

School for Inspiring Talents

20 September 2016

The Growing Rooms, Seale Hayne, Howton Lane, Newton Abbot TQ12 6NQ

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- This emergency inspection was undertaken as a result of a complaint about the school which raised wider concerns about leadership and management, safeguarding, pupils' behaviour, the supervision of pupils, record-keeping and the procedure for dealing with complaints.
- Since the complaint the school has worked with the designated officer for Devon and external, independent advisers to review its safeguarding practice. There is no sense of complacency and the proprietor acknowledged that the school had 'learned a lot' from this process. A detailed action plan was drawn up and acted upon and, as a consequence, safeguarding practice has improved.
- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy is compliant with the most recent guidance issued by the Secretary of State, 'Keeping children safe in education', September 2016. Leaders demonstrate a good knowledge of the changes embodied in this document and could describe how they had been incorporated into the school's culture of safeguarding. The policy is available to parents on the school's website.
- All staff are trained in safeguarding according to the latest requirements and the school is proposing in the next few months to train all staff to such a level that they can act as deputy designated safeguarding leads. In addition, information about safeguarding and child protection is shared between staff at regular meetings, including the daily briefing and debriefing sessions. All staff read and sign part one of 'Keeping children safe in education', together with the school's safeguarding policy and the staff code of conduct.
- Inspection of a sample of files relating to child protection shows that the school keeps these records in good order and communicates with external agencies as required.

Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b)

- The school's behaviour policy is available to parents on the website and includes information on the sanctions that the school will use in the event of misbehaviour.
- Behaviour is managed effectively in classrooms, at other times and while pupils are moving around the site. The principles of the school's behaviour policy are modelled effectively and consistently by all staff.
- The school has recently employed a lead behaviour specialist and they are beginning to overhaul the way in which the school records the use of the 'time-out' room and any instances of restrictive physical intervention. At the moment, however, the school does not analyse behaviour records systematically enough in order to identify patterns or common features behind behavioural incidents. This impedes the

school's drive to improve pupils' behaviour. The introduction this term of a new, electronic system of recording behavioural incidents has improved the quality and usefulness of record-keeping, but it is too early to say what impact this will have on behaviour in the school.

Paragraph 10

- The school's anti-bullying policy is clearly focused on preventing bullying before it occurs and is a basis for effective practice. Teachers and support staff work well with pupils to educate them about how to interact with each other appropriately. Any instances of unacceptable language are challenged calmly but firmly.

Paragraph 11

- The proprietor has ensured that the school complies with all relevant health and safety legislation. The school's health and safety policy covers all the areas outlined in the government's advice to schools on this matter.

Paragraph 12

- The school meets all the requirements of the fire regulations. It works closely with its current landlord at Seale Hayne in order to do this. Fire equipment is regularly serviced by an external contractor and portable electronic equipment is also regularly tested. The proposed new premises at Spires College also meet all the requirements of the fire regulations.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are well supervised at all times, whether that be in lessons, at social times or during outdoor activities. Staff-to-pupil ratios are high and are usually at least one to one. Well-established routines exist for moving around the school and while using the school's outdoor areas. School leaders are well aware that some pupils present a risk of absconding and particular attention is paid to minimising this.

Paragraph 16

- The proprietor and school leaders have completed a range of risk assessments that they use well to identify and reduce risks.
- Every pupil on roll has a personalised risk assessment which is closely linked to their behaviour management plan. Pupils' risk assessments are specific to the individual and are regularly reviewed and updated where necessary. This means that the risk assessments are working documents that promote pupils' welfare and safety effectively.
- In relation both to the premises that it currently occupies and the proposed new premises, the school makes good use of the risk assessments drawn up by the respective landlords, adapting them as necessary for its own purposes.
- The standards in this part are met by the school.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraph 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(1), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(1), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c)

- The school makes the required pre-employment checks on all staff, any supply staff and the proprietor, as laid down in the relevant legislation and guidance.

Paragraph 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5),

21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)

- The school keeps a single central register which records the pre-employment checks that it makes. However, the register does not include the date on which a check was made to establish whether any prospective member of staff is subject to a prohibition order. The school has this information and was able to correct the omission during the course of the inspection.
- The standards in this part are not met by the school.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- As part of the emergency inspection, inspectors also considered the school's request for a material change. This relates to a request to open some new premises in Spires College in Torquay and a new classroom in the Seale Hayne premises. This expansion is planned to allow an increase in the number of pupils for which the school is registered from 15 to 27.
- The proposed new premises at Spires College are part of one of the stands at Torquay United Football Club and, prior to their acquisition by the School for Inspiring Talents, were used by Spires College as part of their sixth form. The premises are maintained to a high standard. There are suitable toilet, washing, showering and changing facilities. Drinking water is available and clearly labelled. There is also appropriate accommodation to meet the medical needs of pupils when they are on-site. There are detailed risk assessments for the premises which have been drawn up by Spires College. Entry to the proposed new premises is secure, being controlled by the use of electronic fobs.
- With regard to the proposed new room at the Seale Hayne site, the school no longer proposes to use the room as a classroom. Instead it will be used as a staff room and meeting room. Pupils will not have access to this room and will not be taught in it.
- The new premises at Spires College will be appropriate for teaching up to 12 pupils and thus the school's request for a material change to increase the number of pupils it is registered for is justified. No change is proposed in the maximum number to be accommodated at the Seale Hayne site, which will remain at 15.
- The standards in this part are met by the school.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii), 33(k)

- In the light of its previous standard inspection in January 2016, where this standard was unmet, the school has drawn up a new complaints policy, which is available to parents on the school's website. This clearly addresses the need for one member of any panel convened to consider a complaint to be independent of the managing and running of the school. Nonetheless, the policy is not precise enough in its provision for the confidentiality of the correspondence, statements and records relating to the complaint. While stating that these will remain 'strictly confidential' it refers to out-of-date independent school standards and does not make it clear that such records will be accessible by the Secretary of State or an inspecting body. The school took steps to amend this policy during the inspection.

- The standards in this part are not met by the school.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor and the school's leadership have not ensured that the independent school standards are met consistently.
- The standards in this part are not met by the school.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet 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. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed (paragraph 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(b)).
- The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which provides that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them (paragraph 33, 33(k)).
- 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 (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

School details

Unique reference number	141515
DfE registration number	6064
Inspection number	10021241

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
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Life Chance Education Ltd
Headteacher	Gaye Williams
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000
Telephone number	01626 325 625
Website	www.sfit.org.uk
Email address	admin@sfit.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	12–14 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school is owned by Life Chance Education Ltd and opened in 2014. It is based in buildings leased from the Dame Hannah Rogers Trust at Seale Hayne, a former agricultural college.
- The chief executive officer of Life Chance Education Ltd acts as the proprietor of the school.
- The headteacher took up her present position in April 2016, having been the deputy headteacher at the school since it opened.
- All the pupils currently on roll have either a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. All have been placed at the school by Devon local authority. Pupils have a range of social, emotional and mental health difficulties that have made it difficult for them to attend mainstream education.
- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This emergency inspection was undertaken as a consequence of a parental complaint which raised wider concerns about the quality of leadership and management, the effectiveness of safeguarding, pupils' behaviour, the supervision of pupils, record-keeping and the procedure for dealing with complaints.
- The inspection was carried out with no notice.
- The emergency inspection was combined with a material change inspection. The school wishes to open new premises at Spires College, Westlands Lane, Torquay, TQ1 3PE, use a new room at Seale Hayne and increase the number of pupils for which it is registered from 15 to 27.
- Inspectors visited both the school's current site and the proposed new premises. At the latter, a full premises check was undertaken and a meeting held with a representative of the landlord.
- Inspectors undertook observations in lessons and observed pupils' behaviour at other times during the day.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and the headteacher a number of times during the inspection. He also had a meeting with the lead behaviour specialist.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documentation provided by the school.
- An inspector spoke to the designated officer by telephone.

Inspection team

Stephen Lee, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martyn Groucutt	Ofsted Inspector

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