

Sporting Edge Independent School

St George's Church Centre, Bridge Street West, Birmingham, B19 2YX

Inspection dates

18 April 2013

Reason for inspection

This was an unannounced emergency inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE), following complaints received regarding the provision made for students' welfare, health and safety, particularly the effectiveness of child protection arrangements to keep students safe from harm.

The purpose of the visit was to check that the school met all welfare, health and safety regulations and that the complaints procedure and provision of information for parents, carers and others met regulatory requirements.

Conclusions

Provision for students' welfare, health and safety is inadequate. A significant number of safeguarding and welfare regulations are not met. Consequently, students are not properly safeguarded. Not all requirements are met for the handling of complaints and the provision of information for parents, carers and others.

The child protection policy is not comprehensive enough and it is not implemented effectively. The guidance does not help staff recognise, and be alert to, the different signs of abuse. It also does not make explicit the procedures to be adopted for dealing with allegations of abuse made against the headteacher or other designated persons. Arrangements for making a child protection referral and the keeping of incident records are not made sufficiently explicit. While the headteacher and deputy headteacher have undergone safer recruitment training there are some important weaknesses in recruitment procedures. For example, the proprietor has not checked the previous employment history and taken up references for all staff before they are employed. All of the other required vetting checks have been carried out on staff and others who work in school to confirm their suitability to work with students. By the end of the inspection the single central register contained all of the required information. Some minor amendments were made to its contents, during the inspection, to ensure that the person undertaking the checks was always identified. The designated child protection officers have been trained at the appropriate level and all other staff have undergone suitable child protection training.

Health and safety procedures, including fire safety arrangements are inadequate. A suitable fire risk assessment has not been carried out and fire drills are not formally recorded, so the timings and outcomes of any evacuations are not known. Portable electrical equipment, fire extinguishers, fire alarm and electrical lighting systems are subject to annual inspection by a competent person. However, the testing of the fire alarm and electrical lighting systems, during the course of the year, are not undertaken within the recommended timescales. There are no records to show that staff fire training

has been suitably carried out. Risk assessments for the premises are adequate but they are not robust enough for educational visits off-site. For example, the names of students going on educational visits are not always specified and trips are not always signed off by the headteacher as required by the school health and safety policy.

An anti-bullying policy is in place but it does not contain sufficient information about the different forms of bullying and how incidents will be recorded. In practice, students are free from harassment and intimidation and they say bullying is rare. When bullying incidents occur students report that they are dealt with effectively. The care and control policy, which relates to physical intervention, positive touch and physical restraint procedures, is of good quality. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appropriately trained in physical restraint techniques, so are qualified to implement restraint procedures when required. While there have been no physical restraints since the school opened in 2005, there are clear pro-formas to record incidents when they happen.

There is a satisfactory first aid policy but procedures are not fully implemented. For example, there are three qualified first aiders but their training certification has lapsed. They have not undergone refresher training within the required three-year timescale. Accident records are not always completed properly because the treatment administered is not always specified.

The behaviour policy is adequate and it is implemented well. A written record is kept of the sanctions imposed on individuals for serious misbehaviour. Students' comments and student surveys indicate that behaviour is at least satisfactory or better. Students are properly supervised in school and on trips off the site. The admission and attendance registers are kept in accordance with regulatory requirements.

There are omissions in the school's written complaints policy. The procedure does not state that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are kept confidential and that a copy of findings and recommendations from panel hearings are available for inspection on the school premises by the headteacher and proprietor. Not all of the required information is made available to parents, carers and others. The prospectus does not state that details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year are available from the school. The school does not provide to all local authorities with an annual account of the income received and the expenditure incurred for those students who are wholly or partly funded by a local authority, as required.

The school requires improvement and must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 ('the Regulations'), and associated requirements

- ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school and that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State paragraph 7
- produce a comprehensive anti-bullying policy and ensure it is implemented effectively paragraph 10

- ensure that health and safety procedures are implemented effectively paragraph 11
- ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 paragraph 13
- ensure that the first aid policy is implemented effectively paragraph 14
- ensure that the following information is made available to parents of students, parents of prospective students and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate: paragraph 24(1)(b)
 - details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year
- ensure where a student who is registered at the school is wholly or partly funded by the local authority, that an annual account of the income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that student is provided to the local authority and on request to the Secretary of State paragraph 24(1)(h)
- ensure that the complaints procedure states that a copy of findings and recommendations made by a panel is available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and headteacher paragraph 25(i)
- ensure that the complaints procedure states that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are kept confidential. paragraph 25(k)

Inspection team

David Rzeznik, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Information about this school

- Sporting Edge is a small independent secondary school in Birmingham. The school opened in September 2005 and is registered to admit 30 students aged between 14 and 16 years. There are currently 14 students on roll and the vast majority are boys. Seven students have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school offers an alternative to mainstream education for students who have been excluded from, or are at risk of being excluded, from mainstream schools.
- The school aims through true sporting ethics to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to develop personally, achieve academically, progress into further education, employment and training, with skills and experiences that will equip them to be successful and contributing adults.
- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in October 2011, when the quality of education provided was judged to be satisfactory and all regulatory requirements were met.

School details

Unique reference number	134403
Inspection number	421552
DfE registration number	330/6109
This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.	
Type of school	Secondary day school
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	14–16 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	14
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Stephen McCullough
Headteacher	Stephen McCullough
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,000
Telephone number	0121 333 7325
Email address	sporting_edge2006@yahoo.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

