



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Report for a Progress Monitoring Visit**

**Maidwell Hall School**

**June 2022**

## School's details

<b>School</b>	Maidwell Hall School			
<b>DfE number</b>	941/6005			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	309917			
<b>Address</b>	Maidwell Hall School Maidwell Northamptonshire NN6 9JG			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 686234			
<b>Email address</b>	theseecretary@maidwellhall.co.uk			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Robert Lankester			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Crispin Holborow			
<b>Age range</b>	4 to 13			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	147			
	<b>Day pupils</b>	71	<b>Boarders</b>	76
	<b>Pre-prep</b>	23	<b>Juniors</b>	65
	<b>Seniors</b>	59		
<b>Date of visit</b>	30 June 2022			

# 1. Introduction

## Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Maidwell Hall School is an independent co-educational boarding and day school, set in the Northamptonshire countryside. Boarding provision is available from Year 4. The school is a registered charity, whose trustees form the governing body. A small number of boarders come from overseas. The school has identified 36 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional specialist help. There is one pupil with an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language for 15 pupils. The school's previous inspection was an additional compliance inspection in October 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 additional inspection of 13 to 14 October 2021. 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 1, paragraph 2(A) (relationships and sex education)	<b>Not met</b>
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 11	<b>Not met</b>
Part 4, paragraphs 18–21 (Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	<b>Met</b>
Part 6, paragraph 32 (provision of information)	<b>Met</b>
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	<b>Not met</b>

## 2. Inspection findings

### Quality of education provided – relationships and sex education (RSE) [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2(A)]

- 2.1 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.2 Parents at the school have been consulted regarding their views on the content of the school's RSE programme of study and a written statement for RSE is published on the school's website.
- 2.3 The school has developed an appropriate curriculum and supporting schemes of work for relationships education in Year 6 and below. These pupils receive appropriate instruction in relationships education as part of the school's Life Skills programme, which is delivered in weekly timetabled lessons. The curriculum covers appropriate topics under core themes that include: health and well-being, relationships, economic well-being, responsible citizenship, and fundamental British values.
- 2.4 The school does not currently provide sufficient relationship and sex education for older pupils in Years 7 and 8. A suitable curriculum and scheme of work have been drawn up and implementation has begun. However, insufficient time is allocated to teaching these topics and this education is provided on an informal, ad hoc basis, outside the timetable. Although plans have been formulated for formal timetabled lessons from September 2022, sessions are currently arranged on an occasional basis, usually three times per term, during pupils' breaks, or after school. Pupils recalled some topics covered, such as puberty, menstruation and safe sex, but the range of topics covered and the depth in which they are considered are insufficient to meet statutory guidance for current pupils.

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

#### Safeguarding policy

- 2.5 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.6 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

- 2.7 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.8 The school has a suitable safeguarding policy, supported by additional policies, such as the code of conduct for staff, whistle-blowing procedures and procedures for the safer recruitment of staff. Pupils confirmed that they feel they are listened to by staff, that there are suitable opportunities to raise any concerns they may have, and that they receive a response to their concerns. Suitable action is taken where needed. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy work closely together to ensure that safeguarding information is regularly shared, and procedures monitored. The DSL consults appropriately with external agencies, when necessary, with regard to pupils' welfare if pupils are in need or at risk. This includes local safeguarding partners and the police.
- 2.9 The DSL keeps detailed records of all safeguarding concerns, and these are regularly monitored to identify patterns so that any early signs of abuse can be acted upon. Staff receive suitable training when new to the school. Training thereafter is regular and effective in ensuring that all staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and how to respond to concerns or disclosures. This includes understanding relating to potential child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and the vulnerability of those with SEND to abuse. Detailed records of staff training are kept, so that absentees at the time of training can be identified.

- 2.10 Suitable arrangements for handling allegations against staff, the head or any other adult engaged with children in the school are included in safeguarding procedures. These are fully understood by staff, senior leaders and governors. When concerns are raised about an adult working in the school correct referral has been made promptly to relevant external agencies.
- 2.11 The school safeguarding team works closely with the designated governor to produce an annual safeguarding report, which is presented to the full governing body. The DSL ensures that governors receive regular safeguarding updates. Leaders and governors are clear about their responsibility for reporting any person whose services are no longer used to the appropriate statutory bodies such as the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Teaching Regulation Agency, where referral criteria are met.
- 2.12 Governors review serious safeguarding incidents appropriately. However, they do not always act with sufficient rigour to ensure that subsequent actions ensure the well-being of pupils. In particular, they have not adequately assessed risk on all occasions with regard to adults working in the school about whom concerns have been raised, nor put in place suitable measures to mitigate any such risks identified.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; NMS 6]**

- 2.13 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.14 The school has a suitable risk assessment policy. Staff are trained in conducting risk assessments. However, insufficient rigour has been applied in assessing the suitability of adults about whom concerns have been raised to participate in, or conduct risk assessments for, residential trips. Where such risks have been identified, senior leaders have not ensured that suitable measures to mitigate them have been put in place.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; NMS 14]**

- 2.15 The school meets the standards.
- 2.16 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff and proprietors, including senior leaders appointed from outside the school. School leaders have a secure understanding of the recruitment process. The single central register of appointments accurately records recruitment checks and governors provide effective oversight. The school does not use supply staff.

### **Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32]**

- 2.17 The school meets the standard.
- 2.18 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, the complaints procedure, the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.
- 2.19 In the course of the visit the school provided all records, documentation and other information requested by inspectors promptly and fully.

**Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 13]**

2.20 The school does not meet the standards.

2.21 Senior leaders and governors do not demonstrate the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure that all regulations are consistently met, in particular with regard to safeguarding and the implementation of provision for RSE. They do not actively promote the well-being of pupils, including boarders.

### 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 requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

#### **ISSR Part 1, Quality of Education, paragraph 2A**

- The school must ensure that every pupil in Years 7 and 8 receives effective relationships and sex education which follows statutory guidance, with sufficient time being given to the subject, except in so far as a pupil is excused as provided for in the regulations [paragraph 2A(1)(b) and (d)].

#### **ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraphs 7, 8 and 16; NMS 6 and 11**

- The school must ensure that review of serious safeguarding concerns by governors is effective, in particular that all potential risks are assessed effectively and suitable steps are always taken to mitigate any risk identified, so that oversight and management of safeguarding by governors meets all requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8(a) and (b) and 16(a) and (b); NMS 6.3 and 11.1; EYFS 3.4 and 3.7].

#### **ISSR Part 8, Leadership and management, paragraph 34; NMS 13**

- The school must ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities use their skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively to promote the well-being of pupils and to ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met [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 deputy head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietor 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.