

School inspection report

Date 28 to 30 November 2023

Oakhyrst Grange School

160 Stanstead Road

Caterham

Surrey

CR36AF

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders provide a positive and supportive school environment in which the children are happy and flourish. Leaders work hard to enhance the 'family-orientated' school environment in line with the school aims and this is appreciated by the staff and pupils.
2. Leaders ensure that effective assessment and tracking systems are in place so that teachers understand the needs of the individual children in their class. Pupils including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) feel that the adults care about their learning and that adults support them to make further progress.
3. Teaching is carried out by a well-trained team of staff who cohesively plan and deliver lessons which are well matched to meet the needs of pupils. Pupils in the older year groups develop effective study skills and are keen to take on new challenges. Children from the early years onwards are given plenty of opportunities to play and explore.
4. Pupils of all ages know one another well and enjoy having the opportunity to play and dine together at lunchtime. Pupils make good use of the extensive outdoor areas to exercise and to play together.
5. Leaders prioritise pupil wellbeing and strive in all areas to develop the sense of a unified community. This supports pupils to be inclusive, tolerant and respectful of each other.
6. The newly appointed education committee supports leaders to carry out effective self-evaluation. However, leaders do not yet effectively log and track cases of any misbehaviour and sanctions applied in the rare cases where this occurs.
7. Safeguarding concerns are not referred in a timely manner. Governors and senior leaders do not have effective oversight of recruitment processes nor suitable oversight of the single central record (SCR). The required checks are not always undertaken or accurately recorded. Leaders are committed to improving practice in these areas.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance, are not met consistently.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are not met consistently.

Areas for action

8. The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities:
 - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - actively promote the well-being of pupils.
9. Leaders must ensure that:
 - safeguarding concerns are recognised and referred in a timely manner in line with local arrangements
 - suitable references are obtained and checked before staff commence work at the school
 - when applicable, a barred list check for staff is carried out before staff start working at the school
 - staff are subject to a prohibition from management check before they take up leadership responsibilities, where relevant
 - the identity and their right to work in the UK are checked for new staff before they commence working at the school
 - the single central record is an accurate record of the relevant recruitment checks.

Recommended next steps

- Leaders must ensure that systems to record and track any incidents of misbehaviour are effective so that trends and patterns can be seen and appropriate action is taken.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Leaders successfully establish a supportive ethos in line with the school aims. Leaders actively promote the mixed-year group initiatives which include the daily 'family lunch', and an active house system. As a result of leaders' endeavours, pupils develop positive relationships with one another and with staff at the school.
11. Leaders actively consider risks and take action to mitigate any risks when they are identified. This process is overseen and effectively quality assured by governors.
12. The complaints policy and procedures are clear and complaints are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner when they arise.
13. Leaders ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are fully met. Teaching is inclusive of all groups of pupils, and the accessibility plan gives due regard to current pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with plans to offer greater accessibility to those who may need it in the future.
14. There has been a change in the governance structure and a newly established education committee to review current policy and practice. Those responsible for managing staff recruitment receive increased support and training and new governors are clear about their responsibility to oversee all aspects of pupil wellbeing
15. Safeguarding arrangements are not secure. The designated leaders for safeguarding do not make referrals in a timely manner. Governors do not maintain effective oversight of the recruitment processes. Checks on the suitability of staff before they commence working at the school are not always undertaken. The single central record of appointments does not contain all of the required information. Governors do not ensure that school leaders have appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively and consistently.
16. Teachers and middle leaders deal with any behaviour issues effectively when they arise. Leaders have recently introduced a system for recording behaviour incidents but this is not embedded in practice.
17. Parents receive regular detailed and informative reports about their child's progress. Leaders ensure that parents are provided with additional helpful information on the comprehensive school website.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. Leaders ensure that the broad curriculum is well-taught with clearly articulated expectations for pupils' learning and progression. Teachers deliver engaging lessons which are carefully matched to meet pupils' needs and leaders have detailed oversight of pupil progress which they monitor carefully.
19. Teachers understand the needs of each pupil and use assessment information to plan lessons accordingly. Staff utilise appropriate strategies to support pupils of all abilities and needs, including those with complex needs. As a result, pupils at all stages make good progress from their starting points. Older pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education as they transition to their preferred senior school, with several pupils annually being awarded scholarships.
20. Leaders ensure that staff deliver effective intervention to support groups of pupils. For example, pupils with relatively higher prior attainment in English and mathematics are provided with tailored activities with increased challenge. As a result, pupils make good progress and develop their self-motivation and problem-solving skills. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) receive in-class individual support or attend small group withdrawal lessons. This enables pupils to improve their core skills, access the curriculum more readily and to make good progress.
21. Subject leaders' accurate self-evaluation of teaching and learning is effective and drives school improvement. For example, as a result of leaders selecting whole-class texts in Year 6 English lessons which boys find more interesting, the engagement and attainment of boys has improved.
22. Teachers have good subject knowledge and implement the school behaviour policy effectively. Teachers implement a robust system to evaluate pupils' work which enables teachers to fully understand the needs of every child. In addition, pupil self-assessment is well-established across the school and pupils respond regularly to teacher comments in their books using green pen.
23. In the early years, children make good progress in literacy and mathematics from their starting points. Staff conduct regular assessments to determine the skills of each child, and staff attend small focus groups to target the learning needs of children effectively. The environment in the early years is thoughtfully structured to enable all pupils to self-select and to develop their speaking and listening skills. The well-resourced 'Reading Garden' space is well-used by children and supports them to enjoy reading their favourite books.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation

All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

24. Leaders establish a nurturing and inclusive environment where pupils feel known and valued. As a result, pupils care for each other and have a high level of mutual respect for cultural diversity and acceptance of difference.
25. Pupils' self-esteem flourishes because of the good relationship between staff and pupils. The decision by leaders for teachers to eat with the children at lunchtime in mixed year groups contributes to the 'family' ethos. This is further enhanced by the role Year 6 mentors' play, supporting younger pupils at the table and with constructive play activities. The mentors are proud of their role and demonstrate maturity beyond their years when looking after their younger peers.
26. Leaders enable pupils from the youngest age to develop their confidence and self-knowledge through the many opportunities to take part in drama performances and assemblies. These range from the nativity play for younger children to annual whole school productions. Leaders further nurture pupils' musical and performance talent through the provision for pupils to learn an instrument, to join an ensemble group and to take part in ballet and modern dance. As a result, pupils develop their self-knowledge and confidence and are happy in school.
27. All pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 attend an annual residential trip and pupils enjoy this additional opportunity to develop important life skills such as independence and team work.
28. Pupils understand the impact of their lessons in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education on their personal development. The PSHE curriculum is effective in supporting pupils to develop strategies for self-regulation. Pupils explain that assemblies teach them to be kind and thoughtful toward others and they have a clear appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Pupils across all age groups readily model strong friendship and empathy toward each other.
29. Staff implement the anti-bullying strategy effectively and pupils understand the difference between bullying and unkindness. Pupils are confident that they have supportive staff to whom they can turn and that their concerns would be dealt with promptly. Leaders are aware of the need to record incidents of bullying and sanctions in a more systematic way and have therefore recently introduced an electronic recording system.
30. Leaders at all levels set very clear expectations of behaviour and as a result, behaviour is good. Pupils are well-mannered, polite and have a clear understanding of the consequences of any rule breaking. Pupils feel that sanctions are fairly applied.
31. All pupils including children in the early years benefit from the extensive space for outdoor learning. The large woodland area is currently used by Year 3 as a dedicated space for structured woodland activities and some play times. Pupils have daily access to equipment that encourages climbing, balancing and imaginative play. Leaders ensure that staff are effectively deployed and children are appropriately supervised.
32. Pupils feel safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, both physically and mentally. For example, all pupils take part in weekly swimming lessons with older pupils learning valuable life-saving skills.

33. Leaders promote the wellbeing of pupils through the accurate maintenance of admissions and attendance records in line with statutory requirements. Pupils' medical and first aid needs are met by suitably trained staff in appropriate provision which ensures the timely delivery of first aid.
34. Leaders ensure that provision for all relevant health and safety requirements are met. All fire safety equipment for detection and prevention of fire is in place and appropriately maintained, enabling safe evacuation if needed. Leaders have established comprehensive systems for auditing and monitoring provision so that any issues arising are dealt with swiftly.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

35. Staff instil enthusiasm in pupils for their learning in a well-established ethos of caring for other people in line with the school aims. The curriculum, including plans and schemes of work, support pupils' development in social and cultural knowledge and understanding, and take into account the differing needs of pupils from the early years foundation stage (EYFS) through to Year 6.
36. Leaders effectively promote the understanding of fundamental British values which is articulated by pupils' positive attitudes to inclusion and high levels of respect for others. From an early age, pupils who have SEND value the support they are given.
37. Staff manage the transition between key stages effectively, for example by providing pupils with taster sessions. Staff regularly meet with each other and with parents to discuss individual pupil needs which helps pupils to be well-prepared for their next stage in education.
38. Pupils are committed to supporting the school and appreciate the need for rules and responsibilities. Older pupils have many opportunities to take on leadership roles, for example, Year 6 pupils take pride in being mentors, prefects and woodland monitors. This helps to build pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
39. Pupils are aware of their social responsibilities and engage with the local community, for example, through supporting the local food bank or raising money for the local church roof. In addition, each year pupils make wider links by supporting a national and international charity.
40. Pupils learn about a variety of careers through a programme of visiting speakers including local fire fighters and through visits. For example, the early years class visit the local shops to learn about the area and to practise shopping for fruit to develop their number skills.
41. Pupils appreciate the additional extra-curricular opportunities they have to learn about different cultures. For example, pupils tasted pumpkin pie in a pupil-led assembly. Pupils are supported to learn about different faiths in context. For example, a visit from parents to the early years class to speak about Diwali enabled pupils to understand more about the significance of the festival in everyday life. These activities cement the high levels of respect shown by all members of the school community.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

42. School leaders do not always make suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, including children within the early years. When safeguarding concerns arise, the school works closely with the local authority and other services. However, referrals by safeguarding leaders to external agencies are not always made within the required time frames.
43. Induction and training for new staff about safeguarding is appropriate and staff are clear about their individual responsibilities with regard to Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) and the EYFS statutory framework.
44. Pupils know how to stay safe online and leaders' self-evaluation prioritises pupil online safety for development and resourcing.
45. Leaders take effective measures to identify and manage risks associated with the maintenance of the school site and extra-curricular visits. Leaders keep detailed risk assessments which take into account contextual risks.
46. Governors and the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), receive regular training and updates but do not fully understand their responsibility to have due oversight of staff recruitment processes and the single central record.
47. Leaders do not follow statutory requirements relating to undertaking and evidencing of checks on the suitability of staff. Leaders do not always obtain and verify suitable references and undertake a children's barred list check before staff start working at the school. Staff in positions of management are not subject to a prohibition from management check before they take up their leadership responsibilities. Checks are not always conducted on the identity or right to work in the UK for new staff. The single central record of appointments is not an accurate record of the checks undertaken, including of checks for prohibition from teaching.
48. Leaders and proprietors do not have the knowledge and skills to ensure that safeguarding arrangements with regard to staff recruitment are in place. Therefore, these standards are not fully met.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

Not all the relevant Standards are met. A schedule of unmet Standards is included at the end of the report.

Schedule of unmet Standards

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

The relevant Standards are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)	The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school – (a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently (b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and (c) actively promote the wellbeing of pupils.

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

The relevant Standards are met.

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing

The relevant Standards are met.

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic wellbeing and contribution to society

The relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

The relevant Standards are not met.

Paragraph number	Standard
ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b)	The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that – (a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and (b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
ISSR Part 4, paragraph 18 (1)	18(1) The standard in this paragraph relates to the suitability of persons appointed as members of staff at the school, other than the proprietor and supply staff.
ISSR Part 4, paragraph 18 (2)	18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if—
	(a) no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;
	(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or

	restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
	(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person— (i) the person’s identity; (iii) the person’s right to work in the United Kingdom.
ISSR Part 4, paragraph 18 (3)	18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) must be completed before a person’s appointment.
ISSR Part 4, paragraph 21(1)	21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraph (3) as is applicable to the school in question.
ISSR Part 4, paragraph 21(3)	21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is—
	(a) in relation to each member of staff (‘S’) appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether— (i) S’s identity was checked; (ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act; (iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction; (vii) a check of S’s right to work in the United Kingdom was made; including the date on which each such check was completed or the certificate obtained.
	(b) in relation to each member of staff (‘S’), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.
EYFS 3.7	Providers must have regard to the government’s statutory guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ and to the ‘Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales’. All schools are required to have regard to the government’s ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ statutory guidance, and other childcare providers may also find it helpful to refer to this guidance. If providers have concerns about children’s safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means the local children’s social care services and, in emergencies, the police.
EYFS 3.9	Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles. Providers must have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who may have regular contact with children (including those living or working on the premises), are suitable.
EYFS 3.12	Providers other than childminders must record information about staff qualifications and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed (including the criminal records check reference number, the date a check was obtained and details of who obtained it).

School details

School	Oakhurst Grange School
Department for Education number	6139
Registered charity number	325043
Address	160 Stanstead Road Caterham CR36AF
Phone number	01883343344
Email address	Office@oakhurstgrangeschool.co.uk
Website	oakhurstgrangeschool.co.uk
Proprietor	Oakhurst Grange Educational Trust
Chair	Mrs Pauline Clark
Headteacher	Mr Alex Gear
Age range	3 to 11
Number of pupils	152
Date of previous inspection	June 2019

Information about the school

49. Oakhyrst Grange School is an independent co-educational school catering for boys and girls between 3 and 11 years of age. It was founded in 1950 as a private day school for boys and moved to its current location in 1957. The school is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee with a governing body. It is divided into three departments: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6.
50. There are 35 children in the early years (EYFS) setting in two classes; 17 in the Lower Kindergarten and 18 in the Kindergarten (Reception).
51. The school has identified eight pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
52. English is an additional language for seven pupils.
53. The school states its aims are to be committed to providing a supportive, enjoyable family-style environment in which every child is nurtured and encouraged to achieve their potential through a broad-based curriculum and opportunities for developing sporting, dramatic, artistic and musical talents.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

28 to 30 November 2023

54. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

55. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

56. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

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