

Rise Education

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	315/6589
Unique Reference Number (URN)	136678
Inspection number	386857
Inspection dates	29 February – 1 March 2012
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield HMI

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Rise Education is situated in Mitcham in the London Borough of Merton. The school is managed by a board of trustees as part of a limited company, Immanuel House. The school registered in February 2010 and since opening provides an education for students who are at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream schools. There are currently 21 students aged from 13 to 16 years on roll, with 20 who attend at any one time. Some students attend for a few days as respite from mainstream education and others on short-term, three-to-four week placements. The majority of older Year 11 students have been attending since the start of this academic year. Students are referred to the school by Wandsworth and Merton local authorities. Two students have a statement of special educational needs. A few students are looked after by their local authority. The school briefly provided childcare on the school site for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage but this setting closed in October 2011. The headteacher has been absent from school over recent months. The school has been managed in his absence by the deputy headteacher. This is the school's first inspection since its registration.

The school has a Christian ethos, with the headteacher also being a pastor of a local church. The school's aims are derived from its name, 'restoring, inspiring; sustaining and supporting and empowering individuals to reach their potential'.

Evaluation of the school

The overall quality of the education is satisfactory. The majority of students make satisfactory, and some good progress from their starting points on entry. The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, as is their behaviour. The attention given to the students' welfare, health and safety is inadequate; safeguarding procedures do not meet regulations. Since the registration visit the school has improved fire-safety procedures and child protection training for staff. The school meets the majority of regulations for independent schools.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Quality of education

The quality of the school's curriculum is satisfactory. A suitable range of subjects are provided to students to help them to learn and develop. Planning is based on the National Curriculum for students in Year 9 and on the requirements of GCSE and BTEC qualifications for students in Years 10 and 11. The quality of lesson planning varies across the school. It contains sufficient detail to ensure that students make at least satisfactory progress in a range of subjects. More detailed planning in some subjects includes key vocabulary, clear objectives and well-sequenced activities to help students make better progress. Staff are clear about the requirements of accredited courses and show a sound understanding of the progression pathways in these subjects. The school provides satisfactorily for the short placements for Year 9 students and works to ensure they develop their personal and social skills to prepare them for returning to mainstream schools.

The school rarely receives up-to-date information on students' abilities and aptitudes on entry to the school because these are not passed on from previous educational settings. As a consequence, the school has devised a suitable baseline assessment, which includes behaviour and attitudes to learning and students' current levels of attainment. This is used to devise an individual learning plan that helps students to make satisfactory or better progress in their basic skills and other subjects. The school takes care to ensure that the curriculum for part-time students integrates with the provision in other settings which they attend. For example, the school provides individual lessons for students on short-term placements so that they can continue with work on a Media GCSE course.

The school provides regular counselling and behaviour management sessions which help students to develop their emotional and social skills. Staff compile individual learning plans to ensure that students' personal and social needs are closely monitored. Students are encouraged to participate in assessing their own levels of achievement and to set targets, which include their career aspirations. Students combine attendance at the school with work experience and placements which provide them with sound careers guidance.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory overall and encourage students to make satisfactory or better progress in a broad range of areas. Lessons are based on a sound assessment of students' abilities. Lessons are planned to a consistent format and have clearly communicated objectives. Teachers use a range of strategies to explain and reinforce students' learning and encourage their participation. Teachers plan and communicate clear expectations and students are regularly required to contribute their thoughts and ideas in lessons. Staff show a clear understanding of examination requirements and course content, helping students to catch up or to deepen their understanding in relation to any weaker areas of knowledge. Students were helped, for example, in their understanding of wave patterns because subject specific language was shared and students were encouraged to use it in their verbal explanations and written work. Where teaching is better, as in an English literature

lesson, stimulating initial activities engaged students and led to discussions of complex moral issues.

Behaviour managements systems are consistently applied and understood by students and staff. Challenging behaviour is rare and is well managed by staff so that students quickly resume learning and show positive attitudes to their work in the majority of lessons. While weekly reports of students' progress for parents, carers and the local authority provide grades for each subject, this information is not recorded over time to more closely monitor and analyse any fluctuations in progress and learning.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Students report that they prefer attending this school than previous settings. Students are encouraged to develop their appreciation of the needs of others and to show respect for each other. They develop a satisfactory understanding of the beliefs and cultures of their peers through their studies. Their behaviour around school is satisfactory because staff use sanctions and merit award system successfully to encourage them to behave well. Their attendance is satisfactory and for many this represents an improvement from their previous settings.

Staff provide good role models. Innovative partnerships with parents and carers help to involve families in understanding how to manage their child's challenging behaviour and in helping to improve attitudes to learning. Through these partnerships and through clear school procedures, students make positive contributions to the school. They show positive attitudes in lessons and ensure that the majority of lessons proceed in a calm and purposeful manner. They benefit from the close support of staff and this helps to raise students' self-esteem and their levels of achievement, and satisfactorily prepares them for their future lives.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for students' welfare, health and safety is inadequate because the procedures to recruit and ensure that staff are suitable to work with children lack rigour. In addition, for one day a week there is no suitably trained and qualified first aider on the school site. The school has not stored a number of cleaning chemicals and materials safely and these are within easy access of students. Staff have completed the appropriate child protection training and are aware of the procedures required to record concerns. However, the school's safeguarding policy has not been updated and does not clearly identify the designated person responsible for safeguarding students.

Staff show care and concern for students on a day-to-day basis and react quickly to reduce any instances of bullying or disruption so that these are rare occurrences.

During lessons, teachers and mentors build good relationships with students which help to moderate students' behaviour and to encourage them to concentrate on the task in hand. The school completes regular fire drills and assessments of fire procedures and maintains regular checks on equipment. Portable electrical appliances are tested regularly. The school has planned well to increase accessibility, particularly in terms of adapting the curriculum and will be drawing up a further plan to review the possibility of further improving access in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. A clear behaviour policy defines rewards and sanctions, and it is evident that it has a positive impact.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has written policies which outline the necessary checks on the recruitment and the suitability of staff. However, the absence of senior leaders and the recent high levels of staff turnover have resulted in a number of omissions in the school's procedures so that the required checks have not been completed on all staff before they start work. The single central register is incomplete and does not meet requirements.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The premises are generally kept clean and tidy and classrooms are suitable for the intended subjects taught. Some classrooms provide attractive displays and informative learning prompts to help students in their work. Motivational posters are displayed around corridors and central areas and help to set clear expectations. Students have access to areas to play a variety of table games and to relax but there is limited outdoor space available. There is no appropriate facility on site for students who are ill.

Provision of information

The school has instigated innovative practices to present parents, carers and others with clear information and to encourage them to support their child's learning and progress. Positive evaluations confirm that these regular sessions encourage parents and carers to communicate with their children and to set clear boundaries. The school provides regular reports to parents, carers and to the local authority of the progress that students are making in their personal development and achievement. However, schools and other settings do not always provide the necessary information to the school as a part of a students' referral and placement and the support of local authorities is being requested to ensure this happens.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints policy sets out a series of procedures but these do not fully meet requirements. The policy does not record that complaints will be kept confidential and that the findings and recommendations made by the appeals panel will either be directly handed to, or sent by email to, participants. The policy refers to

the same individual using a number of different job titles who should not be directly involved during the different stages of the complaints process.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure that recruitment procedures are completed rigorously on all new staff appointments and that the school's safeguarding policy records the name of the school's designated person (paragraph 7)
- ensure there are effective measures to ensure pupils' health and safety by storing hazardous liquids and materials safely with regard to guidance, *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers* (DfES 0803/2001) (paragraph 11)
- ensure the first aid policy is implemented and that an appointed member of staff is present on site throughout the week (paragraph 14).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors (standards in part 4) and must:

- verify that no member of staff is barred from regulatory activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (paragraph 19(2)(a))
- ensure that all required checks are completed on each member of staff (paragraph 19(2)(b))
- complete an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check in respect of any member of staff (paragraph 19(2)(c))
- complete all appropriate checks before a person is appointed to the school (paragraph 19(3))
- ensure that the central register shows that all checks were completed (paragraph 22(3)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

- provide facilities for pupils who are ill which includes a washbasin with hot and cold running water (paragraph 23(k))
provide appropriate and more regular access to outdoor areas for students (paragraph 23(s)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the manner in which complaints are to be handled (standards in part 7) and must:

- ensure that the appeals panel is comprised of three people who have not been directly involved in the complaint previously (paragraph 25(f))
- make provision in the policy so that findings and recommendations are passed directly or are emailed to the person complained about (paragraph 25(i))
- ensure the procedures provide for correspondence, statements and records be kept confidential (paragraph 25(k)).

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education			√	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			√	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			√	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			√	

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development			√	
The behaviour of pupils			√	

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils				√
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Secondary		
Date school opened	February 2010		
Age range of pupils	13–16 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 6	Total: 12
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 7	Girls: 2	Total: 9
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 2	Girls: 0	Total: 2
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 3	Girls: 0	Total: 3
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,000 – £10,800		
Address of school	Units 1–3, 37–39 Western Road Mitcham CR4 3ED		
Telephone number	020 86486088		
Email address	immanuel.house@btconnect.com		
Headteacher	Mr J Kerson		
Proprietor	Immanuel House Limited		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 March 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Rise Education, Mitcham, CR4 3ED

Thank you for explaining your thoughts and views of your school. Many of you told us that you are making better progress at this school than you had been previously in other schools. You are making satisfactory progress because the overall quality of teaching and learning in the school is satisfactory. You make good progress in some subjects; you made thoughtful comments in an English Literature lesson and you have completed required controlled assessments carefully.

Staff at the school help you to develop your social skills and behaviour. In many lessons you work hard and concentrate on what you have to do. Staff are quick to help sort out any disturbances and to help you to focus on your work. The school takes care to find out what you know when you arrive. Some of you attend for a few days and some for a few weeks. We have asked the local authority to make sure that the school receives records of your work when you are transferred.

We have asked the school to make sure that it completes all required checks on staff before they begin work at the school. We have also asked the school to improve some of the policies and procedures and to make sure that chemicals and cleaning materials are stored safely.

You talked about trips and visits that you had enjoyed. I hope that you got a lot out of the day at the army training camp. I wish you all well and hope that you continue to work hard and to pass the exams.

Yours sincerely

Mark Lindfield
Her Majesty's Inspector