



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

St Hilary's School

October 2019



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School's Details

School	St Hilary's School			
DfE number	936/6042			
Registered charity number	312056			
Address	St Hilary's School Holloway Hill Godalming Surrey GU7 1RZ			
Telephone number	01483 416551			
Email address	secretary@sthilarysschool.com			
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Whittingham			
Chair of governors	Mr Richard Thompson			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	267			
	EYFS	98	Juniors	169
Inspection dates	2 to 3 October 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 St Hilary's School is an independent day school for male pupils between the ages of 2 and 8, and female pupils between the ages of 2 and 11. Founded in 1927, it became a charitable trust in 1966. The work of the school is overseen by a board of governors. The school is based in a Victorian house situated on the outskirts of Godalming. The original house has been extended to provide purpose-built accommodation

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to provide an outstanding all-round education, equip pupils with the qualities and skills required in school and beyond, recognise and utilise all their talents and ensure they all achieve their full potential. It works to develop a thirst for learning in its pupils, transmit strong traditional values based on the school's Christian ethos and provide a warm, safe and caring environment that enables all children to thrive.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds, mostly from white British families living locally. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 56 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, speech and language difficulties and hearing impairment. Forty-seven of these pupils receive additional specialist help. Two pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 28 pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified 12 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 14 other pupils because of their special talents in a range of activities, including gymnastics and drama.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#); [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 The curriculum is 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. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place. Staff with responsibility for the management of safeguarding pupils demonstrate good knowledge and have developed strong relationships with the local safeguarding partners. All staff are appropriately trained and regularly updated to ensure that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner.
- 2.8 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils do not pay due regard to current statutory guidance in relation to the recruitment of staff. Reference checks, prohibition from teaching checks, prohibition from management checks and employment history checks have not always been completed before the commencement of employment. For some self-employed staff, employment history checks have not been completed at all. In addition, separate barred list checks have not been completed where relevant.
- 2.9 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9-16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010], and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met, but those in paragraph 7(a) and 7(b) (safeguarding) are not met.**

Action point 1

- **the school must ensure that barred list checks, reference checks, prohibition from teaching checks, prohibition from management checks and employment history checks are carried out on staff before they commence work [paragraph 7; EYFS 3.9].**

Action Point 2

- **the school must ensure that an employment history checks is undertaken for all self-employed staff [paragraphs 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.9].**

Action Point 3

- the school must ensure that, when the results of a disclosure and barring list check are not received before the start date, all other relevant checks and a separate barred list are completed [paragraphs 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.9].

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

2.10 The school undertakes most of the required checks to ensure the suitability of staff, and proprietors. In a number of cases, the required checks of medical fitness, qualifications, right to work and overseas checks have not always been completed before staff or governors take up their posts. A single central register of appointments is maintained to record the dates on which the checks are completed. In some cases, these dates have not been recorded correctly.

2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 18(2)(a-e)] are met, but those in paragraphs 18(3), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b)(ii), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii) and EYFS 3.9 and 3.12 are not met.

Action point 4

- the school must ensure that all the required checks on staff are carried out and completed before staff take up their posts [paragraph 18(3); EYFS 3.9].

Action point 5

- the school must ensure that all the required checks on governors are carried out and completed before they take up their posts [paragraph 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b)(ii); EYFS 3.9].

Action point 6

- the school must ensure that the single central register of appointments is maintained correctly to include the dates on which all checks have been completed [paragraphs 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii); EYFS 3.12].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. This also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor does not ensure that those with responsibility for leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge or fulfil their responsibilities so that all of the independent school standards are met consistently. They have not carried out all of the required checks on staff and proprietors before they start work in the school and are, consequently, failing to safeguard pupils and promote their well-being.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 7

- **the proprietor must ensure that those with responsibility for leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities so that all of the independent school standards are met consistently and that they promote the well-being of pupils [paragraph 34 (1)(a), (b) and (c)].**

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Diane Gardiner

Reporting inspector

Mrs Virginia Jackson

Compliance team inspector (Former deputy head, IAPS school)