



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Report for a Progress Monitoring Visit

Barnardiston Hall Preparatory School

May 2021

School's details

School	Barnardiston Hall Preparatory School			
DfE number	935/6023			
Early Years registration number	EY356342			
Address	Barnardiston Hall Preparatory School Barnardiston Haverhill Suffolk CB9 7TG			
Telephone number	01440 786316			
Email address	registrar@barnardiston-hall.co.uk			
Headmaster	Col Keith Boulter			
Proprietor	Col Keith Boulter			
Age range	0 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	221			
	Day pupils	203	Boarders	18
	Nursery	56	Pre-prep	64
	Prep	101		
Date of visit	17 May 2021			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Barnardiston Hall Preparatory School is an independent co-educational boarding and day school. It is situated in Haverhill in Suffolk. The school is owned and governed by the proprietor, who is also the headmaster. The school is organised into three parts: the nursery, part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged six months to rising three; the pre-prep, including EYFS provision, for pupils aged three to seven; the prep school for pupils aged eight to thirteen. Boarding provision is available from the age of seven. The boarding accommodation is within the main school building, split by gender on separate floors. The nursery is located within its own purpose-built accommodation.
- 1.2 The school has 23 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom five have an education, health and care plan. In addition, 14 pupils speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was an ISI additional inspection in October 2020.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.3 This was an unannounced progress monitoring visit at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the additional inspection on 13 October 2020. The visit focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs), the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2015 and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 11; EYFS 3.4 and 3.7	Met
Part 3, paragraph 9 (behaviour); NMS 12; EYFS 3.52	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information to parents)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 13	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 11; EYFS 3.4 and 3.7]

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 and the requirements.
- 2.4 Arrangements for safeguarding are implemented appropriately, in line with current statutory guidance. Since the previous inspection, changes have been made to safeguarding practice, including to the safeguarding leadership. The newly appointed designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is a member of the school's senior management team and has undertaken suitable advanced levels of training. Other members of the safeguarding team also have appropriate levels of training which has recently been updated. During discussion, the DSL confirmed that she has full autonomy in handling safeguarding matters, which includes responsibility for the management of any concerns for EYFS children and boarders. There has also been a change to safeguarding systems, which now ensure that any behaviour concerns about pupils, including those who board, are triangulated effectively with safeguarding records. Scrutiny of documentation evidences the effectiveness of these arrangements and of the support measures put in place to ensure the safety of vulnerable pupils, including those with SEND. Appropriate consultation with external safeguarding agencies about pupil concerns is sought and given due weight. New suitable protocols have been instigated to ensure that timelines and discussions with external agencies are clearly recorded, in the event of an allegation against a member of staff. There have been no allegations reported to external agencies since the previous inspection.
- 2.5 Staff confirm that they have received considerable training for online safety, peer-on-peer abuse and in particular, supporting pupils' specific needs. They state that they have easy access to all policies and procedures, which provide effective guidance for their roles, and that the DSL is always willing to provide further advice should they require it. All staff, including those who work in boarding and boarding assistants, are fully aware of pupil behaviour management plans. They comment that discussions at weekly staff meetings centre largely around strategies to support pupils' vulnerabilities and that this information ensures a consistent approach across all actions by staff, including support provided in boarding. Staff, during discussion, showed that they have a clear understanding about how to report any concerns about a child or the actions of another adult and that the staff code of conduct provides them with clear guidance about the standards of expectation at the school. They understand whistleblowing procedures.
- 2.6 Pupils, staff and senior management confirmed during discussions that the school premises are only used by pupils who attend the school and that facilities are never used by pupils from other schools. No evidence was found that this happens with the exception of visiting teams for sports' matches. Pupils commented that they are clear about online safety and know what to do should they receive any inappropriate electronic communications; they understand the importance of signing acceptable use agreements and the rules relating to restricted mobile phone use, which they consider fair and appropriate. Suitable procedures control use of such technology in the EYFS. Pupils said that they feel very well looked after and cared for; that staff are supportive towards their respective needs and respond promptly to any concerns that they may have, taking helpful action.

- 2.7 The proprietor conducts an annual review of safeguarding procedures with due diligence and together with senior management team members, which includes the DSL, frequently monitors safeguarding practice, including recruitment procedures, to ensure that pupils' well-being individual needs are suitably provided for.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9; NMS 12; EYFS 3.52]

- 2.8 The school meets the standards and the requirement.
- 2.9 A suitable written behaviour policy is implemented effectively and clearly sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils' misbehaviour. An appropriate record is maintained of sanctions for serious misbehaviour. Since the previous inspection, all staff have received further training on the implementation of pupil behaviour management plans. A new electronic system has also been instigated, which enables staff to record all behaviour issues. Inspection scrutiny of these records shows there is now a clear oversight of all behaviour incidents, whether during boarding time or the school day, and this information informs pupil behaviour management plans, resulting in appropriate actions such as interventions. These records are regularly monitored by senior management to identify patterns. During discussions, staff, including those who work in boarding, confirm that they are well informed about pupils' vulnerabilities, such as specific behavioural difficulties. They comment that senior managers keep them regularly updated on any revisions to strategies to support pupil needs and state that procedures are carefully monitored to ensure a consistent approach across the whole school provision. Pupils, during discussion commented that they are fully aware of the school rules and sanctions system. They perceive the system to be fairly administered. Boarders and day pupils commented that relationships with their peers are generally harmonious; that there is only the occasional mishap. They report that staff are prompt to intervene and help sort out any differences if required.

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

- 2.10 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; NMS 13]

- 2.11 The school meets the standards.
- 2.12 The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently. The proprietor has undertaken an appropriate review of the action points identified at the previous inspection and instigated new protocols to address the shortcomings, which are implemented effectively. Consequently, the proprietor ensures that policies and procedures are effectively implemented and actively promote the well-being of all pupils.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this visit, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and no further action is required as a result of this visit.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the headmaster/proprietor, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietor. They visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.