



Material Change Inspection Report

Chigwell School

November 2023

School's details

School	Chigwell School		
DfE number	881/6006		
Registered charity number	1115098		
Address	Chigwell School High Road Chigwell Essex IG7 6QF		
Telephone number	020 85015700		
Email address	hmpa@chigwell-school.org		
Head	Mr Damian King		
Chair of governors	Ms Roseanne Serrelli		
Proprietor	Chigwell School Trust		
Age range	4 to 18		
Number of pupils on roll	1078		
	Day pupils	1053	Boarders 25
	Pre-prep	121	Prep 242
	Seniors	536	Sixth Form 179
Date of inspection	28 November 2023		

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Chigwell School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. It was founded in 1629 on its present site and is an educational charity, whose trustees form the governing body. There are four single-sex boarding houses for sixth-form pupils. The school comprises four sections, the pre-prep which includes an early years setting, prep, senior school and a sixth form. The school has 120 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Three pupils have an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 24 pupils. The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in April 2023.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase its registered capacity from 1085 to 1150. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework. The proposed change in total capacity is in relation to day pupils in the prep and senior schools only. Boarding was not the focus of the inspection.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18-21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23-29 (premises and accommodation)	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 and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.4 Safeguarding procedures are suitably implemented in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2023. Frequent meetings and records of safeguarding indicate that the safeguarding team works closely together to promote pupils' wellbeing effectively. Safeguarding information is regularly shared with staff, parents and pupils, and with external agencies where required, and procedures are regularly monitored. In discussions, pupils reported that there are many opportunities to raise any concerns and that they feel that they are listened to by staff when they do so. Safeguarding records confirm this view, and that suitable action is taken when pupils' individual needs are identified. Members of staff are confident to identify if a pupil is in need or at risk of harm. Senior leaders and staff understand how incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence should be dealt with if they arise, including by seeking external advice where necessary. Staff understand that if pupils are victims or potential victims of harmful sexual behaviour, safeguarding partners and the police should be contacted promptly. Pupils receive appropriate guidance on how to stay safe online. Suitable filtering and monitoring of technology are undertaken and staff are appropriately trained in this area.
- 2.5 Regular safeguarding training, including by local partners, includes identification of the signs of abuse. In discussions, staff demonstrated a clear awareness of their training and that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They confirmed that they would know how to respond if a situation of child-on-child sexual abuse arose. Staff new to the school receive suitable training, and from thereon, regular update training about the most recent statutory guidance. Staff have completed appropriate training in the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Records of staff attendance at training are kept systematically, so that absentees at the time of training can be identified and training rescheduled. Detailed records of all safeguarding concerns are regularly monitored to identify patterns so that any early indicators of risk or harm can be acted upon. Suitable arrangements for handling allegations against staff are included in safeguarding procedures and, in discussions, staff showed an appropriate awareness of what may constitute a low-level concern.
- 2.6 The school safeguarding team works closely with governors to produce a suitable annual review of safeguarding. Scrutiny of the minutes of governors' meetings relating to safeguarding confirms an appropriate depth and breadth of oversight. A nominated governor for safeguarding meets regularly with the safeguarding team to review procedures. All governors receive effective training and regular updates from the DSL. Discussions with governors and the safeguarding team reveal that appropriate consideration and forward planning has been given to the impact of the proposed increase in registered capacity on related safeguarding procedures and arrangements.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

- 2.7 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.8 The school has a suitable health and safety policy. Health and safety measures within the school are implemented appropriately and outcomes are regularly reviewed by leaders and governors. Systematic procedures, including checks of equipment are implemented. Appropriate checks are made of new buildings and play areas. These are suitable to provide for the proposed increase in registered capacity.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12]

- 2.9 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.10 An appropriate fire safety policy is implemented effectively and is regularly reviewed by governors and senior leaders. The school engage accredited external agencies to undertake checks and the maintenance of the systems. Suitable fire risk assessments are revised annually and the school acts promptly to undertake any works identified in such external audits. Procedures for emergency evacuation are implemented effectively and suitably recorded, including regular fire drills. The required fire signage, refuge points, chairs for the disabled, and evacuation routes are clearly visible in every building. All members of staff have been trained to manage any emergency evacuation.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14]

- 2.11 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.12 The school ensures that pupils are always under appropriate supervision while attending school and on any trips or visits. Appropriate new arrangements are in place to manage the morning drop-off and evening collection of pupils. Duty rotas, provision in the classroom, and supervision before and after school are implemented effectively. The school has maintained the existing teaching group sizes throughout the school and the increase in numbers will be managed by the provision of additional classes. Leaders have reviewed duty rotas effectively in order to maintain suitable supervision if the increase in registered capacity takes place.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16]

- 2.13 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.14 The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy which sets out a suitable approach to the management of risk and includes the actions to be taken to reduce any risks that are identified. Risk assessments are in place for all areas of the school including for recreation and play areas and for trips and visits offsite. Suitable assessments of the risks associated with the propose increase in pupil numbers have been conducted by the governors and senior leaders.

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

- 2.15 The school meets the standards and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.

- 2.16 The school implements a suitable recruitment policy which has due regard to all statutory requirements. The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. The information on the single central register accurately reflects documentation seen in staff files.

Premises and accommodation [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 23-29]

- 2.17 The school meets the standards and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.18 Recent development of the school's large site ensures appropriate provision for additional pupils and has reduced the need for pupils to travel off-site for recreational activities. Building work has been completed which provides sufficient additional classroom space to meet the needs of the proposed increase in pupil numbers. A sport and wellness centre which includes an indoor swimming pool has been opened as well as an outdoor play space for prep school pupils. The new building includes additional toilets and washrooms for both pupils and staff and, across the site, pupils have easy access to drinking water. Furnishings and resources are of a suitable quality in all areas of the school and internal lighting and acoustics promote effective learning. Enhanced medical facilities have been developed in the health and wellbeing centre which are sufficient to cater for the proposed increase in total pupil numbers. External lighting ensures that all areas are appropriately lit when required. Security is appropriate and has been enhanced by new entrance gates and entry systems. The site is maintained in a suitable state of repair and regular monitoring ensures that any maintenance issues are promptly addressed.

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

- 2.19 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]

- 2.20 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in registered capacity.
- 2.21 Those in leadership and management positions in the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role. They fulfil their responsibilities effectively and provide effective support and guidance for all staff to ensure that the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted. The governors and senior leaders have considered with suitable care the implications and requirements of the proposed increase in total pupil capacity. As a result, planning is effective and the school is suitably prepared for the proposed material change.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school is granted permission to increase its registered capacity from September 2024 from 1080 to 1150 pupils.

4. Summary of evidence

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