



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

Westbrook Hay Preparatory School

January 2023

School's details

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|----------------------------------|--|-----|-----------------|
| School | Westbrook Hay Preparatory School | | |
| DfE number | 919/6021 | | |
| Registered charity number | 292537 | | |
| Address | Westbrook Hay Preparatory School London Road Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP1 2RF | | |
| Telephone number | 01442 256143 | | |
| Email address | westbrookhay@westbrookhay.co.uk | | |
| Head | Mr Mark Brain | | |
| Chair of governors | Mrs Diana Robinson | | |
| Proprietor | Westbrook Hay Educational Trust | | |
| Age range | 2 to 13 | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 371 | | |
| | Pre-prep | 136 | Prep 235 |
| Date of inspection | 30 January 2023 | | |

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Westbrook Hay Prep School is a co-educational day school, located in a rural setting outside Hemel Hempstead. The school is a charitable trust, administered by a board of governors. The school is organised into two sections: the pre-prep provides for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2; and the prep provides for those in Years 3 to 8. Thirty pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). None has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 17 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in October 2021.

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 pupil numbers to a total of 400. The inspection 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 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety) | Met |
| Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision) | 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(i)(c) (provision of information) | Met |
| Part 7, paragraph 33 (complaints) | 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 The school's safeguarding policy and associated procedures are implemented effectively. This safeguards the welfare of pupils, including those in the EYFS. Pupils can raise any concerns they may have. They confirmed that they have confidence that the school will listen appropriately and take suitable action if necessary. Safeguarding records confirm that this is true in practice. Pupils know how to stay safe online and there is appropriate monitoring of the use of technology, including in the EYFS. The school has effective procedures for addressing concerns about children who are in need or at risk. It refers concerns to external agencies appropriately in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures and has robust links with local safeguarding partnerships.
- 2.5 Training for all staff is effective, including for those with particular responsibilities. Staff know how to identify the signs of abuse or neglect. They have a suitable awareness of the increased vulnerability of pupils with SEND. Pupils are confident that they will be supported appropriately after any incident. Detailed records of incidents enable school leaders to identify areas where they need to improve educational provision or increase supervision. Suitable arrangements are in place to deal with allegations against any adult working in the school. Governors are suitably trained and they provide effective oversight. This includes an annual review of safeguarding policy and practice. Arrangements are likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.6 The school meets the standard.
- 2.7 The school implements suitable strategies to identify and address any issues related to the health and safety of those in the school. Senior leaders and governors monitor the implementation of a suitable policy to ensure that it is effective in practice. Arrangements are likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.8 The school meets the standard.
- 2.9 The school has appropriate measures in place to assess the risk from fire on the premises. Evacuation procedures are effective. All equipment such as fire extinguishers is checked and serviced regularly. Detailed and thorough fire records are kept. External consultants carry out regular reviews to ensure that the school's arrangements are suitable. Arrangements are likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.
- 2.11 The school deploys sufficient staff to ensure effective supervision of pupils during the school day, including in the EYFS. Pupils confirm that there is always someone they can talk to if they have any concerns. Arrangements are likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.12 The school meets the standard.
- 2.13 The proprietor promotes and safeguards the welfare of the pupils by means of a written risk assessment policy and by ensuring that any risks identified are appropriately reduced. This includes measures to reduce the risk associated with potential hazards in school such as those in the adventure playground. School leaders also take steps to minimise the risk to pupils who may have been the subject of a safeguarding concern or incident by effective continuing monitoring and support. Suitable assessments of risk have been made for the proposed increase in the total number of pupils. Arrangements are likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.14 The school meets the standards.
- 2.15 Senior leaders maintain appropriate oversight of recruitment procedures. These follow guidelines set out in the school's recruitment policy, and they are implemented effectively. This ensures that all those who work at the school are suitable by carrying out all pre-employment checks. An appropriate record is kept of all checks, as required. Arrangements are likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

Premises and accommodation – toilets and changing accommodation; medical accommodation; maintenance; acoustics; lighting, water supply; outdoor space [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29]

- 2.16 The school meets the standards.
- 2.17 The school provides appropriate washing and toilet facilities for the sole use of pupils, as well as changing rooms and showers where required by the standard. There is suitable accommodation for medical examination and for the care of any pupils who are unwell or injured. The proprietor takes a strategic approach to ensuring that the premises and accommodation are maintained so as to support the wellbeing of the pupils. Acoustics, lighting and water supplies are appropriate. There is sufficient outdoor space available for physical education and outdoor play, including in the EYFS. The existing accommodation is sufficient to cater for the proposed increase in the total number of pupils.

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

- 2.18 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]

- 2.19 The school meets the standard.
- 2.20 The proprietor ensures that complaints are handled appropriately by drawing up a three-stage procedure for informal and formal complaints and implementing it effectively. It provides for a hearing before a panel, which includes an independent member, if a complainant is not satisfied with the school's response. These arrangements operate consistently with published procedures. A written record is kept, and findings are provided to the complainant. A log of all formal complaints is maintained appropriately. This indicates actions taken by the school whether or not a complaint is upheld.

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

- 2.21 The school meets the standard.
- 2.22 The proprietor ensures that the senior leaders and managers in the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge so that they promote the wellbeing of the pupils, and they ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently. The proprietor and senior leaders have made suitable plans for the proposed increase in numbers.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the proposed increase in numbers be approved since the premises are sufficient to cater for the number of pupils and, if the school implements its plans effectively, it is likely to continue to meet the standards.

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. He visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. He scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mr Bill Burn

Reporting inspector