

Best Futures School

The Stables, Church Lane, Aylesbury, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN37 7AW

Inspection dates

6 February 2019

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i-ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a, b, c), 2(2)(d)(i-ii), 2(2)(g-i)

- The principal and her team of qualified teaching staff have planned a curriculum that considers the differing needs of pupils. Pupils have timetables that ensure they have experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- Teachers plan a range of enrichment activities, such as residential trips, which enhance the learning that takes place in the classroom. Pupils take part in physical activities while learning and playing in the outdoor area, and while taking part in activities, such as swimming at local leisure centres.
- The complaint raised concerns about pupils receiving a minimum curriculum. These standards were found to be met during the inspection as pupils have a planned curriculum that meets the requirements of the independent school standards.

Paragraph 3(b, e, f, g, h, i, j)

- Pupils learn and make progress in a stimulating and well-resourced environment. They learn through a range of hands-on activities, and information technology is used well to enhance their learning.
- Teachers know the emotional needs of pupils extremely well. This helps to build good relationships in which pupils are generally happy to learn.
- The complaint raised concerns about pupils not receiving education at the school. These standards were found to be met during the inspection as pupils are able to learn and make progress.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d)

- Some teachers' knowledge of pupils' abilities is not used successfully to plan learning and ensure that pupils make good progress. Some pupils spend too long on work that is too easy.
- Teachers are not proficient at meeting the high level of needs of younger pupils so that they learn through activities that stimulate enjoyment and a love of learning.

- These standards were not met during the inspection as too often pupils were not making the good or better progress that they are capable of.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i–vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i–iii)

- Teachers plan well to promote pupils' positive personal development.
- Pupils learn about diversity and how to celebrate diversity. Teachers plan the curriculum so that pupils take the time to study different cultures and religious traditions and festivals, such as Christmas and Diwali.
- Pupils are encouraged to take time to discuss and consider what attributes make a good friend, and how they can be a good friend to others.
- Pupils' behaviour during the inspection was positive and respectful. They were very happy to speak to the inspector and were considerate and thoughtful in their responses.
- The complaint raised concerns about pupils being cut off from society and that racial hatred is encouraged. These standards were met during the inspection as pupils make strong progress in their personal development and are encouraged to become valuable and thoughtful British citizens.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a–b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The proprietor has ensured that a suitable safeguarding policy is available on the school website, which follows guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This policy needed minor modifications during the inspection, and at the time of the inspection was not followed effectively by adults.
- Several staff have safer recruitment training and all staff and governors have enhanced disclosure and barring service checks. However, not all of the supplementary checks, for example prohibition from teaching and section 128 checks, have been made for those who require it. These were being completed during the inspection.
- All staff have received child protection training and several staff and governors have higher level designated safeguarding lead training. Links with the local authority and other agencies are strong, so that any concerns are raised immediately with the appropriate persons. Records of incidents are recorded well and are fit for purpose. The school is in the process of moving their record-keeping to an electronic system.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, for example when crossing the road, and particularly when mornings and evenings are darker.
- Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection said that they thought their children were safe at school and that they were well informed about their child's well-being.
- During the inspection, pupils arrived at the school eagerly in the morning and were relaxed and happy during the school day. However, when asked, a small number of pupils said that they did not always feel safe. When questioned, this was due to the very occasional physically aggressive behaviour of other pupils. They confirmed that

they knew who to talk to if they were concerned about anything, but they did not believe that adults dealt well with this disruptive behaviour.

- Steps were taken immediately by the principal to address safeguarding issues that arose during the inspection. However, not all of these standards were met during the inspection as some aspects of pupils' welfare are not as rigorously safeguarded as they should be.

Paragraph 9, 9(a–c)

- The principal has ensured that a comprehensive positive behaviour policy is embedded across the school. Any sanctions imposed on pupils are rare but documented well to record why the sanctions were imposed.
- The deputy safeguarding lead monitors the numbers of incidents that occur, including those that have required physical intervention. These records are very detailed and show that as pupils settle into the school, almost all of them considerably reduce the number of incidents they are involved in. Records show that the staff's use of full physical intervention is rare. When required by teachers to protect the pupil or others around them, the use of minor physical intervention is the norm.
- The complaint raised concerns about adults physically restraining pupils excessively and pupils being confined in areas for long periods of time. These standards were met during the inspection as records demonstrated that on the few occasions that restraint was used, it is used appropriately. There is no indication from parents, pupils or staff that pupils are confined in any way.

Paragraph 11

- The proprietor has ensured that a health and safety policy has been drawn up and implemented effectively. The school site is secure, and staff have training, for example fire awareness training, as noted in the policy.
- This standard was met during the inspection.

Paragraph 14

- The proprietor ensures that pupils are well supervised at all times. The ratio of adults to pupils is high and the timetable planned so that adults are appropriately deployed.
- This standard was met during the inspection.

Paragraph 16, 16(a, b)

- The proprietor has ensured that a risk assessment policy is implemented successfully. The risk assessments for individual pupils are particularly good. They are monitored carefully and adapted immediately when required.
- This standard was met during the inspection.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33(a–k)

- The proprietor made some minor amendments to this policy during the inspection in order to ensure clarity. However, the policy met requirements at all times.

- The senior leaders have needed to follow their complaints procedure due to a complaint received during this academic school year. They did this accurately and proficiently. There were no complaints in the previous academic school year.
- These standards were met during the inspection.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)(a–c)

- The proprietor has not ensured that all of the independent school standards have been met. She is very aware that senior leaders have not been meticulous at following the guidance issued by the Secretary of State regarding all the necessary safeguarding checks on adults.
- The proprietor has commenced a system to evaluate and support teachers so that weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning can be addressed. She knows the implementation and success of this system has been slow and has not had the full effect intended on pupils' learning.
- These standards were not met during the inspection.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- School leaders have a written accessibility policy which clearly shows their intention to make adaptations if required, so that pupils with a disability can access the curriculum.

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 of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	142828
DfE registration number	812/6004
Inspection number	10091015

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	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Dawn Best
Chair	Janet Goodwin
Headteacher	Dawn Best
Annual fees (day pupils)	£28,500—£32,500
Telephone number	01472 278 978
Website	www.bestfutures.co
Email address	office@bestfutures-school.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	10 to 11 October 2017

Information about this school

- The school opened in 2016 and received its first full standard inspection in October 2017, when it was judged to require improvement.
- The school accepts up to 10 pupils aged between five and 11 years who have social and emotional needs. Currently, there are 10 pupils on roll.
- The pupils are educated on one site except when taking part in physical education, which takes place at the local leisure centre.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place over one day by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and was conducted without notice.
- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) as a result of a complaint made about the school. The complaint raised concerns regarding pupils' education and welfare. The DfE requested that only the standards as listed in the report be considered.
- The inspector spoke to parents, pupils and staff. She held meetings with senior leaders and representatives of the governing body. All these opinions were considered.
- The inspector observed pupils' learning and behaviour throughout the day and looked at pupils' work in their books. She spoke to pupils about their work.
- A wide range of the school's documentation was studied relating to the independent school standards that were checked, including curriculum documentation and evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning. Documents relating to safeguarding, for example training certificates, employment checks and the safeguarding policy, were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Jo Sharpe, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school—
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;

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.

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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