

# Future First

Hockley Port, All Saints Street, Hockley, Birmingham B18 7RL

## Inspection dates

26 November 2015

## Overall outcome

**Independent school standards not met**

## Context of the inspection

- This inspection was undertaken at the request of the registration authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan. It was conducted without notice.
- The school's last full standard inspection was in January 2012, when all aspects of its work were judged good and all the independent school standards were met. Subsequently, the school advised the Department for Education that it wished to expand its numbers and operate on two sites. The second site is in a local authority-owned youth centre, a short distance from the main site. A material change inspection took place in March 2015 to evaluate the provision in the new site. This inspection found that not all the standards were met.
- The school submitted an action plan following the inspection but this was not accepted by the Department for Education. A revised action plan was evaluated in July 2015 and judged to require improvement. The school was advised to submit a further revised action plan. This had not been received at the time of this inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the school's material change inspection.
- The inspector met with the headteacher at the Oakland site to discuss the school's progress with its action plan and its implementation.
- The inspector reviewed the school's records, policies and procedures to check on the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

## Main findings

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- The inspection in March 2015 found that the proposed new site had a number of shortcomings in relation to health and safety and compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) order 2005. The subsequent action plan evaluation found that a number of actions were likely to resolve some of these weaknesses, but not all.
- The school's safeguarding policy, which was not on its website at the time of the action plan evaluation, is on the website and meets requirements. The school has also ensured that there is a designated safeguarding officer onsite, trained to the appropriate level and that all staff have received appropriate training regarding safeguarding and the Prevent agenda.
- There were a number of shortcomings relating to the health and safety procedures at the Oakland Road site's premises. These were not all addressed satisfactorily by the action plan. Questions regarding the proposed actions included: whether all fire exit doors were now appropriately signed and unimpeded, the security of the boiler room and other health and safety concerns related to the premises and accommodation. The school and the landlord were unable to provide evidence of the most recent checks relating to the electrical installation, gas appliances, the fire alarm and emergency lighting. Although the action plan identified actions to ensure these checks now complied with requirements, implementation needed to be seen.
- As a result of implementing its action plan, the school has resolved many of the issues, but some remain. All fire exits and signage now comply with requirements and the caretaker and staff check daily that exits are unimpeded. The fire assembly point is appropriately identified

and all lighting is now working, including in corridors. The boiler room is locked and secure. The school and the proprietor have drawn up appropriate risk assessment policies, and actions to be taken are clearly identified.

- The school and the landlord were able to provide evidence of checks made at appropriate intervals on, and the required regular maintenance of, electrical installations and equipment and gas appliances. Fire drills are carried out monthly and logged carefully. There was also evidence of the regular maintenance of the fire alarm systems. However, although equipment such as the fire extinguishers is checked and maintained regularly, routine checks on the emergency lighting and on the fire alarm system are not made as frequently as required. This means that requirements are still not met.
- The centre manager and the school's headteacher are urgently trying to contact the landlord to gain permission to carry out these checks more often as they are carried out by the landlord's contractors. However, the failure to carry out routine emergency lighting and fire alarm tests at the required intervals places the health and safety of the pupils at risk and means that the school does not yet comply with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

### **Premises of and accommodation of schools**

- The premises are well cared for and are in good repair. They provide a clean, warm and welcoming environment for students, who were observed working happily in both of the school's larger classrooms. Good leisure facilities are available both inside and outside the building, including a sports hall and outside playing fields.
- At the time of the material change inspection, lights in a corridor leading to a fire exit were not working. Rooms and corridors are now all appropriately lit and good acoustics enable students to listen well. There are good resources, including information and communication technology to support the learning of students of this age whose first language is not English.
- The proposed medical room did not have a washbasin and its location was too far away from a toilet. The school now has an appropriately located medical room available both for the treatment and short-term care of students. This is close to a toilet and has suitable washbasin facilities and a bed. The room is light and warm and also includes the cupboard where first aid equipment is stored. It can be readily supervised by school staff.
- Although students had continuous access to drinking water previously, this was not labelled as drinking water as required. The hot water temperature was set too high. Leaders have addressed both of these issues. Students now have ready access to drinking water that is clearly marked. The school provided logged evidence that the required checks are carried out on the hot water supply so that it does not present a scalding risk.
- The school and the centre manager have put together a daily and weekly checklist to ensure that regular health and safety checks are made on the premises as required. Responsibilities are clear and the premises have been regularly maintained since the school opened. Any damage to the building is quickly notified to the landlord and the repair then dealt with. All requirements in relation to this part of the independent school standards are now met.

### **Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

- Leaders have addressed many of the shortcomings identified in the action plan evaluation and at the time of the material change inspection. The site is now open and there is a very positive learning ethos in place.
- The leadership has been strengthened by the appointment of a head of site, who is also the designated safeguarding officer for the site. Checklists have been drawn up and checks are carefully carried out to satisfy almost all of the independent school standards. Responsibilities are clearly allocated. Improvements have been made to the building and repairs carried out.
- Leaders have failed to ensure that the emergency lighting and fire alarms are checked as regularly as they should be. The headteacher and centre manager have taken urgent steps to

remediate this and are determined to resolve the issue. However, the school and its proprietor have not ensured that the independent school standards are met consistently and that the well-being of students is promoted fully. Therefore, the requirements for the quality of leadership and management are not met.

### **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

#### **The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements**

- The proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- The proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).
- The proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school: demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of students (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

## Inspection team

Susan Lewis, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

## Information about this school

- Future First is an independent school for students aged 14 to 16 years. It is registered for up to 40 students. The school was initially set up in 2004 as part of the charitable outreach arm of the Birmingham Community Venture (BCV) project and was formally registered with the Department for Education (DfE) in 2007.
- The school specialises in supporting two different groups of students. It provides education and support for students who have been excluded from, or who refuse to attend, mainstream education. It also makes provision for students who are new to England and speak English as an additional language.
- In January 2015, the school separated its provision for these two groups of students. While its main base remained in Hockley, additional premises at Oakland Young People's Centre, Oakland Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, B21 0NA were leased by the proprietor from Birmingham City Council. The school has exclusive use of the facilities between 9am and 4pm on each school day. Students who are new to England and speak English as an additional language are based at this site.
- At the time of this inspection, the school had 28 students on roll, 14 based at each site. Students at the Oakland site have recently arrived from a number of Eastern Europe, African, Far Eastern or other countries. They are placed at the school by Birmingham City Council.
- The school aims to provide a positive learning environment and ensure a suitable destination is secured for each student at the end of Year 11.
- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2012, when all aspects of the quality of education were judged to be good.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135422
<b>Inspection number</b>	10007006
<b>DfE registration number</b>	330/6121

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

<b>Type of school</b>	Independent
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14–16 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	28
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Barket Hussain
<b>Chair</b>	Barket Hussain
<b>Headteacher</b>	Muhammed Majid
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 January 2012
<b>Fees (day pupils)</b>	£169 per week
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 551 4837
<b>Fax number</b>	n/a
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://futurefirstschool.co.uk">futurefirstschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:futurefirstschool@ymail.com">futurefirstschool@ymail.com</a>

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