sufficient privacy. Consequently, the four regulations relating to the provision of suitable toilet facilities, changing and showering facilities for students aged 11 and over and for the care of sick, unwell or injured students are not met.

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 arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school and that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.	Paragraph 7
Ensure the written health and safety policy complies with relevant health and safety laws and is implemented.	Paragraph 11
Ensure the proprietor checks for all staff before they start work at the school, the person offered for supply by the employment business is suitable for the work required.	Paragraph 20(2)(b)
Ensure that for all 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.	Paragraph 22(5)
Provide suitable toilet and washing facilities for the sole use of pupils.	Paragraph 23A(1)(a)
Provide suitable changing accommodation and showers for pupils aged 11 years or over who receive physical education.	Paragraph 23A(1)(c)
Provide accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of students.	Paragraph 23B(1)(a)
Provide facilities for the short-term care of sick and injured students, which include a washing facility and are near to a toilet facility.	Paragraph 23B(1)(b)

Inspection team

Angela Corbett HMI, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Park View Academy is a co-educational special day school registered for 25 pupils aged seven to 19 years. It is located in Welling, Kent.
- Pupils experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and some have difficulties on the autistic spectrum. All pupils have statements of special educational needs.
- There are currently 23 pupils on roll aged eight to 18 years, of whom two attend part time. All pupils are placed by local authorities or schools; some are admitted as emergency placements at very short notice.
- The school specialises in alternative education and social development programmes for pupils who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from local schools. Placements at the centre may vary from six weeks to several years.
- The school uses other providers for some courses and services such as careers support and also for physical recreation.
- The school aims to 'provide every child with an opportunity to experience success with their education no matter what their background or special needs are'.
- The school was registered in June 2012 and received its first full inspection in June 2013.
- Since the last inspection, the school has changed its name from ASD Learning Centre – Welling to Park View Academy in December 2013. The school is currently being led by a senior leader on secondment from Charlton Park Academy, a local maintained residential special academy.
- A management committee, chaired by the headteacher of Charlton Park Academy, for this and two other ASD centres, has been put in place.

School details

Unique reference number	138386
Inspection number	432463
DfE registration number	303/6000
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.	
Type of school	Special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	23
Number of part time pupils	3
Proprietor	Philip Hoppenbrouwers
Headteacher	Anita Sawyer
Date of previous school inspection	5–7 June 2013
Annual fees (day pupils)	£29,250
Telephone number	020 8301 2685
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