



Material Change Inspection Report

Kingham Hill School

May 2024

School's details

School	Kingham Hill School		
DfE number	931/6004		
Registered charity number	1076618		
Address	Kingham Hill School Kingham Chipping Norton Oxfordshire OX7 6TH		
Telephone number	01608 658999		
Email address	administration@kinghamhill.org		
Headmaster	Mr Peter Last		
Chair of governors	Mrs Caroline Pellereau		
Proprietor	Kingham Hill Trust		
Age range	11 to 18		
Number of pupils on roll	351		
	Day pupils	210	Boarders 141
	Seniors	246	Sixth Form 105
Date of inspection	23 May 2024		

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Kingham Hill School is a co-educational independent day and boarding school, set in a rural location near Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire. The school is owned by a charitable trust, the Kingham Hill Trust, and administered by a board of governors, some of whom are also trustees. There are seven boarding houses: four for male pupils and three for female pupils. There is also one mixed day and boarding house for female pupils, and four day houses. The school has 90 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 6 have an education, health and care plan. There are 25 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The current head took up his post in April 2023. The school's previous inspection was a non-routine inspection in September 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 its capacity from 370 to 405 pupils. The additional pupils would be a mixture of day pupils and boarders. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs), and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2022.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 8	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); NMS 9	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety); NMS 10	Met
Part 3, paragraph 13 (first aid); NMS 7	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision); NMS 20	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment); NMS 9	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18–21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); NMS 19	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23 - 29 (premises and accommodation); NMS 4 and 7	Met
Part 5, paragraph 30 (boarding accommodation); NMS 4	Met
NMS 5 (boarders' possessions)	Met
NMS 6 (provision and preparation of food and drinks)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met

Part 7, paragraph 33 (manner in which complaints are handled)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 2	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding and safeguarding of boarders [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 8]

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 standards.
- 2.4 School leaders have embedded a culture across the school in which the wellbeing and safety of pupils is prioritised appropriately. The school's safeguarding team has recently been expanded to ensure that appropriate support is in place to meet the needs of pupils, including boarders. All staff with specific safeguarding responsibilities are trained in line with statutory requirements. The current arrangements are likely to continue to meet the requirements following the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.5 Discussion with pupils confirmed that they have many trusted adults to whom they can turn to share concerns and seek support. Pupils feel that staff actively listen and that the school takes effective action when needed. That this happens is confirmed in records of safeguarding incidents. Pupils are supported in learning how to keep themselves safe, including online. In discussion, pupils explained how the school has recently been proactive in helping them to identify the risks, and benefits, of artificial intelligence. Monitoring of the use of technology in the school is effective.
- 2.6 Staff have a detailed knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures including how to identify and support pupils in need. Staff fully recognise their responsibilities in understanding the school's whistle-blowing policy, the staff code of conduct and the risks to pupil welfare from the local community. They know how to report concerns, including any about child-on-child abuse, both internally and, if needed, directly to external agencies. Comprehensive training records show that staff receive regular safeguarding updates and interactive training in line with local requirements.
- 2.7 Safeguarding leaders maintain suitable safeguarding records. The log of concerns shows that the school acts appropriately in any safeguarding incidents that arise. The safeguarding team are effective in identifying pupils' needs and they liaise appropriately with children's services in a timely manner. They communicate effectively with parents and put in place appropriate support for individual pupils.
- 2.8 Suitable arrangements are in place to handle allegations against staff. Appropriate records of allegations received, including low-level concerns, show that the school seeks immediate advice from the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO). Records show that the school follows its procedures and acts appropriately on any advice received from external agencies.
- 2.9 Governors maintain effective oversight of the school's implementation of the safeguarding policy. They review the policy annually and receive detailed termly reports from the safeguarding team. The designated safeguarding governor visits the school regularly, to meet with safeguarding leaders. They discuss any relevant concerns and view the safeguarding records.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11; NMS 9]

- 2.10 The school meets the standards.
- 2.11 The school has a suitable health and safety policy which is implemented effectively. Record keeping shows that the school ensures that all health and safety matters are dealt with promptly. There is a detailed site maintenance plan which covers regular checks and servicing of equipment. A comprehensive programme of staff training is in place. All accidents and near misses are recorded appropriately. A suitable contingency plan is in place for any major incident that might occur on site or during an educational visit. The school's health and safety committee have effective oversight of all matters pertaining to health and safety across the school, ensuring that as far as possible the school provides a safe environment in which pupils, including boarders, can live and work. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12; NMS 10]

- 2.12 The school meets the standards.
- 2.13 There is a suitable fire prevention strategy and an appropriate fire risk assessment. The school has an appropriate action plan to address the issues raised in the most recent assessment. This included all boarding houses and was undertaken by a suitably qualified person. Fire procedures are understood by staff and pupils, who are regularly provided with suitable training. Record keeping shows that fire drills take place regularly, including in boarding time. Fire equipment, alarms, emergency lighting and appropriate signage are serviced and maintained appropriately. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – first aid [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 13; NMS 7]

- 2.14 The school meets the standards.
- 2.15 The school has appropriate policies and procedures in place for first aid and the administering of medicines. The policies are implemented effectively to ensure that relevant care is provided for pupils, including boarders, who are sick or injured. Records show that the administering of medicines is co-ordinated effectively with boarding house staff. There is appropriately locked storage for medicines in the medical centre and in boarding houses. Suitable numbers of staff, including those involved in boarding, are trained in first aid. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14; NMS 20]

- 2.16 The school meets the standards.
- 2.17 Pupils, including boarders, are supervised effectively by an appropriate number of suitably qualified and trained staff. Detailed supervision rotas for staff are appropriate for the nature of the school site and the activities involved. All staff involved in boarding have suitable job descriptions. They ensure boarders are supervised effectively in their houses and know how to contact a member of staff overnight. Staff know how to implement the school's policy for a missing pupil, including boarders. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; NMS 9]

- 2.18 The school meets the standards.
- 2.19 The school implements an effective risk assessment policy effectively. Staff are trained thoroughly to identify and manage risk. Regularly reviewed risk assessments are in place for all aspects of school life including educational visits, boarding, high risk areas of the school site and transport. Any risks associated with the planned increase in pupil numbers have been assessed effectively. There are specific and effective welfare plans in place for vulnerable pupils. These plans are managed by the safeguarding team. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; NMS 19]

- 2.20 The school meets the standards.
- 2.21 The school implements its recruitment policy effectively. The required pre-appointment checks on staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and members of boarding staff households who are over 16 are carried out appropriately. These include checks of qualifications, which ensure that the teaching of different programmes is appropriately staffed. The dates of each check are recorded accurately in the single central register. Staff files include the evidence needed to confirm that the relevant checks have been made. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.

Premises and accommodation – toilets and washing and changing facilities; medical facilities; maintenance; acoustics; lighting; water supply and outdoor space [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23-29; NMS 4 and 7]

- 2.22 The school meets the standards.
- 2.23 The school has suitable provision for toilet and washing facilities across the site, including in boarding houses. There are separate toilets for staff, male and female pupils, as well as suitably designated disabled toilets. The toilet and washing facilities provide suitable privacy for pupils. Extensive male and female shower facilities are available to pupils in the school's sports hall as well as in boarding houses. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.24 The school's suitably equipped medical centre provides appropriate accommodation for medical examination, treatment of injuries and care of pupils who are unwell. Boarders who are unwell can also be appropriately looked after in their boarding house. All accommodation for the care of pupils who are ill is integrated with close access to toilets and washing facilities. The medical arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.25 The school's site and buildings are well maintained. A detailed plan for refurbishment and repairs incorporates all of the boarding houses. This is implemented effectively. The school has recently improved the quality of external lighting across the extensive site. This ensures that pathways are well lit and that pupils, including boarders, are able to move about at night safely. Internal lighting and acoustic levels across the school's many buildings and boarding houses are appropriate.
- 2.26 There is a suitable, and clearly labelled, supply of drinking water across the school site including in boarding houses. There are numerous drinking fountains which are separate from toilet facilities. The flow of cold water to washing facilities is appropriate and the temperature of hot water in showers and washbasins is regularly monitored. The school has extensive grounds which contain many grass

sports pitches, hard play areas, tennis courts and an artificial grass sports facility. The outdoor areas are suitable for physical education and pupils' leisure time. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.

Premises and accommodation – boarding facilities [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 30; NMS 4]

- 2.27 The school meets the standards.
- 2.28 The school's separate boarding houses for male and female pupils provide good quality sleeping accommodation. The accommodation gives boarders suitable privacy. Boarders can personalise their individual areas if they so wish. There is easy access to toilets and showers from pupil bedrooms. The toilets and washing facilities are of good quality with the showers enabling pupils to change privately.
- 2.29 Boarders' living accommodation is well furnished providing suitable areas for socialising and playing indoor games. Staff accommodation is appropriately separate from boarders. The entrance to boarding houses is electronically secure, ensuring that unauthorised people cannot access the building. The boarding houses implement a rigorous signing in and out procedure to ensure that the whereabouts of boarders is known to staff.
- 2.30 The boarding arrangements in place, and the capacity of the houses, are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers.

Boarders' possessions [NMS 5]

- 2.31 The school meets the standard.
- 2.32 The school makes appropriate laundry provision for boarders' personal clothing and bedding, which is changed once a week. All boarders have their own lockable cupboard for personal possessions. They can also leave valuable items in lockable storage in the care of houseparents. The arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers, including boarders.

Provision and preparation of food and drinks [NMS 6]

- 2.33 The school meets the standard.
- 2.34 Boarders, including those with special dietary requirements, are provided with good quality, nutritional meals through the school's central catering facility. Breakfast, lunch and evening meals all give boarders a range of menu choices. The central dining room and kitchen are well maintained. Boarders can also use appropriately equipped house kitchens to prepare their own food and additional snacks. The catering arrangements in place are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the planned increase in pupil numbers, including boarders.

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

- 2.35 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.

Manner in which complaints are handled [ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33]

- 2.36 The school meets the standard.

- 2.37 The school has a suitable complaints policy which is made available to parents on the school's website. It provides for both informal and formal complaints to be made. Appropriate timescales are given for dealing with any complaint. Any complaints are responded to appropriately and detailed records are kept including the nature of the complaint, action taken and lessons learnt.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 2]

- 2.38 The school meets the standards.
- 2.39 School leaders have the appropriate skills and knowledge to ensure that all the standards are consistently met. They prioritise the welfare of pupils as typified by their approach to the mitigation of risk. Leaders have planned effectively so that the measures in place to accommodate the proposed increase in pupil numbers, are likely to ensure that the wellbeing of pupils continues to be actively promoted.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school's request to increase its numbers from 370 to 405 be approved as planning for the proposed increase across the school is appropriate.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the 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.