



Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

Clares Court Schools

January 2024

School's details

School	Claires Court Schools			
DfE number	868/6014			
Address	Claires Court Schools 1 College Avenue Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 6AW			
Telephone number	01628 327700			
Email address	registrar@clairescourt.com			
Headteacher	Mr James Wilding			
Joint chair of proprietors	Mr James Wilding and Mr Hugh Wilding			
Proprietor	Claires Court Schools Ltd			
Age Range	2 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	961			
	EYFS	39	Juniors	237
	Seniors	529	Sixth Form	156
Date of inspection	16 January 2024			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Claires Court is an independent day school for male and female pupils. It is owned by Claires Court Schools Ltd whose directors are the academic and administrative principals of the school. The school operates on the ‘diamond’ model with regard to arrangements to educate pupils of different gender. The nursery and sixth form are organised in mixed-gender groups, while from Reception to Year 11, male and female pupils are educated separately. The school is organised across 3 sites. Pupils in nursery and sixth form are organised in mixed-gender groups, and together with female pupils in Years 7 to 11 are taught on the College Avenue site. Since September 2023, male and female pupils in Reception to Year 6 are educated on the Ridgeway site, with mixed-gender pupils in Reception and this arrangement planned to progress over time through the Years 1-6 which are currently segregated. Male pupils from Year 7 to 11 are taught on the Ray Mill Road East site. The school has 189 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities, of whom 17 have an education, health and care plan. There are 16 pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school’s previous inspection was a regulatory compliance and educational quality inspection in November 2022.
- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the focused compliance and educational quality inspection in November 2022.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 25 (maintenance)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 7, paragraph 33 (handling of complaints)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

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

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 Teaching is well planned. It shows a good understanding of the pupils and their needs; good subject knowledge and understanding; and appropriate use of resources and effective strategies for managing behaviour. It is successful in giving pupils the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and make good progress and it fosters self-motivation, application and interest.
- 2.3 Since the previous inspection the school has taken effective steps to adjust the curriculum so that male and female pupils now have the same choice of subjects. Teaching does not discriminate against pupils because of any protected characteristics. There are frameworks throughout the school to assess pupils' performance by reference to the school's aims or British national norms, and assessment information is used to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

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

Safeguarding policy

- 2.4 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.5 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

- 2.6 The school meets the standard.
- 2.7 Implementation of all aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures is effective in providing appropriate support to ensure the welfare of pupils.
- 2.8 Safeguarding procedures are implemented to safeguard children at risk and those in particular need. Staff show effective understanding of their responsibilities, including with regard to child-on-child abuse or sexual harassment, whether in or out of school. Staff show appropriate awareness of the staff code of conduct, whistleblowing policy and safeguarding procedures and are confident to use them. They have a suitable knowledge of the thresholds for reporting issues or incidents. Staff are aware of who to go to if they have a concern or receive a disclosure and are confident to do so. The procedures for reporting and recording low-level concerns are used effectively. Staff understand that they can make a direct referral to children's services if necessary. They take appropriate action when appropriate.
- 2.9 Pupils receive suitable help to address risks and such help prevents issues escalating. The designated safeguarding lead and deputies act on and refer to appropriate agencies the early signs of risk or need. This includes seeking prompt advice from the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO). There are suitable arrangements to handle allegations against adults working with children. The school understands its role in reporting any person to relevant statutory bodies if circumstances require it. Discussions with school leaders and communication with local safeguarding partners confirm an effective dialogue that further promotes the needs of pupils. Records of discussions, assessment of risk in relation to pupils or staff, and the reasons for decisions made are detailed and up to date.
- 2.10 The DSLs ensure the school listens to the views of individual pupils as required by *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. This is confirmed in written evidence from safeguarding records which show that pupils receive a response if they raise a concern, and that action is taken if needed. Risk to pupils is

properly considered, and effective formal assessments drawn up for individual pupils with particular needs where necessary. Pupils feel safe in school and the local area. They show understanding of what they have been taught, including in relation to e-safety. Monitoring of the use of technology is effective. The physical and mental health of all pupils involved in any incident are given a high priority.

- 2.11 The safeguarding policy gives contact details as required for local safeguarding partners. Suitable recruitment procedures for staff are outlined within the safeguarding policy and detailed in a separate recruitment policy. The training for those with specific safeguarding responsibilities is in line with local requirements and statutory advice and is up to date. Training in safeguarding for the principals, teaching and non-teaching staff is of sufficient quality and frequency. The principals commission an independent annual safeguarding review and act on any recommendations.

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

- 2.12 The school meets the standard.
- 2.13 The principals ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy. Records show that testing of electrical, water and other utilities is regularly undertaken. Staff are effectively trained in health and safety and deal promptly and appropriately with accidents if they occur, including through the reporting of serious accidents. The needs of those with physical disability are identified and measures put in place on all the school's sites to ensure access.

Premises and accommodation – maintenance [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 25]

- 2.14 The school meets the standard.
- 2.15 Buildings, grounds and facilities are well maintained so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils is ensured. Security arrangements, including those at dropping-off time in the morning, promote the safety of pupils.

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

- 2.16 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.

Manner in which complaints are handled [ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33]

- 2.17 The school meets the standard.
- 2.18 The school has an appropriate complaints policy which is made available to parents of current and prospective pupils from the website or on application to the school. The policy indicates suitable timescales for each stage of a complaint. These are observed and the policy as a whole is implemented effectively. An effective log of formal complaints is kept which shows timescales for each complaint. Appropriate records are kept of the actions taken by the school, whether a complaint is upheld or not. Informal complaints are handled appropriately. The logs are kept confidential except as regulations required.

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

- 2.19 The school meets the standard.

- 2.20 Senior leaders and the principals demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are consistently met, and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted. The school has fully implemented its action plan and principals monitor compliance with regulations appropriately.
- 2.21 Since the previous inspection the school has formally recorded its rationale for the positive action taken to educate male and female pupils separately between ages 11 and 16. It has identified that male and female pupils at the school would otherwise suffer a disadvantage and that they have different needs. The action taken is proportionate and the principals and school leaders show good understanding of any unintended consequences.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, 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 inspection.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietor. They visited different areas of the school on two sites. They inspected facilities for disabled access and arrangements for dropping off pupils at the beginning of the day. They talked with groups of pupils and scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.