



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Additional Inspection Report

Eastbourne College

May 2023

School's details

School	Eastbourne College			
DfE number	845/6014			
Registered charity number	307071			
Address	Eastbourne College Old Wish Road Eastbourne East Sussex BN21 4JX			
Telephone number	01323 452300			
Email address	reception@eastbourne-college.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Tom Lawson			
Chair of governors	Mr Philip Broadley			
Proprietor	The Governors of Eastbourne College Incorporated			
Age range	13 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	646			
	Day pupils	351	Boarders	295
	Seniors	383	Sixth Form	263
Inspection dates	18 May 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Eastbourne College is an independent co-educational day and boarding school situated in a residential area of Eastbourne. Boarders' accommodation consists of two houses for female pupils and three for male pupils. The school is a registered charity administered by a board of governors. The school has identified 187 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 101 pupils, 28 of whom receive additional specialist help. The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance and educational quality inspection in June 2021.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced additional inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) which focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs), and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2022.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 8	Met
Part 3, paragraph 9 (behaviour); NMS 15	Met
Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying); NMS 16	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); NMS 9	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety); NMS 10	Met
Part 3, paragraph 13 (first aid); NMS 7	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils); NMS 20	Met
Part 3, paragraph 15 (admission and attendance registers)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment); NMS 9	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 7, paragraph 33 (complaints procedure); NMS 14	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 2	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 8]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 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

- 2.3 The school meets the standards.
- 2.4 The school's safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively to ensure the welfare of pupils, including boarders. There is a positive culture of safeguarding across all aspects of school life. Discussions with both staff and pupils confirm that leaders inculcate an atmosphere of inclusivity where all opinions matter and where all concerns are listened to and acted upon swiftly. Pupils confirm that they can approach any member of staff, including those in the medical centre, if they are worried, knowing that appropriate action will be taken to support them. Records of safeguarding confirm that this happens in practice. Matters such as online safety are handled effectively by the school and overseen appropriately by governors. Pupils identified that the school helps them to keep them safe online.
- 2.5 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has a secure oversight of safeguarding arrangements and ensures that the safeguarding team keeps detailed confidential records of any concerns. These confirm that senior leaders work within locally agreed inter-agency procedures and that any referrals of safeguarding concerns are made in a timely manner. These include referral to DBS and/or TRA where allegations against an adult working in the school have been found to be proven. There is also efficient oversight of the school's safer recruitment procedures. The designated governor for safeguarding ensures that an annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements, which is sufficiently detailed to meet local safeguarding partnership requirements is carried out and shared with the governing board.
- 2.6 All staff, including leaders, governors and those with specific safeguarding responsibility, are trained appropriately. Staff show confident understanding of the training they receive, including that regarding signs of abuse, child-on-child abuse and also areas such as mental health, sexual violence and harassment. Regular updates to training supplement the ongoing annual training received by all staff and governors, which is supported by questions and quizzes to ensure a sufficient audit of safeguarding understanding. Staff have a confident understanding of the process for referral should there be any concerns. They understand the school's code of conduct for staff and the whistleblowing policy. They know how to contact children's services direct, should the need arise.
- 2.7 There is an appropriate Prevent strategy in place which is suitably implemented.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9; NMS 15]

- 2.8 The school meets the standards.
- 2.9 The school has a suitable policy in place to promote good behaviour, which is implemented effectively. A suitable record is kept of any serious sanctions which are applied, and this is monitored appropriately by leaders to ensure fairness and consistency. Pupils confirm that incidents of poor

behaviour are relatively few and that they feel safe in school. This is confirmed by behaviour logs. The school rejects the use of corporal punishment, as required.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – bullying [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 10; NMS 16]

2.10 The school meets the standards.

2.11 Suitable arrangements are made by the school to prevent bullying and any which occurs is tackled effectively. A suitable policy is in place and leaders ensure that this is implemented effectively. Pupils speak assuredly about bullying; they are aware of what to do if they believe it to be happening and are confident that the school will deal firmly with any instances. Staff are given suitable training to spot and deal with any bullying which occurs. Appropriate records of bullying are kept and these are monitored regularly to identify any trends in bullying. The records confirm that the school implements suitable and appropriate sanctions if bullying ever occurs.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11; NMS 9]

2.12 The school meets the standards.

2.13 A suitable health and safety policy is effectively implemented to ensure that relevant health and safety law is complied with. The school's arrangements are supported by a management structure with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. School governors ensure that there is effective oversight of the arrangements. This includes a regular, full audit of health and safety which produces an action plan which focuses on compliance and resourcing. Regular health and safety meetings ensure that any accidents or near misses are investigated, reviewed and reported, when necessary. All health and safety matters are summarised in a termly report to the governors. Health and safety leaders ensure that suitable checks are made and records kept regarding hazardous substances, electrical maintenance and legionella testing.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12; NMS 10]

2.14 The school meets the standards.

2.15 Suitable arrangements are made to prevent and tackle fire in the school. There is a sufficient number of suitably trained staff, including those trained to a higher level in firefighting. Regular maintenance and testing of fire-fighting equipment and installations ensure that these are fit for purpose. Fire exits are clearly signed and free of obstructions. A suitable fire risk assessment is in place and any deficiencies are addressed without delay. Pupils and records confirm that regular fire drills take place, including during boarding time. Both they and staff receive regular training in fire safety.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – first aid [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 13; NMS 7]

2.16 The school meets the standards.

2.17 The school has a suitable policy for first aid which is implemented effectively. Scrutiny of records and discussions with responsible leaders confirms that there are sufficient trained staff to ensure that any pupil or boarder who becomes ill or unwell receives prompt and competent medical attention. Pupils confirm that staff carry first aid kits on all trips offsite. The facilities to care for are suitable if an overnight or more prolonged treatment is necessary. Arrangements are in place to use additional local allied services such as dental and optometric facilities and also local hospitals if the need arises.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14; NMS 20]

- 2.18 The school meets the standards.
- 2.19 Suitable arrangements are made to ensure that pupils are properly and competently supervised while in the care of the school. Pupils confirm that it is easy to find members of staff during breaks and lunch times and observations during the visit also verify this. There is suitable supervision during boarding time, including at night.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – admission and attendance registers [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 15]

- 2.20 The school meets the standard.
- 2.21 The school keeps secure admissions records which include all the required information. Suitable attendance records which state whether a pupil is present or absent, along with the reasons for any absences are also kept as required.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; NMS 9]

- 2.22 The school meets the standards.
- 2.23 The school's risk assessment policy describes a clear and strategic approach to the management of risk. The policy is implemented effectively. Scrutiny of records demonstrates a wide range of individual risk assessments for all aspects of school life, including activities, safeguarding, welfare, trips and visits. Written assessments identify any reasonably foreseeable risks and detail how these can be mitigated.

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; NMS 14]

- 2.25 The school meets the standards.
- 2.26 The school has drawn up and implements effectively a suitable procedure for complaints. Scrutiny of records and discussions with leaders and governors indicate that any complaints received are given suitably careful attention, following the procedure and timescales set out in the complaints policy. This is published on the school's website, along with the number of formal complaints in the preceding year. Leaders and governors understand and implement effectively the requirements for appeal panel hearings, should a complainant be unsatisfied with the responses to informal and formal complaints. Where a historic complaint is made after a pupil has left the school, senior leaders and governors respond appropriately. A suitable log of formal complaints is kept, which identifies the stage at which each matter was resolved. This also records whether the matters related to boarding provision, and any action taken as a result, regardless of whether or not the complaint was upheld.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 2]

- 2.27 The school meets the standards.

- 2.28 The school's leadership and management have the required skills and knowledge to ensure that all the other standards are met consistently. They apply these skills and knowledge effectively to actively promote the safety and wellbeing of all pupils, including boarders.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

4. Summary of evidence

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

Inspectors

Mr Kerry Lord

Reporting inspector

Mr Jonathan Dunn

Assistant reporting inspector