



Department
for Education

**IEBT
Level 3, Riverside
Bishopsgate House
Feethams
Darlington
DL1 5QE**

The Proprietor
Sompting Abbotts School
Church Lane
Sompting
Lancing,
West Sussex
BN15 0AZ

Tel no: [REDACTED]

registration.enquiries@education.gov.uk

Ref No: 938/6125

Date: 22 October 2019

Dear Proprietor

I refer to the inspection by The Independent Schools Inspectorate, which was carried out at the above school under section 109 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 on 9 September 2019. You will see from the enclosed report that ISI noted serious regulatory failings.

Taking account of the report, the Secretary of State is satisfied, pursuant to section 114(1) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, that any one or more of the independent school standards¹ is or are not being met in relation to the school.

In these circumstances I enclose a Notice, served by the Secretary of State for Education under section 114(5) of the 2008 Act, requiring an Action Plan which details the steps that will be taken to meet all of the standards set out in the Annex to the Notice and the time by which each step will be taken, to be submitted by 22 November 2019

We have also been notified that there are some security issues at the school, which requires urgent attention. These are:

- 1) set protocols for staff to ensure the locking of the front door are not always followed;
and
- 2) The pupil changing room is unlocked, enabling potential access for visitors.

Please provide evidence that these matters have been addressed by the school by 5 November 2019.

You are reminded that the independent school standards require that a copy of the inspection report is sent to parents and a copy is published on the school's website or, where no such website exists, is provided to parents on request. This will be checked at the next inspection.

¹ [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014 \(SI 2014/3283\)](#)

The Action Plan must contain reasonable timescales for implementation within which the necessary action will be taken and it is expected that the implementation dates given in the Action Plan should not extend beyond 22 January 2020. A template and supporting advice is enclosed which may help you in drawing up a satisfactory Action Plan. Please can you ensure that you copy your action plan to ISI at the same time as sending it to me.

The deadline by which the Action Plan must be received by me is 22 November 2019. If this date is not met, the Secretary of State may remove the school from the Register of Independent Schools or may impose a requirement restricting the school's operations (from a date following the period during which you may appeal).

I must warn you that the Secretary of State may reject an Action Plan, and in these circumstances, the Secretary of State may remove the school from the Register of Independent Schools or may impose a requirement restricting the school's operations (from a date following the appeal period).

If an Action Plan is accepted, ISI may be asked to visit the school again to check that the school has fully implemented the plan and that it is fully meeting the independent school standards.

It is also noted in the inspection report that the school is failing to meet all the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school is required to address the failings listed in Annex 2.

You may wish to note that this letter, the enclosed Notice and Annex(es) will be published shortly on the Gov.uk website.

Yours faithfully



Independent Education and Boarding Team

SECTION 114(5) OF THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS ACT 2008

NOTICE BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION

IN RELATION TO

Sompting Abbots School
Church Lane
Sompting
Lancing,
West Sussex
BN15 0AZ
(“the School”)

WHEREAS


The Secretary of State for Education, being the keeper of the register of independent schools in England² –

- (i) has taken into account a report in respect of an inspection of the School by The Independent Schools Inspectorate, which was conducted on 9 September 2019; and
- (ii) is satisfied that the independent school standards, as prescribed in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, specified in the Annex to this Notice are not being met in relation to the School.

NOW THEREFORE

In exercise of the power conferred upon him by section 114(5) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the Secretary of State serves the following Notice on the proprietor of the School:

- (1) the independent school standards set out in the Annex to this Notice are not being met in relation to the School; and
- (2) the proprietor of the School is required to submit an action plan³ to the Secretary of State specifying the steps that will be taken to meet the standards, and the time by which each step will be taken, on or before 22 November 2019.


Independent Education and Boarding Team

Date

² The Secretary of State is required to keep a register of independent educational institutions in England under section 95(1) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. “Independent educational institution” is defined in section 92(1) of that Act as an independent school and an independent provider of part-time education. Independent providers of part-time education are not currently regulated so effectively the requirement under section 95(1) is for the Secretary of State to keep a register of independent schools.

³ An action plan is defined in section 114(4) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

ANNEX TO NOTICE

Sompting Abbots School
Church Lane
Sompting
Lancing,
West Sussex
BN15 0AZ
(“the school”)

The following independent school standards, as prescribed in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, are not being met in relation to the school:

PART 3: Welfare, health and safety of pupils

6. *The standards about the welfare, health and safety of pupils at the school are those contained in this Part.*

7. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that—

(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and

(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

PART 4: Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

18. (1) The standard in this paragraph relates to the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than the proprietor and supply staff.

(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if—

(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person—

(ii) the person’s medical fitness;

(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person’s appointment.

21. (1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.

(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is—

(a) in relation to each member of staff (“S”) appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether—

(i) S’s identity was checked;

- (ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - (iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
 - (iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
 - (v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
 - (vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);
 - (vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
- including the date on which each such check was completed or the certificate obtained; and

(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

PART 5: Premises of and accommodation at schools

22. The standards about the premises of and accommodation at the school are those contained in this Part.

25. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

PART 6: Provision of information

32. (1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that—

- (c) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request.

PART 8: Quality of leadership in and management of schools

34. (1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school—

- (a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
- (b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
- (c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(c) “well-being” means well-being within the meaning of section 10(2) of the Children Act 2004⁴.

⁴ 2004 c.31.

Annex 2

Sompting Abbots School
Church Lane
Sompting
Lancing
West Sussex
BN15 0AZ
(“the school”)

The school must meet the following requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements

Child protection

3.4. Providers must be alert to any issues of concern in the child’s life at home or elsewhere. Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. These should be in line with the guidance and procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The safeguarding policy and procedures must include an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child and in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, and cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

3.6. Providers must train all staff to understand their safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Training made available by the provider must enable staff to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- significant changes in children's behaviour
- deterioration in children’s general well-being
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- children’s comments which give cause for concern
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child’s home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation⁵ and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children, for example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images

Providers may also find ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners’⁶ helpful.

Suitable people

3.9. Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles. Providers must have effective systems in place to ensure that

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-guidelines

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2

practitioners, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises), are suitable⁷

3.12. Providers other than childminders must record information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed (including the criminal records check reference number, the date a check was obtained and details of who obtained it). For childminders, the relevant information will be kept by Ofsted or the agency with which the childminder is registered.

Disqualification

3.14. A provider or a childcare worker may be disqualified from registration⁸. In the event of the disqualification of a provider, the provider must not continue as an early years provider – nor be directly concerned in the management of such provision. Where a person is disqualified, the provider must not employ that person in connection with early years provision. Where an employer becomes aware of relevant information that may lead to disqualification of an employee, the provider must take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children.

Premises

3.62. Providers must only release children into the care of individuals who have been notified to the provider by the parent, and must ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. Providers must take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises⁹, and have an agreed procedure for checking the identity of visitors. Providers must consider what additional measures are necessary when children stay overnight.

⁷ To allow Ofsted or the relevant childminder agency to make these checks, childminders are required to supply information to Ofsted or the relevant childminder agency, as set out in Schedule 1, Part 2 of the Childcare (Early Years Register) Regulations 2008, amended by the Childcare (Early Years Register) (Amendment) Regulations 2012. The requirements relating to people who live and work on childminder premises are in Schedule 1, Part 1.

⁸ In accordance with regulations made under Section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006. Schools are required to have regard to the disqualification guidance published by the Department for Education, which is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006. Other providers may also find it helpful to refer to this guidance. The Department for Education is considering making changes to the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 following a consultation from 6 May to 1 July 2016. The consultation is available at: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/childcare-workers-changes-to-disqualification-arrangements.

⁹ Where childminders are operating out of non-domestic premises which are routinely accessed by members of the public (e.g. a hotel or a community centre), childminders must take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised persons entering the part of those premises in which the children are being cared for.