

Knowl Hill School

School Lane, Pirbright, Woking, Surrey, GU24 0JN

Inspection date

30 January 2014

Reason for inspection

This unannounced inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education because responses in Ofsted's latest Point in Time survey raised concerns about pupils' behaviour and the school's approach to dealing with poor behaviour.

Conclusions

The management of pupils' welfare, health and safety is inadequate. The school's provision for the overall development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also inadequate. Much of the inadequacy stems from the ineffectiveness of the school's policies and procedures to promote good behaviour and pupils' personal development and attitudes.

Senior leaders are aware of the need to improve behaviour. Discussions with senior teachers showed that the school has started the process of changing its policies and procedures for managing behaviour. Some school documentation is in the process of being updated. The school has an adequate procedure, through a dedicated computer program, to record and analyse incidents of poor behaviour. Previously, however, there has been no systematic and detailed analysis of patterns of behaviour to inform whole-school strategies to improve it. Serious incidents have been recorded appropriately. New procedures are due to be introduced at the beginning of the week following the inspection. Staff have received a presentation about the new arrangements. Pupils told the inspector that they were also looking forward to the planned changes, which had been explained to them.

Discussions with pupils show that behaviour is currently inadequate. Pupils spoke about teachers' inconsistency in the application of sanctions and school policies. Although pupils said that they generally felt safe, they had negative views about behaviour, commenting on rough behaviour around the school and frequent disruption to lessons and learning. They spoke about different types of bullying that occurred including name calling, the use of racist and homophobic comments, and sometimes more violent behaviours. During the inspection some rough behaviour was observed in corridors and some disrespectful attitudes were noted. Staff have very occasionally used pupil restraint to manage certain situations, but there has been no specific training for staff in how to use such procedures. Pupils mentioned that there are some areas of the building, before and during the school day, where they feel less safe.

Appointment procedures and the required checks on staff before appointment are adequate and the information is appropriately recorded on the single central register. Although staff have received training in child protection and are aware that they must be alert to signs of child abuse, their understanding of how to deal with these matters is inconsistent. There is no clear written school procedure for staff to follow, especially if there are allegations against senior staff.

The school has improved its approaches to risk assessments, which are adequate to maintain overall health and safety, fire risk and pupils' outside visits. However, there are weaknesses. Risk assessments have identified that some areas of the school are too untidy, but this has not been rectified. Parts of the school remain very untidy and present health and safety risks, as well as being 'uninviting' as teaching and learning areas.

There are adequate numbers of staff who have up-to-date first aid training. There are enough first aid kits around the school, but not all of these are in good order. Written procedures are not clear enough about first aid responsibilities, how to ensure hygienic procedures, for example when dealing with body fluids and blood, and when to place an emergency call.

The inspector's discussions with pupils indicated that lessons in citizenship adequately covered many aspects of the broader requirements of the regulations about pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. While there are adequate opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibilities, their concern about behaviour and attitudes shows that the school is not effective in promoting respect, self-esteem and tolerance of others' beliefs and views.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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 pupils are enabled to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence	paragraph 5(a)(i)
Enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law	paragraph 5(a)(ii)
Encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative, and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely	paragraph 5(a)(iii))
Assist pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures, in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions	paragraph 5(a)(v)
Encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs	paragraph 5(a)(vi)
Ensure arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State	paragraph 7
Ensure that there is a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils which sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving, and that this policy is implemented effectively	paragraph 9
Ensure that there is an effective anti-bullying strategy in place and that it is	paragraph 10

being implemented

Ensure that there a written policy which complies with relevant health and safety laws and it is being implemented paragraph 11

Ensure that there a written policy on first aid and that it is implemented paragraph 14

Ensure school staff are deployed in such a way as to ensure the proper supervision of pupils paragraph 15

Inspection team

Daniel Towl HMI, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Knowl Hill School, in Pirbright, Surrey, is an independent day special school.
- It was founded in 1984 to accept up to 67 boys and girls with specific learning difficulties, principally dyslexia. Pupils may also have dyspraxia, attention deficits or autism, for example Asperger's syndrome.
- The school is registered to admit pupils aged from seven to 16 years old. There are currently 65 pupils on roll aged from 10 to 16 years.
- There are 54 pupils who have a statement of special educational needs.

School details

Unique reference number	125436
Inspection number	434029
DfE registration number	936/6554
<p>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.</p>	
Type of school	Special School
School status	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	7–16 Years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	65
Proprietor	Knowl Hill Foundation
Chair	Mrs Norma Todd
Headteacher	Mr J Dow-Grant
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2012
Termly fees (day pupils)	£5,263
Telephone number	01483 797032
Email address	info@knowlhill.org.uk

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