

Kisimul School

Woodstock Lane North, Long Ditton, Surrey KT6 5HN

Inspection dates

24 March 2015

Overall outcome

Unmet independent school standards not identified

Reason for the inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education following a complaint received about leadership and management, staffing ratios, safeguarding and the behaviour and safety of students.
- Inspectors were asked to report against the regulations contained within Parts 1 and 8, and specifically standards 7, 9, and 14 in Part 3 of the independent school standards.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.

Main findings

- The school's safeguarding systems and procedures are robust and help to keep students safe and secure. The safeguarding policy reflects the latest guidance and is published on the school's website. All staff have been trained in child protection and safeguarding, with ten staff having been first aid trained. All the required checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are in place.
- Policies and procedures relating to health and safety, fire safety and first aid are rigorous. Observation of classes confirm that high levels of staff supervision are in place, resulting in a contact ratio of at least 1:1 for all students, and 2:1 for nine students with very complex needs.
- The school's behaviour promotes positive reinforcement as a means of promoting and rewarding 'appropriate or more positive' behaviour. It also outlines exemplar responses to challenging behaviour that staff should adopt. This ensures a consistency of approach that helps students manage their emotions and behaviour. The school maintains an up-to-date log of behavioural incidents, some involving biting and physical injury to staff. These are analysed regularly to spot trends and make suitable interventions, so as to help keep students safe, to prevent them from harming themselves and to minimise dangers to staff and other students. Nevertheless, some students, by the very nature of their complex needs, do present challenging behaviours.
- In addressing this issue, leaders have ensured that all staff have undertaken training in dealing with challenging behaviour and physical restraint. They have also established a 'pool' of former school care staff, some of whom have been trained in physical restraint, who can be called upon at short notice to provide cover in the school. Also, negotiations have recently taken place to enable regular agency staff working in the school to undertake training in safe physical restraint.
- The schemes of work have a strong emphasis on developing students' literacy and numeracy skills. While the school has adopted commercial schemes, planning indicates that schemes are adapted to meet the very complex and different needs of each student. As a result, all students are afforded the opportunity to gain a nationally accredited qualification that recognises and records their progress and achievement

throughout their schooling.

- One of the school's main priorities is to develop students' communication skills. Many students are non-verbal and require alternative communication systems, such as signing and picture recognition schemes, to gain access to the full curriculum. Modules based on personal, social, health, citizenship and relationships education help students to gain valuable work-related skills and life skills in preparation for leaving Kisimul.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching. Teachers are given clear information about their strengths and areas for development. In addition, a local authority adviser visits once a term to conduct joint lesson observations and to moderate judgements on the quality of teaching.
- Scrutiny of students' books over a range of subjects shows that marking is regular and appropriate, with teachers providing clear advice on how to improve the work. The school's 'Learning Journeys' records give a further dimension to the overview of students' development by providing photographic and pictorial records of their progress.
- The behaviour of students observed both in and out of lessons and when moving around the school was consistently appropriate, polite and well mannered towards each other and staff.
- The school has in place systems to track and monitor students' progress in English and mathematics. Leaders, in partnership with local authority advisers, are currently examining new assessment systems specifically designed to capture students' academic progress together with improvements made in their behaviour and personal development. Handover records from school to residential staff give a detailed account of each student's day.
- The school's leaders have ensured that all the regulations for independent schools are met and that students' welfare is safeguarded.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements.

Inspection team

David Scott, Lead Inspector

Additional inspector

Information about this school

- Kisimul School (Woodstock House) is an independent day and residential special school for students aged from eight to 19 years of age.
- There are 48 students on roll, 32 of whom are beyond the age of 16 years. There is one primary-aged pupil currently on roll.
- All of the 37 boys and 11 girls have severe learning difficulties and very challenging behaviour, and the large majority have a diagnosis of autism. All students have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school is owned by the Kisimul Group Limited, a company that also runs and manages care provision for young adults.
- The last inspection of the school's educational provision was in November 2012. The quality of provision was judged to be good and all the regulations for independent schools were met. The last social care inspection was in May 2014. All national minimum standards were met.
- In October 2013, following a complaint received by Ofsted, the Department for Education requested an emergency inspection of the educational provision. All the regulations were found to be met.

School details

Unique reference number	135577
Inspection number	463421
DfE registration number	936/6593

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Type of school	Special
School status	Independent day and residential special school
Age range of pupils	8–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Of which, number of pupils in the sixth form	32
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Danny Carter
Headteacher	Sandra Langdon
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 November 2012
Annual fees (day pupils)	£79,000–£95,000
Annual fees (boarders)	£79,000–£250,000
Telephone number	020 8335 2570
Email address	enquiries@kisimul.co.uk

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