



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Material Change Inspection Report**

**King's School Ely**

**November 2022**

## School's details

<b>School</b>	King's School, Ely			
<b>DfE number</b>	873/6005			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	802427			
<b>Address</b>	King's School, Ely Barton Square Ely Cambridgeshire CB7 4DB			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01353 660700			
<b>Email address</b>	reception@kingsely.org			
<b>Principal</b>	Mr John Attwater			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr David Day			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	1131			
	<b>Day pupils</b>	938	<b>Boarders</b>	193
	<b>EYFS</b>	57	<b>Juniors</b>	268
	<b>Seniors</b>	604	<b>Sixth Form</b>	202
<b>Date of inspection</b>	18 November 2022			

## 1. Introduction

### Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 King's School, Ely, is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. It is a charitable trust, overseen by a board of governors. Pupils enter the nursery after their second birthday and progress to King's Ely Acremont for the Reception year. The junior school is for pupils aged 7 to 13 years, and the senior for pupils aged 13 to 18. Boarders are accommodated in seven separate boarding houses, three for male pupils, three for female pupils and one mixed. The school educates the choristers at Ely Cathedral. There are 159 pupils at the school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 197 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in November 2021.

### Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 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 numbers from 1040 to 1250, and to change its age range from 1-18 to 2-18. 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. Boarding was not inspected.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraphs 2 (curriculum), 2A (relationships and sex education), 3 (teaching) and 4 (assessment)	<b>Met</b>
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8(safeguarding of boarders)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	<b>Met</b>
Part 4, paragraphs 18–21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	<b>Met</b>
Part 5, paragraphs 23-30 (premises and accommodation)	<b>Met</b>
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	<b>Met</b>
Part 8, paragraph 34 (quality of leadership and management)	<b>Met</b>

## 2. Inspection findings

### **Quality of education provided – curriculum, relationships and sex education, teaching, framework for pupils' performance [ISSR Part 1 paragraphs 2-4]**

- 2.1 The school meets the standards.
- 2.2 The curriculum is suitably documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils, and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. The proposed change in the registration arrangements for the younger age groups will provide greater space for the two- and three-year-old pupils.
- 2.3 The personal, health, social and economic education (PHSE) curriculum effectively encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act. The curriculum is successfully implemented. In line with statutory guidance for relationships and sex education (RSE) there is a planned programme, with topics being covered at an appropriate age and ability level. The school has continued to enhance changes in this programme, which was spoken about positively by pupils in discussions. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection the school has reviewed its careers programme.
- 2.4 There is a suitable framework for assessing pupils' performance. The effectiveness of RSE is informally assessed in lessons and discussions with pupils.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]**

- 2.5 The school meets the standard.
- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.

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

#### **Safeguarding policy**

- 2.7 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.8 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**

- 2.9 The school meets the standards.
- 2.10 Implementation of all aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures is effective in providing appropriate support for the needs of pupils, including boarders.
- 2.11 Safeguarding procedures are implemented to safeguard children at risk and those in need. Staff show effective understanding of their responsibilities, including with regard to child-on-child abuse and any such abuse linked to respect for those with protected characteristics. Staff have received training on the staff code of conduct and use of the low-level concerns procedures. In discussions they showed a good knowledge of whistleblowing and safeguarding procedures and a confidence in using them. They have a suitable knowledge of the thresholds for reporting issues. Staff are aware of who to go to if they have a concern or receive a disclosure. They understand that they can make a direct referral to children's services if necessary. They take appropriate action when necessary.

- 2.12 The safeguarding policy includes suitable definitions of abuse and has been reviewed effectively in line with the latest statutory guidance. It provides appropriate guidance regarding possible abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil, including linking such abuse to bullying. Since the previous inspection the school has appointed a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) from outside the school community. The DSL is supported by a large number of staff trained to the same level, and a welfare team which provides sustained support for pupils. If needed, the team guides pupils to specific professional expertise. Discussion with safeguarding and pastoral leaders confirmed that pupils receive help to address risks and prevent issues escalating. The DSL acts on and refers the early signs of risk or need, monitors any potential for radicalisation, and ensures the school listens to the views of individual pupils as required by *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. This is confirmed in written evidence from safeguarding records. 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. Monitoring and filtering of technology is effective. The physical and mental health of all pupils involved in any incident are given a high priority.
- 2.13 The safeguarding policy gives contact details for required local safeguarding partners. Suitable recruitment procedures for staff are outlined within the safeguarding policy and detailed in a separate recruitment policy. The training for those with specific safeguarding responsibilities is in line with local requirements and statutory advice and is up to date. Training in safeguarding for teaching and non-teaching staff is of sufficient quality and frequency. The school works closely with those responsible for safeguarding and recruitment checks in the cathedral. Information is regularly exchanged so that the wellbeing of pupils, especially choristers, is promoted.
- 2.14 Suitable arrangements for handling allegations against staff, senior leaders or the governors, and potential misconduct, are included in safeguarding procedures. These include seeking immediate advice from the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO). Records show that procedures are followed effectively, and the school follows up actions promptly. The school understands its role in reporting any person to relevant statutory bodies if circumstances require it.
- 2.15 Governors are appropriately trained in safeguarding. A governor with appropriate expertise maintains frequent contact with the DSL and annually conducts a review of the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements on behalf of the governors. Both governors and senior leaders, including the DSL, work closely with the LADO and other external professionals in discussing individual cases and strategic aims.
- 2.16 Safeguarding arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.17 The school meets the standard.
- 2.18 The proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy. Records show that testing of electrical, water and other utilities is regularly undertaken. Staff are effectively trained in health and safety and deal promptly and appropriately with accidents if they occur, including through the reporting of serious accidents. Systematic records ensure trends are identified and steps are taken to mitigate recurrence of any health and safety issues. Health and safety considerations have been integrated in the planning for the newer and planned refurbishments. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.19 The school meets the standard.
- 2.20 The school has a fire risk (prevention) policy which includes the elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances. A fire risk assessment of all buildings has been undertaken by a suitably qualified person. Fire procedures are understood by, and training provided for, staff. Termly fire drills are carried out and recorded, including in boarding time. The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.21 The school meets the standard.
- 2.22 Pupils are properly supervised by qualified and trained staff. Choristers are at all times under the responsibility of an identified member of staff who is suitably qualified and experienced. These arrangements should be unaffected by the increase in numbers.

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

- 2.23 The school meets the standard.
- 2.24 The school's risk assessment policy clearly describes appropriate lines of responsibility and the approaches to be taken to identify and mitigate risk. There is an effective culture of assessing risk to pupils in any decision taken, in particular regarding pupils about whom behavioural or safeguarding concerns have been identified. There are appropriate assessments of risk for in-school activities and for school visits both in the UK and abroad, including for sports. Appropriate assessments are also made for the needs of individual pupils both while in school and in the surrounding area. In all these areas, appropriate action is taken to mitigate risks identified. The approaches are likely to be unchanged as a result of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers or the change in age range.

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

- 2.25 The school meets the standards.
- 2.26 All the required checks on staff, governors, and volunteers are carried out and completed before they take up their posts. The school does not employ supply staff. Contractors send the school up-to-date information on checks they have undertaken on their employees, and the school makes appropriate further checks on arrival. Staff employed by the cathedral, including chaperones, are checked to the appropriate level.
- 2.27 The arrangements are likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.28 The school maintains correctly an accurate single central register of appointments which includes the dates on which all checks have been completed.

**Premises and accommodation – [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23-30]**

- 2.29 The school meets the standards.
- 2.30 Newly refurbished buildings have been converted to a high standard, including the accommodation for boarders. Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided

throughout the school. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; and water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play, and the school is in the process of expanding and improving its off-site facilities. The provision is likely to be sufficient to meet the needs of the envisaged increase in pupil numbers and is unaffected by the change in age range.

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

- 2.31 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]**

- 2.32 The school meets the standard.
- 2.33 Appropriate procedures are implemented which allow the senior leaders and governors to manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements and monitor compliance with standards and other statutory advice. In this way the leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently. The strategic and operational planning for the proposed increase in numbers and change in age range actively promotes the wellbeing of pupils.

### **3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection**

#### **Summary of findings**

- 3.1 The school has planned in detail for an increase in numbers, including an identification of any unforeseen consequences. The accommodation supports the proposed increase, and no changes will be needed in the curriculum, teaching or arrangements to promote the wellbeing of pupils. The change in the age range provides greater space for the EYFS provision. The school meets the independent school standards inspected and is likely to continue to do so after the proposed change

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the material change be approved.



## 4. Summary of evidence

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

### Inspector

Mr Stephen Cole

Reporting inspector