



Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

Sunningdale School

February 2024

School's details

School	Sunningdale School			
DfE number	868/6007			
Address	Sunningdale School Dry Arch Road Ascot Berkshire SL5 9PZ			
Telephone number	01344 620159			
Email address	headmaster@sunningdaleschool.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Tom Dawson			
Chair of proprietors	Mr Tom Dawson			
Proprietor	Sunningdale School Limited			
Age range	7 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	96			
	Day pupils	19	Boarders	77
	Juniors	49	Seniors	47
Date of inspection	30 January 2024			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Sunningdale School in Ascot is an independent, boarding and day preparatory school for male pupils. The school is set in expansive grounds and is centred on the original Victorian house in which the school was founded. Boarders are accommodated on the upper floors of this building. The proprietor is the headmaster together with other members of his family. The school is organised into: the junior school, for pupils aged seven to eleven; and the senior school, for those aged eleven to thirteen. The school has five pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupil has an education, health and care plan. Five pupils speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in March 2023.

Purpose of the inspection

- 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 regulatory compliance inspection on 22 to 23 March 2023. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2022.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 8	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); NMS 19	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32 (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 2	Met

2. Inspection findings

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

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 standards.
- 2.4 Scrutiny of records, observation and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that appropriate safeguards are implemented effectively, including in boarding. Those responsible for safeguarding hold senior positions within the school. Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed an appropriate designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is independent of the proprietor. The DSL is supported by two deputy DSLs, one of whom is the proprietor. All are suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained, including for multi-agency working. Safeguarding, pastoral, healthcare and boarding staff share key information regularly and effectively. They take into account each individual pupil's physical and psychological needs and wishes, including those pupils with SEND. This information is used to agree appropriate action including the drawing-up and implementation of individual support plans. There is effective liaison with external agencies including referral to child and adolescent health services (CAMHS) and the local authority designated officer (LADO) for safeguarding. Other staff are trained regularly as required, as are other members of the proprietary body. Training is effective and includes informal updates.
- 2.5 Staff are suitably knowledgeable about changes in recent legislation, including the management of children's mental wellbeing, contextual safeguarding, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence. They understand the principles underpinning the staff code of conduct and the procedures for making a referral, including the importance of low-level reporting. Staff are confident about using whistleblowing procedures. In discussions, staff confirmed that training is thorough and safeguarding effectively managed. Senior leaders take appropriate action if any perceived breach of the staff code of conduct occurs, or an allegation is received with regard to an adult who works with children. They understand their responsibility to make referral to relevant statutory bodies once investigations by external agencies are completed.
- 2.6 The proprietor meets weekly with the safeguarding team. This maintains effective oversight of safeguarding policies and their implementation in the main school and in boarding. Reports and meeting records highlight appropriate details of any safeguarding incidents which occur, including during trips and outside of school. This ensures that the proprietor maintains an appropriate level of understanding, scrutiny and oversight. In addition to continuous monitoring, a suitable annual review of safeguarding is undertaken.
- 2.7 The school has a suitable recruitment policy and the proprietor now ensures that all recruitment and other checks required by statutory guidance are undertaken. This includes checks on members of staff households living in boarding accommodation.
- 2.8 Pupils know how to contact the school's independent listeners. Any concerns they raise are monitored and acted upon effectively by the DSL. Records confirm that when pupils raise a concern, they receive a timely response and action is taken where needed. Boarders stated confidently that they receive a

detailed induction when they start school. This includes how to contact helplines including Childline and the Children's Commissioner. All pupils receive effective guidance on how to stay safe, who to talk to if they have concerns, and behavioural expectations. Pupils could name a number of staff to whom they would turn if they are worried or concerned.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; NMS 19]

- 2.9 The school meets the standards.
- 2.10 The school's recruitment policy is implemented effectively. All staff, the proprietor and others engaged in regulated activity, including in boarding, are checked. Those responsible for carrying out the required recruitment checks and the maintenance of staff records ensure that checks and evidence are in place prior to commencing work in the school. Appropriate procedures are in place to manage contractors, including ensuring that they are accompanied at all times if not checked by the school. Where required, recruitment and similar checks are recorded appropriately on the single central register of appointments (SCR). The proprietor now ensures that all members of staff households who are aged 16 and over (and not on the roll of, nor employed by, the school) and who live on the same premises as boarders, have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate with a check of the Children's Barred List. Visits to boarding areas are suitably regulated.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32; NMS 1]

- 2.11 The school meets the standards.
- 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.
- 2.13 Reports of any inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act are published and maintained on the school's internet website by the date specified for publication, and provided to the parents of each registered pupil, including those of each boarder.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 2]

- 2.14 The school meets the standards.
- 2.15 The proprietor has ensured that the school's action plan has been fully implemented. They and senior leaders, including those with specific responsibilities for safeguarding and boarding, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that all the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

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 the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, 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, who is also the proprietor of the school, senior leaders and other members of staff. They visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.