

New Level Academy

Third Floor, Ujima House, 388 Wembley High Road, London HA9 6AR

Inspection dates

28 January 2020

Overall outcome

The school does not meet 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) and 7(b)

- At the previous material change inspection in August 2019, leaders' enhanced safeguarding training had lapsed. Information to evidence leaders' actions in managing concerns, referrals and actions taken was unavailable. Leaders spoken to did not have a clear enough understanding of how to keep pupils safe from harm.
- This inspection found staff to have been suitably trained earlier this month in line with the latest statutory guidance. Leaders also completed some suitable online training in October 2019, two months after the previous inspection. However, the school's child protection policy no longer reflects the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Though the first two pages of the policy state that the September 2019 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance is followed, this is contradicted on the third page onwards, and the key changes in guidance are not reflected or referenced in the policy. The policy also wrongly states that the designated safeguarding leader is somebody who left the school in August 2019. Leaders spoken to again did not have a sharp understanding of how to keep pupils as safe from harm as possible, especially in terms of the latest statutory guidance.
- The independent school standard remains not met.

Paragraph 12

- At the previous inspection, there was not enough available evidence to confirm that the school complied with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- This inspection confirms that the school does not comply with this legislation. The required checks on the emergency lighting are not taking place, and none are recorded. The required certification for fire safety checks is not in place. Leaders continue to rely entirely on the sparse evidence provided by the building's owners. The proprietors have not taken responsibility for fire safety on their floor of the shared premises.
- The independent school standard remains not met.

Paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- At the previous inspection, there was no written risk assessment policy, the written risk assessment for the premises was inadequate and there were no suitable written risk assessments for use of the nearby park and leisure centre facilities.
- This inspection found that there is now a risk assessment policy, but it seems to be copied from elsewhere. Its introduction sums up its lack of relevance and suitability: 'this policy is to state how our establishment deals with the requirements of the law regarding the safety of electrical systems and equipment'.
- Despite this, the risk assessment of the premises is now far more useful and credible. It is supplemented by suitable assessments for the use of nearby boxing and football facilities.
- The independent school standard remains not met.

Paragraph 15

- In light of the reduction in the number of pupils on roll, the inspector scrutinised the admission register. The register does not include pupils' sex or full details of their previous schools. It is therefore not compliant with legislation.
- This independent school standard is now not met.
- The independent school standards checked in this part are not met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(b), 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(ii) and 21(3)(a)(iii)

- The school's single central register (SCR) of vetting checks is now compliant, as it includes all the required information. This includes barred list checks, prohibition checks for all staff working with pupils, and enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. The inspector identified one omission on the SCR, which was rectified during the inspection.
- The independent school standards checked in this part are now met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b) and 24(2)

- At the previous inspection, there was no medical room facility.
- This inspection found a portable washing facility and a camp bed to have been placed in a computing room with no signage. The washing facility was not equipped with water or soap and there were no medical supplies in the room. The camp bed was placed next to a pile of disused computer units and a broken chair.
- As there is still no suitable medical room facility, the independent school standards remain not met.
- The independent school standards checked in this part are not met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- In the absence of a website, the school's child protection policy is readily available to parents electronically or in hard copy.
- The independent school standard checked in this part continues to be met.
- The independent school standards checked in this part are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- This inspection found there to have been very little progress in tackling the deficiencies identified in August 2019. There is a serious lack of attention to detail. This compromises quality, compliance and potentially pupils' safety. The proprietors are currently seeking support and guidance from new governors who may be able to help.
- Leaders acknowledge that the current premises are unsuitable and are vacating, and relocating, probably as soon as Easter 2020.
- The independent school standard checked in this part is again not 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.

School details

Unique reference number	142832
DfE registration number	304/6003
Inspection number	10133629

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	Alternative provision
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Two Point Four FM Ltd
Chair	Terry Springer
Headteacher	Terry Springer
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,500 to £13,000
Telephone number	020 8838 3529
Website	None
Email address	tspringer@newlevel.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	16–18 January 2018

Information about this school

- New Level Academy is a small independent school and alternative provider for pupils in the London Borough of Brent.
- The school provides permanent school placements and temporary alternative provision for up to 16 boys and girls with social, emotional and mental health needs. The school works with pupils excluded from, or at risk of exclusion from, schools in the vicinity. Most pupils are dual-registered. A very few pupils have education, health and care plans. The number of pupils on roll has decreased since the previous inspection.

- The school makes no use of alternative provision. However, pupils attend physical education sessions at the boxing gym which is located within the same building as the school (Stonebridge boxing club) and football sessions at Powerleague, Wembley HA9 0EG.
- Leaders have decided not to pursue any application to extend their age range or increase numbers.
- The school intends to vacate its current premises in the near future. It is most likely that the school will relocate to new premises at 45 Denmark Road, Kilburn NW6 5BP.

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 first progress monitoring inspection, commissioned by the registration authority since the school's material change inspection in August 2019, was conducted without notice. Since the August 2019 inspection, the school was asked to submit an action plan. It was judged by Ofsted as unacceptable, and subsequently rejected by the Department for Education (DfE).
- The DfE requested that the inspector consider whether particular independent school standards contained within Parts 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 are now met.
- The inspector met with the chair of the proprietorial body, who is also the headteacher. He toured the school's premises, checked the single central register of vetting checks, and considered a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding, health and safety and risk assessment.
- The chair of the proprietorial body was clear that the school no longer wishes to make any material changes to its registration agreement with the DfE. This inspection therefore only considered the school's progress in meeting the independent school standards judged as unmet in August 2019.
- There were not enough recent responses to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View) to consider as part of this inspection.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

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 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.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 16(a) 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
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including-
 - 24(1)(a) accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils;
 - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility.
- 24(2) The accommodation provided under sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b) may be used for other purposes (apart from teaching) provided it is always readily available to be used for the purposes set out in sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b).

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; and

- 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction.
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
 - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction.

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