

Lawrence House School

8 Huyton Church Road, Huyton, Liverpool, Merseyside L36 5SJ

Inspection dates

7 June 2017

Overall outcome

The school meets 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)

- The inspector, in the inspection in September 2016, judged this standard to be not met because the school's safeguarding arrangements were not explicit and there was confusion over who should follow up and monitor any incidents. The roles and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding leads were blurred. There was confusion as to who was responsible for checking that all staff are suitable to work at the school. Routines and systems to promote pupils' personal development and welfare were not rigorous. This meant that pupils were not always prepared for school and their conduct caused disturbances in lessons.
- In the action plan submitted to the Department for Education (DfE), leaders proposed to review the safeguarding policy, immediately issue guidance on safeguarding to all staff, provide training for all staff and clarify roles and responsibilities of the designated safeguarding leads. Planned action to implement a termly check on safeguarding logs and a termly audit of safeguarding practice was included. The planned action to review the safeguarding policy did not refer to the most recent guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The plan did not explain how leaders would know that each of their actions had been successful.
- This inspection found that leaders' actions to safeguard pupils are robust. Leaders have reviewed the safeguarding policy. It is detailed in nature and makes appropriate links to the latest statutory guidance and the local safeguarding children services. It specifies links to other policies, such as the behaviour and anti-bullying policies. Expectations are clear. Staff know their roles and responsibilities in the event of an incident so that a designated person follows it through to its conclusion. Staff record any incidents in bound books and the headteacher monitors these regularly. The consultant, employed by the proprietor to support the headteacher, checks these logs termly. This illustrates the high priority the school now gives to safeguarding its pupils.
- The school's records show that all adults have been suitably checked to work at the school. Records of these checks are held centrally so that a named person is responsible

for completing and monitoring these records. Staff have received an appropriate level of training in how to keep children safe.

- New routines are in place to support pupils' personal development and welfare. Pupils wear a uniform designed by themselves. Improved arrangements at the start of the day help pupils to be more ready for lessons. The behaviour policy has been reviewed so that staff know what action to take to tackle any poor behaviour. Pupils appear happy and calm; they are confident and willing to speak to adults. A successful parents' meeting was held so that staff could jointly discuss pupils' progress and achievements.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards that were checked in this part have been met.

Paragraph 12

- The inspector, in the inspection in September 2016, judged this standard to be not met because essential items to keep the school safe from fire hazards were missing.
- In the action plan submitted to the DfE, leaders planned to commission an external fire risk assessment, and purchase additional fire extinguishers and fire escape signs. The plan did not explain how leaders would know that each of their actions had been successful.
- This inspection showed that leaders have replaced the missing fire hydrant and that fire escape signs are displayed in all properties. Leaders have completed a fire risk assessment and have taken action to ensure that the school complies with fire regulations. Plans to repeat this check regularly are in place.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards that were checked in this part have been met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 24(1), 24(1)(b)

- The inspector, in the inspection in September 2016, found that aspects of the standards related to premises and accommodation at the school were not met. Specifically, the proprietor had not ensured that there was a separate toilet for the sole use of pupils at one property. In addition, the proprietor had not provided any medical facilities for the short-term care of pupils near to a toilet or washing facilities in any of the properties.
- In the action plan submitted to the DfE, leaders planned to provide a portable cabin at one school and to deregister any site deemed unable to be brought up to standards. The timescale for these planned actions was ambitious.
- This inspection found that the proprietor and leaders have worked very swiftly to take action to rectify the situation. At Lawrence House there is a toilet for the sole use of pupils.
- Leaders contacted the DfE to deregister one property and the DfE confirmed that the property is no longer registered. Pupils do not use this property.
- Additionally, the plan detailed actions to improve medical facilities, including the designation of particular areas in the school near toilet and washing facilities, and the

provision of foldaway beds. The plan failed to explain how leaders would know that each of their actions had been successful.

- A purpose-built extension is complete at one property and a portable building is now in place at another property. All properties have foldaway beds, complete with a sheet and pillow, near to a toilet and washbasin with running water. This means that the premises and accommodation at all properties are suitable for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards that were checked in this part have been met.

Paragraph 25, 28(1), 28(1)(c)

- The inspector, in the inspection in September 2016, judged these standards to be not met because the school's premises were in need of repair and fire regulations were not being met. Explicitly, there was a hole in a ceiling, peeling plaster and a broken window in a toilet which was not hygienic. Additionally, there were no signs to show that drinking water was available.
- In the action plan submitted to the DfE, leaders planned to revise and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the staff in each setting to make sure that named persons were responsible for the welfare, safety and health of pupils, including the risk assessment of each classroom. Leaders planned to speed up the process of rectifying identified repairs by coordinating the actions centrally.
- This inspection showed that leaders had taken quick action to tackle these failings. Each site is warm, welcoming and attractively decorated. The refurbishment and decoration throughout Lawrence House is complete. This means that the building is in a very good state of repair, with the failings identified at the previous inspection all addressed. Signage is in place so that pupils know where to access drinking water.
- Staff understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe and healthy. Tutors take responsibility to check the classroom for any minor risks.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards that were checked in this part have been met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The scope of the evaluation of the school's action plan submitted to the DfE included a check on whether the school met the standard at this paragraph. Explicitly, whether the school published information about its arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school in line with guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- The evaluation found that the school did not meet the standard because it did not publish its up-to-date arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils on its website.
- During this inspection the proprietor explained that the previous website is now obsolete and has been for some time. A new website is now in place and the most recent safeguarding policy is displayed, along with associated policies such as behaviour and anti-bullying.

- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards that were checked in this part have been met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The inspector, in the inspection in September 2016, judged this standard to be not met because not all the required standards for independent schools were met.
- The evaluation of the action plan submitted to the DfE indicated that this standard was unlikely to be met if the school's proposed actions were implemented. Leaders were not clear in the action plan as to how they would know that the planned actions would be successful.
- The proprietor and other leaders have a much-improved knowledge and understanding of the independent schools standards. Through staff meetings and training they have also ensured that staff have an increased knowledge and understanding of the standards. The proprietor, leaders and staff have used the independent school standards to evaluate the progress of the school. An action plan is in place to guide the work of the school further. The proprietor has implemented a process which enables him to check the work of the headteacher and monitor the effectiveness of the school.
- A governing body is in place and has met once. Minutes show that discussion about the independent school standards is given high priority.
- The inspector judged that the school met all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection.
- This shows that leaders now demonstrate the good knowledge and skills appropriate to their role that has enabled them to ensure that all the independent standards, including this one, have been met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets 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. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that safeguarding arrangements are explicit and understood by all staff and members of the management committee. These should be accurately recorded and regularly reviewed (paragraph 7(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).
- The proprietor must ensure that suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils (paragraph 23(1) and 23(1)(a)).

- The proprietor must ensure that there is suitable accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility (paragraph 24(1) and 24(1)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the accommodation and facilities on the premises are maintained to a standard that protects the welfare, safety and health of pupils (paragraph 25).
- The proprietor must ensure that cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such (paragraph 28(1) and 28(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
 - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

School details

Unique reference number	136752
DfE registration number	340/6001
Inspection number	10034559

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	Secondary
School status	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	11
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Mr Anthony Nolan
Chair	Mr Anthony Nolan
Headteacher	Miss Fay Donnelly
Annual fees (day pupils)	£29,250–39,000
Telephone number	0151 480 8287
Website	http://qpconline.co.uk/
Email address	lawrencehouseschool@qpconline.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	13–15 September 2016

Information about this school

- Lawrence House School is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) for five alternate education sites. In January 2017 one school site was deregistered by the DfE; in March 2017 a separate school site was registered with the DfE.
- Lawrence House School caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- All pupils are looked after by a local authority and most have special educational needs.

- The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high. All pupils speak English.
- Most of the pupils have been permanently excluded or are at risk of permanent exclusion from previous schools.
- Pupils joining the school do so with histories of low attendance, challenging behaviour or having disengaged from mainstream learning.
- Pupil mobility is very high, with pupils arriving and leaving at very short notice. Pupils often stay on roll at the school for short periods of time.
- The aim of the school is to reintegrate pupils quickly into mainstream education and work or college placements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection following the previous standard inspection which took place in September 2016.
- The DfE rejected the school's action plan following the previous inspection.
- The inspection was conducted without notice to the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the proprietor, the education lead and a governor. Meetings were held with the consultant and mentor employed by the proprietor. Informal discussions were held with several members of staff and several pupils as the inspector toured the different school sites.
- The inspector looked through a number of documents, including the school's safeguarding policy and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of staff meetings, minutes of governors' meetings and staff development information. Records of pupils' behaviour were also examined.

Inspection team

Eileen Mulgrew, lead inspector

Senior Her Majesty's Inspector

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