



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

St David's Prep School

March 2023

School's details

School	St David's Prep School			
DfE number	305/6066			
Address	St David's Prep School Beckenham Road West Wickham Kent BR4 0QS			
Telephone number	02087775852			
Email address	office@stdavidsprep.com			
Head	Mrs Julia Foulger			
Proprietor	St David's Prep Limited			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	189			
	EYFS	50	Pre-prep	60
	Prep	79		
Date of inspection	28 March 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 St David's Prep School is an independent, co-educational day school. It was founded in 1926 and owned by the Schove family until 2015, when it joined the Wishford Schools Group. Governance is provided by the sole proprietor, who is chairman of both St David's Prep Limited and the Wishford Schools Group. He is supported by an executive team and non-executive advisory group. Pupils are grouped into pre-prep, for those aged 3 to 7, which includes an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting; and prep, for those aged 7 to 11.
- 1.2 The school has identified 29 pupils as having special educational needs (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, some of whom receive additional help. No pupils have an educational, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 38 pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- 1.3 The school's previous inspection was an educational quality with a focused compliance inspection in June 2019.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.4 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase its capacity from 168 to 208 pupils. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18–21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23–29 (premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

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

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 standard.
- 2.4 Safeguarding procedures are suitably implemented in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2022. Pupils stated confidently that they know how to stay safe including online. They confirmed that they can talk to staff if they are worried or concerned, that they will receive a response and that action will be taken when they express concerns. Scrutiny of records, together with discussions with pupils and staff confirm this.
- 2.5 Those responsible for safeguarding hold senior positions within the school, and there is a member of the team responsible for the EYFS. They are suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained, including for multi-agency working. Records of regular meetings indicate that key information is shared regularly between safeguarding, pastoral and healthcare staff, taking into account each individual pupil's physical, emotional, mental health and learning needs. This information is used to agree appropriate action and includes the drawing-up and implementation of individual support plans. Such action includes appropriate steps to deal with any incidents of inappropriate behaviour. There is effective liaison with external agencies, including referral to child and adolescent health services and the local authority designated officer (LADO) for safeguarding. The safeguarding team has sufficient capacity to provide cover for the proposed increase in numbers.
- 2.6 Training for all staff and for governors is conducted regularly as required. It is effective and includes informal updates. Staff are knowledgeable about changes in recent legislation, including the management of children's mental well-being, 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 and whistleblowing. Senior leaders take appropriate action if any perceived breach of the staff code of conduct occurs. They understand their responsibility to make referral to relevant statutory bodies once investigations by external agencies are completed.
- 2.7 The board lead responsible for safeguarding meets regularly with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies, and maintains effective oversight of safeguarding policies and implementation. Reports are given regularly to the board so that they are well informed. These highlight appropriate details of any safeguarding incidents. The designated safeguarding governor provides effective scrutiny and oversight on behalf of the proprietor, including the use of technology. In addition to continuous monitoring, a suitable annual review of safeguarding is undertaken.
- 2.8 The arrangements are likely to continue to meet the standards with the proposed increase in numbers.

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

- 2.9 The school meets the standard.

- 2.10 The school has an appropriate policy in place for health and safety that is reviewed and updated regularly and implemented consistently. All aspects of health and safety are monitored regularly by senior leaders and governors on behalf of the proprietor. The roles and responsibilities of staff and governors are stated clearly and there is an appropriate delegation of duties and training. Support staff know the site well and are aware of potential risks and hazards. The school has a comprehensive asbestos management plan and appropriate measures are in place for the control and storage of hazardous substances (COSHH). Any issues raised by staff are dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner and response to emergencies is immediate.
- 2.11 The health and safety committee monitors health and safety effectively. Those responsible for day-to-day operations provide detailed reports. These include the effective completion of required maintenance logs and records of work carried out internally and by contractors.
- 2.12 The school currently uses suitable, temporary pre-fabricated buildings until a new building is completed which is designed to accommodate the increase in numbers. Arrangements are likely to continue to meet requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.13 The school meets the standard.
- 2.14 The school has an appropriate fire safety policy that is reviewed and updated annually. The school's fire risk assessment is undertaken by a suitable qualified person and includes the temporary building. It is reviewed regularly and any recommendations are implemented without delay. Appropriate fire safety procedures are implemented. Emergency evacuations are held termly and recorded efficiently. The school checks and maintains fire alarms, firefighting equipment and fire safety equipment appropriately. A competent person has been appointed to assist taking preventative and protective measures including ensuring that all buildings can be evacuated if there is a fire. Regular and suitable training is in place for staff and for those with responsibilities including fire marshals. Arrangements are likely to continue to meet requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.15 The school meets the standard.
- 2.16 The school ensures that all pupils, are appropriately supervised. All staff receive suitable training about their responsibilities as part of the induction process. Pupils who spoke to the inspector confirmed that there is always a member of staff available should they require support or an adult to talk to. The school will be likely to continue to support and supervise pupils appropriately at all times with the proposed increase in numbers.

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

- 2.17 The school meets the standard.
- 2.18 The school implements a suitable written risk assessment policy effectively. Risk assessments seen confirm that the school identifies potential risks and takes appropriate action to minimise these. The impact of the proposed increase in pupil numbers has been suitably assessed. Suitable steps are taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils when engaging in and out of school activities and educational visits. Appropriate assessments of risk are made for vulnerable pupils. The current risk assessment arrangements are likely to remain suitable once the proposed material change takes place.

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

- 2.19 The school meets the standards.
- 2.20 The school implements a suitable recruitment policy which has due regard to the procedures outlined in KCSIE 2022. The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff and the proprietor, and a register is kept as required. The information on the register reflects the documentation seen in staff files. The current safer recruitment processes are likely to remain suitable once the proposed material change takes place.

Premises and accommodation – maintenance [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 23–29]

- 2.21 The school meets the standard.
- 2.22 The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate. There are sufficient toilets and wash facilities for the proposed increase in numbers. Water supply is suitably maintained. Appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs is provided. The dining arrangements have been appropriately considered. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.23 The temporary accommodation is maintained to a similar set of standards and, with the existing buildings, is appropriate for the proposed increase in numbers until the proposed new building is completed.

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

- 2.24 The school meets the standard.
- 2.25 The proprietor and senior leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that all standards are met and the wellbeing of pupils is ensured. They have considered effectively what measures are necessary for the proposed increase in pupil numbers and planning for the increase is suitable.
- 2.26 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

3.1 It is recommended that the school's request to increase its numbers from 168 to 208 be approved.

4. Summary of evidence

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

Inspector

Ms Louise Robinson

Reporting inspector