

The Island Project School

Diddington Hall, Diddington Lane, Meriden, West Midlands CV7 7HQ

Inspection dates

2 July 2019

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

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe were ineffective. There were no systems in place for monitoring staff or pupils' use of the internet.
- Leaders took effective action to improve the safeguarding arrangements in the school after the previous inspection. Leaders introduced an appropriate firewall. The information technology infrastructure in the school is managed by a member of staff who also conducts regular checks of staff and pupils' own electronic devices. Leaders have updated the school's e-safety policy, which is currently under review once more.
- Leaders have published a safeguarding policy on the school's website which is up to date and appropriate. This policy is understood by all staff and has been implemented effectively.
- All standards for this paragraph are met.

Paragraph 9

- Leaders have implemented a clear behaviour policy that explains how staff will manage pupils' behaviour. They have also implemented a separate policy explaining how staff will use reasonable force appropriately, if deemed necessary. Leaders monitor pupils' behaviour closely and ensure a record is kept of any sanctions imposed. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the policy and apply it effectively.
- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Paragraph 10

- Leaders promote positive relationships throughout the school community. They identify and make good use of opportunities for pupils to socialise and interact with each other. Leaders have implemented an anti-bullying policy that is clear and effective. There have been no incidents of bullying this year.
- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Paragraph 11

- At the time of the previous inspection, there were significant failings in the health and safety standards in the school. Leaders did not have an effective health and safety policy in place.
- The school's action plan proposed that a more detailed health and safety policy would be written and shared with all staff.
- Leaders have updated the school's health and safety policy. It has been shared with all staff and implemented effectively. The policy includes sufficient detail to ensure health and safety standards in the school are maintained to an appropriately high level. The new and improved health and safety policy covers health and safety risks identified during the previous inspection, including those associated with asbestos and legionella.
- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Paragraph 12

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not reduced the risks identified in their fire risk assessment plan.
- The school's action plan sets out leaders' intentions to ensure that the site is safe and that risks associated with fire are assessed and appropriate action is taken to reduce them.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action. Following the previous inspection, leaders commissioned an external fire safety review and improved their fire risk assessment plan. Leaders have considered the potential fire risks on both sites and retain information centrally and in an orderly manner.
- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are appropriately supervised at all times during the school day. The majority of pupils receive one-to-one support. Leaders ensure that all pupils receive the level of supervision specified in their education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders did not have an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. Moreover, they had not applied window restrictors to the windows on the upper floors of the building that were used by pupils.
- Leaders had not responded to the risks posed by asbestos. Asbestos had been identified previously and was present inside several fireplaces, yet leaders had not done anything to reduce the risk associated with this dangerous material. Equally, leaders had not identified the potential dangers of legionella, or sought to reduce the risks associated with it.
- The action plan addresses this issue appropriately. A risk assessment policy is now in place and leaders have carried out extensive risk assessments of both school sites. Leaders are now taking suitable precautions to prevent, manage and control the risk of exposure to asbestos and legionella. Regular checks of asbestos, and for legionella, are undertaken by appropriately qualified personnel. Leaders maintain accurate logs of all

checks undertaken and ensure that all staff and visitors are aware of the location of asbestos. There are also clear instructions on outside taps to reduce the risk of legionella.

- The school is located in a Grade 2 listed building, which prevents the antiquated windows from being replaced. Leaders have installed window restrictors that prevent the windows from opening too widely yet still allowing adequate ventilation.
- Leaders have improved the quality of risk assessments in all areas of the school. Each pupil has their own risk assessment which includes risks associated with travel and off-site activities. Leaders are quick to identify and respond to risks. They have recently removed some poisonous plants from the school grounds to prevent pupils from ingesting them. Leaders now record the details of accidents that happen on- and off-site. This information is analysed carefully by leaders and used to inform pupils' individual risk assessments.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 24(2)

- At the time of the previous inspection, there was no suitable accommodation to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils. The action plan proposed that the medical room would be relocated to an appropriate part of the school building.
- Leaders have relocated the medical room to an appropriate space. This new accommodation is located on the ground floor, providing access for all pupils. The room has warm running water and is equipped with a bed and shower. The toilets that were in this space have been removed and the area has been converted into a storage room. There is now a toilet in an adjacent room, with full disabled access.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met.

Paragraph 25

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that the school site and facilities were maintained to an appropriately high standard. There was no supply of warm water for pupils to wash their hands in the toilet facilities. Furthermore, there were insufficient precautions in place for pupils, staff and visitors who may encounter asbestos. Moreover, leaders had not responded effectively to the potential risk of legionella.
- The site was deemed to be unsafe in certain respects. The windows on the upper floors opened excessively wide as they were not fitted with window restrictors. The outside space was also deemed to be unsafe in certain parts. It could be accessed by members of the public and stinging nettles were prevalent in the play area.
- Leaders responded quickly following the previous inspection to improve the school site and ensure that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are secured as far as is reasonably practicable. There is now an adequate supply of warm running water in the toilet facilities. Leaders have introduced appropriate checks for legionella and ensure that all staff, pupils and visitors are aware of the risks associated with asbestos. The outside site is now secure. Leaders have introduced an appropriate gate system that prevents unauthorised access to the school site, and they are quick to remove stinging

nettles and poisonous plants when they appear.

- The standard for this paragraph is met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders did not demonstrate they had the skills and knowledge necessary to be effective in their roles. Leaders did not have appropriate risk assessment procedures in place. Safeguarding arrangements in the school were not effective.
- The action plan produced by leaders sets out what they will do to ensure that they demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary for them to be successful in their roles. Leaders have demonstrated that they have the requisite knowledge and skills by successfully addressing all of the issues raised at the time of the previous inspection.
- Leaders are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, and they ensure that pupils are safe. They promote good relationships between pupils and use opportunities for them to socialise together appropriately. Staff are quick to identify signs that may suggest a pupil is at risk from harm. They pass safeguarding concerns to leaders without delay, and leaders are equally quick to refer concerns to the local authority and to access external support when necessary.
- Leaders have introduced adequate security measures to ensure appropriate access to the internet. They have made the school site more secure by installing a new external gate and have fitted window restrictors to prevent the risk of falling.
- Leaders carry out regular risk assessments of the site, and they ensure that all users are fully aware of the risks associated with asbestos. Visitors are made aware of the areas that contain asbestos, and clear signage indicates the precise location of the material. Leaders have also arranged regular legionella risk assessments and have implemented measures to reduce the likelihood of water contamination. All pupils have their own risk assessments that are reviewed regularly.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate checks of their fire risk assessment, fire evacuation plans, and fire-fighting equipment are completed regularly. Leaders maintain accurate fire safety records.
- Leaders have been quick to relocate the medical room to a suitable part of the school. The new facility is equipped with a bed and has warm running water and a shower. There is a toilet, with disabled access, in a separate room adjacent to the medical room. All toilet facilities have warm running water.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are appropriately supervised. They ensure that the levels of supervision match pupils' EHC plans.
- All standards for these paragraphs are met. As a result of leaders' actions, safeguarding is now effective.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	135453
DfE registration number	334/6010
Inspection number	10100616

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 special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	6
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietors	Jacqueline Walters-Hutton Carol Howe
Chair	Jacqueline Walters-Hutton
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Gallagher
Annual fees (day pupils)	£47,940 to £67,629
Telephone number	01675 442 588
Website	www.theislandproject.co.uk
Email address	admin@ipschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	22 to 24 May 2018

Information about this school

- The Island Project is an independent day special school for pupils who have an autistic spectrum disorder and have additional communication difficulties. The school does not have a religious ethos.
- The main school site caters for pupils between the ages of five and 15. It is situated in a grade 2 listed building within extensive grounds in Solihull, West Midlands.

- There are six pupils on roll between the ages of 16 and 19. These pupils are educated at a separate site in Coleshill, West Midlands.
- All pupils have an EHC plan.
- There are plans to relocate the school to a new site near Shirley, West Midlands. This is because of the likely impact of the High Speed Two (HS2) rail project. These plans were in place at the time of the previous inspection. However, the proprietors are still awaiting confirmation of a relocation date.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This unannounced 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 first progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged inadequate at the standard inspection in May 2018.
- The school submitted an action plan outlining its proposals to address the unmet standards. This action plan was evaluated in November 2018. The proposed action plan was judged acceptable with modifications.
- The inspector walked around the two school sites with the headteacher to evaluate the suitability of the premises and accommodation.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, risk assessments, attendance registers and other school policies.
- The inspector met with various members of the senior leadership team, including the proprietors.

Inspection team

Niall Gallagher, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2019