

Report for an Additional Visit

School name	King Edward's School, Witley
DfE number	936/6103
Registered charity number	311997
Address	Petworth Road Witley Godalming Surrey GU8 5SG
Headmaster	Mr John Attwater
Chair of governors	Mrs Justine Voisin
Date of visit	1 July 2019

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 King Edward's School is a boarding and day school providing education for girls and boys aged from 11 to 18 years. Originally founded in 1553 in the City of London, the school moved to its current location in 1867. The school is a charitable trust, governed by a board of governors known as the Court of Bridewell. It has seven boarding houses, all on the main school site.
- 1.2 The school has 92 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). None has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. There are 132 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in October 2018.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.3 This was an unannounced additional visit at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) which focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2015, in particular safeguarding and the quality of leadership and management.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 11 (safeguarding, including safeguarding of boarders)	Not met
ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 13.3 to 13.5 (leadership and management including of boarding)	Not met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 11]

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 does not meet all of the standards.
- 2.4 Implementation of the school's safeguarding procedures does not provide appropriate support for pupils' needs in all aspects required by statutory guidance, in particular, training for staff; provision of alcohol to pupils; liaison with and referral to external agencies; and the management of safeguarding.
- 2.5 Safeguarding procedures are designed suitably to safeguard children at risk and those in need. Appropriate recruitment procedures for staff operate.
- 2.6 The training for the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies is in line with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 (KCSIE). Regular safeguarding training is held in the school for teaching and non-teaching staff. This is of sufficient quality and scope and includes relevant updates when incidents occur; for example, following unauthorised access to the site by a member of the public, suitable guidance was given to staff to enhance vigilance. Staff understanding is checked appropriately. Central records of staff attendance at training are kept. Other pastoral training provided to staff has, on occasion, not been consistent with established safeguarding practice and procedures. The contents of a recent presentation expressed views which some staff perceived as calling into question their understanding of the norms of appropriate conduct with pupils. Senior managers did not allay these concerns effectively at the time.
- 2.7 Staff show effective understanding overall of their responsibilities, including in those areas which are the focus of the most recent changes in safeguarding guidance, in particular elements of peer-on-peer abuse. In interview, teaching and non-teaching staff showed effective understanding of the training they have received, including training which reflected the new elements in KCSIE and online training regarding radicalisation. They are aware of who to go to if they have a concern or receive a disclosure and also that they can make a referral to children's services if necessary. Staff interviewed showed appropriate awareness of the staff code of conduct and safeguarding procedures. Provision of alcohol to pupils at a social event did not consistently follow the guidance in the school's safeguarding policy to 'have regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions'.
- 2.8 The safeguarding policy includes suitable definitions of abuse after amendment during the visit. It provides appropriate guidance regarding possible abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil, including linking such abuse to bullying. Risk assessment procedures are provided for determining where immediate action is required in such cases, including referral to local agencies. The school shows understanding of the local guidance on reporting pupil-on-pupil abuse. However, in a recent case of potentially sexualised behaviour, advice was not sought from external agencies before it was decided to handle the matter internally. Suitable records are kept of concerns and these are kept confidential. Effective communication is maintained with parents. Pupils receive guidance on staying safe and show understanding of what they have been taught, including in relation to e-safety and safe attitudes to alcohol and smoking. They state that the school takes actions when they express concerns.

- 2.9 The safeguarding policy gives contact details for required local agencies. Arrangements for handling allegations against staff are included in safeguarding procedures; they include seeking immediate advice from the local authority designated safeguarding officers (LADO). However, in instances where alleged behaviour by a member of staff caused concern, the school did not seek advice from the LADO but pursued an internal investigation. Although this internal review was methodical in most respects, it did not seek views from pupils or former pupils allegedly placed at potential risk. The review included investigation of occasions when it might be necessary for a pupil to stay in staff accommodation due to home circumstances, this being relevant to the allegation. It identified the absence of effective assessment of risk in making such provision and recommended, correctly, the need to institute this; the role of senior managers in authorising any such provision; and the need for this to be an exceptional occurrence. In the sole instance identified to inspectors of such provision being necessary since the review, senior managers appropriately authorised a pupil to stay overnight in staff accommodation before an examination which took place before school term had begun. This took place with full agreement from the housemaster and the pupil's parent. On all other occasions during term time, the school's stated policy is now for pupils to be accommodated in the medical centre. The school makes appropriate provision to report any person whose services are no longer used where referral criteria are met to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and/or the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA). Alternative persons of appropriate status are provided in the absence of the DSL.
- 2.10 Annual review of safeguarding is appropriate and there is regular contact between those with safeguarding responsibilities and a nominated governor to liaise regarding safeguarding. When incidents linked to safeguarding occur, they are communicated to governors, but no action was taken to ensure the LADO was informed when concern was expressed about a member of staff's conduct. When governors were alerted to the recent case of alleged sexualised behaviour, they were prompt to liaise with the LADO and to institute an external enquiry, which has followed the guidance of safeguarding professionals. Similar action was taken when alerted to on-going concerns about the conduct of staff.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32]

- 2.11 The school meets the standard.
- 2.12 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; NMS 13]

- 2.13 The school does not meet all of the standards.
- 2.14 Appropriate procedures have not been implemented consistently to allow senior leaders and governors to manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements, monitor compliance with regulations and actively promote the well-being of pupils at all times. In particular, senior managers and governors have not always ensured prompt consultation with external agencies when serious concerns about staff and pupils have arisen or ensured that all staff training which may impinge on safeguarding reinforces staff understanding of appropriate behaviour. Recent action by governors has begun to identify and act to address these shortcomings.

3. Regulatory action points

3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraphs 7 and 8 and NMS 11

- Ensure prompt referral to the LADO where allegations concerning staff conduct are received and to children's services where behaviour arises that could be viewed as serious peer-on-peer abuse;
- Ensure that all staff training fully and clearly supports staff understanding of and confidence in the safeguarding training that they receive;
- Ensure that whenever alcohol is served to pupils, including boarders, its provision is consistent with the school's own guidance to have regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being [paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and 8(a) and (b); NMS 11].

ISSR Part 8, Welfare, health and safety, paragraph 34 and NMS 13

- Ensure that appropriate procedures are implemented consistently to allow senior leaders and governors to manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements, monitor compliance with regulations and actively promote the well-being of pupils at all times [paragraphs 34(a), (b) and (c); NMS 13.3-5].

4. Summary of evidence

Written materials

- Safeguarding policy
- Code of conduct for staff
- Guidance to parents, pupils and staff on providing alcohol to pupils
- School rules on smoking
- Records of child protection incidents
- The school's internal review of June 2018 into issues of staff conduct
- The interim report of the external review commissioned by the school in June 2019 into issues of staff conduct

Meetings with school personnel

- Introductory meeting with headmaster and DSL – to discuss arrangements for the day and areas specified as the focus for the visit
- Meeting with the DSL – to discuss implementation of safeguarding policy and staff training in safeguarding
- Meeting with the chair of governors
- Concluding discussion with the headmaster, DSL and chair of governors to review the day's findings

Activities on site

- Further scrutiny and evaluation of implementation of policies and documentation (as detailed above)
- Presence at break time to enable pupils to talk to an inspector
- Discussion with staff who responded to an open invitation to speak with inspectors
- Interview with pupils, including boarders, in Years 10 and 12 chosen by inspectors
- Meeting of inspectors