

ST PIUS X PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Oak House, 200 Garstang Rd, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 8RD

14 DECEMBER 2016

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Pius X Preparatory School is a Catholic co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of two and eleven years. The school was founded in 1955, and occupies a four-acre site in a residential area of Preston. It is divided into two sections; Oak House Nursery for pupils aged two to four years, and the main school, which educates pupils from five to eleven. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors.

At the time of the visit, there were 218 pupils. Ninety-two of these are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Twenty-three pupils require and receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom two have a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. Seven pupils require and receive support for English as an additional language (EAL). The previous ISI integrated inspection was in February 2016.

PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

This was an unannounced inspection at the request of the Department for Education which was focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the Early Years Statutory Framework 2014, particularly those concerned with: safeguarding; promoting good behaviour; the provision of information; the handling of complaints and the leadership and management.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and EYFS 3.4 - 3.18]

The school does not meet the regulation and requirements.

The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and has appropriate regard to the latest government guidance.

Staff have received recent training in line with the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2016 and are aware of potential types of abuse. Their understanding is assessed as part of this training. Staff also receive informal updates, which have included the measures necessary to prevent radicalisation. All have undertaken full safeguarding training at the required intervals, including the designated senior leaders (DSLs). Staff know how to respond if a pupil makes a disclosure, and how to report any concerns. The school liaises appropriately with local safeguarding agencies. Safeguarding records are detailed, and kept securely. Governors carry out an effective annual review of safeguarding each year. There is suitable internet filtering in place and pupils are taught how to keep safe online.

However, the school did not act appropriately to a safeguarding concern which was raised about the behaviour of three members of staff towards children in the nursery. The ensuing investigation lacked objectivity and rigour. As a result, children remained at risk of potential harm. When the governors became aware of this situation, they

acted appropriately by commissioning a detailed and thorough investigation. However, this did not take place until several months later.

Welfare, health and safety – promoting good behaviour [Part 3, paragraph 9; EYFS 3.52-3.53 and Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010]

The school meets the regulation and requirements.

The behaviour policy indicates that there is a clear process of rewards and sanctions, suitably adjusted for the age of the pupils. Behaviour records indicate that it is followed by staff. Standards of behaviour are generally high, and reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary, for pupils' individual needs.

Provision of information to parents [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

The school meets the regulation.

The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.

The manner in which complaints are handled [Part 7, paragraph 33 and EYFS 3.74-3.75]

The school meets the regulation and requirements.

The school has a suitable complaints policy in place, and this is implemented with care. Parental complaints are handled effectively through a three-stage process. Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations, which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

Leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

The school does not meet the regulation.

The governors ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge. However, leaders do not fulfil their responsibilities effectively, and in doing so do not actively promote the well-being of the pupils. The initial investigation into the allegations concerning the members of staff in the nursery was not carried out with sufficient rigour and objectivity. Staff members raising concerns in good faith were not protected from retaliation, contrary to the school's whistleblowing procedures.

REGULATORY ACTION POINTS

The school does not meet all of the relevant requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Early Years Statutory Framework 2014.

Welfare, health and safety – safeguarding [Part 3, paragraph 7 (a) and (b) and EYFS 3.4]

- Ensure that suitable arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, and that such arrangements have regard to the official guidance, by following up any allegations against staff in a timely, appropriate and objective manner.

Leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34 (b) and (c)]

- The governors must ensure that leaders respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns, thus ensuring they fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

- Leaders must ensure that staff raising safeguarding concerns in good faith are protected from retaliation.