



New Elizabethan School

Independent School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

DfES Registration Number 885/6021
Unique Reference Number 117030
Inspection number 296890
Inspection dates 6-7 March 2007
Reporting inspector Mr Andrew McDowall HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Age group 11-16	Published 30 March 2007	Reference no. 296890
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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

The present management took ownership of the New Elizabethan School in January 2007. The school has extensive grounds and is housed on the site of the old Queen Elizabeth 1 Grammar School. The school is non-selective and sets out to provide a safe learning environment in which each pupil can enjoy achieving high standards. Many of the pupils attend the school because they have failed to flourish in larger settings. Plans are well advanced to increase the number of pupils on the school roll and to extend the age range to include primary aged pupils. This is the school's first inspection by Ofsted.

Evaluation of the school

The New Elizabethan School provides a satisfactory quality of education. The school has been unaware of many of the regulations and currently there are areas where the level of compliance is low. However, the new proprietor is determined to improve this situation and prompt action is being taken to address these matters. The welfare, health and safety of pupils is inadequate due to the lack of school policies in important areas and shortcomings in the way the school ensures risks are assessed and managed.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory and all pupils make satisfactory progress overall. The school does not have a clear curriculum statement that explains how each subject will be taught or how work will be planned to meet the needs of pupils. However, what the school provides is generally broad and balanced and offers the pupils a satisfactory range of subjects to study. The school gives a strong emphasis to the teaching of English and mathematics. The pupils have the opportunity to study three sciences, there are good opportunities for individual music tuition and good amounts of time are allocated to physical education. Plans are well advanced to enhance the curriculum further through the introduction of courses in business studies, politics and law.

Schemes of work are in place for each subject. These have not been reviewed recently and they are not being consistently adapted to meet the needs of all abilities. The way in which the school manages the curriculum is weak. There

are no systems to monitor what work is covered or to evaluate the impact the curriculum is having on the pupils. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and aspects of citizenship are covered in assemblies and through other subjects such as in English and history. However, there is no overall plan outlining what topics will be covered. As a result the school cannot guarantee that the pupils will have the opportunity to learn about all the aspects of PHSE they need to help them make informed choices, both now and as they grow older. The pupils in the school do not receive the advice on careers they need. Consequently, they have a limited understanding of the world of work and the training options open to them in the future. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support the learning in some subjects, such as when finding out about civil rights activists in Black History week. There are few extra curricular opportunities at present but plans are in place to introduce football coaching, tennis, fencing and chess clubs in the near future.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The staff know the pupils well and manage behaviour effectively. Good attention is given to the social needs of the pupils and they make good gains in their social development during their time at the school. Relationships in the classrooms are good. Lessons are relaxed occasions where the pupils respond well to the staff and engage in good discussions about what they are learning. Although individual social needs are well catered for, not enough attention is paid to the individual learning needs of the pupils. There are no specific programmes of work to help pupils catch up if they are behind in their work.

The school has reduced considerably in size in recent years and this has resulted in teachers having to teach more than one subject. The staff have secure subject knowledge in their specialist areas but are less secure when teaching other subjects. Consequently, expectations are sometimes too low. The school is aware of this and new appointments have been made to increase the number of specialist teachers on the staff. The school has appropriate text books and good resources for English. Some resources in parts of the school are badly stored in untidy rooms. The resources for ICT are satisfactory but limited by the lack of access to the internet. However, plans are well advanced to upgrade the school computers in the near future.

The quality of assessment is inadequate. At present, other than in mathematics, the school does not have an effective way of measuring the progress each pupil is making. The pupils do not know enough about their targets and they have little involvement in assessing their own progress. There are weaknesses in the way pupils' work is assessed over time. The school does no standardised testing nor does it measure progress against the aims of the school. Most teachers mark the pupils work regularly and the pupils receive good feedback on their work in lessons. However, the quality of the written marking is too variable and in some subjects the work is not marked regularly enough to enable the teacher

to know how well the pupils are doing. The best marking tells the pupils why they have done well and gives them a target to aim for.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The social and moral development of the pupils is good. Pupils who have had difficulties in previous schools are welcomed by the other pupils and settle well. Attendance is good and most pupils say they enjoy school. The level of cooperation in lessons and around the school is good and pupils go out of their way to include others at playtimes. The pupils have a good sense of what is right and wrong and the curriculum provides good opportunities for them to discuss moral issues such as civil rights and euthanasia. The pupils demonstrate the capacity to listen to the views of others and respect the right to hold differing opinions on issues of the day. Recently introduced prefect and head boy posts provide opportunities for the pupils to take responsibility, although at present, the pupils are not clear about what these are.

Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. Many of the pupils are curious about the world, but there are insufficient opportunities for them to reflect and consider spiritual issues. The school provides opportunities for the pupils to learn about how people live in other countries, and pupils' own experiences of living abroad are used to inform this work. The school is well used by the local community for a range of social and sporting events. The pupils have some opportunities to engage with the community through fundraising and village events, but, in general, not enough use is made of the locality to enable the pupils to make a good contribution to the wider community. The lack of planned and specific career advice or work experience means that the pupils are not well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils are inadequate. Whilst the staff do care about the welfare of the pupils, and aspects of the day to day care are satisfactory, there are several shortcomings in the way policies to keep pupils safe have been developed and implemented. Policies have not been drafted with regard to the appropriate Department for Education and Skills (DfES) guidance. The school is aware of these shortcomings and urgent action is being taken to address these matters. Pupils are appropriately supervised at all times and report that they feel safe in school. Most pupils are confident that the staff will deal with any concerns they might have, although a minority feel they are

not always heard. The school promotes healthy eating through the curriculum and the pupils have satisfactory opportunities for sport and exercise.

Arrangements for child protection do not meet requirements because the staff have not received the training they need for them to be conversant with the current advice and guidance. The school does not have a policy outlining how educational visits will be managed and risk assessments are not completed for educational visits and school activities. However, risk assessment procedures relating to the school site have been recently reviewed. The school is currently beginning to implement the necessary checks to identify and address the health and safety issues on the school site. There are several areas where the school is not having due regard to the health and safety of the pupils. A fire door in one of the science laboratories is locked; chemicals and cleaning fluids are not securely stored; extension leads in the science laboratories are adjacent to water supplies and there are many portable electrical devices in the school that have not had the necessary checks to ensure they are safe. The school carries out regular fire drills and fire appliances are checked to ensure they are working. The necessary fire risk assessment has been undertaken and a fire officer's report has been obtained. First aid boxes are suitably stocked, but the school does not have an appropriate policy for the administration of first aid and currently no staff are up to date with their first aid training.

In addition, the school does not comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002. The proprietor has clearly outlined the processes by which the school will seek to meet requirements, but it does not yet have a written plan outlining how it intends to make the school more accessible to people with disabilities.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The new proprietor has recently reviewed the school's appointment procedures. The school fully complies with the regulations relating to the checks it makes on employees regarding their identity, suitability to work with children, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references.

School's premises and accommodation

Overall, the school premises are suitable for the age and number of pupils attending but there are some shortcomings. The new proprietor has moved quickly and has already improved aspects of the accommodation. The specialist rooms for science and art provide good support for the curriculum. These specialist rooms and other parts of the school are somewhat cluttered and untidy. The school does not have an appropriate room that meets requirements for pupils who are feeling unwell. The school kitchen is not clean enough.

During the inspection there was food from previous days' meals on the floor, washing up had not been completed from the previous day and the general state of cleanliness was unsatisfactory.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

Due to the change in ownership the school is currently reviewing the prospectus and information it provides for parents and others. The present information is helpful to new parents, but it does not meet requirements and in some ways no longer reflects the changing nature of the school. The proprietor and the headteacher are fully aware of the range of information the new document needs to contain. The school provides satisfactory reports to parents each term on the progress their children are making. The pupils are involved in the production of a weekly newsletter that provides helpful information to parents on school events.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has recently reviewed its complaints policy and meets requirements in all respects. The policy sets out the appropriate procedures, responsibilities and time-scales for dealing with complaints.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- produce a curriculum policy that sets out in writing how the curriculum is to be organised and assessed and ensure it is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work (paragraph 1(2))
- provide appropriate careers guidance for secondary age pupils (paragraph 1(2)(g))
- ensure a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and that information from such assessment is utilised to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress (paragraph 1(3)(g))

- ensure there is a framework in place by which pupil performance can be evaluated by reference to either the school's own aims, as provided to parents and/or, by national norms (paragraph 1(4)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with DfES guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* (2007) (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- prepare and implement a written policy relating to the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school which has regard to DfES guidance *Health and safety of pupils on educational visits* (reference HSPV2) (paragraph 3(2)(c))
- tend to the health and safety issues addressed in the report with regard to *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers* (DfES 0803/2001) (paragraph 3(4))
- prepare and implement a satisfactory written policy on first aid (paragraph 3(6)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))
- improve the cleanliness of the school kitchen to ensure there are adequate facilities for hygienic preparation and serving of food. (paragraph 5(m)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- provide particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for discipline and exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e))
- provide particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with statements of special educational need (paragraph 6(2)(f))
- ensure that parents and prospective parents are aware they can request particulars of the curriculum offered by the school (paragraph 6(2)(g))

- ensure that parents and prospective parents are aware they can request particulars of policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving (paragraph 6(2)(h))
- ensure that parents and prospective parents are aware they can request particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(2)(i))
- ensure that parents and prospective parents are aware that they can request details of the complaints procedure adopted by the school, together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

School details

Name of school	New Elizabethan School		
DfES number	885/6021		
Unique reference number	117030		
Type of school	Secondary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	2002		
Age range of pupils	11-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 12	Girls: 1	Total: 13
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,500 - £9,000		
Address of school	New Elizabethan School The Village Hartlebury Kidderminster Worcestershire DY11 7TE		
Telephone number	01299 250258		
Fax number	01299 250379		
Email address	info@newelizabethanschool.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Caroline Coles		
Proprietor	Mrs Annabel Goodman		
Reporting inspector	Mr Andrew McDowall HMI		
Dates of inspection	6-7 March 2007		