



Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

Red Balloon Norwich School

February 2024

School's details

School name	Red Balloon Norwich
DfE number	926/6158
Registered charity number	1117092
Address	Red Balloon Norwich 289 Drayton Road Norwich Norfolk NR3 2PW
Telephone number	01603 622288
Email address	admissions@rbnorwich.org.uk
Head of centre	Mr Mark Anderson
Chair of trustees	Ms Emma Culley
Proprietor	Red Balloon Norwich
Age Range	11 to 17
Number of pupils on roll	33
	Seniors 33
Date of inspection	27 February 2024

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Red Balloon Norwich is an independent co-educational day school. It is one of four members of the association of Red Balloon Learner Centres. The school was established in 2006 and recently moved to its current premises in a residential suburb near Norwich city. Some pupils start their education remotely via online blended learning combined with onsite vocational learning. The chair and board of trustees of Red Balloon Norwich oversee the educational, welfare and financial arrangements of the school. All pupils have a range of support needs which include severe anxiety and trauma. In addition to their support needs all students have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, social anxiety and mental health difficulties. There are 32 pupils with an education, health and care plan. One pupil has English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in September 2022 followed by a progress monitoring inspection in June 2023.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the progress monitoring inspection on 30 June 2023. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs).

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 Implementation of all aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures is effective in providing appropriate support to promote the welfare of pupils.
- 2.5 Safeguarding procedures safeguard children at risk and those in particular need. Staff show effective understanding of their responsibilities, including with regard to child-on-child abuse. Prompt action is taken by staff to ensure the safety of any children who are at risk of harm. All behavioural issues and allegations of sexualised behaviour or bullying, including allegations of sexual or racial harassment, are treated as potential safeguarding concerns and addressed effectively. Pupils receive additional support to ensure that any safeguarding needs relating to their SEND are addressed appropriately.
- 2.6 Child protection records are held securely and with suitable confidentiality. This enables staff to identify welfare considerations for individual pupils consistently and act upon them. The school monitors records to identify patterns of concern. In discussions, staff confirmed that they recognise the particular vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND. Pupils' wellbeing is further supported by effective personal, social and health education, which includes appropriate focus on any current issues. Care for pupils' mental health is enhanced by the availability of suitably trained staff to provide counselling. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online and the school has appropriate controls of the use of technology.
- 2.7 Records show that the school communicates and refers concerns effectively, including to pertinent external agencies when appropriate. The safeguarding team seeks advice when necessary. Pupils reported in discussion that they feel safe in school. They said that if any concerns arise, they report them, confident they will receive a response and action will be taken where needed. Records of safeguarding, which are suitably thorough, confirm that any concerns are dealt with swiftly and appropriately. The school liaises appropriately with parents about any safeguarding concerns.
- 2.8 The safeguarding policy gives contact details as required for local safeguarding partners. The training for those with specific safeguarding responsibilities is in line with local requirements and statutory advice and is up to date. Training for teaching and non-teaching staff is of sufficient quality and frequency. Leaders and staff demonstrate appropriate awareness of the low-level concerns policy and safeguarding procedures and are confident to use them. A suitable code of conduct, which includes the responsible management of personal use of the internet, is understood by staff and implemented effectively.
- 2.9 The school has suitable recruitment procedures. Safeguarding procedures include suitable arrangements for handling allegations against staff or senior leaders, and potential misconduct; these include seeking immediate advice from the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO). The school understands its role in reporting any person to relevant statutory bodies if circumstances require it.

- 2.10 Trustees are trained appropriately in safeguarding. A trustee with appropriate expertise maintains a close working contact with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). Trustees are suitably proactive in the school with regards to monitoring safeguarding policies and procedures, including through arrangements for an annual review. This is sufficient to ensure that all statutory requirements, including those for fire, are met.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12]

- 2.11 The school meets the standard.
- 2.12 The school has a suitable fire policy which includes the elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances. There is a current fire risk assessment of the building undertaken by a suitably qualified person. Appropriate action has been taken to mitigate any noted risks. Fire procedures are understood by, and training provided for, staff. There is a suitably trained and competent person appointed to oversee fire safety and members of staff are designated, and trained, as fire marshals. Termly fire drills are carried out, recorded and evaluated. Pupils, staff and visitors are suitably informed about evacuation procedures. Fire prevention equipment, including alarms and extinguishers, is tested regularly, and evacuation routes are marked clearly. Any fire hazards noticed by pupils or staff are reported and rectified promptly.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16]

- 2.13 The school meets the standard.
- 2.14 The school has a suitable risk assessment policy which is implemented effectively. Staff conduct appropriate risk assessments for each area of the school, for trips out of school and to safeguard the wellbeing of pupils with regard to their particular needs. This has now created an effective culture of assessing risk to pupils in all areas of school activity. Relevant staff are made aware when risk assessments have been put in place.

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

- 2.15 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.16 The school meets the standard.
- 2.17 The proprietor has ensured the effective and full implementation of the action plan so that all the standards are now met. Training has been undertaken to enable trustees to exercise knowledgeable oversight of fire safety. School leaders and managers have demonstrated good skills and knowledge and fulfilled their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and the wellbeing of the pupils is actively promoted.

3. Summary of evidence

- 3.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, a senior leader and other members of staff and met with a group of trustees. She visited different areas of the school and talked with a group of pupils. She scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.