



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

Kingston Grammar School

December 2021

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School's Details

School	Kingston Grammar School			
DfE number	314/6067			
Registered charity number	1078461			
Address	Kingston Grammar School London Road Kingston Upon Thames Surrey KT2 6PY			
Telephone number	0208 546 5875			
Email address	head@kgs.org.uk			
Head Master	Mr Stephen Lehec			
Chair of governors	Mr Robert O'Dowd			
Age range	11 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	869			
	Seniors	606	Sixth Form	263
Inspection dates	8 to 10 December 2021			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Kingston Grammar School is a co-educational day school. The school was founded by royal charter in 1561 as the 'free grammar school of Queen Elizabeth, for the education, training and instruction of boys and youths in grammar'. In 1904, the school became Kingston Grammar School, and boarding was discontinued in 1914. The school assumed independent status in 1978, the same year it began to accept girls. The school is a registered charity, whose trustees act as the governors and hold proprietorial responsibility. A new chair of the governors was appointed in 2019.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers and for vulnerable pupils. During this period of closure, the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than vulnerable pupils or the children of key workers received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.6 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed grades and teacher-assessed grades were awarded.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.7 The school aims to create an environment in which all involved work together to encourage the highest academic aspiration and promote independent thought. It aspires to provide opportunity for engagement in a rich and diverse co-curricular programme. It seeks to ensure that everyone shows a proper regard for people and the environment and that a culture of service, partnership and personal integrity is developed.

About the pupils

- 1.8 Pupils come mainly from business and professional family backgrounds in south-west London and local towns. Almost all live within a 45-minute travelling distance of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils up to Year 11 is well above average. In Years 12 and 13, the pupils' ability profile is above average for pupils in sixth-form education. The school has identified 71 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of a broad range including dyslexia. Of these, 57 receive specialist support for their learning needs. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Forty-five pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) but none require additional support.

About the inspection

For this inspection, the DfE requested a particular focus on ISSR Part 1 (curriculum, relationships and sex education, teaching and assessment), Part 2 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development) and Part 3 (welfare, health and safety) to ensure that pupils are safeguarded effectively, that the quality of education

provided fosters a culture of positive relationships and respect for protected characteristics, and that the school implements a curriculum for relationships and sex education which meets the requirements of the statutory guidance.

Details relating to this particular focus can be found at the end of the Regulatory Compliance section under the heading 'Additional information on particular areas of focus' beginning on page 9.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2020 to 2021, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2020 to 2021 have confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.5 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.6 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.7 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.8 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.9 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.10 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.14 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.16 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.18 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.20 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

Additional information on particular areas of focus

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

- 2.22 The personal, health and social education (PSHE) curriculum reflects the school's aims. It encourages respect for other people with particular regard for those with protected characteristics as specified in the Equality Act 2010 and is effectively implemented. The school introduced an additional relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum, after parental consultation, in 2019, before this became compulsory. All pupils from Year 7 to 13 receive a timetabled PSHE lesson at least once a fortnight, with additional support on pastoral matters discussed in tutorial time, at assemblies and from sessions with outside professionals. Related matters are taught across the curriculum and especially in information and communication technology and religion and philosophy, although all departments contribute in a variety of ways. In Year 7, there is an initial focus on keeping safe, as well as physical and mental health, including healthy relationships, and these topics are regularly revisited in later years. Other topics in addition to statutory RSE provision, are taught to age-appropriate year groups. Years 12 and 13, for instance, have an additional focus on preparation for life after school.
- 2.23 As a result of information received from past and current pupils in 2020, the school moved promptly to review its PSHE and RSE curriculum. The schedule of outside speakers has also recently been reviewed and supplemented to cover current issues raised by the pupil body, sometimes in year groups separated into male and female pupils, and at other times in small groups in order to encourage discussion. For example, drama workshops have enabled pupils to explore how healthy relationships can be fostered, and footballers have visited to talk about the impact of racism on individuals. Pupils were very positive in discussions about the impact of these sessions.
- 2.24 The school has run evenings for parents emphasising their responsibility for what goes on at home and particularly at parties. Staff have also given advice to pupils on what to do if they witness wrong things happening and how to take responsibility, as well as the potential mental health impacts on victims of sexual abuse.

Quality of education provided – teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 3]

- 2.25 Teaching at all ages is well planned and takes into account the age, aptitudes and prior attainment of the pupils. Pupils are taught respect for other people, including those with protected characteristics. Whole school planning ensures that 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 is interwoven across all subjects. Elements of the PSHE curriculum are also taught in other subjects when appropriate, such as during Black History month.
- 2.26 In the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all pupils agreed that their teachers are well informed and most that they help them to learn. In discussions, pupils were positive about the teaching and the support that they receive. Many pupils spoke of the positive impact of PSHE and RSE sessions and described how these have helped them to understand, for example, the difference between racism and stereotypes.

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

- 2.27 The school actively promotes a culture of mutual respect and tolerance, enabling pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. This is underpinned by a strong pastoral structure, where form tutors report to heads of year who in turn work closely with school leadership.
- 2.28 Pupils are able to recognise right from wrong. The large majority agree that the school listens to what they have to say about school and will try to make it better when things are not right. A small minority disagree and from discussions, inspection evidence indicates that most negativity concerns previous events. Pupils feel this has improved and recognise the importance of raising any concerns. Regular

pastoral meetings with pupil representatives in each year group allow for concerns to be discussed and then enable action to be taken.

- 2.29 There is a recently reinvigorated pupils' parliament, made up of representatives from every age group and led by senior pupils. There is also a newly created pastoral forum for student representatives in each and every year group to feedback on pastoral issues and teaching with lead staff. These forums allow for active discussion between pupils, including on matters such as sexism, racism or homophobia, and findings are brought to the attention of school leaders. Recent discussion has been on the overall positive impact of the RSE sessions. Pupils recognise that inappropriate language might still occur without teachers' knowledge outside the classroom, and how this can be addressed.

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

- 2.30 The school has a suitable policy to safeguard its pupils that reflects current guidance. This is reviewed at least annually by the governing body who work closely with senior leaders should any concerns be raised. The school has worked closely with the local safeguarding partnership who have conducted their own assurance review in response to the issues reported. School leaders have attended meetings where they have discussed their own findings and shared the steps they are putting into place. Areas have been identified where local agencies, such as the police and the local hospital, could liaise more effectively with the school in relation to incidents occurring outside of school that involve pupils. The school is aware of the range of support available to children and young people who are victims or who perpetrate harmful sexual behaviour. Referrals are appropriately made, and the school then follows external advice and guidance. Allegations against pupils are investigated appropriately and suitable sanctions applied using the school's disciplinary procedures.
- 2.31 Staff and governors have been trained to understand, identify and respond appropriately to instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence, including online sexual abuse, and peer-on-peer sexual abuse. In addition, school leaders have worked closely with female pupils in order to understand when and how sexist comments and behaviour might occur outside the classroom in order that staff may act to prevent and challenge such incidents. Following a recent pupil survey, all pupils have been taught to understand safeguarding terms and issues, and pupils in Years 12 and 13 have been trained to support younger pupils, how to listen to them and to report concerns, which they do. An anonymised reporting system has also been put in place recently and is beginning to be used.
- 2.32 Recent school surveys show pupils and parents are happy with the new interventions. However, the school accepts that there is still work to be done in ensuring that all pupils feel they are listened to and that all staff are aware that there may be events taking place both in and out of school that need to be reported. Further training for staff and governors is scheduled. These findings by the school are confirmed by the questionnaire responses, with the vast majority of parents agreeing that the school safeguards children effectively, listens and responds to the views of pupils, actively promotes good behaviour and responds effectively when pupils use unkind or prejudiced language to each other.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9]; bullying [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 10]

- 2.33 During the inspection, pupils were observed to be polite and respectful to staff and to each other. The school has recently updated its electronic systems to record incidents of pupil misbehaviour and bullying, allowing for more in-depth analysis to identify any patterns of sexual harassment, including online, or sexual violence, should this occur. Staff implement a policy of zero tolerance of such behaviour and incidents are always investigated and, when appropriate, the disciplinary policy is implemented. Detailed records are maintained of any such incident, although these are rare, evidencing the care the school takes and the support given to both alleged victims and perpetrators. Female pupils recognise that any inappropriate comments from male pupils should be reported.
- 2.34 There are few incidents of bullying. In discussions, pupils were confident that any report of bullying would be taken seriously and investigated. In the questionnaires the vast majority of parents and

pupils agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour, although a small minority of pupils disagreed that the school addresses poor behaviour. The pupils inspectors spoke to generally felt that although there had been past misbehaviour, in particular from a small group of male pupils, this has been dealt with and behaviour has improved. This is reflected in the school's records which confirm that serious sanctions for inappropriate behaviour have been applied suitably.

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

- 2.35 Further to the allegations in the media, leaders wrote to parents of current and past pupils asking them to share what was age-appropriate with their children and to inform the school of any concerns. Some current and past pupils contacted the school directly. Investigations were thorough and made by senior leadership in collaboration with the governing body. As a result of this consultation, the school reviewed its PSHE and RSE curriculum and implemented further training for staff and governors. Informal pupil consultation continues and is shaping further review.

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended pupil meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Serena Alexander	Reporting inspector
Mr Roger Tapping	Accompanying reporting inspector
Mr Devin Cassidy	Compliance team inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)