

# St Martin's School

22 Goodwyn Avenue, Mill Hill, London NW7 3RG

## Inspection date

1 July 2016

## Overall outcome

**Independent school standards not met**

## Context of the inspection

- The 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 inspection was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since its full inspection in July 2015, which identified several unmet regulations.
- The school submitted an action plan to the Department for Education in January 2016. This action plan was judged to require improvement and was subsequently rejected in March 2016.
- The inspection focused on the school's progress in those parts of its action plan relating to Parts 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 of the independent school standards. The inspector also considered an anonymous complaint received by the Department for Education.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and designated safeguarding lead, school secretary and a group of pupils. The premises were inspected and a wide range of relevant documentation was scrutinised. The inspector also observed learning in all classes.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.

## Main findings

- St Martin's School is a caring, nurturing environment. Pupils are happy, feel safe and are very well supported. The school's leaders have continued to focus on the quality of education, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and the many other positive features of the school, such as high-quality music provision, the school's many celebratory events and preparing pupils in Year 6 effectively for their transition into secondary education.
- However, although a year has passed since the school's last full inspection, leaders have still not sufficiently extended this focus to ensure that all of the independent school standards are met.

## Welfare, health and safety

- At the last inspection, a number of standards relating to safeguarding, bullying, health and safety, fire safety and risk assessments were unmet.
- This inspection found improvements in the school's approach to safeguarding pupils. The school's safeguarding policy now meets all requirements and is reviewed annually. Designated safeguarding leads have completed enhanced training and safer recruitment training. They have also recently commissioned safeguarding training for all staff, which covered all the latest guidance. However, while concerns regarding pupils' safety are dealt with swiftly and appropriately, they are still not systematically recorded. The taking up of professional references is still not secure enough, with professionals completing personal reference forms which do not ask about the appropriateness of the applicant working with children, and personal references

continuing to be relied upon to make recruitment decisions. In addition, leaders were unclear about childcare disqualification checks, which were completed with staff during the inspection. As a result, the standards relating to safeguarding continue to be unmet.

- The school's anti-bullying policy has been updated, is available on the school's website and now meets requirements. Pupils say that there is 'no bullying' in their school.
- The school logs all required checks of fire equipment, the alarm, emergency lighting and regular fire drills. Allocated fire wardens are trained to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Leaders also commissioned an external fire safety risk assessment in August 2015. However, this risk assessment document, despite including a lengthy action plan, has been filed away. As a result, the inspector that found actions, such as fire doors requiring intumescent fire door seals, had not been completed. The standard related to fire safety therefore continues to be unmet.
- The school now has a risk assessment policy and has completed risk assessments for some activities and the building. However, these are disorganised and inconsistent. The template used does not sufficiently identify specific risks and hazards. Risk assessments for regular activities, such as swimming, are not in place. As a result, risks are not being adequately considered in the planning of activities and trips, and the standard continues to be unmet.
- The school's health and safety policy has been updated and is now implemented effectively, with weekly health and safety checks completed and swift action taken to resolve maintenance and safety issues. However, the concerns around fire safety and risk assessments mean that there continue to be concerns about the school's procedures to ensure pupils' safety, and this standard therefore continues to be unmet.

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

- The single central register of vetting checks is now kept electronically; it shows all the necessary information and meets requirements.

### **Premises and accommodation**

- Since the previous inspection, a new medical room has been built and meets requirements.

### **Provision of information**

- The school's safeguarding policy, which meets requirements, is now available with all other policies on the school's website.

### **Leadership and management**

- Leaders have taken some effective action to address regulatory failings identified at the previous inspection. However, there continue to be unmet standards requiring urgent attention. As a result, all associated standards for the leadership and management of the school, including in relation to the well-being of pupils, continue to be unmet.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

- Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)).
- Ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the effective implementation of the written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- Ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).
- Ensure that the welfare of pupils is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and appropriate action is taken to reduce

risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)).

- Ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; that they fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and that they actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

## Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

## Information about this school

- St Martin's is an independent preparatory school for pupils aged three to 11 years. It has operated since the 1920s and is accommodated in an extended detached house in Mill Hill, in the London Borough of Barnet.
- The headteacher, who is also the proprietor, acquired the school 20 years ago. There are no additional arrangements for governance.
- There are currently 121 pupils on roll. The school prepares pupils for entrance examinations to independent secondary schools and grammar schools.
- No pupils have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs.
- The last inspection was a full standard inspection in July 2015, when some standards were identified as unmet and the school was judged as inadequate overall.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101383
<b>Inspection number</b>	10017841
<b>DfE registration number</b>	302/6077

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>	Preparatory day school
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	121
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mrs A Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs A Wilson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–10 July 2015
<b>Annual fees</b>	£7,790
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8959 1965
<b>Email address</b>	info@stmartinsmillhill.co.uk

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