



Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

Wellow House School

June 2024

School's details

School	Wellow House School			
DfE number	891/6013			
Registered charity number	528234			
Address	Wellow House School Newark Road Wellow Nottinghamshire N22 0EA			
Telephone number	01623 861054			
Email address	secretary@wellowhouseschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Thompson			
Chair	Mr Ali Khan			
Proprietor	Alpha Schools Ltd			
Age range	3 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	183			
	Pre-prep	42	Prep	56
	Seniors	85		
Date of inspection	6 to 7 June 2024			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Wellow House School is an independent co-educational day school located in the village of Wellow, near Newark. The school consists of the pre-prep, prep and senior departments. The pre-prep includes an early years setting. The school is owned and governed by a limited company. The school started to admit pupils over the age of 13 years in September 2021 and now caters for pupils up to the age of 16 years. The school has identified 38 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are 6 pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was a routine inspection in October 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 routine inspection on 3 to 5 October 2023. 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, paragraph 2 (curriculum)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 2A (relationships and sex education)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); EYFS 3.64	Not met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment); EYFS 3.76	Remains not met
Part 4, paragraphs 18 - 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	Met
Part 5, paragraph 25 (maintenance of premises and accommodation)	Not met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 7, paragraph 33 (complaints)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Not met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2]

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 The school has undertaken a complete and successful revision of its personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme in response to the findings of the previous inspection. This has resulted in a comprehensive scheme of work which has due regard for the promotion of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The programme reflects the school's aims and ethos, encourages respect for other people, including between genders, and pays due regard to the protected characteristics which are set out in the Equality Act 2010. Inspectors found that the teaching of PSHE is now effective and that pupils make suitable progress in their knowledge and understanding of issues such as health and wellbeing, human rights and decision-making. This is strengthened by leaders ensuring that assemblies have a clear link to themes covered in PSHE lessons so that messages can be reinforced. A suitable careers programme is in place as part of the PSHE programme and sufficient emphasis is placed on learning about employability, job or higher education applications and various career pathways. The programme has been supplemented by the introduction of an online interactive platform which enables pupils to make decisions about subjects, courses, careers and apprenticeships.

Quality of education provided – relationships and sex education [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2A]

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 As part of the school's revision of PSHE, leaders have improved the planning of relationships and sex education (RSE) so that there is an effectively co-ordinated cross-curricular approach, with religious studies, English, humanities and science all contributing to the course content. As a result of the revised scheme of work for RSE, pupils are now provided with the knowledge they need and they welcome the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about issues that they feel are relevant to their everyday lives. Pupils have a good understanding of issues such as healthy relationships, consent and contraception.

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

Safeguarding policy

- 2.5 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.6 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

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 The safeguarding policy is now implemented effectively throughout the school. It is supported by suitable safer recruitment and whistleblowing policies, and an appropriate staff code of conduct. The safeguarding team has been expanded and sufficient resources are allocated to it. This has created sufficient capacity to ensure that safeguarding concerns are dealt with promptly. Further measures to strengthen safeguarding arrangements include the introduction of a more effective reporting system

that enables staff to record concerns in such a way that patterns and trends are easily recognised. Suitable procedures are in place to listen to pupils, who confirm that they feel safe and have sufficient opportunities and channels to express concerns. When they do so, they are confident that they will be supported appropriately, and suitable action will be taken. That this occurs is confirmed by records of safeguarding. When necessary, appropriate risk assessments are drawn up for individual pupils to ensure that staff are aware of any control measures that need to be observed. Appropriate care is taken to safeguard pupils with regard to the use of images of pupils in documents published by the school. The school liaises effectively with external agencies to safeguard children in need or at risk. Discussion with staff confirmed that they understand their responsibilities to safeguard children, including those who have SEND. They readily share and record concerns and know that they can make a direct referral to children's services if necessary. Any relevant safeguarding information about individual pupils is shared with their parents where appropriate to do so. Pupils receive guidance on how to stay safe online and monitoring of the use of technology is effective.

- 2.9 Records show that, on joining the school, new members of staff receive appropriate induction in safeguarding. Members of the safeguarding team have the required levels of up-to-date advanced training for their roles. The team ensures that all staff receive regular formal training in line with local requirements and informal updates on safeguarding practice and issues. Records of this training are systematically kept and show that the training for all staff is current and appropriate. Discussion with staff indicates that their safeguarding training equips them to deal effectively with pupil concerns. This is confirmed by child protection records.
- 2.10 Suitable procedures are in place to deal with allegations against adults working with children, including concerns that do not reach the threshold of harm to children. The school now maintains a record of low-level concerns and leaders take appropriate action in response. The school carries out appropriate checks on adults before they begin working at the school, and the single central record of appointments includes all staff. Leaders now retain suitable evidence of staff qualifications, as required by statutory guidance.
- 2.11 Governors are trained appropriately in safeguarding. They provide effective support for designated safeguarding staff, and the school's safeguarding policy and practice are reviewed termly and annually by the governing body.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11; EYFS 3.64]

- 2.12 The school does not meet the standard and the requirements.
- 2.13 Some aspects of the school's health and safety policy are implemented effectively, for example those relating to electrical safety, minibus drivers and maintenance and the control of vehicles on site. However, inspectors noted a lack of systematic monitoring of policy implementation by leaders and the proprietor, resulting in recommended practice not always being followed.
- 2.14 Inspectors identified concerns relating to pupils' potential exposure to harmful chemicals and equipment because of a cluttered laboratory and hazardous materials which were not locked away. Further, a tour of the site revealed a number of physical hazards in areas to which, although identified as out of bounds, pupils nonetheless had ready access.

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

- 2.15 The school meets the standard.

- 2.16 Leaders have now taken measures to ensure and evidence that staff in the early years setting have the required minimum qualifications so that children are supervised appropriately. Records show that all sessions are staffed according to the required ratios, taking into account the qualifications of the staff present.
- 2.17 In the prep and senior sections of the school, leaders have drawn up appropriate rotas and guidelines to ensure that older pupils are suitably supervised at break, lunchtime and the end of the day. These are implemented effectively.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; EYFS 3.76]

- 2.18 The school does not meet the standard and the requirements.
- 2.19 Risk assessments are now in place and implemented effectively for most areas and activities, including safeguarding. However, a number of areas around the site demonstrate inherent risks for pupils, both physically and with regard to potential hazards. These have not been identified as such because leaders rely too much on pupils following the rules. Additionally, there is no monitoring of levels of risk or appropriate mitigations and whether any control measures are being implemented.

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

- 2.20 The school meets the standards.
- 2.21 The school has thoroughly revised its procedures to ensure that all required pre-employment checks are made effectively and recorded accurately and in full before a person commences employment. The single central record of appointments now includes all staff and evidence of staff qualifications is retained.

Premises and accommodation – maintenance [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 25; EYFS 3.64]

- 2.22 The school does not meet the standard and the requirements.
- 2.23 Most of the buildings on the site are suitably maintained. However, inspectors found that there is no strategic or systematic maintenance plan in place. A limited number of maintenance checks are recorded. This results in areas of the site, such as those identified as potentially hazardous, being neglected.

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

- 2.24 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]

- 2.25 The school meets the standard.
- 2.26 Leaders manage complaints in line with an appropriate school policy. Documentation shows that the school's response is prompt, considerate and measured.

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

2.27 The school does not meet the standard.

2.28 Governors have ensured that the action plan required following the previous inspection has been implemented, though aspects of risk assessment remain unsatisfactory. However, they do not ensure that all those with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role in all areas, in particular in relation to the effective maintenance of the school site and ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff. Governors and senior leaders do not fulfil their responsibilities effectively, and actively promote the wellbeing of pupils, so that the school meets the independent school standards consistently.

3. Regulatory action points

3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraph 11

- The school must ensure that its health and safety policy is implemented effectively through appropriate monitoring and oversight [paragraph 11; EYFS 3.64].

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraph 16

- The school must ensure appropriate oversight of levels of risk, suitable mitigations and whether control measures are being implemented [paragraph 16(a) and (b); EYFS 3.76].

ISSR Part 5, Maintenance of premises and accommodation, paragraph 25

- The school must adopt a systematic and planned approach to site maintenance [paragraph 25; EYFS 3.64 and 3.76].

ISSR Part 8, Leadership and management, paragraph 34

- The school must ensure that all those with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, and that they fulfil their responsibilities so that the standards are met consistently, and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted, including through full implementation of changes to risk assessment [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

4. Summary of evidence

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