

Estuary High School

Inspection dates

5 March 2014

Context of the inspection

This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made since its last inspection. The school was last inspected on March 2012 when it was found to provide a good quality of education and met all but two regulations. The subsequent evaluation of the school's action plan was completed on 13 June 2012. The school requested a material change and Ofsted visited the school on 14 October 2013 at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check the suitability of the existing premises. The school failed to meet regulations relating to the suitability of the curriculum, the school premises and the admission register. The school's action plan, following this visit, was evaluated by Ofsted on 10 December 2013 when it was found to be a satisfactory response.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Regulations not met

Leaders have successfully implemented the action plan which they prepared following the material change visit in October 2013 and the previous action plan following the inspection of March 2012. Consequently, almost all of the regulations identified as being unmet at the time of the inspection and subsequent visit are now met. However, at the time of this present inspection visit the attendance register was not fully completed and was not up-to-date.

At the time of the last full inspection, the school failed to provide a broad and balanced curriculum supported by appropriate schemes of work. It failed to ensure that students were taught knowledge and skills in science, information and communication technology, music and in the humanities. In its action plan, the school indicated that it would extend the curriculum to provide a richer learning experience for students. As a result of implementing the action plan, students now have access to a wider range of subjects. They develop skills satisfactorily in lessons which now include literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, music, science and geography. Leaders have drawn up appropriate schemes of work and teachers plan individual lessons to ensure that students make progress in learning new knowledge and skills. The headteacher has implemented a new system to assess students' key skills and to track their progress. The school places an appropriate emphasis on developing students' life skills. They have opportunities to learn how to travel to the school and beyond. During the inspection, students were completing a cycling course to help them use bicycles safely on the roads. Useful links with a local secondary school provide opportunities for students to carry out science investigations using the school's resources. The students have many opportunities to learn in the surrounding environment. They had collected twigs and branches to use in an art project, which they completed well and with much enjoyment. Teachers look for opportunities to link subjects together to give a context for lessons. The boys completed pictures linked to their learning about Australian and historical cave paintings.

The material change inspection visit found that students' targets in their individual learning plans were not appropriate. These targets have been reviewed to ensure they address the most urgent priorities, usually in mathematics, English and personal and social development. The targets are reviewed and updated regularly, using the information from the regular assessments that teachers make of students' progress.

The school failed to ensure students' health and safety by checking electrical appliances and conducting regular assessments of risk including for fire safety. Leaders have now ensured that an appropriate health and safety policy is in place and implemented. All electrical appliances have been tested to ensure they are safe. Leaders and teachers conduct regular risk assessments including of the building and fire precautions. The school conducts fire drills at regular intervals. The buildings and school premises are well ordered.

The inspection visit found that there was no medical room. In its action plan, the school indicated that it would convert areas of the school to provide a space for the medical examination of students and somewhere for them to rest and recover from accidents or illness. The school has completed this work and there is now a quiet and private space for these purposes. Students have easy access to a toilet and there is running water and a sink in the room.

At the time of the material change inspection visit, there were no facilities for changing and showering following physical education and sports activities. The school has now secured the use of a local sports centre so that students can use the appropriate facilities there following their lessons.

Leaders had failed to ensure that the admission register included all of the necessary information on students. They have now introduced an electronic admissions register that includes all of the necessary information. Leaders ensure there is a hard copy of the admission register available at all times. However, the attendance register was not completed in the week of this present inspection. Leaders must take immediate action to ensure the attendance register is completed accurately each morning and afternoon of the school day.

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 there is an attendance register which is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Paragraph 17

Ensure the attendance register is completed twice each day, at the beginning of the day and again after lunchtime.

Inspection team

Michelle Winter, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Estuary High School is a special school for a maximum of ten boys, between 13 and 18 years of age with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- There are currently ten boys on roll, seven of whom has a statement of special educational needs.
- All students are looked after children and are placed here by a number of local authorities. Six of the students live in the children's home owned by the proprietor, four of the students are in foster care.
- The school, which opened in January 2007, is part of Kites Children's Services Limited which caters for various aspects of the needs of adolescent males.
- The school's last full inspection was in March 2012.
- The school aims to provide, 'a learning environment which will enable students to have a full range of educational activities, both within the school and wider community, within a supportive framework involving encouragement, therapy, self-awareness and discipline'. This is based on the philosophy that, 'despite their difficulties, all students have the potential to become fully active, productive and safe members of the wider community, with positive and meaningful roles to play'.
- The headteacher was appointed in November 2012. Two qualified teachers joined the school in September 2013.

School details

Unique reference number	134940
Inspection number	434550
DfE registration number	882/6053
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	Secondary special school for boys with emotional and social difficulties
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Kites Children's Services Limited
Headteacher	Simone Issacs
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2012
Fees (day pupils)	£666 per week
Email address	info@kitescs.com

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