

Hillcrest Oaklands College

13 September 2016

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 3, 3(a) to 3(j). The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school – 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; fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves; involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time; 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; demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught; utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range; demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress; utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly; does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; and does not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the 2010 Act.

- These standards were met at the time of the full inspection in January 2016. However, concerns were raised by pupils at the school in a complaint to Ofsted in May 2016.
- Pupils were concerned about the quality of teaching at the school, particularly in science. The complainants said that some subjects were not taught by subject specialist teachers.
- The school continues to meet the requirements for paragraphs 3, 3(a) to 3(j). Since the last full inspection in January 2016 the Hillcrest Children's Services group has appointed an experienced headteacher to lead the education setting. A science teacher and English teacher have also been appointed. Subject specialists teach subjects across the curriculum.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils follow courses in English, mathematics, science, art, drama, physical education, humanities, food technology, hair and beauty, land-based and equine studies and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils in all age groups have careers information advice and guidance. The school assesses pupils' ability, knowledge, skills and understanding when they join the school. Teachers use this information to plan suitable learning activities and support for pupils. School leaders use this information to make decisions about pupils' level of examination study and entry.

- Pupils receive regular feedback about their work. Teachers use this information to revise and adapt learning activities. School leaders review pupils' progress every six weeks. This information is used effectively to plan individual support and intervention for pupils. Information provided by the school shows that in 2016, pupils made satisfactory or better progress in a number of subjects across the curriculum, particularly in art. In 2016, all of the pupils leaving the school at the end of key stages 4 and 5 secured employment or places for further education or training.
- The teaching of science is interesting and engaging and meets pupils' learning needs. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, to ask scientific questions and to generate and test hypotheses. The level of challenge is appropriate and enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and to do well. Pupils told the inspector that they enjoy science and enjoy discussing 'how science works'.
- The work in pupils' books shows that they have positive attitudes to learning, take their work seriously, act responsibly and make progress. The most able pupils are identified on entry to the school and have work that provides challenge and stretch in the majority of subjects.
- The learning environment is clean, well maintained and conducive to learning. Pupils' current work is displayed in classrooms and around the school. Displays are updated frequently. Pupils have access to a wide range of suitable resources and worksheets. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to reinforce, consolidate or improve pupils' learning.
- The school actively promotes fundamental British values through PSHE lessons, other subject areas and through a range of enrichment activities. For example, pupils recently elected the head girl and members of the school council. Pupils have opportunities to discuss political and social issues such as law and order, British institutions and world faiths. Staff are trained to identify and challenge pupils' potential prejudice or intolerance of other people's differences. Staff treat pupils with respect and do not discriminate. Staff, through their actions, model appropriate language, behaviour and expectations. As a result, pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of how to play a positive role in society.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5, 5(a). The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor – actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

- This standard was marked as unmet on the independent school standards checklist completed during the inspection, but was not included in the standard inspection report.
- The school's action plan stated that staff would have training on how to promote fundamental British values. The action plan also stated that pupils would have opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and acceptance of different cultures, religions, faiths and beliefs.
- The school has implemented the action plan effectively and this standard is now met. Information provided by the school shows that staff have completed the training. Staff who spoke with the inspector showed a secure understanding of

British values and a clear desire to make sure that pupils play a positive and constructive role in British society.

- Pupils who spoke with the inspector demonstrated an understanding of differences in religion, culture, beliefs, gender and sexuality. Staff challenge and address pupils' sometimes deep-seated prejudices effectively.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b). The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that – arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

- These standards were met at the time of the full inspection in January 2016. However, pupils raised concerns about the school in a complaint to Ofsted in May 2016.
- The school continues to meet this standard. Safeguarding policies and arrangements meet current requirements, are fit for purpose and informed by, and reflect, guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- The school deliberately chooses not have a website. It does this to safeguard the pupils at the school. However, the Hillcrest Children's Services website and the school have an appropriate safeguarding and child protection policy that is informed by current government guidance. This policy is supplemented by other safeguarding policies such as anti-bullying and health and safety.
- The arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school are detailed and thorough. Suitable procedures, appropriate training and detailed risk assessments, including for individual pupils, underpin safeguarding at the school. As a result, there is a culture of vigilance, identification of risk and support for those pupils most in need.
- The designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead have been appropriately trained. All staff receive frequent, appropriate and effective child protection training, including 'Prevent' training and how to identify pupils at risk of female genital mutilation or child sexual exploitation. Staff have been trained in restraint techniques. As a result, staff understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting pupils. Staff are vigilant and make sure that pupils are properly supervised at all times, including when off-site. Staff quickly and effectively address incidents of pupils' poor or unsafe behaviour.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b) and 9(c). The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that – a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour; the policy is implemented effectively; and a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.

- These standards were met at the time of the full inspection in January 2016. However, pupils raised concerns about the school in a complaint to Ofsted in May 2016.

- The school continues to meet these standards. The school has a suitable behaviour policy that is informed by current government advice and guidance. The policy has recently been updated, resulting in a change to how teachers manage pupils' behaviour. Pupils are rewarded for appropriate and positive behaviour. Pupils who spoke with the inspector said that they liked the new system as it motivated them to be good and to work hard. Pupils said that all staff issue the rewards and manage pupils' poor behaviour with consistency.
- The work in pupils' books and the behaviour observed during this inspection show that pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and want to do well. The vast majority of pupils complete and present their work neatly and accurately.
- Information provided by the school, including the sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour, shows that pupils' behaviour is improving and that the number of reoffending pupils is decreasing. Any incidents of staff needing to restrain pupils physically are monitored, recorded and analysed by school leaders. Information provided by the school shows that there have been no incidents of staff restraining pupils since June 2016.

Paragraph 11. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.

- This standard was met at the time of the full inspection in January 2016. However, pupils raised concerns about the school in a complaint to Ofsted in May 2016.
- The school continues to meet this standard. The school has a suitable health and safety policy that is implemented effectively. The health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors is of paramount importance to school leaders. They demonstrate a secure understanding of the current government guidance and work successfully with staff and outside agencies to ensure that safeguarding is effective.

Paragraph 14. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.

- This standard was met at the time of the full inspection in January 2016. However, pupils raised concerns about the school in a complaint to Ofsted in May 2016.
- The school continues to meet this standard. Pupils are properly supervised at all times during the school day. This includes: as pupils move from the care homes to school in the morning and at the end of the school day; during lessons and lesson changeovers; and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils are properly supervised during off-site school trips and activities. School staff transport sixth form students attending a local further education college. Staff make suitable checks on the students' daytime attendance and progress.

Paragraph 15. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

- During the full inspection in January 2016 it was found that the school did not maintain an admissions register that met the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

- The school's action plan stated that the school's admission register met requirements and was being monitored frequently by the headteacher.
- School leaders have successfully implemented the action plan and this standard is now met. The school's admission register is up to date and contains all the required information. The school's monitoring of pupils' attendance is secure.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a) and 16(b). The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that – the welfare of pupils at the school 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.

- These standards were met at the time of the full inspection in January 2016. However, pupils raised concerns about the school in a complaint to Ofsted in May 2016.
- The school continues to meet these standards. The school has a suitable risk assessment policy which it implements effectively. The school site is safe and secure. All the classrooms and corridors are well maintained, clean and free from trip/slip hazards or hazardous substances. Equipment and resources are maintained in accordance with an appropriate maintenance schedule. For example, portable appliance testing is completed annually. Risk assessments for each subject, and for school activities and trips are thorough and detailed and minimise any risks appropriately. Pupils say that they feel safe at the school. Pupils are taught how to keep safe and how to identify potential dangers and risks through PSHE lessons.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(b). Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that – separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged 8 years or over are provided except where the toilet facility is provided in a room that can be secured from the inside and that is intended for use by one pupil at a time.

- This standard was met at the time of the full inspection in January 2016. However, the Department for Education (DfE) asked that this standard be included in the evaluation of the school's action plan. As the standard was met at the time of the full inspection the school did not include any actions as part of their action plan.
- This standard is met. This is a single-sex girls' school. There are sufficient toilet facilities that can be secured from the inside and that are intended for use by one person at a time.

Paragraph 25. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

- This standard was met at the time of the full inspection in January 2016. However, pupils raised concerns about the school in a complaint to Ofsted in May 2016.
- The school continues to meet this standard. The classrooms, corridors and other school facilities such as the drama studio and toilets are maintained to a high

standard. They are clean and hygienic. The acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each room are suitable and appropriate for the activities that take place in them. Suitable drinking water is provided. Toilet facilities have adequate supplies of hot and cold water. The temperature of the hot water does not present a scalding risk. Floors in all areas of the school are free from trip and slip hazards. School leaders and maintenance staff understand the procedures to follow to make sure that the facilities are safe in the event of accidents, for example if liquids are spilt.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(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 – demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of pupils.

- At the time of the full inspection in January 2016, it was found that school leaders, including the proprietor, had not made sure that all of the independent school standards were met.
- The school's action plan identified suitable measures and timescales to resolve the unmet independent school standards. In July 2016 the action plan was judged to be acceptable.
- The action plan has been successfully implemented and the previous unmet standards are now met. As a result, the requirements for Part 8 are now met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school meets the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 as an accessibility plan is in place.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- Part 2 spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils – paragraphs 5, 5(a).
- Part 3 welfare, health and safety of pupils – paragraph 15.
- Part 8 quality of leadership and management of schools – paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c).

School details

Unique reference number	131004
DfE registration number	860/6029
Inspection number	10022003

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Special
School status	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	12–19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	8
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	8
Proprietor	Hillcrest Children's Services
Chair	Richard Greenwell
Principal and head of care	Shalana Malcolm
Headteacher (education)	Melanie Callaghan-Lewis
Annual fees (education)	£37,620
Telephone number	01543 473 772
Website	N/A
Email address	oaklandshead@hillcrestcs.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	26–28 January 2016

Information about this school

- Hillcrest Oaklands College is a dually registered independent residential special school and children's home for vulnerable girls aged 12 to 19 years.
- The college was last inspected in January 2016, when a number of independent school standards were not met.
- Since the last full inspection in January 2016 the Hillcrest Children's Services group

has appointed an experienced headteacher to lead the education setting. A science teacher and English teacher have also been appointed. The school's leadership team has been restructured.

- All key stage 4 pupils are taught on-site. Sixth form students have the option to follow courses at a local further education college.
- Pupils are placed at the school by 15 local authorities.
- The school is part of the Hillcrest Children's Services Limited group. The school was first registered in 2005 and is housed in refurbished former farm buildings. The education setting shares a site with a residential children's home which is also owned by Hillcrest Children's Services Limited. All the pupils are in residence.

Information about this inspection

- This unannounced inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The DfE also commissioned an unannounced emergency inspection following concerns about safeguarding and the quality of teaching in a complaint made to Ofsted in May 2016. This aspect of the inspection checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards contained in Part 1 – quality of education, particularly the teaching of science (paragraphs 3, 3(a) to 3(j)), Part 3 – welfare, health and safety of pupils (paragraphs 7, 9, 11, 14 and 16), Part 5 – premises of and accommodation at schools (paragraph 25).
- Following the full inspection in January 2016, the school was asked to submit an action plan to show how it would meet the independent school standards. The plan was approved on 8 July 2016.
- An aligned inspection of the children's home took place at the same time as this inspection.
- The inspector jointly observed parts of lessons in English, mathematics and science with the headteacher. During these observations the inspector looked at pupils' work and spoke to them about their learning and progress. The inspector also talked to pupils about their safety and welfare. Pupils' work in other subjects was scrutinised.
- The inspector checked the school's safeguarding policy.
- A range of documentation was examined including: curriculum plans, safeguarding and child protection documents and the school's admissions and attendance registers.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher, principal and members of staff to discuss the actions taken since the full inspection in January 2016.

Inspection team

Peter Humphries, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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