

# Longwood School & Nursery

Bushey Hall Drive, Bushey, Hertfordshire WD23 2QG

**Inspection date**

7 June 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)*

- The previous inspection found that safeguarding arrangements were ineffective. Inspectors found that the information in the school's single central register was confused and did not meet requirements. This was largely because the school's personnel files had been poorly maintained, making it difficult to be sure whether all the required safer recruitment checks had been carried out.
- Inspectors also found that the school's records of child protection concerns were not good enough. The files sampled by inspectors indicated that leaders had not ensured that concerns were followed up well enough.
- The school's action plan stated that a range of actions would be taken to address these unmet standards. For example, the headteacher undertook to seek advice from the local authority about improving safeguarding. She also undertook to ensure that all staff received updated training about safeguarding. The plan also included actions to improve the school's approach to safer recruitment checks and the maintenance of staff personnel records.
- The proprietor and the headteacher have taken prompt and decisive action to improve safeguarding. They have worked with advisers from the local authority to improve safeguarding systems. The school's child protection records are now detailed and properly organised. For example, each child protection record now has a chronology at the beginning of the file which shows clearly what the concerns have been over time. The records show that appropriate action has been taken, when necessary, to protect pupils.
- The proprietor has reviewed the school's personnel files thoroughly. The records are now detailed and very well organised. The much-improved system means that the headteacher is now able to lay her hands easily on the information she requires. This means that she can check the file kept for any member of staff to assure herself that everything that should have been done has been completed.

- The headteacher now also checks the single central register regularly. She keeps records of her checks and of any actions that are required as a result of them. The headteacher follows up on her checks by ensuring that necessary actions have been completed.
- The school's approach to investigating complaints and allegations is thorough. Records show that the headteacher contacts the local authority designated officer to report issues or for advice, when appropriate. Records also show that the headteacher has carried out methodical investigations, when necessary, and come to reasonable conclusions based on evidence.
- Pupils rightly feel safe at school. The school has a welcoming and caring ethos that promotes a safe culture in the school. The good relationships between pupils and staff are clearly evident. This helps to keep pupils safe. Pupils are confident that they can speak with their teachers about any worries that they might have. One pupil summed this up well by saying that the teachers are 'like your school mum'.
- The school has a suitable safeguarding policy published on its website.
- Leaders have ensured that the standard is now met.

*Paragraphs 11, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- The previous inspection found that the proprietor had not paid sufficient attention to health and safety matters. For example, drinking water had not been labelled, prior to the previous inspection, as required by independent school standard 28(1)(c). Inspectors also found that the school's approach to assessing risks was underdeveloped.
- The school's action plan stated that a health and safety policy would be drawn up and implemented in January 2018. The proprietor also undertook to strengthen and improve the school's approach to risk assessment.
- The proprietor took this issue very seriously and acted promptly to address the concerns raised by inspectors. He and another member of staff have now attended training on health and safety in education. The resulting increased knowledge and understanding have helped the proprietor to improve this area of the school.
- The proprietor ensured that the health and safety policy was reviewed and updated in January 2018. The policy is now detailed, comprehensive and fit for purpose. The caretaker's logbook shows that staff routinely notice and raise issues, such as a sharp edge noted on a piece of playground equipment. Leaders check the logbook to ensure that such concerns are responded to quickly.
- The school's approach to risk assessment is now much stronger. The proprietor has ensured that a suitable risk assessment policy is in place. He has also ensured that risk assessment has become a routine part of the school's daily life.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is now met.

*Paragraph 12*

- The previous inspection found that pupils' safety had been put at risk because the proprietor had not ensured that the school complied with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Inspectors found that neither the fire alarm nor the emergency lighting had been tested routinely at the required intervals.
- The school's action plan stated that a range of actions would be carried out to rectify the shortcomings in this area. For example, the plan stated that the caretaker would

immediately start to check both the fire alarm and the emergency lighting at the required intervals.

- The proprietor took immediate and decisive action to remedy the weaknesses in this area. A fire safety logbook was started on 10 December 2017 and shows that the fire alarm has been tested weekly since that date. The log also shows that a different call point is tested every week.
- The fire safety logbook shows that monthly emergency lighting tests have been carried out since December 2017. Weekly checks of the school's fire extinguishers have also been carried out routinely since the previous inspection took place. The fire safety logbook demonstrates clearly that a robust and systematic approach to these aspects of fire safety is now in place.
- The proprietor has ensured that all aspects of the school's fire prevention systems have been checked professionally since the previous inspection. For example, the emergency lighting was checked and an inspection certificate obtained a week after the previous inspection. The fire alarm and fire extinguishers were checked professionally in December 2017. One of the proprietors and another member of staff attended fire marshal training in February 2018.
- The proprietor employed the services of a professional fire assessor to help him to carry out a fire risk assessment for the school. The resulting document shows clearly that this was a comprehensive process that considered all reasonable eventualities.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is now met.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the proprietor had not ensured that all the independent school standards were met consistently. Also, they had not ensured that the school's safeguarding policy had been implemented effectively. Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness was inaccurate and its improvement plan was unclear.
- The proprietor and headteacher have written an appropriate action plan that is focused on the right priorities. All the areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been covered in the plan. The Department for Education (DfE) accepted the action plan subject to minor modifications. These modifications have now been made.
- The proprietor and the headteacher have acted decisively to address the issues raised by the previous inspection. They responded immediately and did not wait for the inspection report to be published before taking the necessary actions. As a result, the school has made great progress since the previous inspection and safeguarding is now effective.
- The proprietor and headteacher now have a good understanding of the independent school standards. They know that all of the standards must be met consistently. The proprietor and headteacher have put systems in place to ensure that this is now the case.

- The proprietor and headteacher now have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know that there is work still to do to ensure that improvement planning and self-evaluation are more closely connected.
- Similarly, good progress has been made towards improving the effectiveness of leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher has also improved the school's assessment and tracking system to record information about pupils' achievement. These changes are fairly new and they are not yet developed fully to ensure that they have maximum impact on improving outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is now met.

#### Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- The previous inspection found that the statutory requirements for the early years foundation stage were not met because safeguarding for the school as a whole was ineffective. Inspectors also found that leadership roles and responsibilities for the early years were unclear.
- The school's action plan stated that the proprietor would ensure that leadership roles in the early years provision were clarified.
- The proprietor and headteacher have ensured that safeguarding is now effective. Leadership of the early years foundation stage is now clear. The headteacher has taken responsibility for this area of the school's work.
- Leaders have ensured that statutory requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage are now 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 not to 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:
  - 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 relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- The proprietor must ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (2005) (paragraph 12).
- 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 and
  - appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)).
- 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
  - 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)).
- The proprietor must ensure that safeguarding and welfare requirements for the early years foundation stage are met.

## School details

Unique reference number	117662
DfE registration number	919/6236
Inspection number	10054098

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Malcolm and Sally Livesey
Headteacher	Claire May
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,590
Telephone number	01923 253715
Website	<a href="http://www.longwoodschool.co.uk">www.longwoodschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@longwoodschool.co.uk">info@longwoodschool.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	5–7 December 2017

## Information about this school

- Longwood School and Nursery is a small independent school for pupils aged three to 11 years. A separate registered nursery (EY431559) shares the site and is owned by the same proprietors.
- There are three classes for the early years, and three mixed-age classes for primary-aged pupils.
- A standard inspection of the school was carried out, with one day's notice, in December 2017.

## 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 not to comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection following the standard inspection in December 2017. The inspection was carried out without notice.
- Following the standard inspection in December 2017, the DfE required the school to provide a statutory action plan to address the unmet standards. In March 2018, the DfE accepted the action plan submitted by the school, subject to minor modifications.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and spoke with the proprietor on the telephone. The inspector and the headteachers observed teaching and learning in most classes, including a gymnastics lesson taking place in the leisure centre next door to the school. The inspector met with a group of pupils and scrutinised a range of school documents.
- The Reception Year class was out of school on an educational visit when the inspection took place.

## Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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