

Mountwood Academy

Ward Green Lane, Preston PR3 3YB

Inspection dates

17 October 2018

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- Scrutiny of the school's website before the inspection showed that there is a policy in place, which is available for parents and others to view. The policy is thorough and up to date and makes specific reference to the government's current guidance.
- The designated safeguarding lead keeps detailed records in an electronic recording system. She takes prompt action when staff report concerns and follows up any issues that may emerge from them.
- Leaders keep an individual log for each member of staff that records the safeguarding training received. Training covers a range of safeguarding issues, including regular updates and the 'Prevent' agenda. All staff have read and understood 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Part 1 and Annex A and have signed a register to confirm this. New staff receive induction training that includes safeguarding matters. The inspector spoke with new and more experienced members of staff. They demonstrated that they are well trained in safeguarding and understand protocols and procedures. They are familiar with the school's electronic system for recording concerns.
- A tour of classrooms revealed pupils who clearly trust the adults who teach them. Pupils' behaviour showed that they feel safe in school. They were confident enough to talk to the inspector. Staff effectively secure pupils' well-being with the level of care and support they provide.
- Entry to the building is safe and office staff check visitors' identities as they arrive. Visitors remain in a secure holding area before being allowed into the main building. Following previous concerns about pupils being able to run out of school, there is now a new system in place, whereby only staff can open the exit doors, using an electronic fob. These doors would open automatically in the event of an emergency, during which staff would supervise pupils.
- The school's single central record of checks on members of staff is thorough and complies with the government's guidelines.
- Leaders provide all staff with training in de-escalating and managing more challenging behaviour that relates to pupils' special educational needs (SEN) and/or and

disabilities. Staff carry out prescribed physical interventions only when necessary and do so calmly, with the pupil's safety at the heart of their action. Leaders keep a detailed log of any physical restraint that staff have had to apply. They also debrief staff after any incidents involving interventions of this kind and review procedures as necessary.

- Leaders are reflective about safeguarding in the school, which contributes well to its effectiveness. They commission an external adviser to carry out audits of their practice and they make revisions in response to recommendations. For example, they have recently created a separate risk assessment around radicalisation because of the vulnerable nature of the pupils at the school. Leaders' actions have included the establishment of a new scheme of work to emphasise to pupils the importance of avoiding radicalisation.
- Leaders have a secure understanding of the safeguarding procedures around managing allegations against members of staff.
- The standards in these paragraphs are met.

Paragraph 14

- Evidence from visits to classrooms and from observations around the school shows that staff supervise pupils effectively. There is typically one adult to each pupil and, in some cases, two adults. Pupils usually behave well. Where their needs cause inappropriate behaviour, adults manage it effectively.
- The standard in this paragraph is met.

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- Leaders have made sure that there is a risk assessment policy in place, which is up to date and is detailed enough. It identifies the structure used for carrying out risk assessments and clearly establishes that governors have overall responsibility and school leaders manage the day-to-day assessment of risk.
- There is a wide range of risk assessments in place covering various areas of the building, as well as activities inside and outside school. These identify appropriate hazards, depending on the purpose of the risk assessment, and evaluate the degree of risk associated with the hazard. Leaders have suitable control measures in place.
- All pupils have an individual risk assessment and a 'positive behaviour support plan'. These contain pupils' needs and typical behaviour, with guidance on responses tailored to the individual. Hazards and risk levels are clearly identified and suitable control measures are in place. Pupils' plans also include lists of their likes and dislikes, which give staff useful information in developing strategies to calm pupils when required. There is also a facility for reviewing incidents to inform future responses.
- The standards in this part are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that all the other standards that were checked during this inspection are met.

- Leaders have made sure that there are effective safeguarding procedures in place. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school, exemplified by robust systems and effective training and underpinned by a deep care for the pupils.
- Leaders have an effective risk assessment policy that informs the rigorous risk assessments that they carry out. As a result, pupils' safety and well-being are secure.
- The standards in this part are met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has a suitable plan that details how leaders will make sure that they increase the participation in the curriculum of pupils with disabilities. They also have strategies to improve these pupils' access to the learning environment and to relevant information. It is reviewed annually.
- The requirement in this part is met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	136069
DfE registration number	888/6056
Inspection number	10080722

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent residential special school
Age range of pupils	8 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	22
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	4
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Katie Stephens
Chair	Katie Stephens
Headteacher	Ms Emily Haddock
Annual fees	£54,000
Telephone number	01524 762222
Website	http://mountwoodacademy.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	Emily.haddock@mountwoodacademy.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	12–14 September 2017

Information about this school

- Mountwood Academy is an independent special school. The school is located on the outskirts of Preston.

- The school caters for young people with autism. They require residential provision for up to 52 weeks per year. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.
- An inspection of the care provision took place at the same time as this emergency education inspection and is reported separately.
- A material change inspection was carried out in July 2018 at the request of the Department for Education. This was because the proprietor applied to change the school's age range from eight to 19 to eight to 25 years.
- According to GIAS ('Get information about schools', an online service provided by the government), the school caters for boys and girls aged between eight and 19 years, has 10 pupils on roll and has a capacity of 25 pupils. However, as well as the change in age range referred to above, leaders report that the school has 22 pupils on roll and has a capacity of 35 pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The DfE requested that Ofsted conduct an emergency inspection to report against paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c), 34(1), 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b) of the independent school standards. The lead inspector has also reported against paragraph 34(1)(c).
- The inspector scrutinised school policies and other documents relating to safeguarding and risk assessment. He also examined the school's record of checks on members of staff.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and some members of staff. He spoke with the local area designated officer by telephone. He also spoke informally with some pupils.
- Accompanied by the headteacher, the inspector had a brief tour of the teaching areas for pupils.
- The inspector examined the school's website to ensure that proprietor is complying with the requirements to publish information about safeguarding.

Inspection team

Mark Quinn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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