

Report for an Additional Inspection

School name	Tring Park School for the Performing Arts
DfE number	919/6041
Registered charity number	0140330
Address	Tring Park School for the Performing Arts Mansion Drive Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5LX
Principal	Mr Stefan Anderson
Chair of governors	Mr Michael Geddes
Date of visit	26 September 2018

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Tring Park School for the Performing Arts is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils between the ages of 8 and 19 situated in Tring, Hertfordshire. At the time of the visit, there were 363 pupils on roll (258 girls and 105 boys), of whom 205 were in the senior school and 158 in the sixth form, and of whom 212 pupils are boarders. The school is owned and governed by the AES Tring Park School Trust.
- 1.2 The school has identified 153 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities; no pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language for 18 pupils. The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in April 2017.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.3 This was an unannounced additional inspection at the request of the Department for Education which was focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2015, particularly those concerned with safeguarding, including measures to guard against bullying; the quality of education provided; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; welfare, health and safety of boarders; the manner in which complaints are handled and the quality of leadership and management.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
ISSR Part 1 - Quality of Education, paragraph 3(a) and (d)	Met
ISSR Part 2 - Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, paragraph 5(b)(i)	Met
ISSR Part 3 - Welfare, health and safety of pupils, paragraphs 7(a) and (b); 8(a) and 8(b) - safeguarding; NMS 11	Not met
ISSR Part 3 - Welfare, health and safety of pupils, paragraph 10 - bullying; NMS 12	Met
ISSR Part 3 - Welfare, health and safety of pupils, paragraph 11 - health and safety; NMS 6 - safety of boarders	Met
ISSR Part 7 - Manner in which complaints are to be handled	Not met
ISSR Part 8 - Quality of leadership in and management of schools, paragraph 34; NMS 13 - management and development of boarding	Not met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of Education [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 3(a) and (d)]

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school ensures that teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability and to develop their skills in their chosen subjects. The majority of lessons are well planned to take into account pupil's needs.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5(b)(i)]

- 2.3 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.4 The school develops pupil's self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence through the promotion of the school ethos and the principles it promotes to pupils, staff and parents. The principles of working hard and having high expectations are promoted, and through pupil's personal achievements they gain knowledge and skill and develop their self-confidence. For a small number of pupils, their self-esteem and self-confidence is less well promoted due to negative teaching attitudes.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils - safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b); 8(a) and 8(b); NMS 11]

- 2.5 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.6 The safeguarding policy and the implemented procedures show regard for the most recent statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018* (KCSIE). The policy includes details of *Prevent Duty Guidance (2015)* for England and Wales and shows regard for the principles of *Working Together (2018)*. It is further supported by suitable policies covering the staff code of conduct, safe recruitment, whistleblowing and e-safety. The policy and the procedures are reviewed annually by the board of governors, including procedures for boarding. The school has a lead governor for safeguarding, with suitable knowledge and experience. The head confirmed that there has been one concern regarding suitability of staff that has required a referral to the relevant authorities since the previous ISI inspection in September 2017. Records show that this was handled appropriately.
- 2.7 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is a member of the senior leadership team and is assisted by three deputy DSLs. Staff understand the need to report any concerns to the DSL or directly to the appropriate authorities for child protection. The school follows local authority procedures and maintains contact with them for advice. The DSL and deputy DSLs have undergone appropriate and up-to-date training with the local authority, including the Prevent strategy and inter-agency procedures. Staff training is up to date, including the updated requirements of KCSIE 2018, and appropriate induction training has been provided by the DSL for newly appointed staff. Records of training are carefully maintained and recorded.
- 2.8 Boarders have a wide choice of staff within the boarding houses, the medical centre and in the day school to whom they can turn to for advice with a personal concern or problem. Boarders have access to school counsellors and an independent listener.

- 2.9 Safeguarding documents show that most concerns about pupil welfare are acted upon appropriately and promptly, and records are kept secure. However, prolonged complaints over a long period of time regarding the negative use of language by staff in some areas of the school, causing distress and anxiety to some pupils, has not been routinely treated as a potential safeguarding issue and documented as such. In the context of the school, whilst recognizing the need to promote resilience and the handling of failure, the school has not always recognised the potential for causing emotional harm to pupils. The senior management does not always ensure that sufficient consideration has been given to pupils in need or at risk from emotional and psychological abuse. Staff are not fully trained in the correct use of the whistleblowing procedures to ensure that concerns are formerly handled. The school does not monitor uniformity across all staff of the implementation of their code of conduct, particularly with regard to matters of communication and respect for pupils.

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

- 2.10 The school meets the standards.
- 2.11 The school has a suitable policy to guard against bullying and it is implemented effectively, including in boarding. Pupils understand what to do if they are involved or observe bullying and who to report to. The school ensures that it provides suitable education about bullying in the curriculum. Bullying incidents, including in boarding, are recorded and monitored effectively.

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

- 2.12 The school meets the standards.
- 2.13 The school has a suitable health and safety policy which is reviewed annually by the board of governors and the school health and safety team. There is a competent person in charge of health and safety on site. Staff, including those in boarding, are trained in health and safety matters and how to keep pupils safe. Pupils report feeling safe in school. The school implements appropriate policies for the care of pupils, including boarders, who are unwell. The medical centre is appropriate, with suitable qualified medical practitioners including two school counsellors who closely monitor the health and welfare of pupils.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled [ISSR Part 7]

- 2.14 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.15 The governors ensure that a complaints procedure is drawn up and is available to parents on its website. It sets out a clear timescale for the management of a complaint and provides for a written record to be kept of the correspondence regarding complaints. Records show that initially concerns and complaints are dealt with promptly. The record does not, however, suitably document the action taken by the school as a result of those complaints regardless of whether they are upheld or not, or show how, and whether, they have been resolved.

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

- 2.16 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.17 The leadership and management have the knowledge and skills required to meet their responsibilities. They monitor the educational provision effectively to promote pupil progress and provide a safe environment where pupils can develop their knowledge, skills and understanding to allow them to grow in confidence. They are not, however, fulfilling their responsibilities effectively to ensure that the Independent School Standards are met consistently.
- 2.18 The school promotes an open and transparent culture regarding safeguarding, but in some areas of the school an inappropriate culture has developed that has remained largely unchallenged. The governance and leadership have not always viewed safeguarding as a culture that must pervade every element of school life and in all departments. When action has been taken, no clear plan has been put in place to evaluate the outcomes or to adjust the cultural approach when issues are identified. The school has failed to monitor the implementation of the staff code of conduct, particularly in areas regarding communication and respect for pupils. Insufficient training has been provided in the whistleblowing procedures so that staff understand the formal structures that are in place to record their concerns and are confident that their concerns will be dealt with. As a result, governance, leadership and management are not actively promoting the well-being of all pupils.
- 2.19 A suitable complaints procedure is in place and every effort is made initially to resolve the complaints satisfactorily. When the complaint is prolonged the action taken is incomplete and does not fully resolve the matter. The school does not always appropriately record the actions taken.

3. Regulatory action points

3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the 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, paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8(a) and (b); NMS 11

- Ensure the school fully implements the recommendations of KCSIE (2018) with regard to promoting a culture of safeguarding across the whole school.
- Ensure the school takes action to protect pupils from emotional and psychological harm.
- Ensure staff are fully trained in the use of the whistleblowing policy and procedure.
- Ensure staff are fully monitored in the staff code of conduct with particular regard to matters of communication and respect for pupils.
- Ensure that all safeguarding documentation accurately records all incidents and actions taken.

ISSR Part 7, Manner in which complaints are to be handled, paragraph 33(j); NMS 18

- Ensure that records show how and when complaints are resolved and ensure the action taken by the school as a result of any complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld) is fully recorded.

ISSR Part 8, Quality of leadership and management, paragraph 34(b) and (c); NMS 13.1, 13.4 and 13.5

- Ensure that leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities effectively to ensure that the Independent School Standards are met consistently with regard to the handling of safeguarding and complaints.
- Ensure that the leadership and management actively promote the well-being of all pupils by establishing a culture of safeguarding across the whole school.
- Ensure that the leadership and management monitor that all staff uniformly follow the code of conduct.

4. Summary of evidence

Written materials

- Safeguarding policy
- Arrangements to educate pupils about safeguarding, including e-safety; bullying, taking responsibility for their own behaviour (to include PSHE schemes of work)
- Records of staff training with particular reference to safeguarding and bullying
- Code of conduct for staff
- Whistleblowing policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Records of bullying incidents
- Complaints policy
- Records of complaints
- Minutes of governors' meetings
- Minutes of senior leadership team meetings
- External report of safeguarding concerns
- PSHE syllabus
- Mental health policy
- Sample of pupil reports

Meetings with school personnel

- Introductory meeting with head – to discuss arrangements for the day and to provide initial thoughts on areas specified as focus for the visit
- Meeting with the DSL – to discuss implementation of safeguarding policy, training, the induction of new staff and safeguarding concerns
- Meeting with medical staff to discuss arrangements for pupils who are unwell
- Meeting with head of pastoral care to discuss education of pupils in PSHE and safeguarding issues
- Meeting with HR responsible for the recording of complaints

Activities on site

- Further scrutiny and evaluation of implementation of policies and documentation (as detailed above)
- Visit to the medical centre
- Interviews with pupils, including boarders, in Years 12 and 13 chosen by inspectors
- Meeting with boarding staff and tutors to discuss pastoral care of boarders