

Report for a Progress Monitoring Visit

School name	Castle House School
DfE number	894/6002
Registered charity number	510515
Address	Chetwynd End Newport Shropshire TF10 7JE
Headteacher	Mr Ian Sterling
Chair of governors	Mrs Carol Gibbs
Date of visit	5 December 2018

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Castle House School is a co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of two and eleven years. It is situated in Newport, Shropshire. At the time of the visit there were 83 pupils on roll (29 girls and 54 boys), of whom 25 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school is owned and run by Castle House School Trust Ltd, a charitable trust with a governing body, which was established in 1980. The school has 11 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), none of whom have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. One pupil speaks English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in January 2018.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring visit at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the Regulatory Compliance Inspection of 31 January to 1 February 2018.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (a) and (b) (safeguarding)	Not Met
Part 3 paragraph 11 Health and Safety	Met
Part 3 paragraph 12 Fire	Met
Part 4 paragraph 18 (2)(d)	Met
Part 4 paragraph 18 (2)(c)(ii) Medical Fitness	Not met
Part 8 paragraph 34 (1)(a) and (b)	Not Met

2. Inspection findings

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

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 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

- 2.3 The school does not meet the regulation.
- 2.4 Most safeguarding arrangements are correctly implemented and provide appropriate support for pupils' needs. All staff, including those who are regular visitors to the school, have received training in recent changes to regulatory guidance and on-line safety. New staff receive comprehensive induction training to ensure they understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including the staff code of conduct and behaviour policy. The designated safeguarding leader (DSL) and deputy DSLs have sufficient status and authority to undertake their roles, and appropriate levels of training, which is in line with local procedures. One of the deputy safeguarding leads is the designated EYFS safeguarding lead and has appropriate knowledge about ensuring the welfare and well-being of young children. The DSL regularly provides informal updates on any changes to safeguarding policy and its implementation and at each staff meeting gives opportunity for staff to discuss and contribute to safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.5 During discussions, staff demonstrate that they have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They recognise the importance of 'early help' strategies and know how to report any concerns about pupils or other staff, and state that any concerns about senior leaders are reported to the designated safeguarding governor or in their absence to the local safeguarding partners directly. Additionally, they acknowledge the importance of disclosing any required changes in personal circumstance to the senior leadership and state that use of personal mobile phones and cameras is not permitted whilst pupils are present. Appropriate records for safeguarding concerns are kept, which are regularly monitored by the DSL. These show timely and appropriate liaison with both parents and local agencies. The proprietors undertake an annual safeguarding review. Pupils, during discussions, comment that they feel safe and are aware of safeguarding arrangements in school, including on-line safety. They articulate that they feel that staff are very approachable, should they have a concern or worry.
- 2.6 For some recent staff appointments, references have not always been taken up or have been received after the member of staff has commenced work. Additionally, an employment history check has not always been undertaken.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

- 2.7 The school meets the regulation.
- 2.8 The school has ensured that there is now a systematic approach to the management of health and safety in the school. The health and safety policy now includes detailed reference to all recommended areas, ensuring that relevant health and safety laws are complied with. Specific responsibilities are clearly stated in the policy and outcomes reviewed regularly by governors. Staff receive training in health and safety matters as part of their induction and reported that response to concerns is swift and action is taken. Records are kept systematically, which ensures that action is taken and checks completed in a timely manner for all areas of regulation.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12]

- 2.9 The school meets the regulation.
- 2.10 The school has an appropriate fire risk assessment policy which is regularly monitored for its suitability by an external specialist company. Records show that staff are suitably and regularly trained, including as fire marshals. The school carries out fire drills every term. These drills are appropriately recorded and contact made with emergency services when necessary. Emergency routes and fire exits are fully signposted and kept clear of obstruction. Staff and visitors are provided with relevant fire safety information. Alarm points, extinguishers and emergency lighting are all checked regularly and maintained by an external competent person. Fire safety arrangements are appropriately managed and careful records kept by the headmaster, and monitored by the governors.

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

- 2.11 The school does not meet all of the regulations.
- 2.12 The school does not make the appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors. An appropriate register of staff appointments is kept as required. Since the previous inspection the school have ensured that enhanced criminal record checks have been completed before staff begin work or as soon as possible thereafter. However, in some recent appointments, the school has failed to undertake the required medical checks on staff.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32]

- 2.13 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.14 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]

- 2.15 The school does not meet the regulation.
- 2.16 The proprietor does not ensure that leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge so that Independent School Standards are met consistently. This is due to not having due regard for the current statutory guidance for recruitment checks, in particular, medical checks, references and the check of previous employment history. The proprietor ensures that leadership and management actively promote the well-being of 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 requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

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

- Ensure that reference checks and previous employment history checks are completed on all staff [paragraph 7 (a) and (b)].

ISSR Part 4, Suitability of staff, paragraph 18

- Ensure that checks are undertaken to ascertain that all newly appointed staff are medically fit to undertake their role [paragraph 18 (2)(c)(ii)].

ISSR Part 8, Leadership and Management, paragraph 34

- Ensure that leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge to ensure that Independent School Standards are met consistently [paragraph 34 (1)(a) and (b)].

4. Summary of evidence

Written materials

- Safeguarding policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Policy
- Fire Risk Assessment
- Records of staff training with particular reference to safeguarding.
- Code of conduct for staff
- Staff recruitment policy
- Single central register of appointments

Meetings with school personnel

- Introductory meeting with head
- Meeting with the DSL to discuss implementation of safeguarding policy, training and induction of new staff
- Meeting with headmaster to discuss health and safety arrangements and fire risk assessment
- Meeting with responsible for carrying out staff recruitment checks to review school's recruitment procedures, scrutinise single central register of appointments and to check staff recruitment files
- Meeting with a governor to discuss safeguarding arrangements and governance oversight of the recruitment process

Activities on site

- Further scrutiny and evaluation of implementation of policies and documentation (as detailed above)
- Tour of the school
- Interviews with pupils, in Years 5 and 6, chosen by inspectors
- Meeting of inspectors