

THORNGROVE SCHOOL

The Mount, Highclere, Newbury, Berkshire, RG20 9PS

24 NOVEMBER 2017

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Thorngrove School is a co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of two and thirteen years. It is located a few miles south of Newbury in Berkshire. It was founded in 1988 by the present principals, who are the proprietors and responsible for the overall management of the school. The principals jointly led the school until the appointment of the current headmaster in 2009, who is responsible for the day-to-day leadership of the school.

At the time of the visit, there were 227 pupils on roll; 132 boys and 95 girls. Of these, 32 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school has identified 36 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of whom 26 receive support for their learning. No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or statement of educational needs. One pupil has English as an additional language (EAL), and receives additional support with English. The date of the previous ISI regulatory compliance inspection was May 2017.

PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

This was an unannounced visit carried out at the request of the DfE to check that the school had fully implemented the action plan submitted following the ISI regulatory compliance inspection in May 2017. The focus of the visit was on safeguarding; suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors; premises and accommodation – the provision of showers of pupils aged 11 years and over; provision of information and the quality of leadership and management.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 (a) and (b); EYFS requirements 3.4 – 3.8]

The school meets the Regulations and Requirements.

The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare have correct regard for current regulatory guidance and are carefully implemented in practice. The needs of all pupils are appropriately supported, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Staff with designated safeguarding lead (DSL) responsibility, have a thorough understanding of their role and have undertaken appropriate levels of advanced training, which is fully in line with the local safeguarding board's procedures. Further they ensure that all staff receive regular update training to keep them informed of any changes in arrangements and carefully monitor records to ensure all staff have been updated. The DSL readily seeks 'early help' advice from external agencies to support pupils' needs when required. Appropriate records are maintained and stored securely and confidentially.

New staff receive detailed induction, including all the mandatory elements recommended by KCSIE, when they begin work at the school to ensure they fully understand their roles and responsibilities. During discussions, staff demonstrate that they have a strong knowledge of safeguarding implementation and clearly know how to report any concerns about a child or allegations against a member of staff. They know that they can make a direct referral to the local authority if required. Pupils cite that staff are very approachable and readily support them should they have a worry or concern. The curriculum provision ensures that pupils are fully aware of how to keep safe online; both staff and pupils sign an acceptable use agreement for the use of electronic technology.

The proprietors take an active role in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are correctly implemented in line with published procedures. They regularly meet with DSL staff and diligently undertake an annual review of safeguarding procedure and records. Comprehensive meeting minutes demonstrate the rigour of their monitoring and review processes.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraph 21]

The school meets the Regulation.

An appropriate policy for the safe recruitment of staff is in place and correctly implemented. All checks on staff and proprietors are correctly recorded on the single central register of staff appointments. Any gaps in checks identified at the previous inspection have been appropriately rectified. Staff files contain appropriate recruitment information.

Premises and accommodation [ISSR part 5, paragraph 23(c)]

The school meets the Regulation.

Suitable toilet and washing amenities are provided for all pupils. For those pupils over the age of 11 years, appropriate showering facilities are in place. During discussion pupils comment that the provision suitably meets their needs.

Provision of information to parents [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32]

The school meets the Regulation.

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.

The website provides appropriate information on regulatory documentation for both prospective and current parents. The contact details for the proprietors, during both term time and the school holidays, is clearly stated. The required policies that parents may request are published on the website, which also contains information about how to obtain written copies and information relating to academic success for the preceding school year.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

The school meets the Regulation.

The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards and requirements for the EYFS are met consistently. Policies are effectively implemented in practice and actively promote the well-being of all pupils.

REGULATORY ACTION POINTS

The school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.