

Newbury Hall School

Monitoring

Unique reference number	SC382720
Inspector	Mrs Maire Atherton
Event type	SC - Monitoring
Provider type	Boarding School

Inspection dates	04 February 2016
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Context of the inspection

A standalone social care inspection was conducted on 20-22 May 2015 and judged the school to be inadequate for overall effectiveness. An action plan was submitted which was accepted on 10 November 2015. This monitoring inspection was to assess the progress against the action plan.

The inspector held discussions with the senior leadership team, the facilities manager and an administrator. A range of documentation was scrutinised. Communal areas and an empty bedroom were viewed. Practice was observed over lunchtime.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

There were 16 national minimum standards (NMS) judged not met following the last inspection. The management team have employed consultants to support them in addressing the deficits. There has been significant progress in implementing the action plan, however not all the national minimum standards have been fully met.

Since the last inspection a schedule for maintenance has been implemented. As a result young people are enjoying showers that work very well and an improved standard of décor in the boarding house. The staff office has been moved and provision made for the safe storage of

medication.

The management team has been pro-active in developing links with the local authority. For example the management team are working towards local authority accreditation for anti-bullying and a representative from there has visited the school as part of this drive. A local police liaison officer has delivered Prevent and cyber bullying information to the young people. The safeguarding policy has been reviewed by the health and safety consultant and is broadly compliant with the relevant standard and references current guidance. The policy has not yet been shared with the local authority safeguarding personnel. The appendix of this document is a safeguarding risk assessment with a range of potential risks to young people identified. How visitors, including contractors, are to be managed is specified and adherence to the guidance will promote the safety of young people. At the time of this visit staff had not identified any young people requiring individualised risk assessments. Another member of staff has attended level three designated lead safeguarding training and the Principal and the head of care are booked on external safeguarding training specifically for boarding staff. The behaviour management policy is improved but does not provide specific guidance for residential staff. However much of the guidance for teaching staff is transferrable.

Although there has been some improvement towards safer recruitment of staff, young people are not fully safeguarded as there remain shortfalls in meeting the standard. There was no evidence on file that, for a recent appointment, gaps in employment had been explored, the interviewer could demonstrate in conversation that this discussion had taken place during interview and that the response was satisfactory. The written references supplied were limited in content. The risk assessment for a member of staff starting employment with a check outstanding was generic and did not address all the areas particular to that set of circumstances. The safer recruitment requirements have not been fully applied to host families. The register of staff employed has been updated and contains the required information. The person recently given responsibility for this role is booked to attend training in safer recruitment to supplement the online training already done.

Four unmet NMS identified in the last report related to the management and development of boarding. In response the sole Proprietor dissolved the board of governors that had been established. Since November 2015 the Principal has worked under direct proprietorial oversight. Two meetings have been held to date. The template used to structure the meeting outlines the requirements of the standards in relation to monitoring. The Principal reports that the meetings are effective and that the direct involvement of the proprietor has improved staff morale. The records show that there was discussion but lack detail, including whether or not action was taken as a result of the monitoring.

Staff have undertaken a range of online training relevant to their roles, which also now form part of the induction. The head of care has begun the appraisal process, with each eligible member of staff completing a strengths/weaknesses/opportunities and threats analysis. Further work is scheduled to fulfil this.

Several changes in the staff responsible for the management of host families have contributed to the failure to fully comply with the applicable standards. The current lead on host families has been doing the role since January 2016. At the time of this visit there was one young person coming to the end of a short stay with a host family. There had been no check on the accommodation since the registration five months previously. The school alerted the local authority to the private fostering arrangement two weeks after the placement started, but not before the planned placement as required by the relevant regulations. The record of recruitment of a host family does not evidence the issues considered as part of the suitability assessment.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for boarding schools.

NMS 14.1 Schools operate safe recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

NMS 20.5 The school visits all potential lodgings it may arrange, and interviews any adult who will be responsible for the accommodation of the pupils in each lodging, takes up references, and has recorded a satisfactory assessment, before any pupil is placed there. The school can demonstrate that members of the host family aged over 16 are subject to a DBS check completed at the standard level, with a satisfactory outcome known before any pupil is placed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Ensure by visiting that lodgings arranged by the school remain suitable before a young person moves in.

Ensure that the local authority is alerted to any arrangements made by the school that may constitute private fostering prior at the time the arrangements are confirmed.

Inspection team

Lead inspector

Maire Atherton

Information about this school

Newbury Hall School in Berkshire is a non-affiliated independent international boarding school. It provides exclusively for students from outside the United Kingdom, aged from 13 to 18 years for whom English is an additional language. The school provides boarding accommodation for its students, either in purpose-built facilities on site or with host families in the Newbury area. The on-site accommodation is one boarding house, with male and female accommodation on separate floors.

There are 31 students on roll, boys and girls. Students may join the school at any point in the academic year, with a minimum stay of six weeks. The school's central purpose is to enable students to improve their use of the English language and gain GCSE and A-level qualifications.

School details

Unique reference number	135819
Social care unique reference number	SC382720
DfE registration number	869/6016

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection

Type of school	Non-affiliated Independent Boarding School
Number of boarders on roll	31
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	13-19
Headteacher	Mr Jon Crocker
Date of previous boarding inspection	20-22 May 2015
Telephone number	01635 36879
Email address	jon.crocker@newburyhall.com

