

North Bridge Enterprise College

Marshgate, Elwis Street, Doncaster DN5 8AF

Inspection dates 4 November 2015

Overall outcome **Independent school standards met**

Context of the inspection

- This progress monitoring inspection was undertaken at the request of the registration authority for independent schools, the Department for Education (DfE), in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan that was required following an inspection of the school on 24 March 2015.
- This is the school's first progress monitoring inspection. It was unannounced and was undertaken by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI).
- Inspection evidence gathered on the first day of the March 2015 inspection resulted in the inspection changing from a full independent school inspection to an emergency inspection. The proprietor closed the school to staff, pupils and visitors at the end of the first day. This was two days before the Easter holidays. The school reopened to pupils after the Easter holidays.
- The closure was due to leaders' failure to ensure that all independent school standards were met. Some of the standards in Part 1 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils, Part 5 – The quality of the premises and accommodation, and Part 8 – The quality of leadership and management of the school, were not met.
- The DfE issued the school with a statutory notice in respect of these failings on 21 April 2015, with a requirement that the school submit an action plan to the DfE by 21 May 2015.
- The school's action plan was duly submitted on time and it was evaluated by Ofsted on 23 July 2015. The action plan was judged to require improvement.
- In order to check whether the unmet independent school standards have been fully met, the DfE commissioned this progress monitoring inspection to be carried out at the same time as the school's full independent school inspection. This progress monitoring visit was conducted on the second day of the three-day full inspection.
- The inspector held discussions with senior leaders of the school and the company, and a group of staff. She carried out a tour of the premises with a staff member and observed pupils in their daily routines. The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including records of checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils, policies for safeguarding and health and safety, and a number of risk assessments. She also worked closely with the HMI leading the full standard inspection to share findings.

Main findings

Part 1 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- At the time of the March 2015 inspection, the inspector was unable to view school-specific health and safety or risk-assessment policies, and found weaknesses in the school's approach to ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff.
- The action plan submitted by the school stated that a school health and safety policy would be developed by 15 April and displayed on the school's website.

- The school does not have its own discrete website. However, it does have a specific page allocated on the company's website. The written health and safety policy dated April 2015 is accessible on the school's website page. It was reviewed as part of the preparations for the inspection. The policy is detailed and links effectively to relevant health and safety laws.
- Observations during the inspection and discussions with leaders and staff indicate that the policy is being implemented effectively. The school environment is safe. All areas of concern identified at the time of the emergency inspection have been tackled and resolved.
- The March 2015 inspection found that the school had not complied with the South Yorkshire Fire Service's fire safety order. The service reported that the fire alarm system was not operating fully as the fire alarm 'sounder units' were not all working. Action was required to be taken to ensure suitable location of the keys for exiting through the locked gates at the rear of the school in the event of a fire.
- The review of documentation, observation of the school site and discussions with staff indicate that actions required have been undertaken within the planned timescales. Invoices for works undertaken by contractors confirm the fitting and testing of replacement sounder units on 15 May 2015. The fire alarm system is fully operational and checked regularly.
- Fire drills take place and these are recorded appropriately and monitored by senior managers. Staff report that occasionally pupils misbehave and set off the fire alarms. These incidents are acted on effectively and in line with full fire evacuation procedures.
- Staff and pupils are trained regularly in safe evacuation in the case of fire, and exit routes are kept clear. Every member of staff now has a key on their person to unlock the exit gate at the rear should a fire break out.
- The health and safety policy also contains the risk-assessment strategy for the school, which identifies actions the school will take to minimise risks in all key aspects of the school's work, including fire risks.
- Additional individual risk assessments are in place for identified risks in school and for activities out of school. These are reviewed regularly and new ones added when new activities take place.
- Due to the complex social, emotional or mental health needs of each pupil, every young person has their own risk assessment that identifies needs and actions that will be taken to secure effective support for, and management of, their complex needs. These are reviewed regularly and adapted when circumstances change.

Part 5 – The quality of the premises and accommodation

- The inspection of March 2015 found that the school premises and accommodation were not maintained to a suitable standard to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils. Specific weaknesses were identified in the quality of the outdoor recreation area. Significant damage was found to pupils' toilet areas, and there was a lack of suitable facilities generally. There were also concerns about some exposed electrical wires, and a lack of lighting, or broken lighting, in key areas of the school building.
- Significant work has been undertaken within the timescales described in the action plan to tackle all weaknesses identified at the time of the inspection. All electrical wiring is now safe and there are no exposed wires in the school.
- The toilet areas have been repaired and refurbished and are clean. There is hot and cold running water in each of the boys' and girls' toilet areas, and pupils have access to soap and electronic hand-dryers.
- The action plan identified that staff would be trained in behaviour management procedures to improve the behaviour of pupils in school and reduce the risks of damage to property. Staff report that they have received training and pupils' behaviour has improved significantly. Pupils also take more responsibility for their conduct around the school. Consequently, there has been no damage done to the toilets since they were repaired and refurbished.
- Work to improve broken lighting in classrooms and external lighting was completed before the deadline described in the school's action plan. All lights were working at the time of the

inspection and new emergency lighting has been placed in a position that will minimise risks from vandalism or pranks.

- People can safely enter and leave the school premises. The external lighting in the courtyard between the main building and the portable classrooms enables safe passage from each building during the day at times when the natural light is hampered by rain or cloud.
- Work to improve the outdoor areas had already been planned at the time of the inspection in March 2015 and was completed in the Easter holidays. Risk assessments of the provision had led to the decision to change it fundamentally, and the works were carried out to the school's requirements. The outdoor areas have been transformed.
- A fenced recreational area includes a wooden structure called 'the rain shelter'. This provides a safe haven at breaktimes for pupils to relax in and talk to each other and staff.
- The outside space that was of concern at the time of the inspection has been completely renovated with an asphalt surface that is even and no longer poses a hazard. High-quality seating and gardening tubs made by the pupils themselves adorn this space and it is well used by them. They are rightly proud of their endeavours.
- The area to the back of the school where there were metal posts, nails and glass has been cleared and fenced off while decisions are made as to its future use.

Part 8 – The quality of leadership and management of the school

- The inspection of March 2015 identified that the proprietor had not ensured that all independent standards were likely to be met, and that, as a result of regulatory failures, the proprietor had not ensured that the well-being of pupils was actively promoted.
- The action plan submitted to the DfE was judged to require improvement. Although it clearly identified virtually all aspects that required improvement, and set specific and timely deadlines to complete actions, not enough information was provided about the risk-assessment strategy other than that for fire safety.
- Leaders of the school have successfully tackled the weaknesses identified at the inspection. Actions have been carried out within the timescales identified in the plan. Leaders have set in place improved monitoring arrangements to ensure they fulfil their responsibilities, consistently meet the previously unmet standards, and actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Inspection team

Margaret Farrow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- North Bridge Enterprise College is registered by the DfE to take boys and girls aged from 11 to 17. There are currently 47 pupils on roll, aged from 14 to 16 years.
- The college is owned by Bettercare Keys Limited, a group that provides education and care for children and young people in the Yorkshire and The Humber region and nationally. It is located in an adapted industrial unit close to the centre of Doncaster. There are two external portable classrooms located in the large space at the back of the main building. Significant refurbishment of the outdoor area has been undertaken since the inspection of March 2015.
- Pupils attending North Bridge Enterprise College have either been permanently excluded from mainstream schools or are at risk of permanent exclusion. The majority of pupils have experienced significant disruption to their learning due to their social, emotional or mental health difficulties.
- Around 15% of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.

School details

Unique reference number	140816
Inspection number	10007601
DfE registration number	371/6001

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	Day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	14–17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Of which, number of pupils in the sixth form	0
Proprietor	Bettercare Keys Limited
Chair	N/A
Headteacher	Mrs Emma White
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2014
Annual fees (day pupils)	Unknown
Telephone number	01302 343935
Fax number	01302 343935
Email address	naseemakhtar@keyschildcare.co.uk

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