

Kingsbrook School

Southburgh, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 7TJ

Inspection dates

10 September 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 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h)

- The previous inspection found weaknesses in the quality of education provided. This continues to be the case. The standard is not met. A lack of thorough monitoring by the proprietor and the school's previous leaders have slowed the progress made in improving the school.
- Until very recently, school leaders and the proprietor have not done enough to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and provide pupils with a wider range of subjects and qualifications. Very little staff training has taken place since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have made recent improvements. Staff now have clear guidance to follow about leaders' expectations of them. Following recent testing of pupils, staff show a better understanding of pupils' interests and abilities. A new, more appropriate curriculum suited to the different needs of pupils has been introduced this year. Classes have been reorganised so that pupils of similar abilities learn together with the same teacher. Changes to the timings of lessons help pupils keep their concentration and learn well.
- In lessons, pupils benefit from the one-to-one tuition provided by teachers and learning support assistants. This high level of teaching and support promotes regular discussion and develops pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Teachers help pupils to practise basic calculations and find out things for themselves. Staff are well organised and use the resources available in classrooms effectively to capture pupils' interest. At times, teachers do not make full use of assistants in the classroom to fully support pupils in their learning.
- The curriculum and the procedures to assess how well pupils are progressing are new this year. Some training has taken place to show staff what pupils need to learn and to consider different ways of planning and presenting learning to pupils. This approach is at an early stage of development. Some staff and most pupils are new to the school this year. Teachers are still finding out about the needs and abilities of each pupil and developing their planning of learning to meet their very different needs.
- The new head of school and the proprietor have begun to visit lessons regularly to gain

a better overview of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. This is beginning to identify what staff do well and what needs improving. A programme of staff training is now in place to boost the confidence of staff and increase their effectiveness. However, at this stage, leaders have very little information to show that the overall quality of education is improving. Leaders do not yet monitor the school's work systematically to collate evidence that shows that the actions they are taking are leading to improvement.

- Strategies used to manage pupils' behaviour and encourage them to act responsibly generally work well. Good relationships between pupils and staff and firm but sensitive management of behaviour ensure that pupils enjoy learning and make steady progress. Pupils are respectful, polite and respond well to staff. Strategies are less effective in the late afternoons, when pupils' concentration and interest dwindle. Some pupils wander out of lessons and disengage from learning. Leaders are aware of this issue. They recognise that as the new curriculum becomes established, different arrangements may be needed to keep pupils fully engaged in learning throughout the afternoons.
- This standard remains unmet.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(c), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g)

- The previous inspection found that the proprietor was not ensuring that information about the school was in place, published and shared with parents and carers. Significant progress has been made in ensuring that this standard is met.
- The proprietor has taken responsibility for checking that the school's website contains all the required information and is fully compliant. This includes a copy of the previous inspection report. A hard copy of the report was also posted to parents and carers. Up-to-date contact details and names of the proprietor, the head of school and the chair of governors are published on the school's website.
- The website includes policies for complaints, pupil admissions, behaviour and exclusions, health and safety and first aid. Information about the welfare and provision for pupils who have an education, health and care plan and those who speak English as an additional language is in place. There is no information about the school's academic performance during the preceding school year as no pupils were entered for external examinations or tests in 2019.
- Information on the government's register of schools and colleges in England is out of date. The proprietor acknowledges this shortfall and is taking action to update this information.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the time of the previous inspection, the proprietor was not ensuring that persons with leadership and management responsibilities were fulfilling their roles in meeting the independent school standards. This continues to be the case. This standard is not met. Gains have been made in improving the information provided about the school, but further work is needed to improve the quality of education.

- The proprietor has taken action to strengthen the school's leadership and add additional capacity to make improvements. A head of school has been appointed. She promptly identified a range of weaknesses in the school's provision. This includes inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and a curriculum that was not well organised or suitable for all pupils. In a short space of time she has formed a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has rightly prioritised introducing a new curriculum and qualifications more suited to pupils' needs and interests. Other priorities include planning much needed training for staff and implementing new ways of monitoring the school's work. These procedures are very new and remain unproven.
- Following the previous inspection, the proprietor and the school's governors did not take enough action to monitor the school's work, build on the inspection findings and secure further improvement. This has restricted the school's improvement. An action plan to improve provision submitted by the proprietor following the previous inspection was not accepted by Ofsted.
- Leaders have put in place a revised action plan. Plans rightly prioritise a range of essential improvements but do not clearly identify what will be done to ensure that all the independent school standards are fully met. Currently, plans state that the proprietor will check at regular intervals that the actions taken by leaders to meet all the standards are working. However, there is little evidence to show that these procedures are being carried out systematically. At this stage, it is unclear what leaders and the proprietor will do to ensure that all these standards are fully met.
- The head of school has taken responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are robust and that records are well maintained. The details of two new staff who transferred from another local provision operated by the proprietor have been added to the single central record. The proprietor and the head of school make regular checks that the record is updated and accurate. New procedures ensure that safeguarding concerns raised by staff are recorded systematically and followed up appropriately. Weekly meetings involving all staff ensure that the welfare and safety of each individual pupil is constantly reviewed.

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 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that:
 - 32(1)(c) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request;
 - 32(1)(d) following an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, a copy of the report of the inspection (if it has been sent to the proprietor) is published and maintained on the school's internet website, and provided to the parents of each registered pupil, by any date specified by the body who conducted the inspection.
- 32(2) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is:
 - 32(2)(a) the school's address and telephone number and the name of the head teacher;
 - 32(2)(b) either:
 - 32(2)(b)(ii) where the proprietor is a body of persons, the address and telephone number of its registered or principal office;
 - 32(2)(c) where there is a governing body, the name and address for correspondence of its Chair.
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is:
 - 32(3)(a) particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions;
 - 32(3)(b) particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language;
 - 32(3)(c) particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2;
 - 32(3)(d) particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 13;
 - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations;
 - 32(3)(f) details of the complaints procedure referred to in paragraph 33, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding

school year; and

- 32(3)(g) a copy of the report of any inspection carried out under sections 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act or section 87(1) of the 1989 Act.

School details

Unique reference number	145159
DfE registration number	926/6017
Inspection number	10111860

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	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	6
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	4
Proprietor	Priory Education and Children's Services
Chair	Michelle Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Ursula Castillo
Annual fees (day pupils)	£62,000
Telephone number	01953 852303
Website	www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk/find-a-location/kingsbrook-school-norfolk
Email address	kingsbrookschool@priorygroup.com
Date of previous standard inspection	8–10 January 2019

Information about this school

- The school is located in a rural part of Norfolk.
- It caters for up to 15 pupils aged 11 to 18 years who have complex social, emotional and mental health needs. All of them have an education, health and care plan.
- Most pupils arrive having missed long periods of schooling.
- Admission to the school is through local authority and social services referral.

- The school is owned by Priory Children and Education Services.
- A new executive head of school joined the school in July 2019, following the departure of the previous head of school. She is responsible for leading this school and another local provider operated by the proprietor.
- Two members of staff have transferred across to the school from the other provision.
- The chair of the governing body has changed since the previous inspection.

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.
- The inspector and head of school jointly observed pupils at work in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the head of school, and two senior representatives of the proprietor.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation provided by leaders, including the school's self-evaluation, monitoring records, action plan, behaviour logs, safeguarding records and policy and procedures on the school's website.
- The inspector spoke with pupils informally during the day.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 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(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
 - 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(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
 - 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;
 - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

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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