

The Parks School

Market Street, Hindley, Hindley WN2 3AN

Inspection date

12 September 2024

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

Paragraph 7, 7(a)-7(b)

- The school has a suitable safeguarding policy. Leaders were in the process of updating the policy to reflect the changes to statutory guidance as set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024' at the time of this inspection. Leaders have introduced many of the necessary arrangements to keep pupils safe and to promote their welfare at the school. However, they have not paid full attention to the current statutory guidance for safeguarding pupils. At the time of this inspection, the school's single central register (SCR) was incomplete and some of the required suitability checks for agency staff had not been completed.
- Two members of staff are trained as designated safeguarding leads (DSLs). All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and have regular updates on areas such as radicalisation and extremism, child sexual exploitation, the sharing of inappropriate images and e-safety.
- When required, the DSLs liaise closely with external agencies. Safeguarding and welfare records are up to date, thorough and appropriately kept.

Paragraph 9, 9(a)-9(c)

- The proprietor has suitable behaviour and exclusion policies in place. These policies set out appropriate and proportionate sanctions. All incidents of poor behaviour are recorded, often in detail. However, there is variation in where staff record incidents. For example, leaders use at least two different recording systems. This makes it difficult for leaders to cross-reference concerns effectively, so that they can gain a full picture of an individual pupil's behaviour and respond to any additional needs that arise.
- Staff have had appropriate, up-to-date training on the use of physical intervention. Records are appropriate and detailed, but again there is some variability in where these records are kept.

Paragraph 13

- The proprietor has an appropriate first-aid policy in place. Most staff have undergone suitable first-aid training. First-aid kits are visible around the school and taken out when adults and pupils leave the building for activities and trips. Records of first-aid administration, injuries and accidents are suitably recorded.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are supervised adequately, including at breaktimes, when arriving at school and when leaving the school premises. This includes, if required, two members of staff working with individual pupils.

Paragraph 16, 16(a)-16(b)

- A written risk assessment policy is in place. There are a range of appropriate risk assessments, for example for the school building, sporting activities and events. These show that leaders have considered appropriate measures to minimise most risks to pupils. However, the proprietor has not put suitable risk assessments in place for some members of staff, for example those members of staff that have not completed positive handling and restraint training.
- All pupils have individual risk assessments. These are generally of a good quality. However, some pupils' risk assessments are not reviewed as often as they should be. This is most noticeable where pupils are struggling to manage their behaviour. These risk assessments are not updated promptly enough to reflect the most current risks and agreed actions, or mitigations. As a result, this does not support adults to meet the needs of these pupils effectively.
- The independent school standards ('the standards') that the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned to be checked in this part are not met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c)–18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa)–19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b)–19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a)–20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i)–20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i)–21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7)–21(7)(b)

- Leaders complete all the required checks on the suitability of staff before they take up an appointment at the school. At the time of the emergency inspection, the school had two versions of this record. Therefore, it had no one single central record of checks that contained all of the required information.
- The chair has carried out suitability checks on the other members of the proprietor body. All of the required checks, including those relating to the leadership and management of a school, have been carried out.
- There is an induction programme in place for new staff, but this is delivered ad hoc. For example, there is no record of what must be included in this programme and when staff have completed each aspect.
- Leaders have not followed the procedures that they should carry out when employing agency staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with pupils.

- Leaders do not engage volunteers to work in the school. However, they are clear about their responsibility for checking the suitability of volunteers who may work with pupils if this does occur.
- The standards that the DfE commissioned to be checked in this part are not met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)–32(1)(k), 32(2)–32(2)(d), 32(3)–32(3)(g)

- The school does not have a website. Leaders are not fully aware of their responsibility to share information about the school with parents and carers. They do not ensure that parents are provided with key information, such as the contact details for the proprietor.
- The school has all the necessary policies in place, for example on behaviour, the curriculum, health and safety, safeguarding, admissions, first aid, and complaints. However, leaders do not make clear to parents that these documents are available or how they can request a copy.
- The school provided inspectors with all requested information.
- Leaders regularly meet with the local authority to discuss and account for the finances related to any pupil at the school who is funded by the local authority or has an education, health, and care (EHC) plan.
- The requirements in the standard that the DfE commissioned to be checked in this part are not met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The proprietor has not ensured that the school meets all of the standards that were checked during this inspection. It does not have robust systems in place to ensure pupils' welfare, health, and safety.
- The new school leaders, including members of the proprietor body, recognise the failings. However, there remain urgent improvements needed to ensure that all the standards are met consistently.
- The requirements in the standard that the DfE commissioned to be checked in this part are not met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a suitable accessibility plan that meets the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

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. Not all the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	137821
DfE registration number	359/6000
Inspection number	10364395

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 school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	21
Proprietor	Inspire Training and Education Services Limited
Chair	Paul Edward Keogh
Headteacher	Steven Williams
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,861 to £67,752
Telephone number	01942 909 033
Website	None
Email address	stevenwilliams@inspiretes.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	6 to 8 June 2023

Information about this school

- The previous standard inspection was carried out from 6 to 8 June 2023.
- The school currently operates on two sites. The main school site is housed in a former community library at Market Street, Hindley WN2 3AN. The second site is at 29A Park Road, Golborne, Wigan WA3 3PU. A registered children's home also operates from the second site.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The proprietor is Inspire Training and Education Services Limited. However, there is no record of the proprietor on the government's 'Get information about schools' (GIAS) website. There are two directors. The chair of the proprietor body has oversight and

governance responsibilities for the school. The other director is the school's headteacher.

- The school is registered to admit up to 30 pupils.
- Leaders make use of three unregistered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This emergency inspection was commissioned by the DfE because of concerns raised with the DfE about pupils' welfare, health, safety, and record-keeping.
- This inspection was conducted without notice.
- The DfE requested that the inspectors report on the standards in respect of safeguarding, the welfare, health and safety of pupils, and leadership and management. At the time of the inspection, inspectors also checked the school's arrangements to ensure the suitability of staff and provision of information.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher.
- An inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body and the person in charge of human resources. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- An inspector spoke to members of staff and to pupils.
- The inspectors made a tour of the school to check welfare and supervision arrangements. They also reviewed a wide range of documents and policies relating to welfare, health, and safety.
- A scrutiny of the safeguarding procedures, including recruitment processes and checks, was also completed.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rebecca Jewitt

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet 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.
- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively; and
 - 9(c) a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.
- 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 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 19(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 19(2)(a) a person offered for supply by an employment business to the school only begins to work at the school if the proprietor has received-
 - 19(2)(a)(i) written notification from the employment business in relation to that person-
 - 19(2)(a)(i) (aa) that the checks referred to in paragraph 21(3)(a)(i) to (iv), (vii) and (b) have been made to the extent relevant to that person;
 - 19(2)(a)(i) (bb) that, where relevant to that person, an enhanced criminal record check has been made and that it or another employment business has obtained an enhanced criminal record certificate in response to such a check; and
 - 19(2)(a)(i)(cc) if the employment business has obtained such a certificate before the person is due to begin work at the school, whether it disclosed any matter or information; and
 - 19(2)(a)(ii) a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by an employment business before the person is due to begin work at the school;
 - 19(2)(b) a person offered for supply by an employment business only begins work at the school if the proprietor considers that the person is suitable for the work for which the person is supplied;
 - 19(2)(c) before a person offered for supply by an employment business begins work at the school the person's identity is checked by the proprietor of the school (irrespective of any such check carried out by the employment business before the person was offered for supply).
- 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)(i) S's identity was checked;
 - 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;
 - 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
 - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
 - 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);
 - 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
 - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e),
- 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.
- 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(1)(f) an annual written report of each registered pupil's progress and attainment in the main subject areas taught is provided to the parents of that registered pupil except that no report need be provided where the parent has agreed otherwise;
- 32(1)(j) particulars of any action specified in sub-paragraph (4) are published and maintained on the school's website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents.
- 32(2) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 32(2)(a) the school's address and telephone number and the name of the head teacher;
 - 32(2)(b) either-
 - 32(2)(b)(ii) where the proprietor is a body of persons, the address and telephone number of its registered or principal office;
 - 32(2)(d) a statement of the school's ethos (including any religious ethos) and aims.
- 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)(c) particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2;
 - 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)(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.

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