



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report
For Schools with Residential Provision**

Sunningdale School

March 2023

Contents

School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection	5
Preface	5
Key findings	6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	7
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	7
PART 6 – Provision of information	7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	8
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	8
3. Inspection Evidence	9

School's Details

School	Sunningdale School			
DfE number	868/6007			
Address	Sunningdale School Dry Arch Road Ascot Berkshire SL5 9PZ			
Telephone number	01344 620159			
Email address	headmaster@sunningdaleschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Tom Dawson			
Proprietor	Mr Tom Dawson			
Age range	7 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	99			
	Day pupils	23	Boarders	76
	Juniors	51	Seniors	48
Inspection dates	22 to 23 March 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Sunningdale School in Ascot is an independent, family-run boarding and day school for male pupils. The school is owned by Mr Tom Dawson, who is the headmaster, and other members of the Dawson family. Sunningdale was founded in 1874 by Canon William Girdlestone. The school is set in large grounds and centres on the original Victorian house in which the school was founded. Boarding pupils are accommodated on the upper floors of this building.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to provide a happy and supportive environment in which boys can prosper as individuals and as members of the school community. The school aims to prepare boys for life at public school and to instil traditional values of honesty, good manners, hard work and kindness, and to encourage resilience and a zest for life.

About the pupils

- 1.3 A majority of boarding pupils come from the London area and around a quarter of pupils come from overseas. The school has identified five pupils as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) including dyslexia, dyspraxia and attention deficit disorder, all of whom receive additional support. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for five pupils and receive support as required.

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, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. 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, including the boarding NMS. 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, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.](#)

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

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 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. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, 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.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 Arrangements are not made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to the current statutory guidance, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022*. As stated in the guidance it is not appropriate for the proprietor of a school to be the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). When a school has a sole proprietor, appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that the DSL is able to discharge that role with sufficient independence from the owner of the school.
- 2.11 The school has not ensured that all members of staff households who are aged over 16 years and who reside on the same premises as boarders, have an enhanced certificate with a check of the Children's Barred list obtained from the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS).

- 2.12** The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9 to 16 and NMS 3, 5–7, 9-12, 15, 16 and 20, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met, but those in paragraphs 7 [safeguarding] and 8 [safeguarding of boarders] and NMS 8 and 19 are not met.

Action point 1

The school must appoint an appropriate DSL who is independent of the proprietor [paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and 8(a) and (b); NMS 8.1].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that all members of staff households who are aged 16 and over (and not on the roll of, nor employed by, the school) and who live on the same premises as boarders, have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate with a check of the Children’s Barred List [paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and 8(a) and (b); NMS 8.1 and 19.2].

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

- 2.13** The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school’s arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.14** The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 22 are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.15** 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.16** The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4, 7 and 23 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.17** 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, 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.18** However, the school has not published copies of the school’s previous inspection reports on the school’s website by the date specified for publication.

2.19 The standard relating to the provision of information in paragraph 32 is not met.

Action point 3

The school must ensure that copies of the school's previous inspection reports are published on the school web site by the date specified for publication [paragraph 32(1)(d), 32(1)(e) and 32(3)(g)].

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.20 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.

2.21 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.22 The proprietor does not ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met. They do not promote the well-being of pupils by failing to ensure that the school has a DSL independent of the proprietor. A suitable DBS check has not been completed for non-working members of the school community over the age of 16 years who reside on the school site. The school has not provided parents and prospective parents with published copies of the previous inspection reports so that they are in possession of required information.

2.23 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 and NMS 2 and 19 are not met.

Action point 4

The school must ensure that leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are met consistently and pupils' well-being is actively promoted [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.8].

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor and attended chapel. Inspectors visited boarding houses and considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Maureen Bradley	Reporting inspector
Mr Garry Leeson	Compliance team inspector (Compliance Manager, HMC school)
Mrs Harriet Connor	Team inspector for boarding (Headmistress, IAPS school)