

Woodhill Preparatory School

Brook Lane, Botley, Hampshire SO30 2ER

Inspection Dates

28 April 2017

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 6, 7, 7(a) and 7(b)

- At the last inspection, weaknesses were found in the school's safeguarding procedures. The safeguarding policy was not published on the website. Procedures to recruit staff were not robust enough. School leaders did not have the necessary knowledge or skills to make sure that all the independent school standards relating to safety and welfare of pupils were met. Leaders had not followed the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- Actions were planned to strengthen the policy and procedures. Leaders planned to use external consultants to check that the school met all safeguarding requirements. The school based its new safeguarding policy on the local authority model policy.
- The planned consultant's visit has taken place. Leaders have now produced a suitable safeguarding and child protection policy and published them on the school's website. The policy takes into account the 2016 national guidelines and legislation. The understanding of the importance of robust safeguarding procedures has improved among the proprietor, leaders and staff. Appropriate safeguarding training has taken place for all staff. There is now an improved culture of safeguarding in the school. The headteacher has met with parents and written a letter, published on the website, to explain the improvements in safeguarding.
- Leaders have developed safeguarding procedures to follow when advertising for staff. They have developed proformas to record safeguarding questions during interviews. While they have not recruited any staff since the last inspection, they now have a clear set of guidelines for administrators and leaders to follow.
- Leaders are committed to improving safeguarding practices in the school. They have implemented successfully the recommendations from the last inspection. Because of this, this standard is now met.

Paragraph 11

- Leaders have produced a suitable written health and safety policy. An external consultant has visited the school to check the policy and audit site safety and security. The recommendations for improvements have already been implemented. For example,

fencing, gates, closed-circuit television monitoring and external lighting have been upgraded.

- Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe in the school. Pupils explained that the recent improvements to site safety, such as new gates and fences, helped them to feel secure. They said their teachers kept them safe, for example, when leaving at the end of the day.
- Leaders have developed a maintenance programme and checks to ensure the upkeep of the premises.
- The written health and safety policy is now being implemented effectively so this standard is met.

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

- At the last inspection, there was not an appropriate risk assessment policy in place and action was not taken to reduce risks.
- Leaders have now updated the risk assessment policy and provided training to all staff so they can undertake full risk assessments for their areas of responsibility. For example, all clubs now have a risk assessment in place.
- Leaders have developed generic risk assessments, covering, for example, all areas of the school, routines at the end of the day, and specific equipment and activities.
- Staff now consider carefully the severity of potential risks and the controls necessary to reduce risks. Written risk assessments are stored centrally and monitored tenaciously by the deputy headteacher who is the new risk assessment coordinator. On the day of the inspection, a residential trip was due to take place. The risk assessment for this trip was found to be a comprehensive analysis of the risks involved and the controls needed.
- Leaders' understanding of risk is developed well. The deputy headteacher has compelling evidence to show that she has implemented quickly the recommendations for improvement. Plans are in place for regular reports on safeguarding, including risk assessment checks, to be presented to the governing body when it is established.
- Due to the actions taken by leaders, this standard is now met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22, 25, 27 and 27(b)

- At the last inspection, it was found that some aspects of the school's premises were not maintained to a high enough standard. In particular, the outside lighting was not all working.
- Leaders planned to commission a review of the site by an external consultant in January 2017. The recommendations have now been implemented. For example, the outside lighting has been serviced to repair faults, and more lights have been added to the existing arrangements. The area outside of the school is now well lit.
- Leaders have also refurbished areas of the school, including refitting decaying window frames and erecting fences.

- The maintenance of premises and grounds has now been formalised in a maintenance register. Governors, once established, plan to monitor this register as part of their duties.
- Because of the improvements to the school premises, this standard is now met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(2), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(3), 32(3)(a) and 32(3)(e)

- At the time of the last inspection, it was found that the school did not publish a range of information required by the independent school standards, including publishing an up-to-date safeguarding policy on the school's website. Furthermore, the school had not provided the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during term time and holidays, and telephone contact numbers. Details of the academic performance of pupils and exclusion policy were also missing.
- Leaders planned to relaunch the website in February 2017, with all omissions included.
- A new website has now been launched. The headteacher has worked with parents to provide a website that is fit for purpose. It reflects the school ethos and has comprehensive information including school policies such as safeguarding and exclusions. Pupils' academic achievements are explained well. Full contact details are available for the proprietor and headteacher. A checking procedure has been put in place to ensure that the website is kept up to date.
- Because the website is now fully compliant with the independent schools standards, this standard is met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the time of the last inspection leaders were not demonstrating good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role in ensuring the independent school standards were met consistently. Furthermore, leaders had a casual regard to upholding their legal duty in keeping pupils safe.
- The action plan developed showed the steps that leaders would take to ensure that there were improvements in the independent school standards that were not met in the previous inspection. The Department for Education deemed this action plan acceptable in February 2017. The majority of the plan was implemented quickly, within the timescales stated. The headteacher explained, 'the last inspection gave the school a shake up and that we have now changed how the school is run'. Leaders now demonstrate a serious regard to safeguarding procedures, evident during this inspection.
- The proprietor and headteacher plan to form a board of governors. There have been a number of applications from parents and members of the community, and the school is currently processing the applications, carrying out safeguarding checks. As these checks have not been completed by outside authorities the governing board is yet to be formed.
- The action plan shows an increase in accountability in the school to increase the capacity of the headteacher. The deputy headteacher has an enhanced monitoring role, for example as risk assessment coordinator. The leader of the early years has developed a

staff appraisal system that demonstrates rigorous accountability. The headteacher plans to spread this new accountability system to the rest of the school.

- There are plans to employ a new headteacher, when financially viable, to further increase leadership capacity in the school. Since the inspection, the school roll has dropped from 75 to 60.
- All the unmet standards from the previous inspection have now been met. The requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are also now met. Therefore, this standard is now met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- At the time of the last inspection the school did not have a suitable accessibility plan.
- Leaders have now provided a suitable accessibility plan. It provides information about the physical environment and shows how leaders are proactive to adapt the environment for disabled pupils, so that they can access the school's curriculum.
- The plan refers to the governing board reviewing the plan regularly.

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

- Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 6, 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- Ensure that the relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- Ensure 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 taking appropriate action to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- Ensure that the premises and the accommodation and facilities at the school are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured, and that external lighting is provided to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises (paragraph 22, 25, 27 and 27(b)).
- Ensure that the provision of information includes: the proprietor's full name; address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays; a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted; the safeguarding policy; the exclusion policy; and particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(2), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(3), 32(3)(a) and 32(3)(e)).
- Ensure 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 (paragraph 34(1) and 34(1)(a)).
- Ensure 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 (paragraph 34(1) and 34(1)(b)).
- Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1) and 34(1)(c)).
- Ensure that the school complies with paragraph 3 of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 by drawing up a suitable accessibility plan.

School Details

Unique reference number	116540
DfE registration number	850/6014
Inspection number	10033996

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	Independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Number of part-time pupils	18
Proprietor	Marjorie Dacombe
Headteacher	Mike Dacombe
Annual fees (day pupils)	Nursery (full days £6,225) Reception and Years 1 to 6 £6,693
Telephone number	01489 781112
Website	https://woodhill.hants.sch.uk/
Email address	office-b@woodhill.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	4–6 October 2016

Information about this school

- Woodhill Preparatory School opened in 1957. A sole proprietor from Woodhill Schools Limited runs the school. The school aims are 'happy pupils, small classes, high expectations'.
- The school operates on a single site in the village of Botley, Hampshire.
- There are no pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- There are no disadvantaged pupils at the school.
- The school runs before- and after-school provision for pupils on the school site.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 that 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.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the last inspection.
- The school submitted an action plan to the Department for Education which was approved as acceptable on 7 February 2017.
- This inspection was conducted without notice and focused on the unmet independent school standards identified in the last inspection.
- The inspector toured the premises, visited three classes and observed pupils in the playground at break and lunchtime.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, headteacher, deputy headteacher, head of early years, a prospective parent governor, a parent and two groups of pupils.
- The inspector checked school documents including the action plan, safeguarding policy, child protection policy, health and safety policy and risk assessment policy. The website was also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Susan Child, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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