

Frequently Asked Questions regarding Inspections

Is my child safe?

Yes. The inspectors found that we 'provide a safe environment where pupils can develop their knowledge, skills and understanding to allow them to grow in confidence'. 'Safeguarding documents show that most concerns about pupils' welfare are acted upon appropriately and promptly'. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and the inspectors' findings supported this.

Does the school have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place?

Yes. The Safeguarding (including staff code of conduct, safer recruitment, whistleblowing and e-safety) policies and procedures were deemed suitable and in keeping with the most recent statutory guidance. Staff training is up to date and appropriate induction training has been provided for newly appointed staff.

So why did the school fail certain regulations relating to Safeguarding?

The inspectors state that 'the school promotes an open and transparent culture regarding safeguarding'. However, the staff code of conduct forms part of our suite of safeguarding policies and the inspectors felt that not all staff observed the code of conduct uniformly with regard to matters of communication and respect for pupils.

What steps are the school taking to address this?

We have already given all staff refresher training on the staff code of conduct, in particular with regard to communication and respect for pupils. We will be improving our consistency in challenging any negative use of language by staff. We have also given refresher training on our whistleblowing procedures. We have already held the first of a series of workshops on positive communication when working with young people. The Senior Management has implemented the monitoring of positive communication as a specific area of focus.

Does the school take appropriate action to counter bullying?

Yes. The report states that 'the school has a suitable policy to guard against bullying and it is implemented effectively'.

Are Health and Safety standards met?

Yes. The school meets the standards and has a suitable health and safety policy which is reviewed annually by the board of Governors.

Who can my child talk to if they have a concern?

It has always been school policy that any pupil can speak to any member of staff if they have a concern or are feeling anxious or distressed about any matter. All pupils have access to a wide choice of staff including houseparents, tutors, mentors, counsellors, the medical centre and an independent listener. We actively encourage pupils to approach staff with any concerns they may have so that we can work to resolve them.

Why were inspectors concerned about the manner in which complaints are handled?

The findings have shown that concerns and complaints are dealt with properly and promptly and there is a suitable complaints procedure in place. The inspectors felt that if a complaint was prolonged the actions taken and the documentation of those actions were not always completed sufficiently in certain cases.

What steps are the school taking to address this?

We have already taken action to ensure our reporting and recording of concerns and complaints is more rigorous. We will continue to try to resolve complaints as promptly and completely as possible.

Why did the school not meet the standards for governance, leadership and management?

The inspectors found that 'Leadership and Management have the knowledge and skills required to meet their responsibilities. They monitor the educational provision effectively to promote pupil progress and provide a safe environment'. However, failure to meet any of the independent school standards regulations with regard to safeguarding or complaints results in an automatic failure of ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34, relating to Quality of Leadership and Management. Please see above for the actions we are taking to address this.

What happens next?

The school will be working to address the concerns raised by the inspectors as quickly as possible. We have already begun to implement changes to our procedures including the steps taken above and any further actions that we feel to be necessary. The school will receive another unannounced additional inspection at some point to evaluate our progress in these areas.

What does this mean for the school and my child's education?

As the inspectors state near the beginning of the report, 'the quality of teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability'. It also states that 'the school develops pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence through the promotion of the school ethos and the principles it promotes to pupils, staff and parents'. The school will continue to provide the highest possible level of academic education and vocational training.

21st November 2018