



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

Bablake King Henry VIII School

The proposed single registration school formed from the merger of Bablake Senior and Junior Schools and King Henry VIII School

September 2022

School's details

Proposed School	Bablake King Henry VIII
Registered charity number	528961
Address	Bablake School Coundon Road Coventry CV1 4 AU King Henry V111 School Warwick Road Coventry CV3 6AQ
Telephone number	12476 271200
Email address	info@bkhs.co.uk
Principal	Mr Chris Staley
Proprietor	Coventry School Foundation
Age range	3 to 18
Number of pupils on roll	2680
Date of inspection	15 September 2022

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Bablake King Henry VIII is the name of a proposed independent co-educational day school to be formed by a merger of the existing schools within the Coventry School Foundation. The constituent schools would be Bablake Senior School, Bablake Junior School and Pre-Prep, and the King Henry VIII School. The trustees of the foundation currently oversee the running of all three schools.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE). The inspection assessed whether the proposal to merge the existing schools in the foundation to create the new Bablake King Henry VIII School (BKHS) should be approved. It also assessed the new school's proposed age range of 3 to 18 years and its overall registered capacity of 2,680 pupils. The proposed merger was initially implemented by the foundation from September 2021, before consent was obtained from the Department for Education.
- 1.3 Following the initial implementation of the merger, the BKHS sites comprise: Bablake senior and junior departments at the Coundon Road campus in central Coventry; Bablake pre-prep department, which includes an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting, on the outskirts of the city at The Grange campus; and King Henry VIII senior and prep departments at the Warwick Road campus in central Coventry. The King Henry VIII premises, Hales, which previously constituted an additional prep department at the Warwick Road campus, is currently closed, does not form part of the proposed merger, and was not inspected. All the proposed BKHS sites were visited as part of this material change inspection.
- 1.4 Bablake Senior and King Henry VIII schools received concurrent and separate progress monitoring inspections under their present, separate registrations.
- 1.5 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)	Not 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, paragraph 18–21 (recruitment checks)	Not Met
Part 5, paragraph 23–29 (premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Not 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 does not meet the standard.
- 2.4 The school's arrangements for safeguarding have improved in several areas identified during the previous inspection. Since the previous inspection, the school has liaised with parents and external agencies as required in relation to pupil concerns, including those relating to child-on-child sexual harassment. The school has taken effective action to ensure that safeguarding information is kept confidential and stored securely. However, procedures to check the suitability of staff do not yet meet requirements. Not all staff appointed since the previous inspection have been checked comprehensively before beginning work in the school. Not all had been checked against the list of those prohibited from teaching and/or from managing a school, where relevant, prior to the inspection. References have not been verified for all staff appointed since the previous inspection. Staff files do not always contain the required evidence to support the dates recorded on the single central register of appointments (SCR), particularly in relation to the relevant member of staff's identity and right to work in the UK.
- 2.5 The schools ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to listen to pupil concerns. Staff are alert to any signs of concern where pupils are too young to communicate effectively, and staff are aware of particular vulnerabilities of LGBTQ+ pupils and those with SEND. Pupils confirm that they have a variety of people to whom they can turn to for support. They understand how to keep themselves and others safe, including when online. The schools ensure that pupils receive a response when they express concerns, and that appropriate action is taken where necessary. This was confirmed during interviews with pupils and staff and by records of safeguarding. Staff understand the different types of child-on-child abuse.
- 2.6 Since the previous inspection, the schools have liaised with parents and relevant outside agencies effectively. They take prompt action where concerns are raised, or incidents occur. All staff, including those in positions of responsibility, are suitably trained in line with locally agreed procedures. Suitable arrangements exist to handle allegations against adults working with pupils and these are implemented effectively, including liaison with external agencies. There is an appropriate staff code of conduct and suitable arrangements for whistleblowing. Effective procedures have been implemented to manage potential safeguarding risks relating to individuals who have access to children. Staff, including school leaders, are suitably trained and informed as to the needs of individual pupils.
- 2.7 The safeguarding policy includes appropriate systems for the management of child-on-child abuse and instances of sexual harassment and sexual violence, but in Bablake Senior School these are not implemented effectively. Pupils told inspectors that they regularly choose not to report concerns in these areas because they do not believe that the actions taken by the school are sufficient to prevent further occurrences. Inspection evidence shows that staff do not implement the school's policy to challenge verbal sexual harassment consistently or effectively in lessons and around the school. The frequency of reports recorded as made to senior leaders and staff of instances of sexual harassment

in school and online is not consistent with the frequency identified to inspectors by female pupils. Their comments showed sexual harassment to be much more common than records suggest.

- 2.8 A suitable policy is in place for the management of low-level concerns about adults working in the school. However at Bablake Senior School, this is not sufficiently well understood by staff to enable its effective implementation in practice.
- 2.9 Governors have taken effective steps to improve the effectiveness and suitability of their oversight of safeguarding. Review of governance structures and practice has resulted in a more thorough and robust system of reporting to governors. Their review of safeguarding has been developed. Governors have appropriate safeguarding training. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding meets regularly with school leaders to receive reports about the school's safeguarding procedures.
- 2.10 However, the improved arrangements have not yet ensured that all aspects of the school policies and procedures, including those for staff recruitment, are implemented effectively.

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

- 2.11 The school meets the standard.
- 2.12 The proprietor ensures that the written health and safety policy is implemented effectively across all sites to ensure compliance with the relevant health and safety laws. The policy and related materials provide staff with suitable guidance on health and safety matters. Records are kept of relevant health and safety checks. Matters of health and safety are regularly reviewed and reported to the proprietor for further review. The school takes effective steps to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

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

- 2.13 The school meets the standard.
- 2.14 The proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Fire Risk assessments are in place and kept under appropriate review. There are appropriately trained competent persons on site and a suitable number of staff are trained effectively to support fire evacuation procedures. Records show fire evacuations take place regularly, pupils confirm they understand the correct procedures. Records show appropriate installation and maintenance of fire detection and firefighting equipment.

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

- 2.15 The school meets the standard.
- 2.16 The school ensures appropriate supervision of all pupils across all sites, both in and outside of lessons. Pupils moving from site to site on school transport are appropriately chaperoned by the deployment of suitably recruited adults.

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

- 2.17 The school meets the standard.
- 2.18 The school effectively implements a written risk assessment policy at each site. Assessments identify risks and provide effective measures to mitigate these.

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

- 2.19 The school does not meet all of the standards.
- 2.20 An SCR is now kept for the three schools but it does not consistently and accurately record the dates on which checks were undertaken.
- 2.21 Checks for the large majority of staff appointed since the previous inspection have been carried out in a timely manner. However, for a small number of staff, checks of identity, the right to work in the UK and overseas checks, where relevant, have not been carried out before appointment.

Premises and accommodation – [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 24–29]

- 2.22 The school meets the standard.
- 2.23 Suitable toilet, washing and changing facilities are provided and are for the sole use of pupils. They are sufficient for the number and age range of pupils at each site. The school provides appropriate accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils at each site. The school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils is ensured. Staff and pupils confirmed that, in their experience, all matters of maintenance are dealt with satisfactorily and swiftly. Acoustics, internal and external lighting, drinking water, water supply and outdoor space are each of a suitable standard at all school sites.

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

- 2.24 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]

- 2.25 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.26 Since the previous inspection, the governing body has implemented the recommendations of a review of governance. This has resulted in improved systems for the reporting of safeguarding by the school. These include suitable reporting formats and appropriately regular visits to the school by the governor with responsibility for safeguarding. Governors have ensured suitable training for staff in relation to child protection. However, these steps have not ensured that the independent school standards are met consistently, in particular with regard to areas of safeguarding, including sexual harassment and staff recruitment. The wellbeing of pupils is not yet effectively promoted.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraph 7

- The school must ensure that all staff respond effectively when they encounter instances of child-on-child abuse, including verbal or online sexual harassment [paragraph 7(a) and (b)].
- The school must ensure that it obtains references for staff and checks them, where relevant, against the lists of those prohibited from teaching and/or from managing a school before they start work at the school [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].
- The school must ensure that the evidence required to confirm a person's identity and their right to work in the UK, is retained in staff personnel files [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].
- Governors must provide oversight of safeguarding which is sufficiently effective to ensure that all aspects of the relevant policies and procedures, including those for staff recruitment, are implemented effectively [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.4 and 3.7].

ISSR Part 4, Suitability of staff, paragraph 18

- The school must ensure that it carries out all required checks, including those of identity, right to work in the UK, and overseas checks where relevant, to ascertain the suitability of staff to work with children before they start work at the school [paragraph 18(3); EYFS 3.9].

ISSR Part 4, Suitability of staff, paragraph 21

- The school must ensure that the single central register records dates of all checks accurately, in particular those for checks of identity, right to work in the UK and, where relevant, overseas checks [paragraph 21(3)(a)(i), (vii) and (viii)].

ISSR Part 8, Leadership and management, paragraph 34

- The proprietor must ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and that they actively promote the well-being of pupils [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

4. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 4.1 The Coventry School Foundation's proposal to merge Bablake Senior School with Bablake Junior School and Pre-prep and King Henry VIII School, to create the BKHS, cannot be recommended for approval because the existing schools in the foundation do not meet all regulatory requirements.

5. Summary of evidence

- 5.1 The inspectors held discussions with the principal, heads of schools, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with a group of governors. They visited different areas of the school including all three sites and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mrs Vivien Sergeant	Reporting inspector
Mr Graham Sims	Reporting inspector
Mrs Karen Williams	Reporting inspector
Mr Bill Burns	Assistant reporting inspector
Mr David Scott	Assistant reporting inspector