



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Report for a Progress Monitoring Visit

St Hilary's School

October 2020



School's details

School name	St Hilary's School			
DfE number	936/6042			
Registered charity number	312056			
Address	St Hilary's School Holloway Hill Godalming Surrey GU7 1RZ			
Telephone number	01483 416551			
Email address	secretary@sthilaryschool.com			
Head	Mrs Jane Whittingham			
Chair of governors	Mr Richard Thompson			
Number of pupils on roll	261			
	EYFS	88	Pre-prep	57
	Prep	116		
Date of visit	15 October 2020			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 St Hilary's School is an independent day school for male pupils between the ages of two and eight, and female pupils between the ages of two and eleven. Founded in 1927, it became a charitable trust in 1966. The work of the school is overseen by a board of governors. The school comprises an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting including nursery, kindergarten and reception classes, pre-preparatory and prep school. The school has 48 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 4 of whom have an education, health and care plan. There are 29 pupils who speak English as an additional language.

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 regulatory compliance inspection on 2 and 3 October 2019.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 4, paragraph 18 (safer recruitment of staff)	Met
Part 4, paragraph 20 (suitability of proprietors)	Met
Part 4, paragraph 21 (single central register of appointments)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	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 recruitment policy follows statutory guidance and is now effectively implemented to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils, including children in the EYFS. Checks against those barred from working with children or where relevant those prohibited from teaching or the management of schools are completed on staff and governors before they commence work or take up their positions. The school secures at least two satisfactory references and carries out a check of employment history on all staff, including those who are self-employed, before appointment. When the results of a disclosure and barring list check are not received before the start date, all other relevant checks and a separate barred list are completed and the risk of work commencing is assessed. There are clear arrangements for handling allegations of abuse against members of staff, volunteers and the head, including reporting to relevant regulatory bodies if circumstances require it.
- 2.5 Records show that the school acts in the best interests of the child, including in-school provision for listening to children, responding to their concerns and taking appropriate action. This includes providing for early help, including during the period when attendance at school was prevented by COVID-19. Further support was given to pupils who were at risk from extended periods away from school. The school implements effectively its procedures for dealing with and referring concerns about children in need and/or at risk, and acts in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures including by maintaining links with the local safeguarding partners. The safeguarding policy includes, and staff understand, up-to-date definitions of abuse, recognising the particular vulnerabilities of those with SEND including to peer-on-peer abuse. Staff have a clear understanding of the school's code of conduct and have the confidence to use the whistleblowing procedures.
- 2.6 Safeguarding is effectively managed. Training for the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), deputies (DDSLs) and staff is up to date and follows local requirements. The board receive reports on safeguarding at each meeting and reviews the school's child protection policies and procedures annually. Pupils are taught how to keep safe on-line, and there is effective implementation of the school's policy on the use of mobiles and cameras in the EYFS.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18, 20 and 21]

- 2.7 The school meets the standards.
- 2.8 All the required checks on staff and proprietors are now carried out and completed before staff take up their posts. The school does not employ supply staff. Contractors send the school up-to-date information on checks they have undertaken on their employees, and the school makes further checks on arrival.
- 2.9 The school maintains correctly an accurate single central register of appointments which includes the dates on which all checks have been completed.

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]

- 2.11 The school meets the standard.
- 2.12 The school's leadership demonstrates good skills and knowledge appropriate to its role and fulfil its responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently. It actively promotes the well-being of pupils and has sustained that active promotion through the period when attendance at school was prevented by COVID-19. Following the previous inspection, the leadership provided increased resources for the training of key staff in approaches to safer recruitment. The governors ensure that this and all other areas of school life are monitored so that the independent school standards continue to be met.

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 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 head, senior leaders and other members of staff. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.