

Bramdean School

Richmond Lodge, Homefield Road, Exeter, EX1 2QR

Inspection dates

7 February 2014

Context of the inspection

This inspection was undertaken with no notice at the request of the Department for Education, which is the registration authority for independent schools, in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan. The action plan was produced following an emergency inspection in September 2013. The emergency inspection was in response to concerns raised by the local authority's Child Protection Strategy Group about the school's recruitment procedures in relation to safeguarding pupils. The inspectors found that the school's recruitment procedures, including checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and young people, met the regulations. However, the child protection policy was not up to date and staff were not trained at the appropriate level. The school's action plan, dated 6 November 2013, addressed some of these issues, but the timescale for staff training was not clear.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Good progress

The school has adopted, suitably, the local authority's child protection policy. The policy now meets requirements and gives the correct guidance for dealing with allegations against staff. It also gives clear information about working with external agencies. The policy names the school's main designated child protection officer. The current officer is new to the role, although not new to the school. A certificate shows that this member of staff has undertaken the required level of training for the role, at Level 3. The school showed the inspector the confirmation that training for all staff at Level 2 has been booked for 12 February 2014. Certificates are available to demonstrate that many staff have attended training at Level 1. The designated child protection officer is aware that her training is to be updated every two years and that staff training is to be renewed every three years. She has plans for any new staff to undertake Level 1 and Level 2 training online. She is also aware that the school's child protection policy is to be reviewed annually.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and that they are confident to take any concerns to members of staff. They are taught about internet safety and how to keep themselves safe. They state that incidents of bullying are rare and that staff deal effectively with the very few incidents of unacceptable behaviour. They claim that behaviour is not an issue in this small school because they all know each other and accept any differences, for example in race or ability, and the staff take good care of them. The inspector found that behaviour in lessons and around the school was calm, orderly and conducive to learning. Pupils are well supervised at all times.

No formal parental complaints have been made to the school in the past twelve months. The local authority's designated officer for safeguarding confirmed that the school takes appropriate action in the case of any safeguarding referrals and that there are no further issues with the school's procedures.

Examination of the school's records show that all required checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and young people have been carried out appropriately. The school is aware that such checks must be carried out before staff are employed in the school.

During the past year the school has had difficulty in recruiting a permanent office manager and this has contributed to staff training not always being renewed on time. The current interim office manager demonstrates a good understanding of the importance of systematically recording and checking when policies and training are due for renewal. As a result, first aid training for staff is currently being updated.

First aid boxes are properly equipped and the medical room is staffed by a trained nurse. An accident book is maintained appropriately. Admission and attendance registers are completed regularly and any absence is adequately followed up. A tour of the school revealed no health and safety issues. Health and safety checks and risk assessments, including for school trips, are completed appropriately. A suitable fire risk assessment is in place and tests of the fire alarm system and fire drills are carried out regularly. The school, including the kitchen, appears clean and well maintained.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Inspection team

Sue Frater HMI, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Bramdean School is a non-selective independent co-educational school in Exeter.
- It provides for pupils aged from three to 18 years. There are currently 135 pupils on roll. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils speak English as an additional language. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school was established in 1901. It aims to provide pupils with 'a well-rounded education where teamwork, cooperation, self-discipline and good manners are observed alongside the teaching of academic subjects by highly qualified staff'.
- The school's last full inspection was in September 2012.

School details

Unique reference number	113562
Inspection number	433719
DfE registration number	878/6001
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	Preparatory and senior day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–18 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Miss Diane Stoneman and Mr Antony Connet
Headteacher	Miss Diane Stoneman
Chair	Not applicable
Date of previous school inspection	September 2013
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,848-£9,348
Telephone number	01392 273387
Email address	info@bramdeanschool.com

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