



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Report for a Material Change Visit

Northleigh House School

November 2020



School's details

School College	Northleigh House School		
DfE number	937/6108		
Registered charity number	1135483		
Address	Northleigh House School Northleigh House Five Ways Road Hatton Warwick Warwickshire CV35 7HZ		
Telephone number	01926 484203		
Email address	nikki.perks@northleigh.co.uk		
School director	Ms Elaine Simmons		
Chair of Proprietors	Mrs Vivienne Morgan		
Age range	6 to 19		
Number of pupils on roll	34		
	Primary	5	Seniors 25
	Sixth Form	4	
Date of visit	10 November 2020		

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Northleigh House School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Founded in 2012, the proprietor is also the chair of the board of trustees. The school has charitable status. All of the school's pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The school was previously inspected by Ofsted, most recently in October 2019.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.2 This was an announced material change visit at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's request to increase capacity by six pupils to a total of thirty-six, and increase its age range to four to nineteen years.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 2 (curriculum)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 4 (framework for pupils' performance)	Met
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Not met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	Not met
Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29 (premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (quality of leadership and management)	Not met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum, sex and relationships education, teaching, framework for pupils’ performance and SMSC [ISSR Part 1, paragraphs 2-4 and ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]

- 2.1 The school meets the standards.
- 2.2 The quality of education provided and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development provision for both the senior pupils and recently admitted primary-age pupils meets requirements. The curriculum, which is appropriate for pupils with SEND and ensures that requirements for EHC plans are met, is suitably documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work and covers the required breadth of material.
- 2.3 An effective programme of personal, social and health education is implemented together with appropriate careers guidance for older pupils. Teaching is in place regarding sex and relationships education. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources, including for primary-age pupils.
- 2.4 A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils’ performance is in place.
- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils at all ages as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.6 The school meets the requirement.
- 2.7 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.8 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.9 The arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils outlined in the school’s safeguarding policy are implemented effectively in some areas. A suitable code of conduct for all staff is suitably implemented and includes advice on e-safety and the appropriate use of social media. During interview, staff showed effective understanding of the code. Staff reported that they feel confident with the school’s whistleblowing procedures. The school’s arrangements are appropriate in recognising the particular needs of pupils with SEND and regarding peer-on-peer abuse.
- 2.10 However, the proprietor does not ensure proper oversight of safeguarding. There is no effective review of the implementation of the school’s child protection policies and procedures annually.
- 2.11 The school demonstrates a lack of understanding of required recruitment procedures. It has not ensured that all pre-employment checks are carried out in a timely manner. It does not always obtain suitable confirmation of employment history or at least two satisfactory references before work begins. Dates of required checks are not always accurately recorded.
- 2.12 Furthermore, the school does not ensure that it consistently refers concerns regarding any allegations against staff in compliance with current statutory guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety, fire safety, risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 11, 12 and 16]

- 2.13 The school meets the standards.
- 2.14 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in the area of health and safety by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance.
- 2.15 Provision in those aspects relating to fire safety are suitable, with an appropriate fire safety policy implemented in all related areas and a suitable fire risk assessment carried out.
- 2.16 There is a strategic approach to risk assessment which includes a suitable risk assessment policy which is used effectively by staff across different areas to identify risk and implement suitable measures to mitigate that risk.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18-21]

- 2.17 The school does not meet all of the standards.
- 2.18 The school does not ensure that it carries out all pre-employment checks required by current statutory guidance before staff commence work at the school.
- 2.19 It does not ensure that it keeps a single central register of appointments as required, particularly regarding the inclusion of accurate dates of all pre-employment checks that need to be recorded, including discrete confirmation of barred list checks.

Premises and accommodation [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23-29]

- 2.20 The school meets the standards.
- 2.21 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided for both the senior pupils and recently admitted primary pupils.
- 2.22 The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate.
- 2.23 Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play for pupils in all age groups.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1) (c)]

- 2.24 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.25 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.26 The proprietor does not ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and that they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

3. Regulatory action points

3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraph 7

- The proprietor must ensure proper oversight of safeguarding, including reviewing the implementation of the school's child protection policies and procedures annually [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b)]
- The school must ensure that it carries out all pre-employment checks in a timely manner as required by current statutory guidance, including the obtaining of employment history and at least two satisfactory references before staff commence work at the school [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b)]
- The school must ensure that it consistently refers any allegations against staff to the relevant external agencies in compliance with current statutory guidance and locally agreed inter-agency procedures [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b)]

ISSR Part 4, Suitability of staff, paragraphs 18 and 21

- The school must ensure that it carries out all pre-employment checks required by current statutory guidance before staff commence work at the school [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18(2)(e) and 18(3)]
- The school must ensure that it keeps a single central register of appointments as required, in particular that it includes the accurate dates of all pre-employment checks which need to be recorded, including discrete, dated confirmation of barred list checks [ISSR Part 4, paragraph 21(1), 21(3)(a)(i - vii) and 21(3)(b)]

ISSR Part 8, Quality of leadership and management, paragraph 34

- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently and they actively promote the well-being of pupils [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34(1)(a),(b) and (c)]

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 It is recommended that the school's request to increase capacity by six pupils and lower the age range from 11–19 years to 4–19 years is not approved because of the school's deficiencies in its safeguarding and recruitment procedures.
- 4.2 Any subsequent application by the school will need to be dependent on its remedying the current shortcomings.

5. Summary of evidence

- 5.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietor. They visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.