



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Advice Note for a Progress Monitoring Visit

Kingham Hill School

April 2022

School's details

School College	Kingham Hill School			
DfE number	931/6004			
Registered charity number	1076618			
Address	Kingham Hill School Kingham Chipping Norton Oxfordshire OX7 6TH			
Telephone number	01608 658999			
Email address	secretary@kinghamhill.org			
Headmaster	Reverend Nick Seward			
Chair of governors	Reverend Robert Marsden			
Age range	11 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	343			
	Day pupils	168	Boarders	175
	Seniors	246	Sixth Form	97
Date of visit	27 April 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Kingham Hill School is a co-educational independent day and boarding school, set in a rural location in Oxfordshire. It was founded in 1886 as a refuge for disadvantaged boys from the east end of London. The school is owned by a charitable trust, the Kingham Hill Trust, and is administered by a board of governors, some of whom are also trustees. There are eight boarding houses; four for male pupils and four for female pupils. The school has 67 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 4 have an education, health and care plan. Thirty-nine pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was in September 2021.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.2 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 focused compliance and educational quality inspection of September 2021. The visit focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2015.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 2A (relationships and sex education)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)	Met
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)	Remains unmet
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 11	Remain unmet
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 13	Remain unmet
NMS 16	Met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2A]

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 The school provides appropriate relationships and sex education (RSE). Since the previous inspection, schemes of work for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) have been rewritten appropriately to include all required content. These are suitably implemented. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 receive regular relationships and sex education as part of the schemes of work through scheduled lessons. These now include adequate coverage of same-sex relationships, including additional, age-appropriate coverage as pupils become older. Pupils in the sixth form have a weekly programme of visiting speakers, which includes presentations on PSHEE topics such as consent and relationships. This programme fulfils statutory requirements. The delivery of the PSHEE programme is supported by assemblies, tutor sessions, and special days such as a recent well-being day and a day dedicated to supporting victims of sexual assault.

Quality of education provided – teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 3(j)]

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 The school does not discriminate against any group of pupils with regard to protected characteristics. Since the previous inspection, internal training has been provided for staff which has ensured that all those pupils with protected characteristics are fully included in teaching, and in school life generally. In discussions, LGBTQ+ pupils reported that, since the previous inspection, they are more able to discuss their feelings openly in lessons and are more respected within them as a group. An in-depth review of assembly structure has ensured that the messages communicated are appropriate and do not discriminate against any specific pupil group. In discussions, staff showed understanding of the need for teaching to be sensitive and age-appropriate in approach and content.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraphs 5(b)(i) and 5(b)(vi)]

- 2.5 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.6 Evidence from updated policies and discussions with staff and pupils indicates that, since the previous inspection, the school has ensured that it actively promotes principles which encourage respect for other people. This includes those with protected characteristics within the school community. The appointment of a dedicated member of staff for the LGBTQ+ community and the formation of related inclusion groups demonstrate that the school now promotes respect for those with protected characteristics. However, some members of the inclusion groups reported that they still lack self-confidence and self-esteem with regard to their sexual identity and do not feel fully valued as members of the school community. Inspection evidence shows that this is because the changes made have not yet had sufficient impact on the culture of the school as experienced by these pupils.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 11.1 and 16.1]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.7 The school meets the requirements.

- 2.8 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

- 2.9 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.10 Safeguarding procedures are implemented appropriately in most areas in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2021, including in boarding. Since the previous inspection, the school has provided increased support for LGBTQ+ pupils by appointing a dedicated member of the safeguarding team for this group, instigating an inclusion group and ensuring greater staff awareness. In discussions, LGBTQ+ pupils in both day and boarding confirmed that they do not feel any form of discrimination against them and there are staff available who provide appropriate support and guidance. Boarders confirmed that the care provided in boarding is sensitive to individual needs.
- 2.11 However, these pupils still lack confidence and self-esteem with regard to their sexual identity and consider that this has a negative impact on their well-being. Inspection evidence, from interviews with both pupils and staff, demonstrates that not all pupils and staff view the school's prevailing culture as actively promoting the self-confidence and self-esteem of pupils who are LGBTQ+.
- 2.12 Records of regular meetings indicate that the safeguarding team works closely together with pastoral staff to support individual pupils' emotional needs overall. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) ensures that safeguarding information is regularly shared with staff, parents and pupils and that procedures are monitored. Inspection evidence, including safeguarding records, confirms that action is taken when pupils' specific needs are identified. Incidents of sexual harassment, including online, since the previous inspection, have been dealt with competently. The DSL has sought external advice promptly where it has been necessary.
- 2.13 Staff receive suitable training when new to the school and, from thereon, update training about the most recent statutory guidance is provided. Staff have completed online training in the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Specific training for supporting LGBTQ+ pupils is pending. Central records of staff attendance at training are kept systematically, so that absentees at the time of training can be identified. Staff interviewed demonstrated a full awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities, a knowledge of the correct referral pathways and an understanding of how to respond to concerns. Members of staff are clear about whether pupils are respectively in need or at risk. They understand that if any pupils are victims of harmful sexual behaviour or potentially so, safeguarding partners and the police should be contacted immediately. They also showed a clear understanding of the code of conduct which the school requires them to follow and of whistleblowing procedures.
- 2.14 The school safeguarding team works together with governors to produce an annual report which follows the local authority guidelines and provides a suitable annual review. Arrangements for handling allegations against staff are included in safeguarding procedures, as are procedures to carry out checks prior to appointment on adults working with children. These are implemented effectively. Suitable arrangements exist to handle allegations against those working with children. The school understands its role in reporting to the appropriate agencies any person whose services are no longer used where relevant criteria are met.

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

- 2.15 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 13.1 and 13.3-13.5]

- 2.16 The school does not meet the standards.

- 2.17 Since the previous inspection, governors and senior leaders have implemented most of the points outlined in the approved action plan. Some actions dependent on major timetable changes in September 2022 are yet to be completed, as are others related to further staff and governor training on LGBTQ+ issues. These planned actions continue to be in line with the requirements of the previous report. Most staff and pupils consider that the school's culture has changed and continues to evolve positively and inspection evidence confirms this.
- 2.18 However, evidence also demonstrates that LGBTQ+ pupils consider this change to not yet have had sufficient impact to fully enable their self-esteem. This group still feels that they are undervalued demonstrating that the school does not yet promote the self-esteem of all pupils with protected characteristics effectively. Those with leadership and management positions do not demonstrate sufficiently good skills and knowledge as appropriate to their roles or ensure the standards are met consistently. They do not actively promote the well-being of all pupils, in particular those with protected characteristics.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

ISSR PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, paragraph 5

- The school must ensure that it actively promotes principles which enable pupils with protected characteristics, notably those who are LGBTQ+, to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem [paragraph 5(b)(i)].

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraph 7 and 8; NMS 11

- The school must support LGBTQ+ pupils fully by ensuring that the school's safeguarding culture actively promotes their well-being, enabling them to develop appropriate levels of self-confidence and self-esteem [paragraph 7(a) and (b), paragraph 8(a) and (b); NMS 11.1].

ISSR Part 8, Quality of leadership in and management of schools, paragraph 34; NMS 13

- The school must ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of all pupils, in particular those with protected characteristics [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 13.1 and 13.3–13.5].

4. Summary of evidence

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