

## Chetham's School of Music

Long Millgate, Manchester, M3 1SB

**Date of visit**            01 February 2016

### **Purpose of visit**

This was an unannounced emergency visit at the request of the Department for Education which focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding, particularly those concerned with safeguarding, the supervision and medical treatment of pupils and the implementation of the school's behaviour and sanctions policy.

### **Characteristics of the School**

Chetham's is a specialist music school for musically gifted pupils between the ages of 8 and 18. There are 298 pupils in the school (144 boys and 154 girls) of whom 216 are boarders. The school is one part of the Foundation of Chetham's Hospital School and Library, founded by Humphrey Chetham in 1653. The Hospital is governed by Feoffees, some of whom also serve on the School Committee, which is the governing body and proprietor of the School of Music.

The school, which is located in the centre of Manchester, occupies buildings dating back to 1422 and a new building, completed in 2012, which incorporates a recital hall and an outreach centre. Boarders are accommodated in one of three houses within the school campus.

The school student body is a rich mix of national and international backgrounds and social profiles. Entry to the school is based entirely on musical ability with no assessment of academic ability. The school has identified 59 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 45 pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 42 (SEND) and 18 (EAL) receive specialist support. There is one student with an EHC Plan.

The previous inspection was in May 2014.

## Inspection findings

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils - safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8] [NMS 11 and 14]**

The school meets the regulations and standards.

The safeguarding policy and procedure is compliant with current regulations. Scrutiny of records and discussions with staff indicated that it is implemented fully and correctly throughout the school including in the boarding houses. The safeguarding policy contains all the definitions required by *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* July 2015, and is available to parents through the school's website. The recruitment policy covers all necessary elements for checks on the appointment of new staff. Recruitment procedures are suitable and records indicate that they are implemented effectively.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and her deputies have undergone appropriate and timely training with the local authority, including in safer recruitment, and have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They have established good relationships with the local safeguarding board and social services for support and guidance when required. Records of recent referrals to both children's social services and the LADO are well organised and detailed, showing clearly that they had sought guidance within 24 hours, and followed the advice given. Records also showed appropriate detail of a direct referral to the police when a crime was suspected, within the correct timeframe. All staff and volunteers undergo annual training, including awareness of the risks of extremism and radicalisation, delivered by the DSL, and are issued with a useful aide memoir, a card giving contact numbers and ten tips for responding to concerns. Completion of training is rigorously recorded and staff are required to complete an evaluation form to check they have understood the key issues. They also sign to say that they have received and read such documentation as KCSIE July 2015. Safeguarding is an integral part of staff induction which is undertaken by all new staff and volunteers. In interviews, staff, including those new to the school since the previous inspection, were very clear about when, how and to whom they should report any disclosure, allegation or a concern about the welfare of a pupil. They appreciated that the welfare of pupils is the responsibility of all staff at all times. The staff code of conduct provides clear guidance to all staff to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk. The governors review the safeguarding policy and procedural implementation annually and make appropriate amendments to reflect any change in regulations or counter any perceived weaknesses. Minutes of the review demonstrate thorough processes, with governors involved in discussion of key elements. In addition, the day-to-day effectiveness of policy and procedure is monitored by the DSL, the designated safeguarding governor and the safeguarding committee.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – measures to promote good behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9] [NMS 12]**

The school meets the regulation and standard.

The school has an appropriate and comprehensive written behaviour policy, which covers behaviour both during the school day and at other times. It includes the school rules, disciplinary sanctions, occasions when restraint may be used and also arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions. Both the rules, which are printed in the pupil diary for quick reference, and the behaviour policy are known and understood by staff and pupils. The policy is effectively implemented throughout the school. Sanctions, which range from order marks to gating and suspension, are appropriate and appear from the records to be generally consistently applied. Younger pupils who were interviewed felt that a few staff were over-zealous in their use of order marks, while sixth-form pupils felt that some rules were unnecessarily restrictive for older boarders. Inspection evidence did not support these

concerns. All sanctions are recorded in detail on a central database, which is monitored informally by tutors and house staff and formally by the pastoral leadership, who has overall responsibility for behaviour on a weekly basis. Through regular scrutiny of the database, staff identify trends in behaviour, including for any individual pupil whose behaviour may be cause for concern, and monitor the fairness of sanctions awarded. The results of the monitoring are shared with the senior leadership team and other staff as necessary to enable suitable strategies to be put in place to remedy problems.

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

The school meets the regulation and standard.

The school has a comprehensive written first aid policy which is implemented effectively both during the school day and at all other times. The medical centre is staffed by a team of experienced and well-qualified staff, overseen by the head nurse and supported by external health care staff, including a counsellor and a large number of qualified first aiders amongst the staff. Scrutiny of rotas showed that at least one member of the team is on duty 24 hours of the day with a half-hour handover time built into the shift pattern. There are clear protocols for dealing with accidents and for referral to hospital. Recently, additional staff have been appointed to accompany pupils to hospital and other medical appointments, and communicate directly with parents where necessary. Detailed records are kept, both in a daybook and in pupils' files, of all pupil visits to the medical room and incidents requiring medical intervention. Both sets of records are monitored very regularly by the head nurse, who meets frequently with the pastoral leadership to discuss, as appropriate, aspects of pupils' welfare. Particular note is made of those pupils who have long-term health issues whether physical such as diabetes, or psychological, such as stress.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14] [NMS 15]**

The school meets the regulation and standard.

Levels of supervision at all times are good. Staff have appropriate levels of training to care for the age and needs of the pupils and the nature of the activity. Discussions with both pupils and staff showed that the policy for the supervision of pupils is well understood. When not in lessons or timetabled musical activities, all pupils, both day and boarding, are either in their houses under staff supervision or out of school with permission from the house staff. Arrangements for pupils signing in and out and the security of the site ensure that staff closely monitor and know pupils' whereabouts at all times.

### **Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34 [NMS 13]**

The school meets the regulation and standard.

The headmistress and all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, give a high priority to the welfare of pupils including those not under their direct supervision. All staff in leadership and management roles are well qualified and have the experience to carry out their roles effectively. Through close monitoring and through staff review, the senior leadership team quickly identify staff training needs, providing access to suitable courses and also one-to-one support such as that provided for new house staff. Senior staff with designated responsibility for pupils' welfare and behaviour are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of policies and procedures and fulfil their roles effectively. They meet regularly with staff, including those who work in boarding and those responsible for pupils' medical well-being, to discuss individual pupils' needs and to ensure the consistent and effective implementation of policy and procedures. Pastoral leadership staff also spend time on a regular basis in each

house to observe and monitor pupils' well-being and behaviour. Additionally, regular monitoring of the detailed behavioural records kept by staff, including the effectiveness of sanctions, enables issues to be identified, evaluated and any required action carried out promptly. There is a clearly defined line management structure in place for all staff, as well as good communication channels between leadership and management and the staff team.

### **Regulatory action points**

The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.