

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

REPORT FOR A PROGRESS MONITORING VISIT

School name	Beech Hall School
DfE Number	895/6008
Registered Charity Number	525922
Address	Beech Hall School Beech Hall Drive Tytherington Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 2EG
Head	Mr James Allen
Proprietor	Riverston Group Ltd
Date of visit	01.10.18

BEECH HALL SCHOOL

Beech Hall Drive, Tytherington, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 2EG

01 OCTOBER 2018

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Beech Hall School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged between 6 months and 16 years. It was founded in 1926 as a boarding school for boys and became co-educational in 1981. The school has been a limited company since 2015 and is managed by the Riverston Group, who are the board of directors and governors of the school. The school comprises three sections: a Nursery for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage; a junior school for pupils aged 5 to 11 years; and a senior school for pupils aged 11 to 16 years.

There are 99 pupils at the school of whom 47 require support for special educational needs, 18 have education, health and care plans and one pupil has English as an additional language. The previous inspection was in January 2018.

PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

This was an announced visit carried out at the request of the DfE to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the focussed compliance inspection in January 2018. The focus of the visit was on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, particularly those concerned with: welfare, health and safety; safeguarding, health and safety (maintenance of equipment, adequacy of glazing, legionella testing); fire safety; premises and accommodation (maintenance and lighting); and the quality of leadership in and management of schools.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PUBLICATION

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and 8(a) and (b)]; Provision of information to parents [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO PARENTS

The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website and provided to parents on request.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The school meets the requirements.

The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. Staff, and those with responsibility for safeguarding, are appropriately trained; they are clear on the procedures to use and are confident in reporting issues of a safeguarding nature or dealing with allegations. The school makes appropriate contact with the local safeguarding board when issues are raised or advice is required. The governors have safeguarding as a standing agenda item in their termly meetings. The proprietor has a safeguarding responsibility and meets on a regular basis, and at least half termly, with the senior school management including the designated safeguarding lead. There is an effective annual full governing board review of safeguarding and the safeguarding and child protection policy is also reviewed on an annual basis and is ratified by the full board of governors.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

The school meets the Regulation.

The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy which details the operation of the health and safety committee which meets on a termly basis. Health and safety is a standing item in weekly briefings to all staff and both the school bursar and the health and safety officer have clear delegated responsibilities, which cover all aspects of the management of health and safety matters across the school. A hazard reporting system is in place which allows the maintenance team to respond rapidly to potential hazards, including slip and trip risks, the maintenance of equipment and any perceived risks with glazing throughout the school. A site tour confirmed that all windows which were identified in the previous inspection as requiring toughened glass are now in place and the school has produced suitable risk assessments in respect of any windows that may pose a potential risk. Records were seen of legionella testing and regular water flush throughs are undertaken on a half termly basis. In addition, monthly records of water temperature testing are in place demonstrating satisfactory levels of on-going monitoring. Previously identified trip hazards in terms of cobbled walkways have been resolved by introducing dedicated fenced walkways, which have the added benefit of separating traffic flow from paths that pupils may use. Evidence of portable appliance testing (PAT) of electrical equipment was seen and there is a suitable process in place, managed by the bursar, which ensures that items that fail PAT testing are disposed of appropriately.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12]

The school meets the Regulation.

Requirements relating to fire safety are met. The health and safety policy and a separate fire policy give clear detail of the fire evacuation procedures, the use of fire equipment and its location. Staff and pupils spoken to were clear on fire evacuation procedures, which are all appropriately logged with action points to follow up should there be any issues arising. Records of fire drills were seen, including those which are appropriate to pupils with mobility needs. A range of fire risk assessments were examined which covered classrooms, the assembly hall, the dining room, laboratories and other risk areas. They were found to be both appropriate and subject to regular review by the school and governors. An external contractor has reviewed the fire system and has installed new sounders and call points. An external provider has undertaken fire awareness training, fire extinguisher training and fire warden training with a range of staff in September. Monitoring and reporting of issues related to fire safety are a function of the health and safety committee, and are reported termly to governors.

Premises of and accommodation at schools [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 25]

The school meets the Regulation.

The school has reviewed its premises maintenance process to include the early identification of potential hazards which may affect the health and safety of both staff and pupils. Staff are able to report, through the school intranet, any concerns arising and these are logged and assessed for action by the senior leadership team. The bursar and the health and safety officer conduct weekly site walks, noting any concerns which are then documented and sent to the head and the proprietor. There is an effective audit trail and rectification process, with risk factors allocated to each issue arising, with a colour coded system in place to identify timescales for completion. The proprietor visits at least half termly to check maintenance regimes, undertake site tours and to check on maintenance progress.

Premises of and accommodation at schools [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 27(a) and (b)]

The school meets the Regulations.

Following an audit by external contractors which took place over the summer holiday period, outstanding issues related to the operation and effectiveness of external lighting have been addressed. Evidence was seen of work undertaken by contractors during a site tour and the school is now completing further advised, non-essential, remedial work which includes the provision of additional cover protection for wiring, removal of redundant wiring and the fitting of residual current device (RCD) protector sockets. Weekly site inspections include a checklist of internal and external lighting systems, with any matters arising being reported to the head and the proprietor for action.

Quality of leadership in and management of schools [ISSR Part 8, paragraphs 34(a) and (b)]

The school meets the Regulations.

The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. There are clear lines of responsibility for health and safety. The bursar now has responsibility for the premises, site and services, and the health and safety officer manages the day-to-day responsibilities related to health and safety matters, including managing health and safety meetings, the terms of reference of the committee and the overseeing of all risk assessments. A health and safety audit by the school's managers has resulted in senior staff attending qualification courses, including institute of occupational safety and health (IOSH) and national examination board occupational safety and health (NEBOSH) courses, to better enable them to manage health and safety matters. In addition, grounds maintenance staff are undertaking pool maintenance and specific site health and safety courses to increase their awareness of health and safety matters, and an appropriate budget has been set aside to fund these courses. Staff and governors, in discussions, confirmed that leadership and management have a heightened awareness in terms of monitoring and reviewing health and safety matters, which demonstrates an on-going commitment towards ensuring the safety of pupils and staff at the school.

REGULATORY ACTION POINTS

For the regulations which were the focus of this visit, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and no further action is required as a result of this visit.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

WRITTEN MATERIALS

- Safeguarding policy
- Health and safety policy
- Risk assessment policy and sample of risk assessments
- Code of conduct
- Records for legionella testing, glazing assessment, electrical testing and equipment maintenance
- Fire safety policy, records and procedures
- Annual safeguarding report governors
- Senior management minutes regarding follow up to Action Plan
- Governing board minutes regarding follow up for Action Plan

MEETINGS WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL

- Head
- Designated safeguarding lead
- Person i/c risk assessments to discuss risk assessments
- Meeting with person responsible for keeping records of: legionella testing, glazing assessment, electrical testing and equipment maintenance
- Bursar - ref health and safety and fire procedures and implementation
- Telecom with governor – with responsibility for H and S matters
- Telecom with chair of governors

ACTIVITIES ON SITE

- Tour of site to check / view progress on H and S issues
- Scrutiny of child protection records
- Scrutiny of first aid incident and accident logs
- Scrutiny of documents to support: legionella testing; glazing assessments; electrical testing and equipment maintenance
- Scrutiny of governors safeguarding report
- Scrutiny of governing board minutes
- Meeting with a group of staff selected by inspectors
- Meeting with a group of pupils selected by the inspectors
- Oral feedback to head