



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

Moulsford Preparatory School

September 2022

School's details

School	Moulsford Preparatory School			
DfE number	931/6087			
Registered charity number	894631			
Address	Moulsford School Moulsford-on-Thames Wallingford Oxfordshire OX10 9HR			
Telephone number	01491 651438			
Email address	mpsoffice@moulsford.com			
Headteacher	Mr Ben Beardmore-Gray			
Chair of governors	Mr Edward Boddington			
Age range	3 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	380			
	Day pupils	339	Boarders	41
	Pre School	12	Pre-Prep	69
	Prep	299		
Date of inspection	28 September 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Moulsoford Preparatory School is an independent day and boarding school situated in a rural setting between Streatley and Wallingford in Oxfordshire. All pupils from Reception upwards are male. The pre-school, for pupils aged 3 to 4 is mixed gender. The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. Weekly and flexi boarding is offered to pupils from Year 4 and above in a boarding house within the main school building. The school has 56 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupil has an education, health and care plan and there are no pupils who require support for English as an additional language. The previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in March 2022.

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 increase its pupil numbers from 358 to 468. The inspection was focused on the pre-prep department, housed in a newly opened building which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This is where the increase in numbers is requested, with pupils already in situ. Boarding was not inspected. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and relevant requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 3, paragraphs 18–21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23–29 (premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

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

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. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that there are many adults to whom they could report any concerns with confidence. When pupils express a concern they receive a response and action is taken when needed. The school has robust systems in place to monitor and filter use of the internet and pupils state they are well educated about online safety. Any misuse of technology, including on social media, is handled effectively.
- 2.5 There are sufficient numbers of senior safeguarding staff in the new pre-prep building, where the increased number of pupils is accommodated, to ensure the welfare of the youngest pupils. Leadership of safeguarding in the EYFS is suitably managed. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and those with safeguarding responsibilities are appropriately trained. Other staff, including those new to the school, are suitably trained. They have a secure understanding of their training and share a commitment to a strong safeguarding culture in the school. Staff understand procedures for referring any concerns about pupils, including in any cases of child-on-child abuse. They understand that some children may not know how to communicate concerns. They are suitably aware of the staff code of conduct and of procedures to communicate any allegations against staff. They stated that they would use whistleblowing procedures with confidence. The school keeps appropriate, centralised records of concerns and of any referrals to local agencies.
- 2.6 Governors are appropriately trained in safeguarding. The safeguarding governor maintains a close relationship with the DSL and senior leaders, is kept suitably informed of any safeguarding concerns and provides appropriate challenge to ensure a strong culture of safeguarding. The safeguarding policy is reviewed annually by governors.

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

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 The school has an appropriate health and safety policy which it implements effectively. The new pre-prep building meets all necessary requirements for electrical safety and other similar areas. It is secure and has suitable perimeter fencing, well-controlled entrances and a one-way traffic system to ensure pupils can be dropped off and collected safely. The road between the new pre-prep building and the prep school is only accessible to staff. Pupils travelling across from one site to the other are always transported by minibus. Arrangements for health and safety are effectively monitored by governors who also ensure that staff are appropriately trained.

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

- 2.9 The school meets the standard.

- 2.10 A suitable fire safety policy is implemented effectively and a suitable person oversees this area. This sets out procedures for emergency evacuation and these are practised regularly. A practice evacuation has already been held in the new building. A fire risk assessment has been carried for the new pre-prep building which shows that all aspects meet the required standards. The new building has effective fire signage and well-placed fire extinguishers.

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

- 2.11 The school meets the standard.
- 2.12 Arrangements for the supervision of pupils are appropriate for their ages and needs. In the new pre-prep department suitable supervision procedures are in operation. Weekly rotas cover staffing for breaks, lunchtimes, arrival and departure times. In the EYFS children are always within sight or sound of staff. The school has sufficient staff in place to effectively supervise the pupils and to ensure that required ratios of staff to children in the EYFS are maintained.

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

- 2.13 The school meets the standard.
- 2.14 The school has an appropriate policy for risk assessment and an effective approach to managing risk. This includes risks associated with premises and accommodation, including that in the new building and its surroundings. Any off-site trips in which pupils participate are also appropriately assessed. Regular daily assessments of risk are carried out in the EYFS to ensure the safety of children. Staff confirm that they are trained in carrying out risk assessments. They have a secure understanding of the necessity to be risk aware.

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

- 2.15 The school meets the standards.
- 2.16 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, volunteers and proprietors and school leaders and managers have a secure understanding of the recruitment process. The single central register accurately records staff recruitment checks. The school does not use supply staff.

Premises and accommodation – [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 23–29]

- 2.17 The school meets the standards.
- 2.18 The new building is appropriately heated, lit, ventilated and kept clean. Toilet and washing facilities are plentiful and well placed. They are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils. The medical room is appropriate for pupils' needs; dining facilities and food preparation areas are spacious and suitable. Acoustics are appropriate and the water supply is maintained effectively. Suitable drinking water stations are provided and identified as such. All areas of the grounds are well managed and regularly monitored for safety. They provide suitable areas for physical education and recreation. Playground furniture and equipment, including that for children in the EYFS, is age appropriate and well maintained.

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

- 2.19 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]

2.20 The school meets the standard.

2.21 Senior leaders and governors demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently. The new building which houses the pre-prep department has been appropriately designed and provides an effective educational setting for the youngest members of the school community. Regular and thorough review of systems and structures in the school ensure that the school actively promotes pupils' wellbeing. It is likely to do so following the proposed increase in numbers.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the request for a material change in the number of pupils from 358 to 468, the increase in age range from 4 to 13 to 3 to 13 and the introduction of co-education in the pre-school, be granted. The school has opened the new building for its pre-prep department which includes a co-educational pre-school for children aged 3 to 4. The building provides suitable accommodation, including for children in the EYFS. Senior leaders, governors and school staff ensure effective systems for safeguarding and caring for pupils' health and welfare needs.

4. Summary of evidence

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

Inspectors

Mrs Kate McCarey

Reporting inspector