

Sporting Edge Independent School

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

Inspection dates

13 December 2013

Context of the inspection

- The school received an unannounced emergency inspection on 18 April 2013. It confirmed concerns received in complaints that provision for students' welfare, health and safety were inadequate. A significant number of safeguarding and welfare regulations were not met. Consequently, students were not properly safeguarded. Not all requirements were met for the handling of complaints and the provision of information for parents, carers and others.
- The school produced an action plan in June 2013 that was evaluated in July of that year. The actions to be taken by the school were judged to be satisfactory subject to satisfactory implementation.
- This progress monitoring inspection was undertaken at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to evaluate the progress made by the school in the implementation of its action plan.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Good progress

The inspection of April 2013 found that the child protection policy did not help staff recognise, and be alert to, the different signs of abuse. It also did not make explicit the procedures 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 were not sufficiently explicit. While the headteacher and deputy headteacher had undergone training on safer recruitment, there were some important weaknesses in recruitment procedures. In its action plan, the school indicated that it would revise policies to ensure that child protection and recruitment procedures were comprehensive and implemented in accordance with guidelines. As a result of implementing its action plan, the school now gives clear guidance to staff on how to recognise potential abuse and what to do if they suspect it is happening. The child protection policy systematically sets out the procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff, including where this might relate to the headteacher. The school now carries out appropriate employment checks and has revised its systems to ensure that these are recorded.

In April 2013, the anti-bullying policy did not contain sufficient information about the different forms of bullying and how incidents would be recorded. The school's action plan proposed that a new policy, reflecting the guidance provided by the DfE, would be devised. This revised policy contains clear information about different types of bullying, including a detailed approach to tackling cyber-bullying. The rare incidents of bullying are now recorded appropriately.

Risk assessments for educational visits off-site were formerly not robust enough. For example, the names of students going on educational visits were not always specified and trips were not always signed off by the headteacher, as required by the school health and safety policy. The school's action plan proposed reviewing and revising the policy for educational visits, putting in place a new risk assessment form and providing training for staff in implementing the new policy and procedures. Records of visits carried out since the previous inspection show that the weaknesses have been rectified.

At the time of the April 2013 inspection, a suitable fire risk assessment had not been carried out and fire drills were not formally recorded, so that the timings and outcomes of any evacuations were not known. The school had not tested the fire alarm and electrical lighting systems within the recommended timescales. There were no records to show that staff had been suitably trained in fire safety. The school's action plan proposed drawing up a new policy and procedures and providing training for staff. The new policy addresses previous failings and staff have been suitably trained. Records show that procedures are being fully implemented.

The first-aid policy met requirements at the last inspection, but procedures were not fully implemented. For example, the three qualified first aiders had not undergone refresher training within the required three-year timescale and accident records were not always completed properly. The school's action plan proposed that the first aiders would attend required training and that all staff would be trained in implementing the first aid policy. As a result of taking these actions, the school now implements its policy effectively.

The April 2013 inspection identified omissions in the school's written complaints policy. It did not state that correspondence, statements and records of complaints were to be kept confidential and that a copy of the findings and recommendations from panel hearings would be made available for inspection on the school premises by the headteacher and proprietor. The school has amended the policy to include these statements. The prospectus did not provide all the required information to parents. The school has reviewed its prospectus and now ensures that parents receive all necessary information. The school is seeking to establish a website as it feels this would provide a beneficial additional source of information. The school is required each year to provide information to local authorities about how it spends income received for those students who are wholly or partly funded by a local authority. At the time of the last inspection this had not happened. The school now provides a detailed account of how the funds for these students have been used.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements

Inspection team

Sandra Hayes, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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 four students on roll, all boys.
- The school offers an alternative to mainstream education for students who have been excluded, 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 and progress into further education, employment and training with skills and experiences that will equip them to be successful and contributing adults.
- The school's last full inspection by Ofsted was 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	429851
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	Day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	14–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	4
Number of part time pupils	1
Proprietor	S C McCullough
Headteacher	S C McCullough
Date of previous school inspection	18 April 2013
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,000
Telephone number	0121 333 7325
Email address	sporting_edge2006@yahoo.co.uk

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