



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Report for an Additional Inspection

Oakham School

December 2021

School's details

School	Oakham School			
DfE number	857/6000			
Registered charity number	1131425			
Address	Oakham School Chapel Close Oakham Rutland LE15 6DT			
Telephone number	01572 758500			
Email address	enquiries@oakham.rutland.sch.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Henry Price			
Chair of governors	Professor Neil Gorman			
Age range	10 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	1045			
	Day pupils	517	Boarders	528
	Lower School	196	Middle School	479
	Upper School	370		
Date of visit	13 December 2021			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Oakham School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school located in Oakham, Rutland. It has a Christian foundation and is a registered charity, whose trustees provide the governance of the school. Boarding provision is available from Year 6. The seven boarding houses are situated around the centre of Oakham, near the teaching accommodation. The school has 183 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), none of whom has an education, health and care plan. There are 110 pupils who speak English as an additional language. The previous inspection was a regulatory compliance with educational quality inspection, which took place on 5 to 7 November 2019.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.2 This was an unannounced additional inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) which focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs), and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2015.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 11	Not met
Part 3, paragraph 9 (behaviour); NMS 12	Met
Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying); NMS 12	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); NMS 6	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 7, paragraph 33 (manner in which complaints are handled); NMS 18	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (quality of leadership and management); NMS 13	Not met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding and safeguarding of boarders [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 11]

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 does not meet the standards.
- 2.4 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSLs provide sufficient coverage for their role across the school, including in boarding. They and all staff are suitably trained. Staff understand and follow the staff behaviour policy. They are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and the procedures to follow should a safeguarding concern arise. Staff understand the different forms of abuse, including peer-on-peer abuse and sexual harassment and the particular vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND to these. The school implements effective procedures for responding to any allegations against staff and other persons working at the school, including the need to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency when appropriate. Recruitment procedures are effective. The school teaches pupils how to keep safe, including when online. Appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school internet are in place.
- 2.5 Governors monitor the safeguarding policy and procedures, including through an annual review. Those affected by peer-on-peer abuse, including victims and perpetrators, receive appropriate support. However, the school has not always acted in the best interests of the child or acted in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures. In particular, the school has not always sought advice from or made timely referrals to appropriate external agencies when safeguarding concerns about pupils, particularly those related to sexual assault, have been raised.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9; NMS 12]

- 2.6 The school meets the standards.
- 2.7 The school implements a suitable behaviour management policy effectively. It acts to promote positive behaviour and keeps suitable records of any poor behaviour, the sanctions awarded, and actions taken to improve behaviour. Leaders monitor these records to identify any patterns and trends in the nature of pupils' behaviour and takes action to address these. Scrutiny of the school's behaviour records confirms that the school responds to incidents of poor behaviour, including those relating to fighting, name calling or racist behaviour, effectively, fairly and consistently.

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

- 2.8 The school meets the standards.
- 2.9 The school maintains an appropriate anti-bullying policy and takes effective action to prevent and respond to bullying. Staff are trained in how to respond to and record bullying incidents and pupils receive guidance on types of bullying and appropriate responses. Scrutiny of behavioural records shows that bullying incidents are responded to swiftly and effectively, with appropriate support given to victims and perpetrators.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11; NMS 6]

- 2.10 The school meets the standards.
- 2.11 The school implements a suitable health and safety policy effectively. Health and safety records demonstrate that all required checks, servicing and maintenance take place regularly and systematically. Staff receive appropriate health and safety training, including food safety training for those with catering responsibilities. Hazardous materials are stored safely. The school implements a dynamic COVID-19 risk assessment effectively. Appropriate measures are taken to meet pupils' dietary needs and requirements. The school monitors health and safety matters effectively through a health and safety committee which meets regularly.

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

- 2.12 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.

Manner in which complaints are handled [ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33; NMS 18]

- 2.13 The school meets the standards.
- 2.14 The school responds to any complaints in line with a suitable three-stage complaints procedure. The record of complaints shows that the school responds to complaints within stated timescales. The record of complaints identifies any complaints relating to boarding provision and actions taken in response to complaints, whether or not they are upheld.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 13]

- 2.15 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.16 The proprietor does not ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. In particular, leaders and managers have not ensured that advice has always been sought from or timely referrals made to the appropriate external agencies when safeguarding concerns about pupils, particularly those related to sexual assault, have been raised.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraph 7 and 8; NMS 11

- The school must ensure that it always seeks advice from, and makes timely referrals to, appropriate external agencies when safeguarding concerns about pupils, particularly those related to sexual assault, are raised [paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and 8(a) and (b); NMS 11.1]

ISSR Part 8, Quality of leadership and management, paragraph 34; NMS 13

- The proprietor must ensure that leadership and management demonstrate good skills and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are met consistently and that they actively promote the well-being of the pupils [paragraphs 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 13.1, 13.3–13.5, 13.7 and 13.8]

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the headmaster, senior leaders and other members of staff and with the chair of governors. They talked with groups of pupils and scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.