



**Material Change Inspection Report**

**Kingshott School**

**November 2023**

## School's details

<b>School</b>	Kingshott School		
<b>DfE number</b>	919/6102		
<b>Registered charity number</b>	280626		
<b>Address</b>	Stevenage Road St Ippolyts Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7JX		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01462 432009		
<b>Email address</b>	info@kingshottschool.com		
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr David Weston		
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Dr James Bentall		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Kingshott School Trust LTD		
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 13		
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	392		
	<b>Pre-prep</b>	149	<b>Prep</b> 243
<b>Date of inspection</b>	16 November 2023		

# 1. Introduction

## Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Kingshott School is an independent co-educational day school. It is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors. The school consists of a pre-prep department for pupils aged three to seven, which includes an early years setting, and a prep department for pupils aged seven to thirteen. The school has identified 33 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 24 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for one pupil, who receives additional support.

## 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 extend the upper age range from 13 years to 16 years and increase the registered total capacity of pupils from 410 to 520. 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 1, paragraphs 2 to 4 (curriculum, relationships and sex education, teaching, and framework for pupils' performance)	<b>Met</b>
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraphs 16 (risk assessment)	<b>Met</b>
Part 4, paragraphs 18 – 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and the proprietor)	<b>Met</b>
Part 5, paragraph 22 – 29 (premises and accommodation)	<b>Met</b>
Part 6, para 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	<b>Met</b>
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	<b>Met</b>

## 2. Inspection findings

### **Quality of education provided – curriculum, relationships and sex education (RSE), teaching, framework for pupils’ performance [ISSR Part 1, paragraphs 2 to 4]**

- 2.1 The school meets the standards.
- 2.2 The school has a suitable curriculum policy which is implemented effectively. Supported by appropriate plans, it covers the required breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding to ensure that pupils make good progress. It details appropriately provision for pupils who have SEND. New schemes of work are currently being prepared to extend teaching and learning into Year 9 and, subsequently, Years 10 and 11. These show an effective understanding of the curriculum needs of pupils at these ages.
- 2.3 The personal, health, social, citizen and economic education (PHSCE) curriculum encourages respect for others effectively, paying particular regard to the protective characteristics set out by the 2010 Equality Act. Careers advice for senior pupils is suitable and follows established principles. There is an effectively planned programme for RSE. This is in line with statutory guidance, with topics being covered at an appropriate age and ability level. Proper consultation with parents is made.
- 2.4 Teaching enables pupils to make good progress. It encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. The school has planned for, and in many cases already fulfilled, the need for suitably qualified and experienced staff in extending teaching to GCSE level. Staff use suitable framework to assess pupils’ progress over time.
- 2.5 It is likely that the standard will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]**

- 2.6 The school meets the standard.
- 2.7 The school follows an effective programme to promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It promotes British values effectively, together with equality, and respect for those with protected characteristics and for the law. These principles are embedded in the daily life of the school. Leaders have suitably planned intentions to extend this programme to the older pupils as they progress through the school. It is likely that the standard will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

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

#### **Safeguarding policy**

- 2.8 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.9 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**

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.
- 2.11 Safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively, including for children in the early years. The school provides appropriate support for pupils’ needs, including listening to pupils, responding

appropriately, and taking appropriate action when concerns are raised. In interviews, pupils confirmed that their views and concerns are heard and acted upon. Records of safeguarding support this view.

- 2.12 Staff have received suitable training, including on the recent changes to statutory guidance. They understand the various types of child-on-child abuse, know how to report any concerns and do so. New staff undergo a comprehensive induction process to ensure that they understand their safeguarding responsibilities. This induction includes appropriate sections of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE); the staff code of conduct; whistleblowing procedures; procedures for children absent from education; and the school's behaviour and bullying policies. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies have sufficient status to undertake their roles and have appropriate levels of training in line with local procedures. The DSL provides regular informal updates to staff and opportunities for discussion on any changes to safeguarding policy and implementation. Staff, including those with designated responsibilities, show effective awareness of the safeguarding needs of pupils in the older age group the school proposes to admit. The handling of any allegations against adults working in the school is effective and includes prompt liaison with external agencies. Pupils understand how to stay safe online, and suitable filtering and monitoring systems are implemented.
- 2.13 Records of safeguarding are kept electronically. They show appropriate liaison with parents and local agencies. The governors are trained effectively in safeguarding. They provide the safeguarding team with regular support and appropriate challenge, and undertake an annual safeguarding review.
- 2.14 It is likely that the standard will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

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

- 2.15 The school meets the standard.
- 2.16 The school has an appropriate written health and safety policy covering the areas defined by the relevant guidance. Senior leaders and appropriately qualified staff ensure that the policy is fully implemented. An in-school committee monitors all aspects of health and safety and the governors monitor this process. New staff are provided with suitable health and safety information during the induction process, and all receive regular updates with training as required by their roles. It is likely that the standard will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

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

- 2.17 The school meets the standard.
- 2.18 The school has an appropriate fire risk policy, which complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. It is implemented effectively. The designated competent person has proper training for the role, and all the staff receive regular training. An external agency completes fire risk assessments for each building regularly, and action points are addressed promptly. Evacuation drills are routinely undertaken, and evacuation times are recorded. Fire alarms and extinguishers are regularly serviced and appropriately located around the school site. Fire doors are kept closed, and escape routes are clear. The buildings in which the additional pupils will be accommodated are currently below their capacity; therefore, the school does not envisage issues with escape routes. It is likely that the standard will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

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

- 2.19 The school meets the standard.

- 2.20 The school ensures appropriate supervision of pupils at all times of day. Staff rotas are published and demonstrate a suitable number on duty during breaks and lunchtimes. The school is aware of the needs of introducing a greater number of older pupils and has planned for any potential additional risk, including by deploying more staff. It is likely that the standard will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

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

- 2.21 The school meets the standard.
- 2.22 The school has a suitable risk assessment policy and makes comprehensive arrangements to identify risks appropriately. Action is taken to mitigate and reduce risk across the site. All risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated, and staff can access them. Staff producing risk assessments for trips, activities, or around the school, including in the early years, receive appropriate training. Suitably qualified senior staff oversee the risk assessment process for planning for offsite trips, sign off the assessments and evaluate their effectiveness. The increase in the total number of pupils and introduction of older pupils has been effectively risk assessed. It is likely that the standard will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21]**

- 2.23 The school meets the standards.
- 2.24 The school effectively implements its recruitment policy, which has due regard to the procedures outlined in KCSIE 2023. The school undertakes all required checks prior to appointment to ensure the suitability of staff and proprietors. A single central register of appointments (SCR) is maintained as required. A small number of administrative errors present in the recording of contractors' checks were rectified during the inspection. It is likely that the standards will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

### **Premises and accommodation – toilet and washing facilities, medical facilities, maintenance, acoustics, lighting, water, outdoor space [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 22–29]**

- 2.25 The school meets the standards.
- 2.26 There are sufficient toilet and washing facilities for the number of pupils, and these are appropriate for the proposed number of pupils. Medical facilities are suitable and accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils contains a washing facility and is near a toilet. Any premises maintenance issues are promptly rectified. Classrooms are suitably sized and have suitable acoustics and lighting to support learning. There are adequate supplies of clearly labelled drinking water. There is a supply of hot and cold water for washing, and the hot water does not pose the threat of scalding. Externally, the site is spacious, enabling provision for pupils' physical education and outdoor play, providing appropriate separation of ages. It is likely that the standard will continue to be met with the proposed change to age range and total number of pupils.

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

- 2.27 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]**

2.28 The school meets the standard.

2.29 The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively to ensure the independent school standards are met consistently and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted. The governors and senior leaders have ensured the preparations for the proposed increase in numbers and age of pupils have been undertaken with due regard for pupils' education and wellbeing, including in the early years. It is likely that the standard will continue to be met.

### **3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection**

#### **Summary of findings**

- 3.1 The governors and leadership have effectively planned for the proposed change. A broad and balanced curriculum has been developed to provide the development of knowledge and skills necessary to support the phased increase of older pupils. This curriculum planning includes suitable negotiation with examination boards. A comprehensive review of teaching requirements has been undertaken and suitably qualified and experienced staff have been, or are planned to be, recruited. The school has reorganised its accommodation and reduced its intake to two forms to allow appropriate separation by age. Teaching accommodation for the oldest pupils is sufficient to cover the first phase of the change, and the school has plans in place to convert existing rooms into specialist facilities in the near future. Timetabling allows for staggered lunches and there is sufficient outdoor space for all to play. The governors have ensured that the safeguarding structure has sufficient capacity to manage the larger numbers.

#### **Recommendation**

- 3.2 It is recommended that the request to extend the upper age range from 13 years to 16 years and increase the registered capacity of pupils from 410 to 520 is approved.



## **4. Summary of evidence**

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