



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Report for an Additional Inspection

Buckswood School

March 2022

School's details

School	Buckswood School			
DfE number	845/6031			
Address	Buckswood School Broomham Hall Guestling East Sussex TN35 4LT			
Telephone number	01424 813813			
Email address	achieve@buckswood.co.uk			
Co-principals	Mr Michael Shaw and Mr Kevin Samson			
Proprietor	Mr Giles Sutton			
Age range	10 to 19			
Number of pupils on roll	293			
	Day pupils	83	Boarders	210
	Seniors	179	Sixth Form	114
Date of visit	24 March 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Buckswood School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. The school is owned by Buckswood School Limited, whose director is the proprietor, who has responsibility for oversight of the school. He is supported by an advisory governing board. Two co-principals are responsible for the day-to-day running of the school. The school has identified 36 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil has an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language for 150 pupils. The previous inspection was an additional inspection visit in March 2021.

Purpose of the visit

- 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 2015.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 11	Met
Part 4, paragraph 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and the proprietor); NMS 14	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 13	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding and safeguarding of boarders [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 11]

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 implements its safeguarding policy effectively to ensure that the welfare and safety needs of its day and boarding pupils are met.
- 2.5 The designated safeguarding lead and deputies have received suitable training which is up to date. They act on and refer any concerns about pupils appropriately and promptly to the relevant local authority. They liaise with local agencies closely, seeking advice when appropriate. Staff are trained regularly and effectively in safeguarding procedures and receive regular updates. During interviews they showed effective understanding of the training they have received regarding the staff code of conduct, whistleblowing and safeguarding procedures for boarding and day pupils. They understand to whom they should refer any concerns, including low-level concerns, and that they can refer directly to the local authority, should the need arise. They are cognisant of the vulnerabilities of pupils with protected characteristics, including those with SEND, and those who are international boarders, living a long way from home. Regular, timely and appropriate contact is maintained with parents.
- 2.6 Suitable arrangements for handling any allegations against staff, senior leaders or the proprietor are included in the safeguarding policy and effectively implemented. Referrals to the local authority designated officers are prompt and records are systematic and coherent, including in relation to any low-level concerns. Pupils confirm that they feel safe in school and are confident that they are listened to if they have any concerns, and that action is taken when they do so. They confirmed that they understand the importance of internet safety and that school systems of filtering and monitoring the internet are effective.
- 2.7 Suitable recruitment procedures are outlined in a separate policy. All appropriate checks on the suitability of teaching staff, support staff and proprietors have been completed before they have taken up their appointment.
- 2.8 An independent safeguarding advisor with sufficient knowledge undertakes an annual review of safeguarding on behalf of the proprietor which is shared with him to enable appropriate action. Regular contact between senior leaders, the safeguarding advisor and the nominated safeguarding member of the advisory board ensures effective oversight.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; NMS 14]

- 2.9 The school meets all of the standards.
- 2.10 All the required checks on teaching, support staff and the proprietor are completed before they take up their role. The school carries out its own, appropriate checks on all non-teaching staff it employs, including the customary range of regular maintenance personnel such as cleaners, although no security staff are employed. Contractors are supervised or complete work in the holidays.

- 2.11 The school maintains an accurate single central register of appointments which includes the dates on which all checks have been completed. Scrutiny of staff personnel files showed that suitable documentary evidence of timely checks is in place.

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

- 2.12 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.

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

- 2.13 The school meets the standards.
- 2.14 Appropriate procedures are implemented which allow the proprietor and senior leaders to manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements, including those for staff recruitment, effectively. Thus the leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities so that the independent school standards are met consistently and the well-being of pupils is actively promoted.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this visit, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015, and no further action is required as a result of this visit.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the co-principals, senior leaders and other members of staff and spoke with the proprietor. They visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.