

Newbury Hall School

Enborne Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 6AD

Inspection Dates

1–2 February 2017

Overall outcome

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

Residential provision outcome

The school does not meet all of the national minimum standards for boarding that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Ensure that pupils receiving secondary education, access accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options (paragraph 2, 2(2) and 2(2)(e)(ii)).

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because careers guidance for learners in the sixth form was limited. There were very few opportunities for pupils to learn about a range of career options.
- The school proposed to make task sheets available to pupils to raise their awareness of potential subject-related careers or higher study and to introduce online personality and career quizzes.
- Although school leaders are beginning to explore further opportunities for pupils to find out about a broader range of careers, this continues to be limited. The school has invested in an online system for pupils to explore their suitability for different career options. However, pupils' main experience of career choices continues to be through university open days and visits to university career fairs. Pupils are not provided with enough information about a wide range of career alternatives.
- This standard is still not met.

Ensure that the teaching at the school utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly (paragraph 3 and 3(h)).

- At the time of the previous inspection, policies linked to behaviour and welfare were out of date and did not include required information. The behaviour policy did not contain effective rewards and sanctions to support pupils to behave appropriately during lessons. It was not clear what behaviours would result in which sanctions and how sanctions were escalated. Inspectors found that behaviour was not managed consistently and some teachers were not clear what they should do to manage situations themselves. Many new teachers had joined the school. Some teachers lacked the necessary skills to manage pupils' behaviour effectively. There were no clear mechanisms in place to modify pupils'

behaviour.

- School leaders proposed to check behaviour more regularly through observations during the school day and to introduce an online system of rewards. It is proposed to include behaviour management information into the induction procedures for teachers new to the school.
- School leaders have now revised the behaviour policy. The new policy includes a range of appropriate rewards to motivate pupils. The online system is in place and is used effectively to reward pupils' behaviour, effort and consideration of others. Pupils behave well and engage effectively in their learning. Teachers are more confident to utilise the behaviour management strategies that are set out in the new behaviour policy.
- This standard is now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

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 (paragraphs 6, 7, (7)(a), (7)(b), 8, 8(a) and 8(b)).

Ensure the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person's identity; medical fitness; right to work in the United Kingdom; and where appropriate, the person's qualifications; in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and these checks completed before a person's appointment (paragraphs 17, 18, 18(2), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(e) and 18(3)).

- These standards were not met at the previous inspection because the safeguarding policy was out of date. Designated leaders did not take appropriate action when allegations were made. Processes and systems did not ensure that pupils were safe. Some staff working with pupils had not completed any safeguarding training. Leaders had not taken action to tackle previous shortfalls in meeting the national minimum standards for boarding. Processes for recruiting staff did not meet the independent school standards. Requests for references did not ask the right questions, and leaders did not check whether the questions they had asked were answered. Further checks were not made in the case of staff who had lived or worked outside the United Kingdom.
- School leaders proposed to update the safeguarding and child protection policy, review the staff code of conduct and review recruitment procedures. It is also intended to record, review and monitor all safeguarding issues that might arise.
- The safeguarding policy is now up to date. It is available on the school website. It makes reference to the most up-to-date guidance issued by the Secretary of State. However, not all requirements are included in the policy. For example, the policy does not make reference to potential safeguarding concerns such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. The school does have guidance relating to these aspects on its website, but the safeguarding policy does not make any reference to these links. The policy does not set out procedures for minimising the risk of peer-on-peer abuse. As a result, procedures are not effective. The policy does not state how school leaders will monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

- School leaders have ensured that all staff receive up-to-date training in a range of safeguarding issues. They have set up a staff media platform to make sure regular updates are circulated. Staff knowledge and awareness is checked through questionnaires and quizzes. Staff now have a better understanding of their responsibilities to keep pupils safe.
- School staff have worked hard to put an appropriate single central register in place and to organise staff recruitment files with a helpful checklist of required information. However, some required checks on the suitability of staff are still not completed prior to them starting in post. For example, the school has not completed further checks on some staff who have lived and worked outside the United Kingdom.
- Recruitment procedures have improved. School leaders use new application forms and reference requests forms which include questions on a candidate's suitability to work with pupils. Interview procedures have improved through providing safeguarding prompts for interviewers. However, the records held are of poor quality because candidate's responses are not recorded well enough.
- These standards are not met.

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 (paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b) and 9(c)).

- The previous inspection report stated that policies and documentation to support pupils' welfare, such as behaviour and anti-bullying, were not up to date and did not meet requirements. Behaviour incidents and sanctions were not reported, recorded or analysed. As a result, it was not clear how often incidents occurred, nor how often pupils received detentions or were grounded. Leaders did not consider whether poor behaviour was linked to specific lessons or teachers.
- School leaders proposed to update policies and include suitable rewards and sanctions in line with the government guidance on behaviour and discipline in schools.
- School leaders have updated policies and documentation to support pupils' welfare. The standard in paragraph 9(a) is met.
- Records of sanctions imposed on pupils for serious misbehaviour are now kept. The standard in paragraph 9(c) is met.
- Although the policy is up to date and a record of sanctions is in place, some aspects of the behaviour policy are not implemented effectively. For example, the policy states that school leaders will record, monitor and review behaviour incidents and carry out ongoing evaluation of behaviour and safeguarding information. Currently, there is limited evidence of the monitoring of behaviour incidents, and reviews are not carried out in a timely fashion.
- This standard is not met.

Ensure that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16(b)).

- At the time of the previous inspection, risk assessment processes were ineffective. Individual risk assessments were not carried out and generic ones lacked essential detail, so insufficient consideration was given to reducing or managing risks. Staff were not

provided with guidance about the risk assessment process. Individual risk assessments were non-existent. Staff did not fully reflect on incidents, their potential impact on others or that control measures that might be required. School leaders planned to put a new risk assessment process in place to monitor risk assessments for their appropriateness and take action to reduce risks.

- School leaders proposed to implement a new risk assessment system to include monitoring the risk assessments and taking appropriate action to reduce risks.
- School leaders have begun to put risk assessments in place for a range of school activities. However, they are not being monitored effectively. Some are out of date and some do not contain accurate information.
- This standard is not met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibility 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) and 34(2)).

- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that leaders had not ensured that safeguarding processes were effective. The senior management team had not put into place systems to ensure compliance with the independent school standards and the national minimum standards for boarding.
- School leaders submitted an action plan to the Department for Education (DfE) following the inspection. This action plan was judged to be unsatisfactory. School leaders have revised their action plan, but this revised plan does not meet requirements. It does not set out how school leaders plan to improve the quality of leadership and management so that all the independent school standards are met. It does not set out ways in which school leaders will measure the success of the plan and its impact on improving the school.
- School leaders have taken some action to address the shortcomings found at the time of the previous inspection. All the identified policies have been updated. A new behaviour policy supports teachers to manage behaviour more effectively.
- School leaders are not checking systems and procedures well enough. They are not analysing the information they gather to identify trends, strengths or weaknesses. As a result, they do not know how effective are the changes that have been put in place, because they do not measure the impact of their actions. There continues to be a number of failed independent school standards and national minimum standards for boarding. School leaders have not checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards or the national minimum standards for boarding with sufficient rigour.
- The standards in Part 8 are not met.

Residential provision

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding that were assessed during this inspection

NMS 11.1: The school 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.

The following areas of improved/good practice were identified:

- There is a more robust response to accidents involving young people. For example, following an accident where a young person was injured, staff met with the health and safety officer from a local leisure centre frequently used by the young people. This enabled them to review and amend their risk assessment for activities undertaken at the leisure centre.
- Effective links have been made with police. This has resulted in an officer advising on the potential for young people to become radicalised by extremist views, and young people being offered support and advice on staying safe online.
- Some positive work in relation to the prevention of bullying has been undertaken with young people. For example, staff consulted with an external professional and obtained advice regarding best practice on this issue.
- Staff have taken a proactive approach to meeting the mental health needs of young people. This has included making referrals to external support agencies, and planning how young people's needs can be met in the boarding facility.
- Systems have been introduced to ensure effective communication takes place regarding the welfare of young people. As a result, staff across the school familiarise themselves with any safeguarding concerns that arise. An online system is now used to ensure that staff can update their knowledge on good child protection practice. More consultation with external safeguarding professionals is now taking place.

Despite these improvements, significant failings were identified in relation to this standard. These include:

- The child protection and safeguarding policy is not an effective tool for ensuring young people are protected from harm. Examples include no distinction being made between the risks associated with historic and current abuse. The process for responding to allegations made against staff does not indicate how young people will be protected. The policy does not cross-reference other relevant policies pertaining to the welfare of young people. Incorrect details are given in relation to which agencies and professionals should be notified when a child protection concern comes to light. The policy does not specify the action to be taken by designated safeguarding leads when they are notified of a concern for a young person.
- Serious events involving young people do not always result in risk management and welfare plans being written. There was no such plan for a young person who had demonstrated violent and aggressive behaviour, for example, and the potential for him to self-harm. The risk management and welfare plan for a young person experiencing mental health difficulties has not been updated in a timely manner.
- The quality of an internal investigation, undertaken in response to an allegation made against a member of staff, was poor. The subsequent investigation report lacks detail and analysis. The principal did not ensure that he was provided with a copy of the minutes of

a multi-agency strategy meeting that took place prior to the internal investigation being undertaken.

- The proprietor has not undertaken 'Prevent' training, to ensure that he is familiar with the risks associated with young people becoming radicalised by extremist views.
- There is not a robust process for undertaking checks on adults who may come into contact with the young people. No disclosure and barring checks have been undertaken on adults who may be present when young people attend a cookery club that operates from the home of a member of staff. The risk assessment for this activity has not been updated, and fails to identify a number of hazards young people could be exposed to.
- There have been no visits to the young people from an independent visitor for over a year. This has limited the opportunity for young people to share any concerns they may have with an independent person.
- No evidence could be found that leaders and managers monitor and review young people's medical records to ensure that their health needs are being met.

This standard is not met.

NMS 12.1: The school has and consistently implements a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils. This policy includes: measures to combat bullying, including cyberbullying, and to promote positive behaviour; school rules; disciplinary sanctions; when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and how this will be recorded and managed; and arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions.

The following area of improved/good practice was identified:

- Some proactive work has been undertaken when concerns regarding bullying have come to light. This has included meetings with the alleged bully and victim, discussion with parents and consultation with external professionals.

Despite this improvement, failings were identified in relation to this standard. These include:

- The failure to produce anti-bullying plans for young people who experience bullying, or perpetrate bullying behaviour, as required in the school's anti-bullying policy.
- No individual behaviour management plan/strategy being implemented for young people when they demonstrate violent and aggressive behaviour.
- No evaluation of the effectiveness of the behaviour management policy contained within a self-evaluation report of the boarding provision, which was produced in November 2016.

This standard is not met.

NMS 13.1: The school's governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school and takes appropriate action where necessary.

The following area of improved/good practice was identified:

- Proprietor monitoring meetings with the senior leadership team now take place every six weeks.

Despite this improvement, significant failings were identified in relation to this standard. These include:

- Proprietor monitoring meetings are not used to fully explore all aspects of safeguarding young people and protecting them from harm.
- The proprietor was not able to name which new policies have been introduced since the integrated inspection undertaken in May 2016. He was not aware of which government guidance he can refer to in relation to raising standards within the boarding provision.
- The proprietor was not able to describe the experience and areas of expertise of the consultants bought in to advise the leadership and management team, following the integrated inspection in May 2016.
- The proprietor was not aware that the school's child protection risk assessment has not been reviewed and updated in a timely manner.
- The proprietor could not demonstrate that he has given sufficient consideration to the security of the premises.
- The proprietor was not able to recall the content of the boarding facility self-assessment report, completed in November 2016.

This standard is not met.

NMS 13.4: The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met.

The following area of improved/good practice was identified:

- Action has been taken to ensure that information is shared effectively across the senior leadership team, and with staff working across the school. An electronic information system has been introduced. Staff are familiar with this and use it to record any concerns regarding the welfare needs of young people.
- Leaders and managers are beginning to develop a network of professionals they can consult regarding safeguarding practice, and are making effective use of online training resources.

Despite this improvement, significant failings were identified in relation to this standard. These include:

- Weak self-assessment of the boarding provision. A self-assessment report produced in November 2016 makes no reference to the national minimum standards that were failed in May 2016. The report does not identify any actions that need to be taken to meet the standards and ensure continuous improvement. The proprietor was not able to recall the content of this report.
- A spreadsheet to identify how the national minimum standards are being met is being developed, but is not yet fit for purpose in terms of identifying a timescale for when the school will meet all the standards.
- There is no set agenda for the proprietor's monitoring meetings with the senior leadership team. Minutes of these meetings lack detail. They do not provide a clear picture or strategy for securing continuous improvement.
- The school's child protection risk assessment has not been reviewed and updated in a timely manner.

- In conversation, the proprietor was not able to identify the priority training needs for staff.
- The head of boarding was not able to recall the outcome of one serious incident, where a young person demonstrated violent behaviour towards a peer.
- No evidence could be found to demonstrate that leaders and managers monitor the health records of young people.

This standard is not met.

NMS 13.7: The school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix 1.

Failings were identified in relation to this standard. These include:

- Young people who go missing is a safeguarding matter. The policy relating to young people who go missing states that each young person will have a missing risk assessment. This practice is not followed. No young people have a missing risk assessment.
- The policy relating to anti-bullying measures is not consistently followed in practice. The policy states that where bullying is identified as a concern, a bullying plan will be put in place. Records of bullying incidents examined during the inspection did not contain anti-bullying plans.
- The child protection policy is not consistently well maintained. The policy contains a child protection risk assessment. This has not been reviewed and updated in a timely manner.

This standard is not met.

NMS 13.8: The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate.

Failings were identified in relation to this standard. These include:

- Checks on adults who may have access to the young people are not always undertaken. No disclosure and barring checks have been completed for the family members who live or stay in the home where the after-school cookery club takes place.
- Risk assessments are not consistently well maintained. The risk assessment for the after-school cookery club has not been reviewed and updated since September 2015. This out-of-date risk assessment fails to identify many of the risks associated with the cookery club taking place in a member of staff's home.
- Boarders' records are not updated following significant events. The welfare plan of one boarder did not make reference to the advice given by the child and adolescent mental health service.

This standard is not met.

NMS 14.1: Schools operate safe recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements, having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

The following areas of improved/good practice were identified:

- Requests for references now ask appropriate questions in relation to disciplinary procedures.
- Requests for overseas police checks, and disclosure and barring checks are now made before the member of staff joins the school.

Despite this improvement failings were identified in relation to this standard. These include:

- References are not always requested from more than one previous employer. In one case, two references were accepted from the same employer, and no other references were taken up.
- Records of recruitment interviews are brief and lack detail. In one case, the record stated that the candidate appeared knowledgeable about safeguarding young people. No examples were recorded to verify this was the case.
- On some staff personnel files there is no evidence to confirm that the referees were contacted for verification of the reference they supplied.

This standard is not met.

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 or the national minimum standards for boarding schools published by the Secretary of State for Education under section 87C(1) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Education Act 2011 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 does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

- The proprietor must ensure that pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options (paragraph 2(2)(e)(ii)).
- 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), 7(7)(a) and 7(7)(b)).
- Where section 87(1) of the 1989 Act applies in relation to a school the standard in the paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders while they are accommodated at the school; and such arrangements have regard to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools or, where applicable, the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools or the National Minimum Standards for Accommodation of Students under Eighteen by Further Education Colleges (paragraph 8, (8)(a) and 8(b)).
- The proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that a written behaviour policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 9, 9(b)).
- The proprietor ensures that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16(b)).
- The proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each person; in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and the checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment (paragraphs 17, 18(2), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(e) and 18(3)).
- 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) and 34(2)).

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- The proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly (paragraph 3(3)(h)).
- 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 pupils' misbehaviour; and a record of sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour (paragraph 9, 9(a) and 9(c)).

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for boarding schools

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

- The school 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 (NMS 11.1).
- The school has, and consistently implements, a written policy to promote good behaviour among pupils. This policy includes: measures to combat bullying, including cyberbullying, and to promote positive behaviour; school rules; disciplinary sanctions; when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and how this will be recorded and managed; and arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions (NMS 12.1).
- The school's governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school, and takes appropriate action where necessary (NMS 13.1).
- The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met (NMS 13.4).
- The school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix 1 (NMS 13.7).
- The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate (NMS 13.8).
- The school operates safe recruitment and adopts recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State (NMS 14.1).

School Details

Unique reference number	135819
Social care unique reference number	SC382720
DfE registration number	869/6016
Inspection number	10023055

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.

The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Education Act 2011, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

Type of school	Independent international boarding school
School status	Independent boarding school
Age range of pupils	13 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	13
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	10
Number of part-time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	13
Proprietor	Mr Till Gins
Headteacher	Mr Jon Crocker
Annual fees (day pupils)	£37,200
Telephone number	01635 36879
Website	www.newburyhall.com
Email address	jon.crocker@newburyhall.com
Date of previous standard inspection	17–19 May 2016

Information about this school

- Newbury Hall School is an international boarding school. All the pupils come from countries outside the United Kingdom and all are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The school opened in 2008 and was registered in March 2009.
- It is registered for 100 pupils but currently has 13 on roll. No pupils have identified special educational needs and none have disabilities.
- The school provides boarding accommodation for its pupils. Eleven pupils live on-site. The school has previously accommodated some pupils with host families. Two pupils are accommodated through private arrangements organised by their parents.
- The school's core purpose is to enable pupils to improve their use of English, secure good academic results and become successful adults with social skills, self-discipline and confidence. The school encapsulates this as 'gusto, grit and growth'.
- The school is situated on a small single site with very limited outside space, most of which is used for parking. Pupils use local leisure facilities for sports. There is no other alternative provision used.

Information about this inspection

- This 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 and the national minimum standards for boarding that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection following the standard inspection that took place in May 2016.
- The DfE served a notice on this school on 22 July 2016, following the last inspection that took place between 17 and 19 May 2016. The school failed to meet 16 of the independent school standards relating to the quality of education, welfare, health and safety of pupils, suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors and the quality of leadership and management of the school. The school submitted an action plan to the DfE in August 2016 and this was rejected by the Secretary of State on 23 September 2016.
- This inspection was carried out with no notice. The social care inspection started on 1 February and lasted for two days. The education inspection took place on 2 February.
- Meetings were held with the proprietor, the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. The education inspector met with a group of teaching staff, the lead educator and the operations leader.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils through informal discussions and during meetings with groups of pupils selected by inspectors.
- Inspectors were unable to consider the views of parents as there were no responses to the Parent View online survey, and all parents live abroad.
- A range of documents was scrutinised, including the school's own evaluation of its boarding provision. Information about safeguarding arrangements was checked, as were the single central record, risk assessments, minutes of senior leadership meetings and a range of policies.
- This inspection focused on the independent school standards and national minimum standards that were not met at the inspection carried out in May 2016.

Inspection team

Ann Henderson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Collett	Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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