



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

St James' School

November 2022

School's details

School	St James' School			
DfE number	812/6000			
Registered charity number	1099060			
Address	St James' School 22 Bargate Grimsby Lincolnshire DN34 4SY			
Telephone number	01472 503260			
Email address	enquiries@saintjameschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Miss Trudy Harris			
Proprietor	Alpha School Ltd			
Age range	12 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	57			
	Day pupils	44	Boarders	13
	Seniors	48	Sixth Form	9
Date of inspection	29 November 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 St James' School is a co-educational day and boarding school with a Christian ethos. In May 2021, the school was purchased by Alpha Schools Holdings Ltd, which appoints directors to oversee the governance of the school.
- 1.2 The senior department includes a small sixth form. Boarders are accommodated in one, appropriately segregated house, close to the school site. The majority are full boarders. Since the previous inspection a new headmistress has been appointed in April 2022. The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance inspection with inspection of educational quality in March 2022.
- 1.3 The school has identified 16 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), one of whom has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 13 pupils, who receive additional support as required.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.4 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 focused compliance and educational quality inspection on 23 to 25 March 2022. The inspection was also asked to consider an additional concern raised since the previous 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 were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 2 (curriculum)	Met
Part 1, paragraph 2A (relationships and sex education)	Met
Part 2, paragraph 4 (framework for pupils' performance)	Met
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 8	Met
Part 3, paragraph 9 (behaviour); NMS 15	Met
Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying); NMS 16	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); NMS 9	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision); NMS 20	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment); NMS 9	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18–21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); NMS 19	Met

Part 5, paragraph 25 (maintenance); NMS 9	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)(provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 2	Met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2]

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 A suitable written curriculum policy is implemented which is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for all required areas of learning. Planning takes into account the needs and aptitudes of all pupils, including those with SEND. Flexible and personalised support is provided for pupils to ensure that their individual needs are met, including following the diagnosis of any specific learning need. The curriculum is appropriately structured to ensure that all age groups have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- 2.3 The pupils are provided with accurate and up-to-date careers guidance. Since the previous inspection a broad range of activities have been planned and implemented to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to experience as broad a range of careers as possible. Arrangements include trips to local colleges and institutes where pupils in Years 10 and 11 can explore opportunities for further education courses or apprenticeships. One period a week is now dedicated to exploring careers options and outside speakers have supplemented the material delivered by school staff.

Quality of education provided – relationships and sex education [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2A]

- 2.4 The school meets the standard.
- 2.5 The school's personal, social, health and economics (PSHE) programme reflects the school's aims and ethos and promotes mutual respect appropriately, including for those with protected characteristics. Since the previous inspection the school has developed an appropriate programme for relationships and sex education which is supported by appropriately detailed plans and resources. Curriculum plans are written to be in line with the most recent statutory guidance and teaching is by suitably experienced and trained teachers. It is supplemented further by a programme of visits and talks from specialist speakers.

Quality of education provided – framework for pupils' performance [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 4]

- 2.6 The school meets the standard.
- 2.7 Suitable assessment processes ensure that individual pupils' attainment is appropriately tracked to ensure their continuing good progress across the age range. These include assessment of pupils' learning in relation to the relationships and sex education programme.

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

Safeguarding policy

- 2.8 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.9 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

- 2.10 The school meets the standards.
- 2.11 Safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively in line with current statutory guidance. The school provides appropriate support for pupils' needs, including listening to children, giving a response and taking appropriate action when concerns are raised. All staff have received suitable training on recent changes to statutory guidance and online safety. New staff complete a comprehensive induction process to ensure they understand their safeguarding responsibilities, including details of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) Part 1 and Annex B; the staff code of conduct; whistleblowing procedures; procedures for children missing education; and the school's behaviour policy. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy have sufficient status and authority to undertake their roles, and have appropriate levels of training, which is in line with local procedures. The DSL provides regular informal updates to staff and opportunities for discussion on any changes to safeguarding policy and its implementation.
- 2.12 Staff demonstrate a full understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities, including to safeguard the particular needs of any pupils with SEND. They recognise the importance of 'early help' strategies, know how to report any concerns about pupils, and do so appropriately. They understand the varied types of child-on-child abuse and the seriousness of such behaviours. They understand how to report any concerns about senior leaders or other adults working with pupils. Appropriate records for safeguarding concerns are maintained. These are regularly monitored by the DSL. These show timely and appropriate liaison with both parents and local agencies. The governing body undertakes an annual safeguarding review with due diligence, demonstrating suitable rigour in their oversight of arrangements, including providing for suitable checks on staff recruited to work in the school. They are trained in safeguarding and provide suitable support and challenge.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9; NMS 15]

- 2.13 The school meets the standards.
- 2.14 The school has a suitable behaviour policy which is available on the school website. It sets out the aims of the school and outlines both suitable rewards to promote good behaviour and appropriate sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour. Staff and pupils understand the policy and it is implemented effectively. Detail of incidents is recorded appropriately and monitored regularly by senior staff to identify patterns and inform action to be taken. A record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour. These show that staff take into account the specific needs of individual pupils, including those with SEND, when dealing with any misbehaviour.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – bullying [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 10; NMS 16]

- 2.15 The school meets the standards.
- 2.16 The school has a suitable policy in place to prevent bullying in so far as is practicable. It stresses the seriousness of bullying, including physical, emotional and online bullying. It sets out the procedures to follow in the case of any incidents and staff are provided with training for the management of bullying cases. Senior leaders understand the threshold for bullying to be regarded as a safeguarding matter. Records are kept appropriately to enable patterns to be identified and action taken in a timely manner.

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

- 2.17 The school meets the standards.

- 2.18 Since the previous inspection the school has developed an appropriate written health and safety policy which covers the areas suggested by the relevant health and safety laws. Senior leaders ensure that this is fully implemented. The newly established health and safety committee meets regularly to monitor and address all aspects of health and safety for the site necessary to ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are safe. Senior leaders ensure the effective elimination of health and safety hazards around the school site. In particular, they now ensure the safe storage of hazardous liquids in the science laboratory. New staff are provided with appropriate health and safety information through the induction process. Regular site inspections are recorded, together with checks of equipment and utilities, and action taken where appropriate. The proprietor oversees these processes effectively.

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

- 2.19 The school meets the standards.
- 2.20 There are sufficient staff on duty to manage transitions in school, break times and lunch time recreation periods. Suitable rotas are in place to ensure this. The number of staff on duty in the boarding house is appropriate for the age and number of pupils present at all times, including overnight. Pupils confirm that there is always someone available for help if they need it.

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

- 2.21 The school meets the standards.
- 2.22 A suitable risk assessment policy and comprehensive arrangements now ensure that risks are appropriately identified, and action taken to reduce risk across the school site. This includes risks from any identifiable hazards. All staff who are involved in producing risk assessments for activities, trips off site, or areas of the school receive appropriate training on induction, and this is updated when necessary. Senior leaders now evaluate appropriately the effectiveness of risk assessments. The planning process for off-site visits including a detailed process of risk assessment has been effectively developed and is used consistently. Suitable assessment is made where new risks are identified. Senior staff oversee the risk-assessment process, sign off the assessments and evaluate their effectiveness

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

- 2.23 The school meets the standards.
- 2.24 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.

Premises and accommodation – maintenance [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 25; NMS 4]

- 2.25 The school meets the standards.
- 2.26 Since the previous inspection, appropriate systems have been developed to ensure that the site is well maintained. A daily sweep of the site is completed, and action taken to address any concerns identified, including in boarding areas. The head also conducts a weekly tour of the site with the site manager to confirm whether action taken has been appropriate. All concerns identified at the time of the previous inspection have been rectified, including replacing an uneven path. Staff and pupils confirm that the site is now kept tidy, and that action is taken in a timely manner when concerns are identified.

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

- 2.27 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]

- 2.28 The school meets the standards.
- 2.29 The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently. The required actions identified by the previous inspection have been completed and the school's action plan has been implemented successfully. Proprietorial review is suitably thorough and supportive to ensure that policies are effectively implemented in practice and actively promote the wellbeing of all pupils, including boarders.

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, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietor. They visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mrs Diane Gardiner

Reporting inspector

Mr Matthew Lovett

Assistant reporting inspector