

RISE Education

37–39 Western Road, Mitcham CR4 3ED

Inspection date

14 November 2023

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 to 7(b), 16 to 16(b), 34(1) and 34(1)(c)

- At the previous inspection in October 2022, the school's safer recruitment practice did not comply with statutory guidance. Leaders had not ensured that there was a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the recruitment process. Leaders were not clear about the process for risk assessments for visitors and gave contradictory accounts of the school's risk assessment process during the inspection.
- The school's post-inspection action plan set out a range of actions, including the completion of safer recruitment training by leaders and administrators, and an independent audit of safeguarding was planned and completed.
- This inspection found the safer recruitment process to now be compliant with statutory guidance. All applicants complete suitable application forms, and any gaps in employment history are followed up. Only professional references are accepted, including consistently from applicants' most recent employers. The interview process is suitably documented. Training for staff has improved school-wide understanding of strong recruitment and risk assessment practice. The management of visitors to the school is now more robust and consistent.
- Routine checks on safeguarding during the inspection found the school's safeguarding policy to be unhelpfully scheduled for review in February 2024. Leaders are changing this to ensure that their current policy reflects the latest statutory guidance. However, the school's culture of safeguarding is strong. Those leaders with responsibility for safeguarding have a clear understanding of the latest 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance. They ensured that training for staff covered all necessary changes in September 2023. Processes for identifying, dealing with and recording concerns and actions taken continue to be strong.
- Overall, the school's work to keep pupils safe, assess and minimise risk and actively promote pupils' well-being is now suitable.
- These independent school standards (the standards) checked are now met.

Part 6. Provision of information

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

- The previous inspection found that a range of key information for parents and carers was missing from the school's website.
- The school's action plan proposed to publish all the required information and policies in a timely fashion.
- This inspection found that all the required information is now published on the school's website. This includes contact details for the sole proprietor, chair of governors and headteacher. All the required policies, inspection reports and examination information are now available to parents.
- These standards checked are now met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33, 33(e) and 33(f)

- The previous inspection found that no effective complaints procedure was in place to handle complaints from parents of pupils at the school. The complaints policy had sections missing and was not suitably edited for this school.
- The school's action plan proposed that the proprietor would republish the complaints procedure on the school's website, but there was no further detail provided.
- This inspection found the school's complaints policy, published online, continues to be ineffective. It is unclear and confusing. On one page, a stage-by-stage approach to making a complaint is subsequently contradicted by the content on the following pages. It is not clear whether a formal complaint is to be made in writing to the chair of governors or to a complaints panel. Leaders acknowledge the need to rethink their complaints procedure in light of the specific requirements of the standards in this part.
- These standards checked remain not met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1) to 34(1)(b)

- The previous inspection found that the proprietor and leaders had taken steps to meet the standards but had not completed the shift from functioning as alternative provision to operating as an independent school. As a result, some standards were not met.
- The school's action plan proposed a range of actions, including appointing new leaders and governors and improving arrangements for training and monitoring.
- This inspection found there to have been a range of improvements. The proprietor, supported by a new senior leadership team, has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are now suitable. All the required information is now readily available to parents.
- There remains too limited an understanding of, and consistency in checking compliance with, all the standards. There is also a general lack of attention to detail. For example, arrangements to keep the website updated are too convoluted, and some policies contain inaccurate information.

- The standard checked remains 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. 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	136678
DfE registration number	315/6589
Inspection number	10295207

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 special school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	21
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Alton McDonald
Headteacher	Nina Cromwell
Annual fees (day pupils)	£17,000 to £45,000
Telephone number	020 8665 2605
Website	www.riseeducation.org.uk
Email address	admin@riseeducation.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	4 to 6 October 2022

Information about this school

- RISE Education is an independent special school for pupils aged 13 to 16. All pupils have education, health and care plans for their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The current headteacher took up her post in September 2023.
- The school's previous inspection was a graded inspection in October 2022.
- The school uses Play Place Innov8: Croydon Auto Bike Scheme (CABS), Croydon, CR0 9DX as alternative provision. The school also makes use of the facilities at Legacy Youth Zone, Croydon, CR0 2LG for pupils' physical education.

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 was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since its last graded inspection in October 2022. The inspection was conducted without notice.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders were asked to submit an action plan. This was judged by Ofsted to be unacceptable in April 2023 and was subsequently rejected by the Department for Education.
- The focus of the inspection was to check whether the school complies with particular requirements in parts 3, 6 and 8 of the standards.
- The inspector met with the sole proprietor, headteacher and those responsible for safeguarding. He also met with some pupils. The inspector toured the premises and reviewed a range of documents, including policies, risk assessments and the record of vetting checks on adults.

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 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which-
 - 33(e) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (d), establishes a formal procedure for the complaint to be made in writing;
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), 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;

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.

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.
- 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 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)(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)(b) either-
 - 32(2)(b)(i) where the proprietor is an individual, the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted, or
 - 32(2)(c) where there is a governing body, the name and address for correspondence of its Chair; and
- 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)(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.

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

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