

## **WESTFIELD SCHOOL**

Oakfield Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE3 4HS

**27 MARCH 2018**

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Westfield School is an independent day school for girls aged between 3 and 18 years. The school is a member of Round Square, an international group of schools sharing the same holistic view of education. Governance is provided through a charity, The Northumbrian Educational Trust. The school was founded in 1960 and is situated in Gosforth, a residential suburb of Newcastle upon Tyne. The school is divided into four sections; the EYFS, the junior house for pupils in Year 1 to 6, the senior house for pupils in Years 7 to 11 and the sixth form. The current Headmaster and Bursar were appointed in September 2017.

There are 217 pupils on roll; 73 in the junior house including 15 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pupils and 144 in the senior house including 37 pupils in the sixth form. There are 82 pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), particularly for their language and literacy skills. There are currently no pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Twenty-eight pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), three of whom receive additional support.

## **PURPOSE OF THE VISIT**

This was an unannounced visit carried out at the request of the DfE to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the Focused Compliance and Education Quality Inspection in October 2017. The visit focused particularly on those regulations concerned with; safeguarding, the suitability of the staff, supply staff and proprietor; the single central register and the quality of leadership and management of the school. Additionally, the visit focused on the regulations concerned the provision of information to parents.

## **INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 (a) and (b)]**

The school meets the Regulations.

The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. The implementation of this policy is monitored by the school governors who have overall responsibility for the oversight of the school through The Northumbrian Educational Trust.

The school's safeguarding arrangements reflect the requirements of *KCSIE (September 2016)* and offer appropriate support for pupils' needs. A suitable recruitment policy, staff code of conduct and whistleblowing policy are in place and are understood by staff. Safeguarding is correctly managed. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in the senior house and, where appropriate the deputy DSL in the junior house, collate information from staff, liaise with parents and local agencies, including seeking advice from the LADO, and take prompt action if concerns are expressed about a child. Two recent cases involving pupil referrals were well documented and

evidence was noted of prompt contact with the LADO and the appropriate action was taken following the advice given by the local children's services. The governors review the safeguarding policy and procedures annually and ensure that they reflect the current requirements. The chair of governors, who is also the safeguarding governor has regular contact with the senior leaders and has monthly meetings with staff who have safeguarding responsibilities.

All staff, including the DSLs are suitably trained and training records confirmed this. New staff receive an appropriate induction and current staff receive update training. Staff understand how to respond to a disclosure and the importance of reporting concerns promptly. They know who they should report to and are aware that anyone can make a referral to children's services. The safeguarding arrangements for the school take into account all the requirements of the key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, as the school policies and procedures apply across all four sections of the school. Definitions of safeguarding are understood by staff and reinforced through regular inset training sessions lead by an external safeguarding provider.

**Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraphs 32(1) (b), 32(3) (b), and 32 (3) (d)]**

The school meets the Regulations.

The school website has all the required information for parents and for parents of prospective pupils. The website includes the most recent inspection report, the procedure for contacting the chair of the governing board, the school's mission and vision statements as well as the academic results of the pupils in public examinations. In addition, key policies such as admissions, behaviour, anti-bullying, health and safety and first aid are available directly from the website. Parents and prospective parents can also access particulars of the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

**Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors and single central register – [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18(c)(i) to (iv), (d) and (3); 20(6)(b)(ii); 21(3)(a) (i) to (iv) and (vii)]**

The school meets the Regulations.

The school has undertaken a comprehensive review of their recruiting procedures, recruiting policy and its implementation. Staff files now contain a summary sheet as a checklist detailing the file contents. The school has, since the last inspection, ensured that the chair of the governing board now has an enhanced CRB which is countersigned by the Secretary of State. Further, in the case of the governors, checks have been made to ensure that; all governors have been subject to an enhanced criminal record check; that they have undergone the relevant identity checks, and that a check has been completed on their right to work in the United Kingdom. All the above information is now correctly recorded in the single central register so that the dates are appropriately entered when the relevant checks have been made and when the resulting certificates were obtained. Previous omissions and gaps in the completion of the single central register have now been rectified. A check on the single central register was carried out during the visit, which included teaching and non-teaching staff, including all those appointed since the previous inspection. It was confirmed that the school had carried out the appropriate checks on all adults prior to their employment. No employee, volunteer or governor is barred from regulated activity relating to children. The single central register, which has been comprehensively updated since the last inspection was found to be accurately completed, demonstrating that the above checks had been carried out.

**Suitability of proprietors/governors [ISSR Part 4 paragraphs 21(6) and (7)]**

The school meets the Regulations.

A specific check was conducted of the single central register to ensure that all the required checks of the governing board members had been conducted before their appointment. This was found to be the case and in addition the

register showed that all governors had appropriate; enhanced criminal record, identity, right to work in the United Kingdom and, where relevant, an overseas check in place. This included governors who had been in post prior to and after the 1st May 2007. Examination of the current single central register, produced as a new data base in November 2017, appeared to show that the prohibition from management checks had not been conducted on the governors as required. However, this was found to be an error in the construction of the new single central register, which the school has now corrected. It was evident during the visit that much work had been undertaken to correct previous errors and omissions in the single central register and checks conducted on staff files confirmed that the recorded data now matched the register contents, ensuring that the single central register is now an accurate and more robust document.

**The quality of leadership and management of schools [ISSR Part 8 paragraphs 34 (1) (a) and (b)]**

The school meets the Regulations.

Since the previous inspection, the school's leadership and management have taken steps to ensure that they have the good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and effectively fulfil their responsibilities.

Senior staff and governors have sought external professional advice to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities, including the setting up of regular governor monitoring meetings which involve periodic checks on policy and procedures and the appropriate monitoring of the single central register. Individual governors with the required skill sets, have been tasked with undertaking the regular monitoring of; staff recruiting, health and safety and safeguarding within the school. Five senior staff including the chair of governors have recently undertaken safer recruitment training and discussion with the chair of governors confirmed that all governors were now far more focussed in ensuring that the regulatory standards were being consistently met. An external advisor with expertise locally in safeguarding is engaged to annually train and regularly update staff on safeguarding matters and further training for staff and governors is due to take place, focussing on the maintenance of the single central register. All the requirements of the Action Plan have been successfully put in place. As a result of this increased effort in monitoring and review and the seeking of external professional advice, the school is now in a stronger position to ensure that the Independent School Standards are consistently met.

**REGULATORY ACTION POINTS**

The school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework.