



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Advice Note for a Material Change Visit

Gosfield School

January 2022

School's details

School	Gosfield School			
DfE number	881/6010			
Registered charity number	310871			
Address	Gosfield School Halstead Road Gosfield Halstead Essex CO9 1PF			
Telephone number	01787 474040			
Email address	enquiries@gosfieldschool.org.uk			
Principal	Mr Rod Jackson			
Chair of governors	Mr Peter Sakal			
Age range	2 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	289			
	EYFS	25	Juniors	82
	Seniors	160	Sixth Form	22
Date of visit	31 January 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Gosfield School, founded in 1929, is an independent co-educational day school. It is a charitable trust, with a board of governors. All sections of the school are on a single site, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting, which is part of the junior school. The construction of a new performing arts centre is currently underway. The school has 87 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) two of whom have an education, health and care plan. English is as an additional language for two pupils. The current principal took up his appointment in September 2021. The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in September 2018.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.2 This was an announced material change visit at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase its registered capacity from 260 to 380. The visit focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 13 (first aid)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18–21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23–29 (premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

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 meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.4 Safeguarding procedures are suitably implemented in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2021. Additional arrangements to ensure the welfare of the pupils during the COVID-19 pandemic have been continually updated in line with government advice. In discussions pupils reported that they feel they are listened to by staff and that there are many opportunities to raise any concerns both in school and during periods of remote learning. Inspection evidence confirms this view and that action is taken when pupils' specific needs are identified, including those of pupils with SEND. Records of safeguarding show that the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and three deputies work closely together to promote children's well-being. They ensure that safeguarding information is regularly shared with staff, parents and pupils and that procedures are monitored. Records confirm that incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence, including online, since the previous inspection have been dealt with according to school procedures and external advice has been sought appropriately. Where pupils are respectively in need or at risk, including any who are victims of harmful sexual behaviour or potentially so, safeguarding partners and the police have been contacted promptly and the school has co-operated with external agencies effectively.
- 2.5 Detailed school records of all safeguarding concerns are regularly monitored to identify patterns so that any early signs of abuse can be acted upon. Regular safeguarding training for all staff includes identification of such behaviours. In discussions, staff demonstrated a full awareness of their training and their safeguarding responsibilities, and confirmed that they would know how to respond if a situation of child-on-child sexual abuse arose. Staff receive suitable training when new to the school and, from thereon, update training about the most recent statutory guidance is regularly provided. Staff have completed training in the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Central records of staff attendance at training are kept systematically, so that absentees at the time of training can be identified.
- 2.6 Arrangements for handling allegations against staff are included in safeguarding procedures. The school safeguarding team works together with the governors to produce an annual report. A scrutiny of the minutes of board meetings where safeguarding was discussed confirms an appropriate depth and breadth of oversight. When incidents occur, governors ensure there is appropriate review and that any necessary improvement in procedures is made. Governors have received effective safeguarding training and the DSL ensures that they receive regular updates.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety and fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 11 and 12]

- 2.7 The school meets the standards and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

- 2.8 Health and safety matters within the school are handled appropriately. Systematic procedures are implemented effectively and outcomes are regularly reviewed by governors. An appropriate fire safety policy is in place, and procedures for emergency evacuation are implemented effectively and suitably recorded with regular fire drills held. Suitable fire risk assessments for all school buildings, including new buildings have been undertaken with any recommended actions being swiftly addressed. Fire signage is clear throughout and there are sufficient members of staff in place to manage any emergency evacuation.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – first aid [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 13]

- 2.9 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.10 The school ensures that members of staff are appropriately trained in first aid with paediatric cover always being available when children in the EYFS are on site. When any errors in the implementation of arrangements occur governors and senior leaders review procedures effectively and take suitable action. The school has recently reorganised its first aid provision and introduced more rigorous systems to monitor the administration of medicines. Records checked on the visit confirm that procedures are now robust and that the school's first aid policy is effectively implemented.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils and risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 14 and 16]

- 2.11 The school meets the standards and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.12 The school ensures that pupils are always under appropriate supervision while attending school. There are sufficient staff in place to maintain suitable supervision of pupils once the proposed increase in numbers takes place. The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy which sets out a suitable approach to the management of risk. Risk assessments are in place for all visits and areas of the school, such as for the EYFS areas, the science laboratory, design and technology room and recreation areas.

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

- 2.13 The school meets the standards and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.14 The school implements a suitable recruitment policy which has due regard to the procedures outlined in KCSIE. The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. The information on the register reflects documentation seen in staff files.

Premises and accommodation – [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29]

- 2.15 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.16 A tour of the school premises demonstrated that the current site provides appropriate provision for the proposed increase in the number of pupils. Existing classrooms have capacity for additional pupils in each of the year groups. Plans to increase the size of the senior school changing rooms and reconfigure the existing sixth-form accommodation are effectively designed to create more useable space. A new performing arts centre is currently under construction. Dining arrangements have been appropriately considered and there is sufficient space for outdoor activities and recreation. Effective provision is in place for pupils to have easy access to drinking water. Throughout the school,

furnishings and resources are of a suitable quality. Appropriate medical facilities are in place. Acoustics effectively promote learning. The site is maintained in a suitable state of repair and regularly monitored for safety with any maintenance issues being promptly addressed. There are sufficient toilets and wash hand basins for 380 pupils. External lighting ensures all areas are appropriately lit.

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

- 2.17 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]

- 2.18 The school meets the standard and is likely to continue to do so with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- 2.19 Those with leadership and management positions demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and they fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are likely to continue to be met. Senior leaders have considered carefully what measures are necessary to increase numbers from 260 to 380 and the school is suitably prepared for the material change.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change request

- 3.1 It is recommended that Gosfield School is granted permission to increase its registered number of pupils from 260 to 380.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the chair of governors. She visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. She scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.