

Bhaktivedanta Manor School

Hartspring Cottage, Elton Way, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 8HB

Inspection dates

20 May 2019

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i)

- This independent school standard relates to the school's curriculum.
- In the September 2018 inspection this standard was not met because the school's curriculum policy was not being implemented effectively. In consequence, the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), were not being met.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a suitable process in place to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Often, teachers ensure that these pupils receive appropriate support during lessons. When this is the case, pupils make good progress from their individual starting points. However, some teachers lack the necessary expertise to be able to meet these pupils' needs. Consequently, the progress made by pupils with SEND remains too variable.
- The school's curriculum plans for subjects other than English and mathematics are insufficiently detailed. They do not provide teachers with clear enough guidance about how to ensure that activities meet the needs of pupils, given their ages, needs and aptitudes. As a result, pupils are often given tasks to complete that do not enable them to make the gains in their knowledge and understanding that they should.
- This independent school standard remains not met.

Paragraph 3(g)

- This independent school standard relates to the school's framework for assessment of pupils.
- At the time of the September 2018 inspection, leaders and staff were not using information about pupils' prior attainment to improve pupils' achievement. The school's system to check pupils' progress was not well understood or being implemented effectively by leaders and staff.
- The interim headteacher has ensured that staff have information about pupils' prior attainment, and that teachers are using this to set targets for improvement. In addition, teachers are making ongoing assessments of what pupils know and can do, by checking

their work and the extent of their understanding during lessons. Teachers typically have a clear understanding of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. However, the extent to which teachers use this understanding to plan activities that are appropriate to individual pupils' needs is too variable.

- This independent school standard remains not met.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d)

- This independent school standard related to the quality of teaching at the school.
- In the previous inspection, leaders and staff did not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve, including the most able. Staff were not making use of assessment information to identify what pupils should learn next or planning activities to take into account the needs and abilities of pupils in their classes.
- Visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' books show that too often, the activities completed by the most able pupils are insufficiently challenging. This is particularly the case when pupils are studying subjects other than English and mathematics.
- In mathematics, pupils are insufficiently able to apply their skills to reasoning and problem-solving tasks because they do not complete this kind of work often enough. In some classes, pupils' extended writing skills are underdeveloped because they have limited opportunities to write at length for different purposes.
- Too often, pupils either complete tasks that they find too difficult, or start with work that they have already mastered and do not always move on to more challenging tasks when that would be appropriate. This means that pupils do not make sufficiently swift progress from their individual starting points.
- When assessment is most effective, teachers provide clear feedback in line with the school's policy which helps pupils understand how to improve their work. Teachers enable pupils to make the necessary changes, by giving them time to edit their pieces of extended writing in English, for example.
- The interim headteacher has made the development of pupils' extended writing skills a priority. Pupils are now benefiting from more regular opportunities to write at length for different purposes. This is particularly evident in upper key stage 2.
- This independent school standard remains not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- This independent school standard relates to the safeguarding of pupils at the school.
- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders and governors lacked a comprehensive understanding of their responsibilities to promote effective safeguarding. The school's safeguarding processes were not compliant with statutory guidance and legislation. Leaders did not monitor safeguarding issues well enough or act appropriately on all issues that came to their attention. Record-keeping and monitoring of safeguarding concerns lacked rigour. Staff had insufficient knowledge and understanding of how to fulfil their safeguarding duties effectively. Pupils had limited understanding about how to stay safe.
- The interim headteacher has ensured that, through appropriate training, leaders and

governors have a secure understanding of their responsibilities to promote effective safeguarding.

- The school's safeguarding policies have been updated. They are comprehensive and fully compliant with statutory guidance and legislation. Leaders check that staff understand and follow all relevant procedures.
- Inspectors found staff to be knowledgeable about safeguarding processes, and what to look out for in respect of a pupil's attendance, behaviour or appearance that might indicate a concern. Staff value the weekly safeguarding updates that leaders provide, and being able to access details of all policies and procedures via the safeguarding folders kept in every classroom.
- Staff record concerns about pupils in a timely, clear and consistent manner. The school's designated safeguarding lead works well with external agencies so that pupils who need it receive appropriate early help and support.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school and that 'there is no bullying here because we are all friends'. Pupils have benefited from changes to the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. These changes mean that pupils are taught about a wide range of risks and how to minimise them. Pupils could speak knowledgeably about how to stay safe when playing online games, for example, and the dangers involved in gang membership or the misuse of drugs.
- This independent school standards 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)

- The requirements of this independent school standard were not met at the September 2018 inspection. Leaders' and governors' evaluation of the quality of the school's work was overgenerous and their plans for improvement did not accurately identify areas requiring immediate action. Leaders' focus on pupils' progress and attainment was insufficient. The requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2014 were not being met as there were no appropriate processes to identify the needs of pupils with SEND at the school. Leaders were not actively promoting the well-being of pupils because safeguarding arrangements were not adequate.
- The Department for Education (DfE) requested that leaders provide an action plan for how they will meet the previously unmet standards. This action plan was deemed unacceptable in January 2019. Leaders have adapted the previous action plan, which they are using to address the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted at the time of the previous standard inspection.
- The interim headteacher knows the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. She has, rightly, prioritised the most urgent improvements since joining the school in January 2019. Her support has helped the recently-appointed designated safeguarding lead to become effective in her role. She has ensured that the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 are being met.
- The interim headteacher visits lessons regularly and gives teachers guidance about how they can develop aspects of their professional practice. Teachers also visit other schools so that they can learn from effective strategies that are used elsewhere. Inspectors

found that overall, teaching, learning and assessment are having a more positive impact upon pupils' learning than was the case at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' progress remains too uneven, however.

- Discussions with the chair of the governing body indicate that he is aware of the school's weaknesses and the actions that are required to be taken. Governors are starting to develop methods by which to hold senior leaders to account for standards, but this work is at an early stage. Governors are not yet challenging leaders sufficiently about the extent to which the school's curriculum aims in each subject are being implemented successfully.
- Curriculum policies have been updated in English and mathematics, but only minimally in other subjects. Subject leadership has not been developed; the interim headteacher is providing most leadership capacity at the school, which is otherwise limited. In consequence, progress towards some of the objectives within the school's action plan has been insufficiently rapid.
- At the time of the inspection, governors advised inspectors that they are actively seeking to recruit a permanent headteacher, but an appointment has yet to be made.
- This independent school standard remains unmet.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school's accessibility plan was not fit for purpose. It was not individualised and well considered in order to meet the needs of pupils at the school.
- The interim headteacher has worked well with governors to amend the accessibility plan so that it makes clear how both the school's premises and the curriculum will be adapted to meet the needs of pupils who have a disability.
- The statutory requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are now met.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

- The statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage for child protection were not met at the time of the previous inspection. Leaders were not ensuring that children had a wide enough range of opportunities to develop their early reading, writing and number skills. Staff were not assessing children's learning precisely enough to be able to support them effectively.
- The interim headteacher has supported the early years leader to make rapid improvements to this aspect of the school's work. Teachers now have an accurate view of individual children's starting points. They use this, together with ongoing assessment, to plan activities that typically move children on in their learning.
- Teachers are helping children to develop their phonics skills, so that they can decode familiar and less familiar words. This is helping to develop children's reading ability. Teachers are developing children's vocabulary by discussing their work and play with them, and by reading stories that introduce unfamiliar words.
- Children have regular opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills. Many can form letters clearly and complete full and coherent sentences. Children are also developing their number skills well.

- Children are benefiting from being given regular opportunities to learn by exploring and playing, with minimal adult direction, including within the outdoor area. Sometimes, teachers do not choose resources that reflect children’s interests, or ensure that the things children do when they are learning independently are sufficiently challenging.
- The statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage are now 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 that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. 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

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that:
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures the persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school –
 - 34 (1) (c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	117654
DfE registration number	919/6228
Inspection number	10098209

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	49
Proprietor	ISKCON Bhaktivedanta Manor (International Society for Krishna Consciousness)
Chair	Mr Kapila Monet
Headteacher	Ms Shelpa Patel, interim headteacher
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,980
Telephone number	01923 851 005
Website	www.bhaktivedantamanorschool.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@bvmschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	25–27 September 2018

Information about this school

- The school is registered as a school with a religious character and a Hindu ethos.
- The school is registered to admit a maximum of 60 pupils. There are 49 pupils currently on roll. The registered age range is four to 11 years. Pupils currently at the school are aged four to 11 years.
- There are no pupils currently at the school who have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use supply staff.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

- The interim headteacher started at the school in January 2019.
- Ofsted has conducted seven inspections and an evaluation of three action plans. These are:
 - 27–30 September 2004, a standard inspection when the school was judged to be broadly meeting its objectives
 - 20–21 May 2008, a standard inspection when the school was judged to be good and the independent school standards were met
 - 28–29 February 2012, a standard inspection when the school was judged to be good and the independent school standards were met
 - 13–15 September 2016, a standard inspection when the school was judged to require improvement and was found not to meet all of the independent school standards
 - 13 December 2016, when an action plan was evaluated and found to be acceptable
 - 15 March 2017, an additional inspection when the school was found not to meet all of the independent school standards
 - 24 July 2017, when an action plan was evaluated and found to be acceptable
 - 11 January 2018, an additional inspection when the school was found to meet all of the independent school standards
 - 25–27 September 2018, a standard inspection when the school was judged to be inadequate and not all of the independent school standards were met
 - 9 January 2019, when an action plan was evaluated and found not to be acceptable.
- In March 2016, Ofsted conducted a material change inspection at the request of the DfE. This was to consider the proprietor's request to increase the number of registered pupils from 30 to 60 because, for the past four years, the school had admitted almost twice the number of pupils that it was permitted to admit. At the time of that inspection, the school was found to be unlikely to meet the independent school standards relating to the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils, the recording of sanctions and the suitability of staff and proprietors.
- The proprietorial body owns and runs an early years provision on the Hare Krishna temple at the Bhaktivedanta Manor site. The Manor Pre-School (URN 130503) is registered with Ofsted and is inspected separately. The school and pre-school are run separately.

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 is the first monitoring inspection since the standard inspection in September 2018, when the school did not meet all of the independent school standards.
- The DfE commissioned Ofsted to conduct this progress monitoring inspection without notice.
- Inspectors met with the interim headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead, other members of staff and the chair of the governing body. Inspectors spoke formally with a group of pupils.
- Inspectors visited classes to observe learning and scrutinised work in a large number of pupils' books. They scrutinised a range of documents, including curriculum plans, the school's self-evaluation and information relating to the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection team

Jason Howard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Pardy

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

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

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if—
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work—
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school—
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) 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—
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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