



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Additional Inspection Report

St Dominic's Grammar School

January 2023

School's details

School	St Dominic's Grammar School			
DfE number	860/6005			
Address	St Dominic's Grammar School Bargate Street Brewood Staffordshire ST19 9BA			
Telephone number	01902 850248			
Email address	enquiries@stdominicsgrammarschool.co.uk			
Head	Mr Peter McNabb			
Proprietor	Mr Gary Hartland			
Age range	4 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	286			
	EYFS	15	Prep	88
	Seniors	159	Sixth form	24
Date of inspection	17 January 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 St Dominic’s Grammar School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged 4 to 18 in the village of Brewood, Staffordshire. The school is owned by a sole proprietor, who is assisted in providing oversight by an advisory board. The school, which includes an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting, has three sections. These are the prep school, for pupils in Reception to Year 6; the senior school for pupils in Years 7 to 11; and the sixth form. The school has 61 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Two pupils have an education, health and care plan. There are two pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school’s previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in May 2019.

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 requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 2A (relationships and sex education)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 4 (framework for pupil performance)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 9 (behaviour)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 5, paragraph 23 (toilet, washing and changing facilities)	Met
Part 5, paragraph 25 (maintenance of premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 5, paragraph 28 (drinking water and water supply)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 7, paragraph 33 (complaints procedure)	Met

Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met
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2. Inspection findings

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

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 The school has a suitable relationships and sex education policy which is published on its website. Parents were consulted appropriately during its development, and it contains suitable content for educating pupils of all ages which reflects statutory guidance. This includes the promotion of inclusivity and respect for others. Schemes of work and lesson plans demonstrate a comprehensive framework for teaching the programme.

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

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 Teaching, including in the EYFS, is well planned. It provides suitable opportunities for all pupils to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding so that they make good progress. The needs of individual pupils, including those with SEND, are identified appropriately and met by the teaching provided. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, is effectively taught in timetabled lessons. It includes relationships education in the prep school and sex and relationships education in the senior school. It also includes suitable guidance about smoking and vaping. Pupils are well motivated and their behaviour is effectively managed in lessons. Pupils' work shows that they make good progress and demonstrates appropriate assessment by staff, including suggestions for further improvement.

Quality of education provided – framework for pupil performance [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 4]

- 2.5 The school meets the standard.
- 2.6 The school has a suitable framework for assessing pupils' performance, including in the EYFS, and pupils' progress is effectively monitored. Parents receive suitable reports of their child's performance and progress regularly, including a full written report at the end of the academic year.

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

Safeguarding policy

- 2.7 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.8 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

- 2.9 The school meets the standard.
- 2.10 The school implements its procedures effectively, including in the EYFS. It acts in the best interests of the child. Pupils confirm that they are confident to express any concerns they have, that staff and school leaders listen to them, and that action would be taken promptly, if needed. This is confirmed by records of safeguarding concerns. Pupils say that they are well educated about online safety and the school has effective systems in place to monitor and filter the internet.

- 2.11 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and her deputy undertake appropriate advanced level training. They carry out suitable training, including regular updates, for all staff, both face-to-face and using online resources. Staff demonstrate an effective understanding of child-on-child abuse, including the vulnerability of pupils with protected characteristics, and are conversant with how to report any concerns they have about children or adults in the school community. All staff, including senior leaders understand the staff code of conduct. The proprietor and advisory governors are made aware of its expectations. Suitable procedures are included in the safeguarding policy for handling allegations against any adult working with children in the school. Staff confirmed in discussion their awareness of these and that they would use the whistleblowing procedure without hesitation, should it be necessary. They have been trained in the importance of identifying low-level concerns and report them as appropriate. A centralised record of these concerns is kept by the head.
- 2.12 The DSL keeps effective centralised records for any pupils of concern and acts appropriately in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures; maintains close links with local children's services; attends their training; seeks their advice promptly when necessary; and makes timely referrals for any safeguarding concerns. Senior leaders maintain effective communication with parents where appropriate.
- 2.13 The advisory governor for safeguarding provides effective, independent support and challenge for the safeguarding team on behalf of the proprietor, including an effective annual review of the safeguarding policy and regular audits of safeguarding practice in the school.

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

- 2.14 The school meets the standards.
- 2.15 Suitable measures to promote good behaviour and guard against bullying are implemented effectively. These measures are published on the school's website. Staff are trained in anti-bullying measures effectively and pupils are given appropriate guidance. An appropriate log of sanctions is kept and sanctions are commensurate with the relevant behaviour recorded. Incidents of child-on-child abuse and bullying, including any racial incidents, are rare but when they do occur the school responds promptly and appropriately. Senior leaders understand the threshold for treating bullying as a potential safeguarding issue. Pupils confirm that the school takes appropriate action when poor behaviour or bullying is identified. They perceive any sanctions to be fairly administered and records confirm this. Where serious incidents occur, senior leaders communicate effectively with the parents of all pupils involved. Suitable centralised records of incidents are kept so that any emerging patterns can be identified and acted upon.

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

- 2.16 The school meets the standard.
- 2.17 There is a suitable health and safety policy which is effectively implemented. The site provides a safe environment and traffic is carefully managed at the beginning and end of the day. Recreational areas for pupils are well maintained and provide safe areas for pupils to play. Records of health and safety matters are suitable and accurately reflect practice. They are monitored effectively by senior leaders and by advisory governors on the proprietor's behalf.

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

- 2.18 The school meets the standard.

- 2.19 Scrutiny of supervision rotas shows that supervision is sufficient to ensure the safety of pupils. Active supervision by staff is in place for breaks, lunchtimes and the start and end of the school day when pupils are being dropped off and collected. Observations by inspectors confirmed effective supervision during break and lunchtime including around toilet areas and the EYFS. Pupils say that sufficient staff are always visible or easily available to them and that they feel safe.

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

- 2.20 The school meets the standard.
- 2.21 There is a suitable risk assessment policy which is implemented effectively. Risk assessments for the school site are appropriate and indicate a systematic approach to managing risks. The required daily checks are carried out in the EYFS building and linked outside areas and these are monitored effectively by maintenance staff so that actions can be taken when necessary.

Premises and accommodation – toilet and washing facilities [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 23]

- 2.22 The school meets the standard.
- 2.23 Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils. These are separated by gender for pupils of 8 years or older and appropriately signed. All facilities are clean and well maintained. Facilities for children in the EYFS are separated from those for older pupils.

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

- 2.24 The school meets the standard.
- 2.25 A tour of the school confirmed that all buildings and outdoor areas of the school are maintained to an appropriate standard. The outdoor areas provide appropriate and safe spaces for outdoor play. Scrutiny of maintenance logs shows appropriate recording of all checks and a systematic approach to ensuring timely responses to any ongoing maintenance needs. Staff confirm that the system is effective and that any issues reported receive a prompt response.

Premises and accommodation – Water [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 28]

- 2.26 Drinking water supplies are suitably located around the school and are clearly signed and maintained. There are suitable hot and cold water supplies in toilet and washing facilities. The temperature of any hot water at the point of use does not provide a scalding risk.

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

- 2.27 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]

- 2.28 The school meets the standard.
- 2.29 The school has a suitable complaints policy which is implemented effectively. The policy outlines appropriate timescales for the management of complaints whether informal, formal or a panel hearing. It provides for any panel hearing to consist of three members not directly involved in the complaint and for the panel to include one member who is independent of the management of the

school. Complaints are recorded appropriately and include any action taken, whether or not a complaint was successful. The head keeps the record of complaints confidential.

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

2.30 The school meets the standard.

2.31 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are consistently met and they actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

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 requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, 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 the chair of the advisory group of 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.

Inspectors

Mrs Kate McCarey

Reporting inspector

Mr Michael Evans

Assistant reporting inspector