

Repton School

The Hall, Repton, Derbyshire, DE65 6FH

Date of visit 03 November 2015

Purpose of visit

This was an unannounced visit carried out at the request of the DfE to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the emergency visit on 21 January 2015. The focus of the visit was on safeguarding; behaviour management, suitability of staff, supply staff and volunteers; and the quality of leadership and management.

Characteristics of the School

Repton School is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged 13 to 18. It is situated in the village of Repton, about four miles outside Burton-on-Trent in Derbyshire. There are 650 pupils, of whom 355 are boys and 295 are girls. Two-thirds of the pupils are boarders, accommodated in boarding houses spread around the village. Most pupils are white British, with 14 different nationalities represented in boarding. The school has identified 142 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); 36 of them receive specialist learning support. There are 60 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL); 25 of them receive support for their English from the school. There is one pupil with an EHC plan. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors. Since December 2014, the school has been led by the acting head, who was previously the deputy head pastoral. A new head has been appointed and will take up post in April 2016. The previous inspection was in March 2014.

Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b) and 8 (a) and (b); NMS 11]

The regulations and standard are met.

The latest revision of the safeguarding policy meets the requirements and has been updated since the unannounced visit in January to include the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education, July 2015*. It is available to parents on the school website. The policy ensures that reporting lines and timescales are clearly stated and that allegations against the head must be made to the chair of governors without the head being informed. The policy also makes it clear that contact details for local agencies are provided for any staff, parent or other person to use.

The policy makes clear the potential, particularly in boarding provision, for abuse by peers and awareness of relationships. It states that, where there are allegations of abuse by one

pupil against another, there will be referral of such abuse to an external safeguarding agency. The policy specifies that whole-school training in child protection is provided for all staff including the head.

The school effectively implements the policy. Interviews with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the head, as well as scrutiny of records, evidence the school's appropriate response both to pupils in need and those at risk. Pupils receive the right help at the right time from the appropriate staff in the school, and outside agencies, such as CAMHS, are quickly involved where necessary. A trained counsellor in the school, as well as an independent counsellor, are available to pupils. The DSL consults with the local Derby Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) independent schools' liaison officer on a regular basis and seeks advice as to whether a referral should be made. In interview, pupils confirmed that they can seek help if they need to do so.

The DSL has careful records of all contacts with the LSCB and was able to show records which evidenced on-going concerns and how they are being dealt with. The school has sought the advice of the LSCB with regard to following relevant statutory guidance concerning working with and sharing information with parents regarding their child's alleged involvement in serious incidents of pupil-on-pupil abuse, whether as alleged perpetrator or victim. There have been no incidents of pupil on pupil abuse but a bullying issue, with the potential to escalate, was fully recorded and handled. Parents were informed and involved.

The head carries out the requirement to report allegations of abuse by staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), as shown by records. The DSL is fully aware of the duty to challenge inaction by senior leaders and to share full information with external agencies, as is evidenced in the booklet which she herself has prepared for the school about child protection. She has not had to challenge inaction since the emergency visit. The school's safeguarding policy explicitly states that any person can speak to children's social care directly if a child is at risk of harm or if there is a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken by senior staff.

Every member of staff has received recent training in safeguarding, including the Prevent duties. The LSCB approved the content of the training and was involved in the delivery of it. Records of training are scrupulously kept and new staff receive appropriate training. Both new and more experienced members of staff were able, in interview, to identify correct lines of reporting and how to receive a disclosure.

The school's stance on relationships between pupils, including those under 16, is consistent and appropriate. The pupils are made familiar with the school rules but they learn about relationships in PSHCE, including a full course of sex education in Year 10, by visits from a nurse for Years 11 to 13 and by an informative film in Year 9.

The management of safeguarding has been improved by ensuring that when senior leaders interview pupils involved in serious incidents, another member of staff or adult is always present and that systematic notes of the meeting are kept.

The school has strengthened the staff code of conduct. All staff are aware of its implications, including those who are part-time, who are on temporary contracts or who are self-employed. They are required to sign a statement that they have received the training. They are aware of the guidance about being alone with a pupil and the need to avoid giving a lift in a car to a single pupil, in line with the safeguarding policy. Staff confirmed their understanding of the code in interview.

The dangers of alcohol and drug misuse have not been included in the safeguarding policy but rules in the sixth form bar have been tightened following advice from the police and

licensing authority. There is a separate school policy on alcohol and another on drugs and pupils receive education on these issues through PSHCE and in their houses.

The governing body conducts an extensive, comprehensive and effective annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements. The chair of governors and the safeguarding governor have completed suitable local authority training so that they can more effectively monitor the school's procedures.

The school ensures that references are obtained and verified before any staff begin work. It confirms risk assessments and supervision arrangements in writing when staff begin work before DBS checks have been seen. It obtains a separate barred list check and updates risk assessments every fortnight in such cases.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour management [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9; NMS 12]

The regulation and standard are met.

The school has revised and strengthened its implementation of the school rules and sanctions. Housemasters and housemistresses now have a transparent common set of procedures to deal with incidents. The tariff of sanctions is applied consistently. All houses keep records in the same way. They are monitored by a member of the leadership team. In interviews, housemasters and housemistresses said that they welcomed the earlier involvement of senior management and the greater consistency between houses that has been achieved. Consistency in the awarding of all sanctions leads to consistency in the awarding of serious sanctions. Accurate records are maintained. Housemasters and housemistresses inform parents at an early stage of any serious behavioural incidents and record all conversations with them.

House staff have been involved in developing an effective system which is monitored by senior leadership on a termly basis.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and volunteers – prohibition from teaching [ISSR Part 4, paragraph, 18 (2) (b); NMS 14]

The regulation and standard are met.

The school ensures that all staff involved in teaching, whether full or part time, are checked against the list of those prohibited from teaching. A scrutiny of recent appointments showed that pre-appointment checks are carried out in line with requirements.

Quality of leadership and managements of schools – fulfilment of responsibilities [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34 (a) (b) and (c); NMS 13]

The regulations and standard are met.

The governance, leadership and management of the school have implemented the action plan thoroughly. They promote the wellbeing of the pupils by ensuring that the management of safeguarding is consistent and effective. The first termly meeting between the DSL and governors has taken place as planned. Allegations are managed according to the school's published arrangements which are fully in line with LSCB procedures. Record keeping is rigorous and consistent, and information relevant to child protection is fully communicated to external agencies. Recruitment procedures and the maintenance of the Single Central Register of appointments are regularly monitored by the bursar. Excellent communication between the governors and school leadership, and between members of the leadership

team have characterised a detailed, considered and continuing response to implementation of the action plan.

Regulatory action points

The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 and National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.