

The NAS Anderson School

Rookery Lane, Pilning, BS35 4JN

Inspection dates

23–24 June 2015

Overall outcome

Unmet independent school standards identified

Reason for the inspection

- Concerns were raised about student's educational provision, the welfare, health and safety of students and a failing of leaders to respond to views that had been raised.
- In view of the nature of the concerns, an unannounced emergency inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education. Her Majesty's Inspector was requested to look at the school's procedures and practices around safeguarding and child protection, behaviour, bullying and health and safety. Her Majesty's Inspector was asked to check that procedures are followed with regards to a disclosure to the disclosure and barring service. In addition, Her Majesty's Inspector was requested to consider whether the quality of education provided to students, including assessments and education, health and care plans, meet the independent school standards. Her Majesty's Inspector was requested to check the complaints policy and the implementation of that policy. Her Majesty's Inspector was requested to check on the standards regarding leadership and management.

Main findings

- The curriculum is not adjusted to meet the needs of all the students' statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans. In particular, there is a lack of regular therapeutic services to address pupils' social interaction and social communication difficulties and pragmatic learning difficulties.
- The curriculum is not sufficiently challenging between Key Stages 2 and 4, given the starting points of some of the students. There are insufficient meaningful accredited courses for the most able students.
- The school has not organised a comprehensive programme of careers advice and work-based experiences that will help students and their families plan for their futures.
- The assessment of students' academic achievements is significantly underdeveloped. As a consequence, teachers are not clear about the gaps students have in their basic skills and do not match work to their specific learning needs with enough precision. This was an area for improvement at the last inspection and was not addressed effectively by the previous leadership team. As a result, students are still not making the academic progress of which they are capable.
- Systems for tracking students' progress in the short term are improving. The Principal insists that teachers appraise the success of students' learning in the lessons and make adjustments to the next day's lesson. This is a very recent development. There is no system for gathering the information about students' progress in all the subjects they are learning. Consequently, leaders cannot provide a complete and accurate picture of the progress students are making over time.
- The current individual education plans, updated every term, are not fit for purpose. They do not bring together all the information about the student into a coherent plan for the next phase of their provision. This is because coordinating the various assessments made by specialists and teachers until recently has lacked proper oversight.
- Leaders have recognised this shortcoming. They are piloting a new individual education plan produced by the national autistic society to sit alongside the education, health and care plans

that are to be phased in over the next two years.

- A number of school policies relating to safeguarding and the provision for special educational needs are not compliant with recent guidance published by the Department for Education. There is some confusion among leaders as to which policies are currently in force. The gaps in the safeguarding children and child protection policy are placing students at risk. There is no overarching arrangement for introducing the teaching of safeguarding into lessons. Also, not all staff have undertaken the most up-to-date training to help them identify possible abuse and staff attendance records are incomplete. Additionally, the policy lacks clarity about when and how this policy and practice are to be evaluated.
- The behaviour of students is managed sufficiently well to ensure all students can access the lesson. While the school keeps detailed records of all incidents, leaders do not analyse the information to check on patterns of behaviour and the type of incident. The records are incomplete. Records do not show clearly whether a debriefing is offered to staff and students in the event of a need for physical intervention, or restraint. Students' risk assessments are not refreshed to reflect the information held on the behaviour incident log.
- There are no rotas posted to alert staff as to who has overall responsibility for first aid during the day.
- The school's website is not up to date. The school's safeguarding and child protection policy was unavailable at the time of the inspection. Neither were there details of the nature of special educational needs provision available.
- The complaints procedure meets requirements although there is an ongoing issue around adherence to time scales laid out in the policy. Lessons the school has learned are to be included in the revised policy. The proprietor has prioritised a strengthening of the partnership with parents and has made steps to securing the confidence of parents in the school.
- The leadership and management have identified the weaknesses in curriculum, assessment, welfare and safeguarding at the school. The recent appointment of qualified teachers and an experienced special educational needs coordinator has brought capacity to address the regulatory failings quickly. Further appointments have been made to secure the services of regular therapists as required.

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

The proprietor should ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and	2(1)(a)
take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.	2(1)(b)(i)
For pupils receiving secondary education, provide access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that:	2(2)(e)
is presented in an impartial manner;	2(2)(e)(i)
enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and	2(2)(e)(ii)
helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.	2(2)(e)(iii)
That all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and	2(2)(h)
effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.	2(2)(i)

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school:	3
enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;	3(a)
shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;	3(d)
demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and uses information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.	3(g)
The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.	4
The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that:	7
arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and	7(a)
such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.	7(b)
The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour among pupils by ensuring that:	9
the policy is implemented effectively.	9(b)
The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that:	16
the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy.	16(a)
The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that:	
particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request.	32(1)(c)
The information specified in this sub-paragraph includes:	
particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language;	32(3)(b)
the written policy relating to those on EHC plans.	32(3)(c)
The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:	34(1)
demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;	34(1)(a)
fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and	34(1)(b)
actively promote the well-being of pupils.	34(1)(c)

For the purposes of paragraph (1)(c) 'well-being' means well-being within the meaning of section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004 ¹ .	34(2)
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¹ 2004 c.31.

Inspection team

Jonathan Palk, Lead Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- The NAS Anderson School is a small special school that provides full-time education for boys and girls aged between seven and 19 years. It is owned and operated by the National Autistic Society. Three of the students reside in residential accommodation provided by the proprietor.
- The school opened in February 2013. It had its first standard inspection in November 2013. All regulations were met at that time.
- All of the pupils currently on the school's roll have a statement of special educational needs in relation to autistic spectrum disorders. Most pupils have experienced disrupted education prior to attending the school. Two pupils are looked after.
- The school has experienced a high turnover in staffing. The current headteacher was appointed in April 2015. The special educational needs coordinator was appointed at the same time. Two teachers have been appointed to the school to replace staff that have left.
- The number on roll has increased since the last inspection from six to 18.
- The school makes use of local sports and leisure centres. One student attends alternative provision at Education First Kingswood. This arrangement was not inspected.
- The school aims to realise and maximise each pupil's potential, support them to achieve their aspirations, develop their confidence and self-esteem, and support a successful transition into their local community.

School details

Unique reference number	138563
Social care unique reference number	SC 449331
Inspection number	464836
DfE registration number	803/6009

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
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	18
Of which, number of pupils in the sixth form	0
Number of boarders on roll	3
Proprietor	National Autistic Society
Chair	Jacqui Ashton Smith
Headteacher	Kim McConnell
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2013
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,600
Telephone number	01454 632532
Email address	nasanderson@nas.org.uk

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