

International Community School

4 York Terrace East, Regents Park, London, NW1 4PT

Inspection dates

26 November 2014

Overall outcome

Independent school standards met

Context of the inspection

- In April 2014 the school was subject to a progress monitoring inspection, combined with a full inspection carried out under section 162a of the Education Act 2002. Inspectors found that the school was failing to meet a number of the independent school standards relating to the school's premises and to students' welfare, health and safety. Consequently, the school was required to prepare an action plan to address the failings. Ofsted evaluated the action plan in September 2014 and considered it an acceptable response..
- The Department for Education (DfE) asked Ofsted to check on the implementation of this action plan and, at the same time, consider a material change request to allow the school to operate on a third site. The outcome of this material change request is reported separately.
- This inspection was unannounced.

Main findings

- At the previous inspection, the school failed to meet the standards for provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (paragraphs 7, 11, 15) and the suitability of premises and accommodation (paragraph 23C). The school has implemented its action plan to address these failings within the stated timescales and, consequently, it now meets all the independent school standards.
- The proprietors have created a governing board. The Chair of the Board has named responsibility for safeguarding. The board has completed an external review of governance and is making reasonable progress in acting on its recommendations. The members appointed possess a wide range of skills relevant to the review recommendations. Their plans for developing policies over the next two years set suitable timescales for review.
- A leader for health and safety has been appointed. His role as the health and safety manager is well understood by staff and pupils. The health and safety manager communicates developments and concerns effectively to the head of school. As a result, a more robust culture of safety is emerging. Staff, including those who have recently been appointed, understand their responsibilities in relation to behaviour and safety more fully.

Welfare, health and safety

- At the time of the last inspection, school leaders and managers were not demonstrating a good enough understanding of how to safeguard pupils. As a result, children and young people were exposed to unnecessary risk both from adults who share the building.. Safeguarding policies, and the procedures for evaluating them, required strengthening. The proprietors did not fully comply with their responsibilities as set out in paragraph 28 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (April 2014). Concerns were raised about the dual/shared use of the premises by International Student House.
- Designated staff for safeguarding are now clearly identified and deployed at both school sites.

Their roles are clear to staff, who understand where to go if they need help with a safeguarding matter. Members of staff say that they can easily report concerns and receive advice about safeguarding issues.

- Designated senior persons understand their roles well and communicate a passion for their work. Case studies of recent safeguarding issues show that these are dealt with in a timely and thorough manner.
- Pupils can explain how to keep themselves safe; they can explain how changes to the curriculum are helping them to learn about safety issues.
- The health and safety manager has made sure that external audits of fire risk and safety have been completed on the primary school site. He has made sure staff are better trained to complete risk assessments. Members of staff are expected to submit proposals well in advance of planned activities. The health and safety manager provides advice to help staff every time they complete an assessment. As a result, assessments seen identify risks and steps planned to reduce them more effectively. On the day of inspection a group of pupils were attending the Science Museum. The risk assessment seen was appropriate and demonstrated the positive impact of recent training.
- A full-time security guard has been appointed. He is accessible and prominent around the school. Pupils and staff say that his presence makes them feel more secure.
- Updates to policies are understood and used by staff. For example, catering staff use information provided by school staff to make sure pupils with special dietary needs are well cared for. Staff complete and record daily checks on outdoor play equipment. In each school location, a noticeboard displays roles and responsibilities clearly. Accompanying photographs help new staff identify appropriate people to approach for help. The staff handbook has been redesigned. The expectations and roles of staff are now explained in detail. As a result, all staff have access to precise guidance about their responsibilities. An organisation chart has been created which shows all of the key roles on both school sites and their relationship to one another.
- The areas which pupils use during the day are now securely locked with an electronic fob system. When pupils use the dining hall, a system of supervision is in operation to promote safety. The classroom which was a cause of security concerns is no longer in use by the school.
- Staff understand the revised code of conduct and the whistleblowing policy. They have been trained in relation to safeguarding by the health and safety officer and by an external consultant. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Westminster has worked with the school to support in-house training for safeguarding. The school has revised its induction policy. Newly appointed staff say it has helped them understand their roles in relation to behaviour and safety.
- Ratios for supervision of pupils and supervision responsibilities have been improved. The senior leadership team completes spot checks on supervision and pupils report that they feel safe. The supervision policy has been revised and is clear in its expectations.
- The external audit of safety lists a range of recommendations. Some of these have been carried out. The report recommends that metal grilles are installed over gaps below steps alongside a path from the school to the playground. These are not yet in place although pupils regularly use this path. Leaders say they are ensuring pupils in this area are always closely supervised until the work is completed.
- Record keeping has improved. There are detailed and regular records of checks and outdoor play equipment and investigations related to unacceptable behaviour.
- Consequently the independent school standards for safeguarding, health and fire safety are now met.

Premises

- In the last inspection report, concerns were raised about the dual/shared use of the premises by International Student House. Some staff employed by this organisation, which is not part of the

school, have access in order to to carry out their work.

- Cleaning and maintenance staff from the International Student House, which shares the premises with the primary school, still have access to the areas where primary pupils work. The school has now provided a protocol for them to follow. The safety manager and security guard check that staff from the International Student House follow the protocol consistently. School leaders have made sure safeguarding checks have been undertaken on the staff needing access to the pupil areas. Cleaning staff are to be given safeguarding training by the school before the end of term.
- As a result, the independent school standards for premises are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended, and associated requirements.

Inspection team

Andrew Wright, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- The International Community School provides education for pupils from the ages of three to 18.
- The primary and secondary school premises are about a mile apart from one another. The proprietors have acquired a third site with the intention of using this to accommodate upper Key Stage 2 pupils. This site is not yet in use and is the subject of an application for a material change. There is an administrative base on a third site.
- The school's curriculum is based on the International Baccalaureate. It places a strong emphasis on the use of educational visits and experiences outside of the school to enrich the curriculum. Many of the pupils speak English as an additional language. A high proportion of them are foreign nationals resident in London. A small proportion of pupils have statements of special educational needs for specific learning difficulties.
- International Student House (ISH) is a separate organisation that share use of the primary school premises.
- The school formerly offered boarding provision but this had ceased at the time of inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	101171
Inspection number	455369
DfE registration number	213/6304

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 inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Independent all-age
School status	Independent
Age range of pupils	3–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr B A Toettcher and Mrs E A Toettcher
Chair	Mr B A Toettcher
Headteacher	Ms R Threlfall
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2014
Annual fees (day pupils)	£16,650–£22,100
Telephone number	020 7935 1206
Email address	primary@ics.uk.net

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