



SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

Progress monitoring report

School name	Brighton Steiner School
DfE registration number	846/6016
Inspection dates	15 March 2017
Reporting inspector	Jane Cooper
Supporting inspector	Helen Weatherhead

SECTION A: Information

Information about the inspection

This inspection was conducted by the School Inspection Service (SIS) at the request of the Department for Education (DfE). It was carried out by SIS in accordance with Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and it follows the inspection framework agreed with the DfE.

Brighton Steiner School was last inspected on 11-13 October 2016. At that time inspectors found that the school did not meet the following standards: 7 (a)& (b); 14; 16(b); 18(2)(c)(i); 18(2)(e); 18(3); 21; 21(3)(a)(i); 21(3)(a)(viii); 33 and 34 (1)(a)(b)(c). These standards relate to safeguarding; supervision; risk assessment; the checking and vetting of staff appointments and their recording on a single central record (SCR); handling complaints and leadership and management. As a result of these failures the DfE required the school to produce a Statutory Action Plan which it submitted on 10 January 2017. The Action Plan was evaluated by SIS at the request of the DfE on 17 January 2017. The action described in the school's plan had either been completed or was on track to be completed within an acceptable timescale.

The purpose of this progress monitoring inspection was to check whether the required action has been taken and whether the school now meets the independent school standards.

This inspection took place without prior notification to the school. It was conducted by an independent professional inspector who was accompanied by a Steiner Community Consultant. As requested by the DfE in their commission, the inspectors focused on compliance with the regulations which were failed at the last inspection and addressed subsequently in the school's action plan.

Information about the school

Brighton Steiner School is a co-educational, independent school for pupils aged three to 16. It adheres to the International Steiner Waldorf curriculum developed by the Austrian philosopher Dr Rudolf Steiner. The school's vision is 'to support each pupil's educational journey through the successive stages of child development from birth to adulthood'. It aims to nurture each pupil's full educational potential within a safe and secure environment.

The school is located in Brighton. There are 145 full-time and 39 part-time pupils on roll. Thirty-nine children are under five in a playgroup and in the four kindergarten classes. There are 85 pupils in key stages 1 and 2, and 60 in key stages 3 and 4. Three pupils have educational health care plans, funded by the local authority and the school has identified 25 pupils with learning difficulties. There are 11 pupils with English as an additional language (EAL).

SECTION B: Evidence of progress in relation to the action plan and compliance

Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and ensure such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State, (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and (b)).

This standard is met. The safeguarding policy, which is on the school's website, meets requirements. It is straightforward, detailed and informative, providing staff and parents with clear information and advice which reflects the latest government guidance. All members of staff have received recent online training in safeguarding, together with updates from the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). They are familiar with the school's procedures and understand their responsibility to safeguard young people. A thorough induction procedure ensures that all new staff receive safeguarding training when they join the school.

The DSL is a senior member of staff and also the current Chair of College. She has received up-to-date safeguarding training at the required level from the local authority, which covered, among other matters, assessment and referral, and multi-agency working. Her deputy and the designated safeguarding Trustee have also received the appropriate level of safeguarding training for their roles. The school has strong links with the local multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH), and the DSLs are part of the local safeguarding network which provides additional training and advice are available. Thus, key staff with designated responsibilities have good knowledge and understanding of local safeguarding procedures, allowing referrals to be made promptly and effectively to secure the best outcomes for pupils. The local authority recently undertook a full audit of the school's safeguarding procedures, and found them to be fit for purpose and in line with the latest government guidance. Confidential child protection files are held on limited access in a locked cabinet. They provide a full and detailed record for each child on the register, but would benefit from a coversheet to facilitate more efficient tracking of action taken in individual cases.

All trustees and the administrator have undertaken safer recruitment training. The impact of this training is seen in the school's new recruitment policy which now includes a standardised form for requesting references for applicants prior to interview. Safe recruitment practice was followed carefully when the school recently made a new appointment.

Ensure that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff (paragraph 14).

This standard is met. Pupils are well supervised in lessons and at break times. There are two non-teaching members of staff and an assistant on playground duty every day. The school has strengthened its policy and procedures for school trips. The ratio of staff to pupils has been increased and the responsibilities of all accompanying adults on educational trips are clearly defined, both on day and on residential visits at home and abroad.

Ensure that appropriate risks are identified in risk assessments and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16(b)).

This standard is met. At the last inspection concerns were raised about the safety of pupils on educational visits where the risks had not been properly assessed and managed. The school has now addressed this matter successfully. The policy on educational visits has been modified, extended and signed off by trustees and is on the school's website for parents to see. There is now a rigorous procedure for arranging any trip. The Health and Safety Officer is also the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and she oversees all procedures and ensures compliance with them. This includes ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken for all activities both in and out of school, and on day and residential trips at home and overseas. . All teachers have received training on assessing and managing risk and have been issued with a comprehensive and custom-made folder for their subject or classroom. Volunteers who accompany school trips have been appropriately vetted and are briefed by the group leader. The EVC checks all arrangements and risk assessments thoroughly. The documents relating to a recent class 5 trip to the British Museum were scrutinised by inspectors as an example of the good practice.

Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to confirm a person's identity (paragraphs 18(2)(c),18 (2)(c)(i) and 18(3)).

This standard is met. The school has undertaken a root and branch audit of personnel files and, where previous gaps existed, it has now ensured that retrospective checks have been conducted to verify the identity of all existing staff. Identity checks are now made routinely on all newly appointed teaching and non-teaching staff, trustees and regular volunteers. No agency staff are used by the school.

Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to confirm, in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such DBS is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 18(2)(e) and 18(3)).

This standard is met. As part of the audit described above, the school has now ensured that retrospective checks have been made of all personnel who had lived or worked outside the UK. This check is now part of the routine recruitment process.

Ensure that the single central register shows that a person's identity was checked and they were overseas checked and that this can be verified in the personnel file (paragraphs 21, 21(3)(a)(i) and 21(3)(a)(viii)).

This standard is met. The Single Central Register (SCR) is a detailed document which is well organised and now clearly records that each person's identity was checked, by whom and on what date. It also records, where relevant, that checks have been conducted for those persons who have experience of living or working overseas. The entries on the SCR are supported by evidence in personnel files selected at random. The confidential staff files are in good order and provide further

evidence of the other necessary checks which the school has undertaken to assure itself of the suitability of persons in the school, including regular volunteers, who have contact with the pupils.

Ensure details are provided on the number of formal complaints during the preceding school year (paragraph 32(3)(f)); and

Ensure that the school retains details of all formal complaints and the way they were dealt with (paragraph 33(j) to paragraph 33(k)).

These standards are met. All concerns and complaints, whether informal or formal now come to the Designated Complaints Officer who is the current administrator and a senior member of staff. There is also a clear process for handling any complaint about the administrator. Details of all concerns and complaints are recorded and filed clearly, along with details of the outcomes. These records are kept confidential and are secured in a locked cabinet. The school has received two formal complaints in the current academic year. Both of these are ongoing and are being handled according to the published complaints policy and in accordance with the required timescales. There is provision for the information about the number of formal complaints to be provided to parents through the newsletter and on the school's website.

Ensure that leaders and managers address identified weaknesses so that the independent school standards are met consistently and pupils' well-being is promoted (paragraphs leadership and management 34(1) to 34(1) (c)).

These standards are met. The trustees have all received training on the independent schools standards (ISS) and are now clear what these standards entail. The school has linked each trustee with a number of standards and given them responsibility for ensuring compliance with the ISS requirements. Thus trustees have ensured that all the ISS are currently met and that pupils' well-being is promoted effectively. The trustees are now also able to hold staff accountable for their work.

The school has made substantial improvements to the way in which it is governed, led and managed. The current trustees, Chair of College and Administrator have shown considerable vision and perspicacity in involving the whole school community and securing agreement for wide-ranging and ambitious developments which include arrangements for securing the school's financial stability and resourcing improvement going forward. This work has included careful consideration of the school's strengths and weaknesses and resulted in an ambitious school improvement plan (SIP), which is being implemented and monitored by senior leaders. Clear improvement has already been made, particularly in drawing up policies, procedures and records which meet the requirements of the independent school standards (ISS). The implementation of the SIP should ensure that the intended improvements to the quality of education are made by introducing a clear and fair system of staff appraisal which is underpinned by relevant professional development for both teachers and the managers charged with monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching.

Much good work has also been done to create better liaison between College, Trustees and the Administrator. A new accounting package has been introduced to keep better track of finances. The school is working towards a system of more efficient collection and collation of data to provide school managers with the information required to support decision making.

Compliance with the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014¹

The school now meets The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/contents/made.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Brighton Steiner School			
Address of school:	John Howard House Roedean Road Brighton BN2 5RA			
Telephone number:	01273 386 300			
Email address:	enquiries@brightonsteinerschool.org.uk			
Web address	www.brightonsteinerschool.org.uk			
Proprietor:	Brighton Steiner School Council Of Trustees			
Chair of Trustees:	Patrick Collinson			
Administrator:	Damian Mooncie			
DfE Number:	846/6016			
Type of school:	Independent school			
Age range of pupils:	2 - 16			
Gender of pupils:	Boys and girls			
Total number on roll:	full-time	145	part-time	39
	Boys:	82	Girls:	102
Number of pupils with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP):	Boys:	1	Girls:	2
Number of pupils with English as an additional language:	Boys:	2	Girls:	9
Type of inspection:	Progress monitoring inspection under Section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008			

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, and members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship or Cognita group. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk.