

BREDON SCHOOL

Pull Court, Bushley, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, GL20 6AH

16 JUNE 2016

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Bredon School is a coeducational boarding and day school for pupils between the ages of 3 and 19. It is situated on a 90-acre estate near Tewkesbury, on the border of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. At the time of the visit, there were 256 pupils on roll (68 girls and 188 boys), of whom 38 were in the junior section, 155 in the senior school and 63 in the sixth form. Boarding provision is available from the age of nine; 101 pupils are boarders. In December 2014, the school came under the ownership of Cavendish Education Ltd, whose board of directors, together with a small number of other professionals, operates as a governing body to oversee the work of the school. The school is registered with a specialist professional association for schools teaching dyslexic pupils and has 181 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Of these, 72 have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Ten pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in September 2015.

PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

This was an unannounced progress monitoring visit carried out at the request of the Department for Education to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the regulatory compliance inspection on 29 to 30 September 2015. The focus of the visit was on: the welfare, health and safety of pupils, particularly with regard to safeguarding; the school's procedures for dealing with bullying and risk assessments; the suitability of premises and accommodation, with a focus on boarding accommodation; and the quality of leadership and management.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – Safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 (a) and (b), 8 (a) and (b) and NMS 11; and Provision of information to parents ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32 (1) (c)]

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO PARENTS

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.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The school meets the requirements.

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

IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFEGUARDING

The school meets the Regulations and the Standard.

The school has thorough processes for ensuring its safeguarding procedures reflect the latest requirements. The safeguarding policy is reviewed each term. All new staff receive a thorough induction to ensure they are familiar with the school's safeguarding procedures. Training for all staff is regular, and steps are taken to ensure not only that they attend training but that they have a good understanding of safeguarding policy and procedures.

The school has good relationships with social services and other external agencies and involves them whenever necessary. Any concerns with regard to the safety of pupils are referred promptly to the local authority's designated officer, and the school follows the advice given. Where necessary, the school facilitates meetings with different agencies to agree an appropriate course of action for an individual pupil and is then diligent in ensuring that such action is carried out.

Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and that the staff take excellent care of them. They are taught about keeping safe and recognising risks, especially those involving the use of the internet and social media.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – bullying [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 10 and NMS 12]

The school meets the Regulation and the Standard.

Since the previous inspection, the school has revised its policies to combat bullying and to promote good behaviour; both policies are made available to parents through the school's website. The new anti-bullying policy provides clear guidance for staff on how to deal with bullying, including cyber-bullying, and on how to promote positive behaviour. The policies provide a clear outline of the school rules and the sanctions for any disciplinary offences, and pupils understand these well. The school also provides clear guidance as to when restraint, including reasonable force, may be used and how this will be recorded and managed. A separate policy outlines the arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions should this be required.

The school has rigorous procedures for recording any concerns about an individual pupil; staff are fully aware of these and are diligent in following them. Since the previous inspection, senior staff now keep a separate log which records any incidents of bullying. This enables them to monitor incidents and identify any patterns or trends. The log also helps staff to identify appropriate action and support for perpetrator and victim. In practice, there are few bullying incidents, and records indicate that these have been dealt with effectively.

A concerted effort to raise pupils' awareness of bullying, the different ways in which it might occur, and what to do should they be a victim of or witness bullying has been successful. Pupils talk with clarity about the training they have received and demonstrate very good awareness of the consequences of bullying, why it is unacceptable and how to minimise the risk of bullying. Information boards and posters at strategic points throughout the school provide pupils with timely reminders of the training they have received. Staff have also undertaken training in the new procedures and how to safeguard pupils in a boarding context, and further training sessions are scheduled to take place as part of the school's concerted effort to ensure pupils' safety.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessments [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16 and NMS 6]

The school meets the Regulation and the Standard.

The school has completely revised its procedures for carrying out risk assessments. A member of staff has been appointed to oversee the new procedures, to provide training for staff on how to carry out risk assessments and to ensure that risk assessments have been carried out wherever necessary. A new software package has been implemented which provides clear guidance to staff on writing risk assessments, provides a central reference point for all of the school's risk assessments and gives timely reminders when an assessment is due for renewal, escalating the process should the review not take place in time.

Responsibility for drawing up risk assessments for different areas of the school and for specific activities have been allocated to individual members of staff, and new risk assessments have already been written for all of the most vulnerable areas and activities, including for school premises and boarding houses. All staff, including those responsible for boarding, have embraced the process and appreciate the new guidance and structure which are now provided.

Premises and accommodation [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 25 and 30, and NMS 5]

The school meets the Regulations and the Standard.

The school provides suitable sleeping accommodation for boarders which is well organised and managed. Sleeping accommodation for boys is separate from the accommodation for girls. Suitable toilet and washing facilities for boarders are reasonably accessible from the sleeping accommodation and provide appropriate privacy. The accommodation is appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained.

The school has dealt effectively with all of the deficiencies with regard to premises and accommodation which were identified at the previous inspection. The school has instigated a new system for reporting and prioritising maintenance issues which has resulted in a much more efficient service. All windows above the ground floor have now been fitted with window restraints in addition to the window bars which were in place at the time of the previous inspection. The proprietors have also carried out further refurbishment and ensured full compliance with the requirements of a recent fire safety audit.

All boarders now have a fixed, lockable money box and a cupboard which can be secured by padlock in order to ensure the security of personal possessions. However, many of the boarders choose not to use padlocks on their lockers.

A new high speed broadband cable for sole use of the school has been laid. As a result, access to the internet around the school and within the boarding accommodation has improved greatly. Pupils are pleased with the improvement.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraphs 34(1)(a), (b) and (c) and NMS 13]

The school meets the Regulation and the Standard.

Staff with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently. They actively promote the well-being of pupils, ensuring that the school provides a safe and attractive environment which promotes pupils' achievement and personal development.

The school's leadership and governing body have responded positively to the regulatory issues identified at the previous inspection, formulating a detailed action plan, keeping staff fully informed about what needed improvement, and monitoring regularly and rigorously that agreed actions have taken place and are having the

desired impact. The leadership has carefully documented the progress in dealing with each of the action points identified at the previous inspection.

The proprietors meet frequently with the school's leaders, thus keeping abreast of any safeguarding or behavioural issues, and provide them with helpful support. They monitor the school's progress carefully and regularly to ensure the school complies with current regulations. Through their financial support, they have enabled significant improvement to the school's accommodation and ensured the school is well staffed and resourced.

REGULATORY ACTION POINTS

The school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.