



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT

THE KING'S SCHOOL CHESTER

JANUARY 2018



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	The King's School Chester			
DfE number	896/6019			
Registered charity number	525934			
Address	The King's School Wrexham Road Chester Cheshire CH4 7QL			
Telephone number	01244 689500			
Email address	hm@kingschester.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr George Hartley			
Chair of governors	Ms Joanne Clague			
Age range	4 to 19			
Number of pupils on roll	1102			
	Boys	706	Girls	396
	EYFS	35	Juniors	331
	Seniors	518	Sixth Form	218
Inspection dates	31 January to 1 February 2018			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Founded by King Henry VIII in 1541, the school was originally housed within the precincts of Chester Cathedral. A junior school was added in 1911. It moved to its current location on the southern outskirts of the city in 1960, and the first girls were admitted in 1998. The school became fully co-educational in 2004. Since the previous inspection, the school has opened an infant school for pupils between the ages of 4 and 7, and a new headmaster has been appointed.
- 1.2 The school is a charity overseen by a board of governors who are also its trustees. It is organised in four distinct sections all based upon the same site: an infant school known as Willow Lodge, a junior and a senior school, and a sixth form occupying a sixth form centre. It selects its pupils on their academic ability.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school's aim is to provide outstanding academic tuition, nurture spiritual growth and to offer wider sporting, artistic and social skills in order that each pupil may develop his or her potential.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, mostly from white British families living within a 15-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is well above average. The school has identified 125 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, 82 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. English is an additional language (EAL) for 21 pupils, none of whom require additional support with their English. Data used by the school have identified 257 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, whose needs are met by their classroom teachers.

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. 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 meets almost 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. In order to meet all the standards, the school should take immediate action to remedy the deficiencies as detailed below.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the junior school, the school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2014 to 2016, performance has been well above the national average for maintained schools, and above the average for maintained selective schools.
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2014 to 2016 have been well above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools, and above the national average for maintained selective schools.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 The school has not paid sufficient regard to current statutory guidance. It has not ensured that the contractor has carried out the required recruitment checks prior to catering staff starting work at the school.
- 2.11 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 paragraphs 7(a) and 7(b) [arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance] are not met.**

Action point 1

- the school must ensure that the required recruitment checks are completed by the contractor prior to catering staff starting work at the school [paragraphs 7(a) and (b)]

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

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.14 Suitable toilet, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their medical 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.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.16 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include 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 those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, and its results in public examinations, 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.
- 2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.18 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.
- 2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.20 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management actively promote the well-being of the pupils.
- 2.21 The proprietor has not fully ensured that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met. Failings in Part 3 relating to the required checks upon the suitability of catering staff employed by a contractor lead to the failings in Part 8.
- 2.22 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in sub-paragraph 34(c) is met but those in sub-paragraphs 34(a) [demonstrate good knowledge and skills] and 34(b) [fulfil their responsibilities effectively] are not met.**

Action point 2

- **the proprietor must ensure that people with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, so that the Independent School Standards are consistently met [paragraph 34(1)(a)]**

Action point 3

- **the proprietor must ensure that people with leadership and management responsibilities at the school fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the Independent School Standards are consistently met [paragraph 34(1)(b)]**

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 assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Roberta Georgiou

Reporting inspector

Mr Shaun Wilson

Compliance team inspector (Bursar, HMC school)