



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

Gresham's School

November 2022

School's details

School	Gresham's School			
DfE number	926/6003			
Registered charity number	1105500			
Address	Gresham's School Cromer Road Holt Norfolk NR25 6EA			
Telephone number	01263 714511			
Email address	reception@greshams.com			
Headmaster	Mr Douglas Robb			
Chair of governors	Mr Michael Goff			
Age Range	2 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	934			
	Day pupils	640	Boarders	294
	Pre-prep	130	Prep	272
	Senior	532		
Date of inspection	23 November 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Gresham's School is a co-educational day and boarding school comprising Gresham's School and Gresham's Prep School. The latter consists of the pre-prep, which includes a non-registered Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting, and the prep. The school is located in Holt on the north Norfolk coast. The pre-prep site has recently been remodelled and refurbished and the senior school has recently built a science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics building. The school has charitable status and is a limited company; its governors are directors and trustees of the company and governors of the foundation. The school has 237 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Seven have an education, health and care plan. There are 111 pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in February 2019.

Purpose of the inspection

This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase the number of pupils from 900 to 1050. The proposed change does not affect the number of children in the EYFS setting. This area was not included within the focus of the inspection. 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 are the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 8	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); NMS 9	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety); NMS 10	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils); NMS 20	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment); NMS 9	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); NMS 19	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29 (premises and accommodation); NMS 4	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 2	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [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 Implementation of all aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures is effective in providing appropriate support for the needs of the pupils. The current arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.5 Staff show appropriate understanding of their responsibilities and fulfil them effectively. They demonstrate suitable knowledge of the safeguarding procedures including those for children missing in education. They understand the code of conduct for staff and the school's whistleblowing procedures. The particular vulnerability of pupils with SEND is understood and these pupils receive appropriate support for their welfare and education. Staff have a suitable knowledge of the thresholds for reporting potential issues, including child-on-child abuse. They are aware of who to go to if they have a concern or receive a disclosure and that they can make a direct referral to children's services if necessary. The safeguarding policy provides appropriate contact details for local agencies. Suitable recruitment procedures for staff are outlined in the policy.
- 2.6 Discussions with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) confirm that pupils receive guidance on how to respond to issues if they arise. Training for staff is of sufficient frequency and quality. Those with specific safeguarding responsibilities have training in line with statutory advice and local requirements. The DSL at the senior school has oversight over safeguarding at all three sections of the school. Records of training attendance are kept by the DSL.
- 2.7 Records relating to safeguarding and behaviour are comprehensive. They indicate that the school deals appropriately with any issues identified in order to support and safeguard pupils. Staff, including senior leaders, listen to the views of the pupils effectively as required by *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. Pupils confirm that they feel listened to by the school. They receive a response if they raise a concern and suitable action is taken. The DSL acts immediately on any early signs of risk and monitors pupils effectively, sharing information with staff and governors as appropriate. Referrals to children's services and the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO) are detailed and timely. The school maintains effective relationships with outside agencies. Pupils are supported in learning how to keep themselves safe, including online, through appropriate monitoring and the filtering of technology.
- 2.8 Suitable arrangements operate effectively to handle allegations against staff. Records show that the school seeks immediate advice from the LADO where required and takes due note of any given. Stated procedures are followed appropriately. The school understands its role in reporting any person to the relevant statutory bodies where necessary. There is effective oversight by governors, and they carry out an annual review of safeguarding. Governors receive suitable training in safeguarding.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11; NMS 9]

- 2.9 The school meets the standards.
- 2.10 Senior leaders ensure that an effective health and safety policy is implemented. This ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with. Records show that all required testing of utilities is systematically undertaken. Training for staff is comprehensive throughout the school, including for those within the boarding houses. Any trends identified through monitoring are attended to in order to mitigate incidents. The arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed number of additional pupils.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12; NMS 10]

- 2.11 The school meets the standards.
- 2.12 The school has an appropriate fire prevention strategy. A suitably qualified person has carried out an effective fire risk assessment and the consequent action plan has been implemented. Staff and pupils understand fire procedures effectively following suitable training. Regular fire drills are undertaken, including in boarding time. The arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed number of additional pupils.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14; NMS 20]

- 2.13 The school meets the standards.
- 2.14 Pupils at all ages of the school are properly supervised by suitably qualified and trained staff. This includes effective overnight supervision in boarding. The arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed number of additional pupils.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; NMS 9]

- 2.15 The school meets the standards.
- 2.16 The school has effective risk assessments for buildings and educational visits as well as aspects such as sport and activities. All appropriate risk assessments are clear and include approaches to be taken to identify and mitigate risks. There are specific and effective plans which assess risks for vulnerable pupils which are managed through the DSL. The arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.17 The school meets the standards.
- 2.18 All required checks on staff, including supply staff, and members of the proprietorial body are carried out and completed before they take up their position. The arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the additional pupils.
- 2.19 The school maintains a comprehensive and accurate single central register of appointments which includes the dates on which the checks have been completed.

Premises and accommodation – toilets and changing accommodation; medical facilities; maintenance; acoustics; lighting; water supply, outdoor space and boarding accommodation [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23–29, NMS 4]

- 2.20 The school meets the standards.
- 2.21 Suitable toilet and changing accommodation and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a suitable standard; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; and water provision is adequate. There is suitable outdoor space for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is appropriate.
- 2.22 Following the recent re-purposing of existing buildings there is no requirement for any additional new buildings to accommodate the proposed increase in pupils. The current arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of the additional pupils.

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

- 2.23 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 2]

- 2.24 The school meets the standards.
- 2.25 The proprietor and senior leaders manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements effectively and monitor compliance with the standards and other statutory advice. They implement suitable policies, practices and procedures to enable this. The leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are consistently met and the pupils' wellbeing is supported. The proposed increase in numbers is manageable within the current structures of the school.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school's request to increase its numbers to 1050 be approved as planning for the proposed increase across all areas is suitable.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the chair of governors. She visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. She scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Miss Sue Duff

Reporting inspector