

Greater Grace School of Christian Education

Church Lane, Backford, Chester, Cheshire CH2 4BE

Inspection dates

31 January 2018

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

- At the inspection in October 2016, these standards were identified as not met. This was because the safeguarding policy was out of date and did not make reference to the most up-to-date guidance by the Secretary of State. Consequently, the version of the safeguarding policy published on the website was out of date and was not helpful to parents and carers.
- The action plan evaluation of March 2017 judged that the standards were unlikely to be met if the school's proposed actions were implemented.
- At the progress monitoring inspection of October 2017, these standards were judged to be met.
- The school's safeguarding policy, which is available on the school website, is up to date and refers to current guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Staff have a good understanding of the policy and know the process to follow if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being.
- Staff and trustees have received training from the local authority. The headteacher and lead teacher for safeguarding receive helpful, regular briefings on safeguarding issues from the local authority and the police. Leaders share these updates with staff, trustees and volunteers so that all understand the most up-to-date procedures.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a)

- The previous inspection in October 2016 judged that this standard was not met because leaders' approach to assessing and managing risk was not strong enough. Risks to pupils were not systematically identified and action was not taken to tackle any such risks quickly enough. Neither had leaders put in place a written risk assessment policy.
- The action plan evaluation of March 2017 judged that the standard was unlikely to be met if the school's proposed actions were implemented.
- At the progress monitoring inspection in October 2017, it was found that leaders' approach to managing risks had greatly improved. Leaders had remedied the identified risks, took action to tackle them and had introduced a rolling programme of maintenance

to make sure that risks were dealt with swiftly. Leaders introduced detailed risk assessments for activities within and away from the school. Appropriate action had taken place to reduce risks to pupils. Nevertheless, the standard remained unmet as leaders had not implemented a written risk assessment policy.

- Leaders attended to this issue immediately. The headteacher and trustees set about writing and implementing a written risk assessment policy. This outlines the school's approach to risks and is a comprehensive document which encapsulates all risk assessments. Leaders take an active approach to managing risk so that pupils are kept as safe as possible.
- This standard is now met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(c)

- At the inspection in October 2016, this standard was not met because the school did not have suitable changing accommodation or showers in place for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.
- The action plan evaluation of March 2017 judged that the standards were unlikely to be met if the school's proposed actions were implemented.
- At the progress monitoring inspection in October 2017, leaders had taken some action to meet this standard. Leaders had a fully costed plan in place to install a shower and had identified a possible location. However, leaders had not identified a timeline to ensure that the shower was installed swiftly.
- Leaders have secure plans for the installation of showering facilities. The location of suitable changing accommodation and shower is now agreed and leaders have purchased suitable shower equipment.
- Leaders make sure that pupils experience a wide range of physical education and sporting activities at a local sports centre, which provides suitable changing and showering facilities. Leaders have detailed and up-to-date risk assessments in place to cover these visits. These include risks associated with the transport to and from the venue and when pupils use the toilets, the changing accommodation and showering facilities. As a result, pupils are kept safe when using the sports centre. Leaders have taken effective action to make sure that suitable changing accommodation and showering facilities are available for the pupils who need to use them.
- This standard is now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the inspection in October 2016, this standard was not met. This was because leaders had not ensured that all the independent school standards had been met. Furthermore, weaknesses were identified in the trustees' capacity to ensure that the necessary improvements were made and that standards were met.
- In the action plan submitted to the Department of Education (DfE) in March 2017, leaders outlined their plans for remedying these weaknesses. However, leaders did not detail how the leaders and trustees would monitor the success of their actions.

- The progress monitoring inspection in October 2017 found evidence to show that leaders and managers had taken strong action to improve the school. Leaders and trustees had attended appropriate training and all knew their specific role and responsibilities. They had significantly increased their knowledge and understanding of the independent school standards. They introduced policies and procedures to enable all to contribute to the improvement of the school.
- Leaders and trustees have accessed additional training so that they have a good knowledge and understanding of the independent school standards. Trustees understand their role is to set the direction of the school while the headteacher focuses on the day-to-day running of the school. However, trustees provide the headteacher with an even balance of challenge and support, which was lacking at the previous full inspection. The headteacher, staff and trustees know the strengths of the school and the action needed to improve. Regular meetings between the headteacher and the chair of the trustees means that trustees know the school better. Trustees meet half-termly to check the performance of the school. This includes academic performance of pupils, safeguarding and the maintenance of the site. Therefore, there is an organised process for the trustees to monitor the effectiveness of planned actions.
- This standard is met. Leaders have taken effective action to remedy any weaknesses from the previous inspection and all standards are met.

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

- The proprietor must 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 (paragraphs 16, 16(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education (paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must 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, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).

School details

Unique reference number	131791
DfE registration number	896/6027
Inspection number	10045464

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	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	5
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	1
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Trustees of Greater Grace School of Christian Education
Chair	Alastair Craddock
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Mulligan
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,772 per annum
Telephone number	01244 851797
Website	www.wix.com/greatergraceschool/ggs
Email address	greatergraces@gmail.com
Date of previous standard inspection	18–20 October 2016

Information about this school

- Greater Grace School of Christian Education is situated in a small village near Chester.
- The school is registered to admit 14 pupils aged from five to 18 years. There are currently six pupils on roll, aged between six and 17 years.
- Pupils are taught in two classes, one for pupils of primary age and one for the older pupils.

- There are no pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school states its desire `to serve the Body of Christ by complementing the parental responsibility to “train up a child in the way he should go”’.
- As a condition of pupil admission, at least one parent must be a `born-again’ Christian and regularly attend their own local church.

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 that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the second progress monitoring inspection following the school's previous standard inspection in October 2016.
- The DfE rejected the school's action plan following the previous standard inspection in October 2016.
- The inspection was conducted without notice to the school.
- During this inspection, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) held meetings with the headteacher, two trustees and a member of staff. HMI also spoke with a parent. HMI toured the school and the school site. She scrutinised a variety of documents, including the safeguarding policy, minutes of trustees meetings, the risk assessment policy and examples of risk assessments.

Inspection team

Eileen Mulgrew, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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