

North Hill House

Independent school progress report

DCSF registration number	933/6200
Unique Reference Number (URN)	131975
Inspection number	354276
Inspection dates	26 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Mick Megee

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 08456 404040
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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Purpose and scope of the visit

This inspection visit was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002¹, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005², and under the Care Standards Act 2000 having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools or residential special schools.³ The visit was conducted 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 following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

North Hill House School in Frome, in Somerset, is a purpose-built residential and day school for boys between the ages of seven and 18 years who have Asperger's Syndrome and associated learning difficulties. It occupies four sites across Frome. At the time of this inspection, the school had 27 day pupils and 32 boarders. Pupils are placed by local authorities and all but one have a statement of special educational needs. Post-16 students are educated at local further education colleges. The school is part of the Priory Group, which operates a number of schools nationally for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school first opened in 1999. The education and boarding provision was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2010. The school describes its mission as, 'The fostering of a responsible, positive outlook on life and achievement through the provision of an appropriate and stimulating educational environment.'

Context of the visit

At the time of the last inspection, the school failed to meet two regulations; one concerning pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and the other in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5). A subsequent action plan to address regulations that were not met was evaluated and approved by Ofsted in March 2010. This inspection is the first visit undertaken to monitor the progress that the school has made against that action plan.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

At the last inspection, the admission register and attendance registers did not fully meet requirements. The admission register did not record the name of the previous school attended for all pupils. In order to meet the regulation, the school proposed in its action plan to include the required information on the register. The inspector

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

³ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000014_en_1

examined the register and found that it now includes the information on the previous school attended by all pupils, as well as all the other required information.

At the last inspection, the attendance registers were not completed in line with DCSF guidelines. Contact details for all pupils were not entered fully, registers were not completed on a daily basis and attendance figures were not completed weekly. In order to meet the regulation, the school proposed in its action plan to set out the necessary contact information, call the register at the start of every morning and afternoon session, and to enter the weekly attendance figures. The inspector examined all the school's registers and found that all the required information is now included. The inspector observed the register being taken at the start of a morning session, and the headteacher confirmed that the registers were taken at the start of each morning and afternoon session. As a result of implementing the agreed action plan, the school now meets this regulation.

At the last inspection, there was no dedicated room that could be used when a pupil was ill. The school made alternative arrangements, such as using a spare bedroom, but often these rooms were in regular alternative use. In order to meet the regulation, the school proposed in its action plan that a bedroom would be allocated for the sole use of day and boarding pupils who are ill. The inspector examined the designated room and found that the room fully meets requirements and has en-suite washing and toilet facilities. It is not used for any other purpose. As a result of implementing the agreed action plan, the school now meets this regulation.

All matters relating to safeguarding, including the school's single central register, together with policies concerning welfare, health and safety, were checked during the visit and all were found to be in order.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

School details

Name of school	North Hill House		
DCSF number	933/6200		
Unique reference number (URN)	131975		
Type of school	Residential special school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1999		
Age range of pupils	7–18		
Gender of pupils	Boys		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 59	Girls: 0	Boys: 59
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Boys: 0
Number of boarders	Boys: 32	Girls: 0	Boys: 32
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 58	Girls: 0	Boys: 58
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 3	Girls: 0	Boys: 3
Annual fees (day pupils)	£70,821–£133,432		
Annual fees (boarders)	£95,793–£158,403		
Address of school	Fromefield Frome Somerset BA11 3AD		
Telephone number	01373 466222		
Fax number	01373 475175		
Email address	sharone@nhh4as.co.uk		
Headteacher	Ms Sharon Edney		
Proprietor	Ms Julia Bond		
Reporting inspector	Mick Megee		
Dates of inspection	26 April 2010		