

# Finches School

80 East End Road, Finchley, London N3 2SY

## Inspection dates

6 October 2015

## Overall outcome

**Independent school standards not met**

## Context of the inspection

- This inspection was undertaken 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.
- The most recent standard inspection of the school was conducted in June 2014, when the school was judged to be good. Subsequently, at an emergency inspection in January 2015, a number of the independent school standards were judged to be not met. In May 2015 the school's action plan was judged to require improvement. This was the first progress monitoring inspection to the school.
- This inspection was conducted without notice.
- In September 2015 Cavendish Education Ltd acquired the school from its former proprietors. During the inspection meetings were held with the headteacher and the Operations Director of Cavendish Education. A number of documents were scrutinised, including the school's safeguarding policy, admission and attendance registers and the single central record of checks made to ensure the suitability of staff.
- There were no students present on the day of the inspection. Leaders reported that no students have attended the school site since they took over the school, and for some time prior to their arrival.

## Main findings

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- Since taking over responsibility for the school in September 2015, the proprietors have created a new safeguarding policy in line with their own ethos and mission statement. This policy is specific to Finches School rather than an overarching organisational policy.
- The policy does not have regard to the most recent guidance issued by the Secretary of State, *Keeping children safe in education*, July 2015. Neither does it have regard to earlier versions of this document. Instead, it refers to documentation which was replaced by *Keeping children safe in education*.
- The policy includes appropriate procedures to be followed in the case of allegations being made against staff members or the headteacher. It also includes relevant information regarding the indicators of abuse that staff should be aware of. It takes into consideration the specific context of the school, working with vulnerable young people with special educational needs.
- The policy outlines arrangements for appropriate training of both leaders and other members of staff with regard to safeguarding matters.
- Leaders have taken a proactive stance in liaising with local authority officers to confirm which students remain on roll. They are actively seeking information regarding the current engagement of these students with education and training opportunities.
- Leaders have ensured that, although the few pupils on roll do not currently attend the school site, accurate attendance registers are kept. They have also set up an electronic admission register. This does not meet requirements as it does not record all the information it should. It does not record the students' gender, address, emergency contact details or previous school.

**Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

- Leaders have utilised Cavendish Education organisational systems in order to set up a single central record of checks made on staff and proprietors for this school. All the required checks have been carried out on those with responsibility for governance of the school.
- All the required checks have been carried out on the sole member of staff, the headteacher, and a system is in place to do so as other staff are appointed.
- The school does not currently use supply staff employed through an agency.

**Provision of information**

- Having taken over Finches School in September 2015, the school's area of the company website is under construction. Currently, it contains a contact telephone number and email address with no further information.
- The proprietors have not published information about the school in order to inform parents or other interested parties about their work. They have started work on producing a prospectus but this is incomplete and not readily available.
- Similarly, the school's arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are not available for parents, either in electronic or paper form.

**Leadership and management**

- When the current proprietors took on responsibility for the school they sensibly decided to ensure that the appropriate systems and procedures were in place before seeking to expand the school roll. They have met with local authority officers to try to clarify the current situation of the few remaining students.
- Leaders have ensured that the relevant checks are made on those who may work with students, and that the systems for recording these checks are in place.
- They have not ensured, however, that all the independent school standards are met. In particular, they have not been rigorous in ensuring that the policies and systems they have introduced are in alignment with current guidance.

**Compliance with regulatory requirements****The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements**

- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).
- The proprietor must ensure that the required information is provided to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate (paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a) and 32(1)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 (safeguarding) are published on the school's website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request (paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the persons with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge relevant to their role, and fulfil these responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b)).

## Inspection team

Gaynor Roberts, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Information about this school

- Finches School, formerly known as Marvel School, is an independent day school catering for up to 20 students with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). The school is registered for students aged 7 to 18. Currently there are two students on roll, both of whom are in the sixth form.
- In September 2015 the school was acquired by Cavendish Education from the previous proprietors. The organisation's mission statement is 'celebrating and nurturing difference'.
- Students are referred by their local authorities and have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans. The school focuses on improving students' behaviour, social skills and academic achievement.
- The school is located within the Sternburg Centre. This is a community resource catering for the needs of the Jewish community in Finchley, North London. The school has no religious affiliation.

## School details

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 139558   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 10006640 |
| <b>DfE registration number</b> | 302/6050 |

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.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Type of school</b>                               | Day special school   |
| <b>School status</b>                                | Independent school   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                          | 7–18   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                             | Mixed  |
| <b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>           | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>          | 2  |
| <b>Of which, number of pupils in the sixth form</b> | 2  |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                                   | Cavendish Education Ltd  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                  | Adrian Mahon   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>           | 22 January 2015  |
| <b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>                     | £39,000  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                             | 020 8343 0105  |
| <b>Email address</b>                                | <a href="mailto:amahon@finchesschool@gmail.com">amahon@finchesschool@gmail.com</a> |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/user>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2015

