

Tumblewood Community School

The Laurels, 4 Hawkeridge Road, Heywood, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 4LF

Inspection date

18 January 2017

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)

- This emergency inspection was undertaken as a result of complaints that raised wider concerns about safeguarding, the management of pupils' behaviour, the supervision of pupils, and the leadership and management of the school.
- The proprietors and school leaders have not ensured that a robust culture of safeguarding has been developed in the school. There are shortcomings in relation to record-keeping, staff training and the checks made on the suitability of staff.
- The quality of record-keeping in relation to safeguarding incidents and the school's work with external agencies, including children's services, is inconsistent and sometimes poor. Records of key meetings are not routinely kept in pupils' files. Chronologies of actions taken by the school often lack detail, are incomplete or are entirely absent from pupils' records.
- Training for school staff does not follow the guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education. The most recent internal safeguarding training for school staff referred to out-of-date guidance. Staff are not routinely given part one of 'Keeping children safe in education', September 2016, at induction, as required by that document. Moreover, there is no evidence that all staff have received a copy of this guidance since it was last updated. Taken together, these shortfalls in the quality of staff training seriously impair attempts to create an effective culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Proprietors have failed to carry out the necessary checks to ensure that no teachers are subject to prohibition or interim prohibition orders. This is unacceptable and exposes pupils to potential risk.
- The school's safeguarding policy, which is available on its website, was drawn up in November 2016 and does pay due regard to the latest guidance. It is not being implemented effectively, however, as the deficiencies in safeguarding practice and training indicate.

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

- The school has a behaviour management policy which is supported by a separate rewards and sanctions policy. These policies make the school's approach to the management of pupils' behaviour clear to parents and staff.
- Pupils in the school often arrive presenting challenging behaviour and, in most cases, the school works effectively to reduce the frequency and seriousness of behavioural incidents over time. The atmosphere in lessons and at other times is largely calm, and when incidents do occur staff use well-established de-escalation techniques to deal with them effectively.
- Since the last standard inspection in December 2015, the use of restrictive physical intervention rose markedly and by mid 2016 it was being used on an almost daily basis. Since then, however, the frequency of its use has dropped significantly. This reflects more accurately the school's policy that restrictive physical intervention should be used as a last resort.
- The school keeps thorough electronic records of behavioural incidents. These records include particularly detailed accounts of the use of restrictive physical intervention, including types of hold and their duration, with a rationale for their use. All school staff have up-to-date training in the use of restrictive physical intervention.
- The school keeps a record of the sanctions imposed on pupils in cases of misbehaviour.

Paragraph 11

- The school's written health and safety policy is clear and supported by specific policies relating to, for example, hazardous chemicals or electricity at work. These policies are effective tools in ensuring that the relevant health and safety legislation is complied with.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are well supervised during the school day, whether in lessons or at other times. Levels of supervision take account of the particular needs of each individual pupil. There are well-established routines for ensuring that supervision continues during transition between lessons or between lessons and social times. Staff are clear about their roles in this system of supervision.

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- All pupils have individual risk assessments. Most of these are effective documents which help to minimise identified risks. They are based around a secure knowledge of pupils' needs and any particular patterns of behaviour they have exhibited in the past. They are updated regularly to reflect changes in the pupils' circumstances, needs or behaviour. In some cases, however, the risk assessments are not as thorough or as regularly updated and this reduces their effectiveness as working documents.
- The school has risk assessments which cover all the activities that are undertaken during the school day. They dovetail well with the health and safety policies and are effective parts of the school's drive to reduce any risks that are identified.
- The standards in this part are not met.

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

Paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(b)

- The school has not undertaken the necessary checks to ensure that teachers are not subject to prohibition or interim prohibition orders.

Paragraph 21(1)–21(3)(b)

- The school's register of the checks that it makes on the backgrounds of staff and their suitability to work with children does not meet with requirements. The date on which an identity check was made is not included in the register. This is also true for the date on which a check was made on a member of staff's right to work in the United Kingdom. As no checks for prohibition orders have been made, there is no information about this aspect of pre-employment checking recorded in the register.
- The standards in this part are not met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietors and school leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are consistently met. This has led to pupils being exposed to unnecessary risk and has, therefore, not promoted their welfare effectively.
- The standard in this part is not met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for residential special schools

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 proprietor must ensure 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 (paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that no member of staff carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction (paragraph 18(2)(b)).
- The proprietor keeps a register which shows in relation to each member of staff ('S'), appointed on or after 1 May 2007, whether:
 - S's identity was checked and a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made, including the date on which such check was completed or the certificate obtained
 - 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)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(b)).
- 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	132775
DfE registration number	865/6034
Inspection number	10026858

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 school
Age range of pupils	9 to 18
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	0
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Sue Hortop and John Kearney
Headteacher	Jennifer Lewis; Fiona Wiseman (acting headteacher)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£64,000
Telephone number	01373 824466
Website	www.tumblewood.org
Email address	jennifer.lewis@tumblewood.org
Date of previous standard inspection	1–3 December 2015

Information about this school

- Tumblewood Community School is a small school that caters for girls with significant social, emotional and mental health problems.
- The proprietors are responsible for the governance of the school.
- The school is currently led by an acting headteacher who took up post in December 2016.

- The school's last standard inspection took place in December 2015.
- The school currently uses two alternative providers, Larkrise Community Farm and The Springfields Academy.

Information about this inspection

- This emergency inspection was undertaken as a result of complaints that raised wider concerns about safeguarding, the management of pupils' behaviour, the supervision of pupils and the leadership and management of the school.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.
- During the inspection, the inspector held discussions with the acting headteacher, the proprietors and other staff. He also talked to pupils throughout the day both formally and informally.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and in social times as they interacted with their peers and adults.
- The inspector examined a wide range of the school's documents, including those related to safeguarding, behaviour, health and safety and risk assessment. He checked the single central register and cross-referenced this with staff files. Pupils' files were also examined.

Inspection team

Stephen Lee, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
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