

# St Paul's

Hertford Street, Birmingham, B12 8NJ

## Inspection dates

14 January 2015

## Overall outcome

**Independent school standards not met**

## Context of the inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools to monitor the progress made by the school in the implementation of its action plan.
- The school was last fully inspected in March 2012. It was judged to be good.
- An emergency inspection took place in May 2014 because of significant concerns with pupils' behaviour. Many regulations were not met. These indicated significant weaknesses in the curriculum and welfare, health and safety. In addition, the inspection identified failings in the school's policies to support good behaviour and tackle bullying.
- Following the emergency inspection in May 2014, the school drew up an action plan outlining its proposals for tackling the failings in the curriculum, teaching and assessment. This was evaluated in August 2014 and found to require improvement.
- A monitoring inspection visit was carried out in September 2014 which found that there remained weaknesses in the curriculum. The visit also found significant low-level misbehaviour by students.
- This visit was the second monitoring inspection visit to the school to follow up its progress in rectifying the weaknesses reported in May 2014.

## Main findings

- Many of the required actions have been completed successfully. Consequently, the school does now meet many of the regulations failed in May 2014. Some, however, remain unmet.

## Curriculum, teaching and assessment

- The previous progress monitoring inspection found that science, music, religious education and a modern foreign language in Key Stage 3 were not taught as specified in pupils' statements of special educational needs. Also the school did not provide all of the specialist provision required by pupils' statements.
- This progress monitoring inspection found that the curriculum has been broadened and that all subjects apart from a modern foreign language are taught. However, the school still does not provide all of the specialist provision required by pupils' statements. Therefore this regulation is not met.
- The previous progress monitoring inspection visit found that teaching and learning policies had been updated, including those for behaviour and recording incidents. Staff turnover and reduced income led to a delay in delivering the planned training and support, for staff, including those new to the school and in the early stages of their teaching career. Additionally, while there had been a reduction in serious behavioural incidents, the previous inspection identified incidences of significant low-level disruption.

- This progress monitoring inspection has found that the required training is due to take place mid-January 2015. There has been a further reduction in staffing including the school's special education needs coordinator, who is also the deputy headteacher. This reduces the leadership team's capacity to provide support and training to new and temporary staff. Incidences of serious misbehaviour are reducing; there remains, however, significant low-level disobedience, such as walking out of lessons. Therefore this regulation is not met.

### **Spiritual, moral and social development of pupils**

- The previous progress monitoring inspection found there had been a reduction in serious incidents since April 2014. However, the inspection also found high incidences of poor behaviour in lessons by a small group of older pupils.
- This inspection found that leaders have made many efforts to improve attendance and have attempted to work closely with parents and pupils to improve pupils' behaviour. Two pupils attend school part-time with no planned timescale for when they will return on a full-time basis. While most pupils behave well in school, some still do not. Pupils do not understand how they can contribute positively to the school. For example, some have been reported to have caused damage to school property. The school still does not meet this regulation.

### **Pupils' welfare, health and safety**

- The previous progress monitoring inspection found that the school's safeguarding policy had been revised and met requirements. The school was unable to provide documentary evidence to confirm that staff had undertaken child protection training at the required level. This inspection found that senior members of staff are trained to the required level in child protection and that training is planned for mid-January for those staff yet to complete child protection and safeguarding training. This aspect of the regulation is now met.
- In-house staff training at the time of the previous monitoring inspection was not good enough to secure consistent implementation of the behaviour and anti-bullying policies, particularly for staff new to the school or inexperienced. Delays in recording incidents of poor behaviour prevented the leadership from making an effective follow-up or picking up on trends and trigger points. This inspection found that the reporting, recording and analysis of poor behaviour incidents is much improved and that staff are receiving appropriate training in autism and behaviour management. The school therefore, now meets this regulation.
- The pupil admission register did not meet requirements. It is now much improved, it does contain admission numbers and pupils can be listed both alphabetically and numerically. However, the school does not record the pupils' previous school or any details of moves to other schools. The school is unaware that admission registers should be kept for a period of three years and that, where a pupil is taken off the school roll, the local authority should be informed. Therefore, this regulation is not met.
- Recording of safeguarding concerns are not kept in line with the recommendations of the Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board. For example, incidents are not recorded in a bound book and there is no clear chronology to show that referrals are made in a timely manner. Therefore, this regulation is not met.

### **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection in September 2014, there was no provision for changing or showers for pupils over 11 years of age undertaking physical education. The school planned to enrol each pupil to use the local swimming pool and to hold supervised swimming lessons there but had not made the necessary arrangements.

- This inspection found that the school now has an arrangement with the local gymnasium for physical education lessons and for swimming lessons to be conducted at a local leisure centre. These venues include changing and showering facilities. The school therefore now meets this regulation.

### **The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements**

- Ensure that the curriculum policy and schemes of work are implemented fully (paragraph 2(1)).
- Ensure that where pupils have a statement of special educational needs the education provided fulfils its requirements (paragraph 2(2)(e)).
- Ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensure these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3(d)).
- Ensure that teaching utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly (paragraph 3(h)).
- Ensure that principles are promoted which:
  - enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law (paragraph 5(a)(ii)).
- Ensure that principles are promoted which:
  - encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour (paragraph 5(a)(iii)).
- Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7).
- Ensure that the admission register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 17).

## Inspection team

Jacqueline Wordsworth, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Information about this school

- St Paul's opened in March 2007 and is registered for 100 pupils, aged between nine and 19 years. The school provides places for pupils who have been excluded from school, are at risk of exclusion, or do not have a school place. The school is part of The St Paul's Community Development Trust. The Trust has a children's centre, a nursery provider and out-of-school provision on site, with a further pre-school and other nursery providers in the locality as part of its wider work. These are all separately inspected. The school's last full inspection was in March 2012 when most aspects were judged to be good.
- In November 2013, St Paul's began to admit nine- and ten-year-olds for the first time and created a Key Stage 2 department in nearby premises. About 18 months ago, it extended its provision for students from 16 to 19 years located in an adjacent building. This is partly funded by finance from the Department of Work and Pensions.
- Most pupils are funded by Birmingham local authority. On 21 March 2014, when there were 41 pupils on roll, the school closed because of serious concerns about pupils' behaviour and their health and safety on the school site. The local authority sought alternative places for a number of pupils. During this time, the school provided some home tuition by school staff and also work to be completed at home by pupils. Some pupils were re-admitted and the school operated with low numbers for the rest of the school year.
- A temporary headteacher, who had previously retired, took over leadership of the school in July 2012, until the end of March 2014. Since then, the school has been led on a temporary basis by the chief executive of the Trust.
- An emergency inspection visit in May 2014 found that a number of regulations relating to the curriculum, the welfare, health and safety of pupils and the premises and accommodation at the school were not met. The school submitted an action plan outlining its proposals to address these failings. This was evaluated in August 2014 and found to require improvement.
- A progress monitoring visit took place in September 2014. Many regulations were still not met. These indicated significant weaknesses in the curriculum and the welfare health and safety and in the premises and accommodation. In addition, the inspection identified failings in the school's policies to support good behaviour and tackle bullying.
- There are currently 21 pupils on roll, all of whom attend on a full-time basis. Twenty of these are placed by Birmingham local authority; one pupil is from Sandwell.
- The school registered as a special school at the end of the autumn term 2014; all pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The vast majority have emotional and social difficulties, although many have additional needs such as autism. One pupil is looked after by the local authority.
- There has been a considerable turnover in staff during the past six months and this is continuing, the deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator left on the day of this monitoring visit. The current staffing includes an agency teacher and two newly qualified teachers. Since the start of the autumn term, the Key Stage 2 pupils have been taught in the same building as those in Key Stages 3 and 4.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135208
<b>Inspection number</b>	455383
<b>DfE registration number</b>	330/6115
<b>Type of school</b>	Independent special
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–19 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	21
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	2
<b>Proprietor</b>	St Paul's Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Gill Coffin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anita Halliday
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 September 2014
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£19,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4644376
<b>Fax number</b>	0102464255
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