



Material Change Inspection Report

Highfield Preparatory School

February 2024

School's details

School	Highfield Preparatory School			
DfE number	868/6009			
Registered charity number	309103			
Address	Highfield Preparatory School 2 West Road Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 1PD			
Telephone number	01628 624918			
Email address	office@highfieldprep.org			
Executive Principal	Mrs Joanna Leach			
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Wallace			
Chair of governors	Mrs Anita Gleave			
Proprietor	Chatsworth Schools (Highfield Preparatory) Ltd			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	94			
	EYFS	20	Juniors	74
Date of inspection	7 February 2024			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Highfield Preparatory School is an independent day school for female pupils aged between 3 and 11 years and male pupils aged between 3 and 7 years. The school was founded in 1918 and became a charitable trust in 1966. In 2019, it became part of the Chatsworth School group, who form the governing body. The school has eight pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language for seven pupils. The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in March 2022.

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 upper age range to 13 with the entry of pupils into Years 7 and 8. The total registered capacity of the school will not change. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

1.3

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 2 (curriculum)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 2A (relationships and sex education)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 4 (framework for pupils' performance)	Met
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

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

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 The school has prepared a suitable curriculum policy which meets the needs of pupils. It is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work which cover all the required areas of learning. Suitable arrangements have been planned which provide appropriately for pupils in Year 7 and 8, with corresponding plans and schemes of work. Personal, social, health and economic education is provided effectively and the school has appropriate plans to provide careers education for pupils in Years 7 and 8. The school's provision takes note of the particular needs of individual pupils, including those with SEND.
- 2.3 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of pupils into Year 7 and 8.

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

- 2.4 The school meets the standard.
- 2.5 Scrutiny of the RSE schemes of work indicates that pupils receive appropriate relationships education. The school has effective plans to ensure that Year 7 and 8 pupils receive suitable relationships and sex education lessons. It has made appropriate arrangements to consult parents over provision for sex education for these pupils.
- 2.6 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of pupils into Year 7 and 8.

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

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 Scrutiny of documents and pupils' senior school destinations indicate that teachers enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability. Pupils with SEND are promptly identified and appropriately supported. Teachers employ effective strategies for managing pupils' behaviour. Policy and practice highlight the importance of not undermining fundamental British values. The school plans to deploy staff with suitable training and experience to teach RSE effectively to Year 7 and 8 pupils. Plans for Year 7 and 8 pupils indicate teaching is likely to continue to support good progress and appropriate outcomes for pupils.
- 2.9 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of pupils into Year 7 and 8.

Quality of education provided – framework for pupils' performance [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 4]

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.
- 2.11 Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and effectively using internal benchmarks and standardised measures of progress. Building upon its current effective assessment practice, the school intends to extend its existing model of assessment into Year 7 and 8 which is likely to prove effective.

- 2.12 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of pupils into Year 7 and 8.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]

- 2.13 The school meets the standard.
- 2.14 Pupils embrace the appropriate values promoted by the school. They are enabled to develop into responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Pupils enjoy healthy relationships and demonstrate respect towards those with protected characteristics. Pupils are respectful towards those who hold beliefs that are different to their own and celebrate other cultures during occasions such as the annual diversity week. Pupils have a suitable appreciation of the needs for rules and sanctions within any community. Plans to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of Year 7 and 8 pupils are appropriate.
- 2.15 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of pupils into Year 7 and 8.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.16 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.17 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

- 2.18 The school meets the standard.
- 2.19 Safeguarding procedures are appropriately implemented in keeping with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2023. Pupils are confident that if they have a concern it will be listened to by staff and suitable action will be taken. Discussions with staff and pupils, along with scrutiny of records, confirms that this happens. Pupils know how to stay safe online and use of technology is monitored appropriately.
- 2.20 Staff with designated safeguarding responsibility have appropriate status within the school and a member of the team holds a leadership position within the early years. These staff have suitable training to fulfil their responsibilities. There is effective liaison with external agencies, including children's services and the local authority designated officer (LADO) for safeguarding. The safeguarding team has sufficient capacity to cover the proposed rise in pupil numbers effectively.
- 2.21 Relevant and regular safeguarding training for all staff and governors enables them effectively to fulfil their responsibilities. Staff support a suitable safeguarding culture which includes a willingness to adhere to the staff code of conduct and report low level concerns. They are suitably aware of the potential for child-on-child abuse in different forms.
- 2.22 Governors provide effective oversight of safeguarding policy and procedures. A member of the board with designated responsibility for safeguarding meets regularly with staff with safeguarding responsibilities to ensure effective implementation of school policy is taking place. Suitable arrangements exist to handle allegations against any adult who has contact with children. Appropriate recruitment checks are provided for in the safeguarding policy. All governors are kept well informed of changes to legislation and guidance and review appropriately actions taken when safeguarding incidents occur.

- 2.23 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the admission of pupils into Year 7 and 8.

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

- 2.24 The school meets the standard.
- 2.25 Governors' and senior leaders' good knowledge and skills enable them to fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that all the standards are met and pupils' wellbeing is promoted. They have given appropriate consideration to the measures necessary for the proposed addition of Years 7 and 8.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school's request to add Years 7 and 8 to its existing year groups, with a consequent change in its upper age limit, is approved.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the executive principal, the headteacher, 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.