



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Report for a Material Change Visit

St Dunstan's College

December 2021

School's details

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|---------------------------|--|-----|------------|-----|
| School name | St Dunstan's College | | | |
| DfE number | 209/6032 | | | |
| Registered charity number | 312747 | | | |
| Address | St Dunstan's College Stanstead Road Catford London SE6 4TY | | | |
| Telephone number | 0208 516 7200 | | | |
| Email address | collegeoffice@stdunstans.org.uk | | | |
| Head | Mr Nicholas Hewlett | | | |
| Chair of governors | Mr Paul Durgan | | | |
| Age Range | 3 to 18 | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 1042 | | | |
| | Pre-prep | 131 | Prep | 211 |
| | Seniors | 549 | Sixth Form | 151 |
| Date of visit | 6 December 2021 | | | |
| School name | St Dunstan's College | | | |

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 St Dunstan's College is an independent co-educational day school in Catford. Dating back to 1408, it moved to its current site in 1888. It retains close links with the City of London. It is overseen by the trustees of the St Dunstan's Educational Foundation, all of whom are governors. The school is divided into four sections; pre-prep, which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2; prep (Years 3 to 6); senior (Years 7 to 11) and a sixth form. The school has 238 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, of whom 50 require support for their needs. No pupil has an education, health and care plan. There are 117 pupils who speak English as an additional language, of whom 25 require support for this aspect of their learning.
- 1.2 This was an announced material change visit at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase its numbers to 1250. The visit 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 are the focus of the visit/inspection | Team judgements |
|--|-----------------|
| Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment) | Met |
| Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors) | Met |
| Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 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 standard.
- 2.4 Implementation of all aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures is effective in providing appropriate support for the needs of pupils, including children in the EYFS. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.5 Safeguarding procedures are implemented to safeguard children at risk and those in need. Staff show effective understanding of their responsibilities, including with regard to peer-on-peer abuse and any such abuse linked to respect for those with protected characteristics. Staff show appropriate awareness of the staff code of conduct, whistleblowing policy and safeguarding procedures. They have a suitable knowledge of the thresholds for reporting potential issues and allegations of sexual harassment. Staff are aware of who to go to if they have a concern or receive a disclosure and also that they can make a direct referral to children's services if necessary. They take appropriate action when necessary.
- 2.6 The safeguarding policy includes suitable definitions of abuse and has been reviewed in line with updated statutory guidance. It provides appropriate guidance regarding possible abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil, including linking such abuse to bullying. Discussion with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for the school confirmed that pupils receive help to address risks and prevent issues escalating. The DSL acts on and refers the early signs of risk or need, monitors any potential for radicalisation, and ensures the school listens to the views of individual pupils as required by Keeping Children Safe in Education. This is confirmed in written evidence from suitable records. Effective and timely communication is maintained with parents. Pupils receive guidance on staying safe and show understanding of what they have been taught, including in relation to e-safety. Monitoring and filtering of technology is effective. Pupils confirm that the school listens and takes prompt action when they express concerns. The physical and mental health of all pupils involved in any incident are given a high priority.
- 2.7 The safeguarding policy gives contact details for required local agencies. Suitable recruitment procedures for staff are outlined within the safeguarding policy and detailed in a separate recruitment policy. All appropriate checks on the suitability of staff, proprietors and other adults have been completed before they have taken up the role. The training for those with specific safeguarding responsibilities is in line with local requirements and statutory advice and up to date. Training in safeguarding for teaching and non-teaching staff is of sufficient quality and frequency. Central records of staff attendance at training are kept systematically.
- 2.8 Suitable arrangements for handling allegations against staff, senior leaders or the governors, and potential misconduct, are included in safeguarding procedures; they include seeking immediate advice from the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO). Records show that procedures are followed effectively, and the school follows up actions promptly. The school understands its role in reporting any person to relevant regulatory bodies if circumstances require it.

- 2.9 A governor with appropriate expertise maintains a close working contact with the DSL and annually conducts a review of the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements on behalf of the governors.

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

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.
- 2.11 The school effectively implements its arrangements to guard against bullying. Bullying is prevented as far as is possible. Detailed recording enables all pastoral concerns to be logged for each pupil. All incidents of misbehaviour between pupils are considered as potential bullying and/or safeguarding issues, and trends analysed. Incidents of bullying, when they occur, are reported quickly and in detail, and dealt with proportionately. Records corroborate the views of pupils that there is almost no peer-on-peer abuse of those with protected characteristics. When it does occur the school treats incidents seriously and effectively, providing support for alleged victim and perpetrator, and monitoring the effectiveness of any action taken. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.12 The school meets the standard.
- 2.13 The proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy. Records show that testing of electrical, water and other utilities is regularly undertaken. Staff are effectively trained in health and safety and deal promptly and appropriately with accidents if they occur, including through the reporting of serious accidents. Systematic records ensure trends are identified and steps taken to mitigate recurrence of any health and safety issues. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.14 The school meets the standard.
- 2.15 The school has a fire risk (prevention) policy which includes the elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances. A fire risk assessment of all buildings has been undertaken by a suitably qualified person. Fire procedures are understood by, and training provided for, staff. Termly fire drills are carried out and recorded. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.16 The school meets the standard.
- 2.17 Pupils are properly supervised by qualified and trained staff. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.18 The school meets the standard.
- 2.19 The risk assessment policy clearly describes the lines of responsibility and the approaches to be taken to identify and mitigate risk. There are appropriate assessments of risk for in-school activities, school visits, and for the needs of individual pupils both while in school and in the surrounding area, and appropriate action is taken to mitigate risks identified. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.20 The school meets the standards.
- 2.21 All the required checks on staff and governors are carried out and completed before they take up their posts. The school does not employ supply staff. Contractors send the school up-to-date information on checks they have undertaken on their employees, and the school makes appropriate further checks on arrival. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.22 The school maintains correctly an accurate single central register of appointments which includes the dates on which all checks have been completed.

Premises and accommodation [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29]

- 2.23 The school meets the standards.
- 2.24 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; and water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. The provision, including the new building, is likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.25 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]

- 2.26 The school meets the standard.
- 2.27 Appropriate procedures are implemented which allow the senior leaders and governors to manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements and monitor compliance with standards and other statutory advice, including those concerned with safeguarding, staff recruitment and pupil behaviour. In this way the leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently. The strategic and operational planning for the proposed increase in numbers actively promotes the well-being of pupils.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change request

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school's request to increase its numbers to 1250 be approved.

4. Summary of evidence

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