



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

Dulwich Prep London

May 2023

School's details

School	Dulwich Prep London			
DfE number	210/6001			
Registered charity number	1174356			
Address	Dulwich Prep London 42 Alleyn Park Dulwich London SE21 7AA			
Telephone number	0208 766 5500			
Email address	information@dulwichpreplondon.org			
Headteacher	Miss Louise Davidson			
Chair of governors	Mrs Kate Kelleher			
Proprietor	Dulwich Prep London			
Age range	3 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	838			
	EYFS	156	Pre-Prep	164
	Prep	518		
Date of inspection	22 May 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Dulwich Prep London is an independent day school for male pupils aged 3 to 13 years and female pupils aged 3 to 4 years. It was founded in 1885 and is a charitable trust, overseen by a board of governors. The school comprises the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children aged 3 to 5 years; pre-prep, for pupils aged 5 to 7 years; and prep, for pupils aged 7 to 13 years. The EYFS is situated on a separate site near the main school premises.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to introduce flexi-boarding from Year 3 for up to 9 pupils with the option to accommodate 16 occasionally. The inspection 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 3, 5, 6 and 8	Met
NMS 4 (boarding accommodation)	Likely to be met
NMS 9 (safety of boarders), 10 (fire precautions and drills)	Likely to be met
NMS 7 (boarders' health and wellbeing), 11 (boarders' induction and individual support), 12 (contact with parents), 13 (boarders' views) and 14 (complaints)	Likely to be met
NMS 15 (promoting positive behaviour), 16 (preventing bullying) and 17 (good relationships)	Likely to be met
NMS 18 (activities and free time)	Likely to be met
NMS 19 (staff recruitment and checks on other adults), 21 (prefects) and 22 (educational guardians)	Met
NMS 20 (staffing and supervision)	Likely to be met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 1 and 2	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding and safeguarding of boarders; [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 3, 5, 6 and 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 implements its safeguarding arrangements effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. It is likely that these arrangements will continue to be satisfactory with the introduction of a boarding setting. The safeguarding policy and procedures are based on the most up-to-date statutory guidance: *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022* (KCSIE) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018). The policy is further supported by appropriate guidance including for whistleblowing, e-safety and preventing extremism and radicalisation, together with a staff code of conduct. Discussions with staff confirm that they have a full understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities including those that may be required in a future boarding setting.
- 2.5 The safeguarding team includes a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and five deputies from different sections of the school. All designated staff have appropriate levels of safeguarding training, including with the local safeguarding partnership. Teaching and support staff are trained at the start of each term and additional updates are provided as required. New staff undergo suitable induction training. The staff who will be involved in the boarding setting have received suitable additional training to promote the welfare of boarders. The governors are trained effectively in safeguarding and conduct an annual review of the policy and its implementation. There is a designated safeguarding governor who visits the school regularly and monitors safeguarding procedures. This governor will take a lead in the safety of boarders.
- 2.6 Records show there is prompt and effective liaison between the DSL and the relevant local authorities, including children's services, when advice is required and when referrals need to be made. Suitable recruitment procedures are implemented and the school has appropriate measures to deal with an allegation against any adult if needed. Means of listening to children are suitable and pupils report that they can report concerns in a number of ways but would probably speak to any member of staff. They are confident they will be listened to and that any concerns will be handled quickly. That this happens in practice is confirmed by detailed child protection records. These are held securely and with suitable confidentiality.
- 2.7 The school is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including boarders. Boarders will not be discriminated against, particularly with regard to the legally protected characteristics and requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.8 There is suitable provision made for boarders' possessions. It is expected that flexi-boarders will take home their laundry and the school will be responsible for the laundry of bedding.
- 2.9 Suitable provision has been made for food and drink for boarders. There is an already established catering arrangement where pupils are able to take breakfast, lunch and supper in school and the boarders will join in with these arrangements. Snacks and drinks will be provided in the evening. Dietary and allergy requirements will be observed.

- 2.10 Safeguarding arrangements are likely to remain adequate in meeting the needs of the boarders in the material change application.

Boarding accommodation [NMS 4]

- 2.11 The school is likely to meet the standards.
- 2.12 The school has provided suitable accommodation for boarders in a recently renovated school building. Good quality sleeping accommodation, furnishings and bedding, for up to 9 boarders has been provided in good sized rooms with another room available to extend this to 16 boarders if required. A place for private study has been identified in the school library adjacent to the accommodation. Sufficient toilets, sinks and showers have been installed which offer suitable privacy. The accommodation is well lit, heated and ventilated. Standards of maintenance and cleanliness are appropriate. Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of boarders only and is secure from access by any unauthorised to do so. CCTV is used only on the outside of the building.

Safety of boarders; fire safety [NMS 9 and 10]

- 2.13 The school is likely to meet the standards.
- 2.14 The school has a suitable health and safety policy that is effectively implemented. The building in which boarders will reside meets the requirements of current regulations concerning fire and there is an appropriate fire detector system installed which is tested regularly. A fire risk assessment for the use of the building for boarding has been undertaken. The designated competent person and other staff have suitable training. Fire drills are held each term and arrangements for boarding include planned drills in boarding time. The school's arrangements are for flexi-boarders to be instructed in fire safety and drill procedures when new to the boarding environment as part of their induction process.
- 2.15 A suitable risk assessment is in place for the introduction of boarding and for boarding accommodation. Other risk assessments have been updated to include boarders. Appropriate action has been taken to reduce any risks that have been identified.

Boarders' health and wellbeing; boarders' induction and individual support; contact with parents; boarders' views; and complaints; [NMS 7 and 11–14]

- 2.16 The school is likely to meet the standards.
- 2.17 Medical arrangements are suitable for the introduction of boarding. Throughout the day there is a school nurse on site who can provide boarding staff with advice for evening care. Medicines will be stored securely in a medical room which can be used for isolation purposes at night. Medical information and parental consent forms for treatment are kept securely. House staff will complete a recognised first aid course.
- 2.18 There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance planned for boarders. Comprehensive boarding handbooks have been prepared. Pupils will be able to contact their parents during the week and parents will be encouraged to raise any concerns with boarding staff. The school has a suitable complaints policy and boarders will be encouraged to report any concerns. They will be able to offer their views to staff at evening 'chat' sessions. Pupils will be informed of the people available to speak to including the school counsellor, independent listener and Childline.

Promoting positive behaviour, good relationships and preventing bullying [NMS 15–17]

- 2.19 The school is likely to meet the standards.
- 2.20 There are suitable policies to promote good behaviour and guard against bullying in place in the school and the senior leaders are committed to maintaining the same standards in the boarding environment.

An anti-bullying leaflet is displayed on the house notice board. All policies have been updated to include the boarding environment and provide appropriate rewards and sanctions. The school educates pupils appropriately in how to nurture good relationships. House meetings and training for staff will concentrate on safeguarding and appropriate procedures for implementing the behaviour and anti-bullying policies. The housemaster will monitor behaviour and record any incidents on the school administration system. Senior management will monitor the records.

Activities and free time [NMS 18]

- 2.21 The school is likely to meet the standards.
- 2.22 A number of suitable activities have been planned for boarders in the evenings, including a wide range of sports and swimming using the school facilities. The boarding accommodation has a separate games room and a place to relax and enjoy leisure activities such as board games and TV.

Staff recruitment and checks on other adults, prefects and educational guardians [NMS 19, 21 and 22]

- 2.23 The school meets the standards.
- 2.24 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 will be appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are appropriately managed. Other adults resident in the boarding environment have appropriate checks and agreements in place. No boarding prefects will be appointed.

Staffing and supervision of boarders [NMS 20]

- 2.25 The school is likely to meet the standards.
- 2.26 Appropriate levels of supervision are planned, using staff who have experience and knowledge of boarding. Suitable plans are in place for duty rotas to be implemented and for boarders to have appropriate means of contacting staff at night.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 1 and 2]

- 2.27 The school meets the standards.
- 2.28 The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively to actively promote the wellbeing of pupils. Senior leaders and governors have made appropriate preparations for the introduction of flexi-boarding into the school with suitable policies and documentation already in place. They have appointed experienced and suitably trained staff to manage the boarding setting and have ensured that they are appropriately trained for their roles. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice has been prepared. The arrangements made are likely to remain suitable to meet the needs of flexi-boarders as envisioned in the material change application.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that Dulwich Prep London's application for material change should be approved. The governance and management have made suitable plans and arrangements to accommodate flexi-boarders in the school. There is sufficient space and facilities to accommodate the low numbers expected, between 9 and 16 pupils, in the future. The setting has suitable security in place for the protection of boarders.
- 3.2 The school has budgeted effectively to increase the range of resources required and suitably qualified and experienced staff have been appointed. The safeguarding in the school is secure and well managed. Governance and leadership and management have the knowledge, skills and understanding required for maintaining the required standards and understand their responsibilities to promote the welfare of the pupils.

4. Summary of evidence

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

Inspectors

Mrs Maureen Bradley

Reporting inspector