

Buckswood School

Broomham Hall, Rye Road, Guestling, Hastings, East Sussex TN35 4LT

21–27 June 2017

Overall outcome

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

Boarding provision outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a)

- During the last inspection, in March this year, there was no curriculum overview identifying how the needs of different year groups and pupils with different levels of English would be supported to develop their skills and knowledge across the curriculum.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have devised a curriculum policy which explains how the school seeks to meet the learning needs of pupils across the school, including those who are new to English.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g), 4

- Leaders have not monitored the quality of teaching sufficiently to ensure that it meets pupils' needs. Although some leaders checked how well pupils learned, some did not do this well enough so they did not identify and take action to support pupils who are falling behind.
- Some leaders continue to visit lessons and check whether teaching is effective. Some leaders also review planning and consider whether it meets pupils' needs well. However, there is still not a consistent approach to this across the school. Where teaching and learning is not as effective as it should be, there is not an agreed approach to either improving performance or managing capability.
- The curriculum policy states how pupils will learn to keep themselves safe. Discussions with pupils show that they learn much about being safe online, including understanding what internet grooming is and strategies to ensure that it does not happen to them. They learn about the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and know what bullying is and that it is not acceptable. However, pupils are not taught about face-to-face grooming, nor what is and is not acceptable in terms of physical contact. This means that the school does not teach pupils to be safe in all situations.

- Leaders and teachers are in the process of reviewing the way in which they record the progress pupils make so that they can more easily analyse where pupils are not doing as well as they could. However, a new system has not been implemented and, although there are signs that leaders are trying to resolve this, there is much more to do for this to help improve pupils' progress.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 8, 8(a), 8(b)

- At the previous inspection, pupils and boarders were not kept safe because the proprietor, leaders and staff did not know enough either about safeguarding or the relevant statutory documentation which sets out the requirements and standards.
- Although leaders have taken action to improve aspects of safeguarding at the school, pupils and boarders continue not to be kept safe. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and two deputy DSLs have received the required training from the local authority, which clarifies how allegations against staff should be managed. However, despite this training and subsequent reminders, DSLs continue to provide details of allegations to the staff members subject to the complaints. As a result of this incorrect practice, staff who are involved have time to remove evidence before internal or police investigations commence. These actions suggest that leaders either are not able, or do not wish, to resolve safeguarding weaknesses at the school.
- Staff reporting of concerns is better than it was and staff often make referrals if they have concerns about staff or pupils. However, this is not yet embedded and the documentation is not sufficiently detailed, so wider issues cannot be picked up quickly.
- Historical issues, where safer recruitment processes were not followed, means that there are risks related to employment decisions relating to staff who continue to work at the school. Leaders have not yet taken action to assess, manage and mitigate these risks, nor have they ensured that these misjudgements could not be repeated. Additionally, leaders have not shared information appropriately with DSLs or senior leaders, so staff who may pose a risk to pupils are not monitored.
- There is insufficient accountability to ensure that boarders are kept safe at all times. For example, the proprietor is a housemaster and head of boarding, as well as being the person with overall accountability. Leaders have begun to recognise where changes need to be made but too little has been done to ensure that boarders are safe.

Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 10, 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- In March, behaviour was judged not good enough. Pupils who demonstrated challenging behaviour were not managed and supported to behave better. Leaders did not ensure that bullying was dealt with effectively or that the documentation to support management of behaviour and bullying helped staff to know what to do. There was a lack of supervision by staff at times so pupils could access boarding provision without anyone being aware. Processes around assessing and managing risk were not sufficiently robust.
- Pupils say that staff now have higher expectations of behaviour and generally apply rewards and sanctions fairly. However, documented evidence shows that staff deal with similar incidents in different ways, with some talking to pupils informally and others

removing privileges. Recording of incidents is not sufficiently detailed to enable leaders to identify patterns and areas which could be improved.

- It is evident from complaints and records of incidents that it is not an unusual occurrence for pupils to consume alcohol. There is no investigation as to how the alcohol is acquired and the sanctions are typically relatively minor. This means that pupils are not discouraged from breaking the law.
- Leaders now record incidents of bullying but further information is required for these records to be useful and provide accurate information. Documentation shows that leaders and staff do not take a consistent approach to investigating allegations, and the sanctions applied vary considerably. There is no evidence that staff follow up incidents to ensure that they have not recurred, and opportunities are missed to provide support to victims.
- Leaders plan for staff to be appropriately situated around the school site and buildings when pupils are not in class. Because boarding accommodation is used during the day to supplement the shortage of toilets and lockers available to pupils, arrangements have now been made to ensure that a member of staff is in each of the buildings where pupils might be.
- The new risk assessment policy is useful and appropriate. However, a number of risk assessments are missing, including ones to ensure that any staff who might have convictions are safe to work with pupils, and individual risk assessments for pupils with specific requirements. This means that the policy is not being implemented effectively.

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

Paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(e), 18(2)(f), 18(3), 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(viii)

- At the last inspection, the proprietor failed to ensure that the necessary checks were carried out to ensure that staff were safe to work with pupils.
- Leaders and those involved with recruitment have now completed the required safe recruitment training so they understand what they need to do to meet their statutory obligations.
- The required checks are now carried out and are completed in advance of appointments being confirmed. Applicants for positions now complete an application form and provide proof of identity at interview. All staff are subject to a disclosure and barring check, which is completed before staff join the school. The processes around recruitment are now followed robustly.
- The single central register provides an accurate record of staff details, checks and required information. The register includes all staff, including external coaches, who work at the school.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(d)

- Previously, the hot water was not regulated and, at times, became so hot that pupils and boarders were at risk of being scalded.

- Temperature regulators have now been fitted to hot water tanks and regular checks are carried out to ensure that the water remains safe for pupils to use.

Part 6. Provision of information

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

- At the last inspection, some of the statutory information which should be published and available to parents was not on the school's website.
- Leaders have ensured that the above information is available on the website. Parents can now identify who the headteacher and proprietor is, and how to contact him if necessary. Some of the information is not as easily accessible as it could be because although staff at the school know exactly where to look, some of the headings are not clear and documents are not always located in an obvious place.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i).

- In March, the policy for managing complaints did not specify how parental concerns would be dealt with. It did not identify time frames by which parents should expect a response, nor how they might take further action if they are not satisfied with the response.
- Leaders have devised and published an appropriate complaints policy which enables concerns to be dealt with informally before formal processes are implemented. Procedures for responding to complaints and hearing appeals are appropriate and meet requirements. There is now a written record of complaints, although it lacks a summary with salient details that would enable leaders to track concerns and recurring themes more easily.

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, many of the independent school standards and national minimum standards for boarding schools were not met.
- There continues to be a number of unmet standards, both for school and boarding. Although leaders have responded seriously to some of the concerns raised, and have taken swift action in many respects, leaders have not ensured that safeguarding requirements are met and that pupils are safe.
- The headteacher and proprietor is still not accountable to anyone. Senior leaders report directly to the headteacher, but they are not held formally accountable, and monitoring of practice is not planned or routinely carried out by the headteacher. This means that necessary processes to ensure that the headteacher and leaders are effective in their roles and fulfil their responsibilities are not in place.
- Although leaders give a strong verbal message that they want the school to improve, ongoing and repeated weaknesses in safeguarding practice indicate that leaders either do not want to, or cannot, change the culture of safeguarding at Buckswood. This means that pupils are not safe while in school or boarding.

Boarding provision

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools that were assessed during this inspection

The school must ensure that:

- arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (NMS 11.1).
- The school has and consistently implements a written policy on managing behaviour, including promoting good behaviour. This policy includes: measures to combat bullying, including cyber bullying, and to promote positive behaviour; school rules; disciplinary sanctions; when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and how this will be recorded and managed; and arrangements for searching children and their possessions (NMS 12.1). The policy complies with relevant legislation and has regard to guidance, and is understood by staff and children (NMS 12.2).
- At the previous inspection, the same issues of safeguarding and management of behaviour and bullying that pertained to the school were replicated for boarding provision. Concerns were not identified, recorded or responded to. Risks were not routinely assessed and managed. Inspectors were also concerned that there was no policy or procedure in place for restraint of pupils, should it be necessary.
- Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have taken action to provide the designated safeguarding officers and boarding staff with appropriate training. There is some development in responding to concerns raised by staff about boarders, and boarding staff are clear in their understanding of the processes for raising concerns. However, recording of concerns lacks analysis, depth, the historical context and details of the action needed to protect boarders. Risks are not well identified, understood or managed to support the safeguarding of boarders effectively. Individual risk assessment is not robustly used as an effective tool to determine and/or minimise risks. The management of allegations against staff is not rigorous.
- The school has made some progress in relation to systems to identify poor behaviour. Incidents of bullying are now recorded. Boarding staff have undertaken training to ensure that they employ safe techniques when using physical intervention. However, systems to track and monitor incidents are not embedded, resulting in an inconsistent approach to behaviour management. The recording of incidents is not robust.
- The use of restraint policy has been reviewed and, through additional training, boarding staff are more competent in managing challenging behaviour.

The school's governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school, and takes appropriate action where necessary (NMS 13.1).

- This standard is not met. Effective monitoring of leaders and managers by the school's proprietor is not yet taking place. There is no evidence of robust scrutiny or evaluation of practice to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the boarding provision with the action required to address shortfalls. There are plans to restructure the management of boarding but these will not be implemented until the start of the new academic year.

Currently, there is no evidence of the introduction of systems to rigorously monitor the delivery of boarding within the school. The action plan developed in response to the breaches of the national minimum standards in March 2017 does not make clear how senior leaders will monitor progress towards meeting the standards to ensure that actions taken are making a difference in a significant number of areas.

There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of boarding in the school, and effective links are made between academic and residential staff (NMS 13.2).

- This standard is not met. Boarding staff are not provided with adequate support and guidance to ensure their ongoing professional development and evaluation of their practice. The boarding organisation and management policy approved on 4 May 2017 states that the head and the boarding coordinator, 'has meetings with the staff involved as appropriate in addition to their weekly scheduled meetings'. These weekly scheduled meetings are boarding staff team meetings. Some, but not all, boarding staff say they have individual weekly meetings with the manager of boarding. The policy does not make it clear that boarding staff will receive regular reviews of their practice. No evidence was provided to demonstrate that boarding staff are receiving one-to-one supervision of their practice. There are no records of boarding staff receiving a formal appraisal to consider their professional development.

The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role (NMS 13.3).

- This standard is not met. Some progress has been made in providing the safeguarding leader and the boarding coordinator with the training required to fulfil their roles as designated safeguarding officers. However, the necessary skills, awareness and understanding of safeguarding within the school's leadership and management team continues to be weak and ineffective in protecting boarders.

The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met (NMS 13.4).

- This standard is not met. Leaders and managers have focused on reviewing policies since shortcomings were identified in March 2017. However, there is little evidence that they have taken robust action to tackle the weaknesses, particularly in relation to safeguarding boarders. Clear management systems to evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken to meet the national minimum standards are not evident. A member of boarding staff has been appointed to monitor compliance with the national minimum standards from the start of the new academic year.

The school's leadership and management and governance actively promote the well-being of pupils (NMS 13.5).

- This standard is not met. Inadequate levels of scrutiny and a lack of monitoring systems, particularly in relation to safeguarding, are not promoting the welfare of boarders. Although the proprietor liaises with the designated safeguarding leader regarding safeguarding concerns, he has not undertaken relevant safeguarding training to provide the necessary scrutiny and challenge to safeguard boarders.

The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate (NMS 13.8).

- This standard is not met. Progress has been made in ensuring that arrangements for recruiting and vetting staff are sufficiently rigorous to prevent unsuitable adults gaining access to pupils. However, the school is not keeping records of staff supervision and appraisal.

The issues specified in Appendix 3 are monitored, and action taken to improve outcomes for children as appropriate (NMS 13.9).

- This standard is not met. There is insufficient evidence of robust monitoring of the boarding provision to identify whether the issues listed in Appendix 3 are regularly reviewed by leaders and managers to identify whether changes in welfare practice are needed.

The school operates safe recruitment and adopts recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State (NMS 14.1).

- This standard is met. Progress has been made in ensuring that arrangements for recruiting and vetting staff are sufficiently rigorous to prevent unsuitable adults gaining access to pupils. Staff responsible for recruitment records have been trained in safer recruitment, have updated the single central register and are developing a culture of safe recruitment.

Any staff member or volunteer employed or volunteering in a position working with boarders has a job description reflecting their duties, receives induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receives regular reviews of their boarding practice, with opportunities for training and continual professional development in boarding (NMS 15.1).

- This standard is not met. Boarding staff are not receiving regular reviews of their boarding practice. Consequently, leaders and managers cannot be confident that boarding staff have the necessary level of knowledge and understanding of safeguarding practice to protect boarders. There are no records to demonstrate that boarding staff have undertaken an appraisal to identify their training and development needs to safeguard boarders and promote their welfare.

Staff working within the school know and implement the school's policy in relation to boarders going missing and their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for boarders who are missing, including working with police where appropriate (NMS 15.6).

- This standard is not met. The 'missing boarders and child exploitation' policy approved on 6 April 2017 is a document that sets out a list of what staff should do if a boarder's whereabouts are not known. It is not a rigorous and robust policy linked to wider safeguarding issues and does not take account of the requirements outlined in the statutory guidance for children missing from home and/or education. Consequently, staff do not fully understand the risks associated with pupils who go missing and thus pupils are not effectively safeguarded. The information in this policy relating to child sexual exploitation remains weak and makes no mention of recently published guidance from the Department for Education.

The school has, and follows, an appropriate policy on recording and responding to complaints that is compliant with the relevant regulatory standards (NMS 18.1).

- This standard is met. The complaints policy has been reviewed and amended to meet regulatory standards.

Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards'), the national minimum standards for boarding schools 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.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

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

- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
 - 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
 - involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - 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
 - 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(paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place (paragraph 4).
- 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 arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders while they are accommodated at the school; and such arrangements have regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools (paragraph 8, 8(a), 8(b)).
- The proprietor must promote good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour; and the policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementing of an effective anti-bullying strategy (paragraph 10).
- 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 school now meets the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that that a written policy on the curriculum is drawn up (paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff (paragraph 14).
- The following checks must be made as to the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than the proprietor and supply staff:
 - that 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
 - the person's medical fitness
 - that in the case of any person whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the secretary of state; and
 - in the case of staff who care for, train, supervise or are in charge of boarders, the proprietor checks that Standard 14 of the national minimum standards for boarding schools is complied with(paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(e), 18(2)(f)).
- The proprietor must ensure that checks are completed before a person's appointment (paragraph 18(3)).
- The proprietor keeps a register which shows a check was made to establish whether staff are 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 either such direction and that in the case of any person whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance

issued by the secretary of state (paragraph 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(viii)).

- In order to meet the standard about the premises and accommodation of the school, the proprietor must ensure that the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users (paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(d)).
- To meet the standard about the provision of information the proprietor must ensure that the following information is published and maintained on the school's website:
 - a copy of the report of an inspection carried out under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act
 - a copy of the report of an inspection under section 87(1) of the 1989 Act
 - the name of the headteacher
 - where the proprietor is an individual, the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays and a telephone number on which the proprietor may be contacted
 - particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for exclusions
 - particulars of educational provision for pupils with education, health and care plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language
 - the curriculum policy
 - particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations
 - the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year(paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(e), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which:
 - sets out clear timescales for the management of a complaint
 - allows for a complaint to be made and considered initially on an informal basis
 - where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, establishes a formal procedure for the complaint to be made in writing
 - where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint
 - ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school
 - allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish
 - provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is provided to the complainant and,

where relevant, the person complained about; and available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the headteacher

- provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made and whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing

(paragraph 33, 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i)).

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for boarding schools

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

- The school 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. (NMS 11.1)
- The school has and consistently implements a written policy to promote good behaviour among pupils. This policy includes:
 - measures to combat bullying, including cyberbullying, and to promote positive behaviour;
 - school rules;
 - disciplinary sanctions;
 - when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and how this will be recorded and managed; and
 - arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions. (NMS 12.1)
- The school's governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school and takes appropriate action where necessary. (NMS 13.1)
- There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of boarding in the school, and effective links are made between academic and residential staff. (NMS 13.2)
- The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role. (NMS 13.3)
- The school's leadership and management consistently fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met. (13.4)
- The school's leadership and management and governance actively promote the well-being of pupils. (NMS 13.5)
- The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate. (NMS 13.8)
- The issues specified in Appendix 3 are monitored, and action taken to improve outcomes for children as appropriate. (NMS 13.9)

- Any staff member or volunteer employed or volunteering in a position working with boarders has a job description reflecting their duties, receives induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receives regular reviews of their boarding practice, with opportunities for training and continual professional development in boarding. (NMS 15.1)
- Staff working within the school know and implement the school's policy in relation to boarders going missing and their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for boarders who are missing, including working with police where appropriate. (NMS 15.6)

The school now meets the following national minimum standards for boarding schools

- The policy complies with relevant legislation and has regard to guidance, and is understood by staff and pupils. (NMS 12.2)
- Schools operate safe recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State. (NMS 14.1)
- The school has, and follows, an appropriate policy to recording and responding to complaints that is compliant with the relevant regulatory standards. (NMS 18.1)

School details

Unique reference number	114656
Social care unique reference number	SC050170
DfE registration number	845/6031
Inspection number	10038279

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.

The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent boarding school
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	54
Number of part-time pupils	0
Number of boarders on roll	250
Proprietor	Giles Sutton
Headteacher	Giles Sutton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£12,900
Annual fees (boarders)	£20,400
Telephone number	01424 813 813
Website	www.buckswood.co.uk
Email address	achieve@buckswood.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	28–30 March 2017

Information about this school

- Buckswood School is a co-educational school for day and boarding pupils aged between 11 and 19. The school is not selective and admits pupils from over 45 different countries. Approximately one third of pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils join the school at different times and with varying abilities in written and spoken English.
- The school's motto is 'ad vitam paramus' – 'we are preparing for life'. The headteacher seeks to recognise the range of talents that pupils bring, and offers a curriculum that is intended to nurture these abilities.
- The school is based in attractive surroundings on the edge of Guestling, a village three miles north-east of Hastings. The school has a range of facilities including a swimming pool, stables, a vineyard and ponds. The school has recently opened an outdoor activity centre, where pupils can experience a range of adventurous activities.
- Just over half the pupils board in one of eight boarding houses. Seven are on the school site and one is about half a mile away and accessed by school transport.
- The previous inspection of the school and boarding provision took place in March 2017. At this time, the school and boarding were judged to be inadequate.
- No pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 inspection was carried out at the same time as the social care inspection. The inspection was carried out over two days, and Her Majesty's Inspector visited the school again the following week to gather further evidence.
- During the inspection, a local authority safeguarding review was taking place at the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher who is also the proprietor, senior leaders including the head of teaching and learning, and the head of boarding, subject advisers, teachers, boarding staff, and both day and boarding pupils to consider progress against the unmet standards.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documents relating to the education and boarding provision. This included the school's action plan, minutes of meetings, information about the curriculum, safeguarding documents, records of behaviour incidents and other documentation including the code of conduct and complaints policy.

Inspection team

Louise Adams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jan Hunnam

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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