



Material Change Inspection Report

Hoe Bridge School

March 2024

School's details

School	Hoe Bridge School			
DfE number	936/6395			
Address	Hoe Bridge School Hoe Place Old Woking Road Woking Surrey GU22 8JE			
Telephone number	01483 760018			
Email address	info@hoebridgeschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Webster			
Chair of proprietors	Mr Ian Katté			
Proprietor	Hoe Bridge School Ltd			
Age range	2 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	534			
	EYFS	111	Years 1 & 2	116
	Years 3 to 8	307		
Date of inspection	27 March 2024			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Hoe Bridge School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged 2 to 13. It is overseen by a governing body. The school comprises two sections: pre-prep for pupils aged 2 to 7 years, which includes the early years setting; and prep for pupils aged 7 to 13 years. The school has 52 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom seven have an education, health and care plan. There are 97 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in March 2023.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase capacity from 550 to 600 with effect from September 2024. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4 paragraphs 18-21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	Met
Part 5 paragraphs 23-29 (premises and accommodation)	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 The school implements its safeguarding policy and procedures effectively and consistently. This ensures that it supports pupils' individual needs across all stages of the school, including early years. Leaders have made arrangements that are likely to ensure that the school continues to meet the requirements following the proposed increase in the number of pupils.
- 2.5 The safeguarding team has undergone the necessary training in accordance with the local safeguarding partnership procedures. Other staff are appropriately trained and are regularly updated to ensure they can fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. All concerns are recorded and referred appropriately to ensure there is effective oversight of pupils' wellbeing. The safeguarding team employs early intervention strategies and works closely with parents and external agencies to offer additional support. Child protection records are suitably detailed and stored safely.
- 2.6 The pastoral team works alongside the safeguarding team to provide individualised additional support for pupils' wellbeing. Pupils are taught to use technology safely and be alert to potential online dangers. Monitoring and filtering of technology are implemented effectively.
- 2.7 Safeguarding records indicate that the school effectively communicates and refers concerns to external agencies. They confirm the pupils' response that they feel safe in school because they can access trusted adults who listen to their concerns, provide a response, and take appropriate action.
- 2.8 Staff clearly understand the whistleblowing policy and know when and how to report concerns regarding colleagues or senior leaders. They know to contact the designated local authority officer (LADO) if their concerns are not addressed.
- 2.9 The proprietors support the pupils' wellbeing through a committee structure with the skills and knowledge to implement an effective safeguarding policy. The governors are trained appropriately in safeguarding. A nominated governor is in regular contact with the safeguarding team. The governing body monitors safeguarding suitably and holds senior leaders to account, while providing appropriate support.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.
- 2.11 An appropriate health and safety policy is implemented effectively to keep pupils, staff, and visitors safe. Suitable checks are carried out and recorded to ensure the building is maintained safely and staff are provided with suitable training to carry out their duties. Leaders have reviewed and updated their health and safety procedures, and the school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in capacity.

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

- 2.12 The school meets the standard.
- 2.13 A suitable external fire risk assessment was conducted in March 2023, and leaders have addressed all subsequent recommendations. New fire evacuation routes have been in place since September 2023, which address the use of additional teaching areas successfully. Staff receive annual fire training and know how to evacuate the pupils in their care safely. Regular fire drills are held and the outcomes recorded and considered appropriately. The fire safety arrangements will likely continue to meet requirements with the proposed increase in capacity.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14]

- 2.14 The school meets the standard.
- 2.15 Staff provide appropriate supervision for pupils during break times and outdoor play. New supervision rotas have been in place since September 2023 which allow for the proposed increase in pupil numbers. Additional servery provision and staffing are being introduced into the dining room from next term. Suitable ratios are in place for supervising the children in the early years setting. The current supervision arrangements are likely to meet requirements with the proposed increase in capacity.

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

- 2.16 The school meets the standard.
- 2.17 The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy. Since September 2023, all risk assessments in the school have undergone review. Senior leaders oversee all risk assessments in the school. They ensure that the risk assessment policy, which outlines the process for assigning responsibility, identifying risks, and implementing appropriate control measures, is followed. Staff assess all areas of the building that pupils can access, including specialist areas such as laboratories. When planning educational visits, staff assess the specific needs of pupils and provide suitable mitigation. The school's arrangements for managing risks are likely to continue to meet requirements with the proposed increase in capacity.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21]

- 2.18 The school meets the standards.
- 2.19 Leaders ensure that staff involved in recruitment receive appropriate training and possess an understanding of safe recruitment practices. Before commencing their post, the school conducts the required checks for all staff, supply staff, and governors. Additionally, contractors must provide detailed records of their checks, which are reviewed alongside the school's additional checks when they arrive on site. The school's arrangements for ensuring the suitability of all adults are likely to continue to meet requirements with the proposed increase in capacity.

Premises and accommodation – [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29]

- 2.20 The school meets the standards.
- 2.21 The school provides appropriate toilets, changing facilities, and makes suitable provision for the medical needs of its pupils, including children in early years. The premises are consistently maintained to meet health and safety requirements. The proposed total capacity identified in the material change request can be accommodated in existing accommodation. The lighting and acoustics in the building

are appropriate and there is sufficient drinking water available to meet the needs of the proposed capacity. Pupils can access well-maintained and suitable outdoor spaces for physical education and recreation. The school's arrangements are likely to continue to meet requirements with the proposed increase in capacity.

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

2.22 The school meets the requirements for providing parents with information about safeguarding. Details of the safeguarding arrangements are published on the school's website.

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

2.23 The school meets the standard.

2.24 The proprietors and senior leaders demonstrate the necessary skills and knowledge to enable the school to meet all required standards consistently. They prioritise the wellbeing of the pupils and fulfil all safeguarding requirements, including those for early years. The plans in place for the proposed increase in pupil numbers are likely to ensure that the school continues to actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school's request to increase its total capacity from 550 to 600 pupils be approved. Planning for the change is effective and most necessary steps to support the change have been taken already. Remaining actions are scheduled to be completed by September 2024.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, senior leaders, and other staff members and met with the acting chair of governors. He visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. He scrutinised a range of documentation, records, and policies.