

## Report for a Progress Monitoring Visit

<b>School name</b>	Tring Park School for the Performing Arts			
<b>DfE number</b>	919/6041			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	0140330			
<b>Address</b>	Tring Park School for the Performing Arts Mansion Drive Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5LX			
<b>Principal</b>	Mr Stefan Anderson			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Michael Geddes			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	354			
	<b>Boys</b>	103	<b>Girls</b>	251
	<b>Day pupils</b>	144	<b>Boarders</b>	210
	<b>Preparatory School</b>	12	<b>Junior School</b>	92
	<b>Middle School</b>	100	<b>Senior School</b>	150
<b>Date of visit</b>	14 May 2019			

## 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 eight and nineteen, situated in Tring, Hertfordshire. It is one of nine specialist schools supported by the Department for Education under its Music and Dance Scheme. Pupils are admitted on the basis of their talent in dance, drama, music or musical theatre. The school is owned and governed by the AES Tring Park School Trust.
- 1.2 The school has 40 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 12 pupils. The school's previous inspection was an unannounced additional inspection in September 2018.

### Purpose of the visit

- 1.3 This was an unannounced progress monitoring visit at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the additional inspection on 26 September 2018.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 11 (safeguarding)	Met
ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32 (1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33; NMS 18 (the manner in which complaints are handled)	Met
ISST Part 8, paragraph 34 (quality of leadership in and management of schools); NMS 13 (management and development of boarding)	Met

## 2. Inspection findings

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [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. The safeguarding policy is supported by suitable guidance on whistleblowing, mental health and online safety, as well as clear guidance to staff on their code of conduct.

#### Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standards.
- 2.4 Safeguarding is well managed in line with current statutory and local authority guidance, thus promoting the welfare of both boarders and day pupils. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and three deputy DSLs are all trained at the required level for their responsibilities, including in inter-agency and Prevent training. All other staff have received further safeguarding training since the previous inspection and are given regular informal updates by the DSL as well as undertaking online training. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to promote pupils' well-being and of how to refer concerns. New staff undergo suitable induction training and all staff sign to confirm that they have read and understood relevant parts of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)*. The school keeps suitable records of staff training to ensure catch-up sessions, where necessary. Records of pupils whose welfare is being monitored, as well as of referrals to Children's Services, are maintained with suitable detail and confidentiality. Governors, through a nominated safeguarding lead, maintain strong oversight and review the school's safeguarding policies and procedures as appropriate.
- 2.5 In response to safeguarding concerns identified in the previous inspection regarding pupil-staff relationships in some departments, which caused anxiety and distress to some pupils, senior leaders, overseen by governors, have made a determined effort to effect a change and improvement in the culture of safeguarding in school and to improve the staff's understanding of the causes of stress in pupils. To this end, several effective initiatives to promote pupils' well-being and support those in need have been instigated. Staff have received additional training to ensure they fully understand and implement their code of conduct and both pupils and staff report that the atmosphere in school, particularly in vocational departments, has become more positive as a result. Pupils state that whilst they recognise the need to be able to receive criticism and disappointment as a necessity for their future careers, this is now given more constructively and sensitively.
- 2.6 The school has introduced a pupil concerns form to enable staff to record and communicate any welfare concerns that arise. This has given staff a better awareness of pupils and enabled them to share information efficiently to build a fuller picture of individuals' needs. As a result, staff assert that suitable interventions are now provided at an earlier stage. Staff confirm that communication between academic and vocational departments and the medical centre is improving though pupils state there is still room for improvement in this respect. A pupil well-being survey, to be undertaken termly, has taken place and the principal and DSL meet each week with random groups of pupils to seek their views. This has strengthened the leadership's awareness of issues of concern to pupils and enables them to gain a first-hand picture of pupils' well-being and necessary improvements. For example, staff told inspectors that if pupils are anxious about an examination, they can now choose to study rather than attend a dance session. Pupils state that they have a choice of trusted adults they can speak to, the houseparents for boarders in particular, but also their tutor, director of vocational

department or staff in the medical centre. They assert that through the school council and prefects who report to the principal weekly, they can give their opinions and share concerns.

- 2.7 The pupils confirm that they feel safe, cared for and generally happy in school. The staff demonstrate a positive response to the new initiatives, stating that they have all had cause to examine their practices. They cited a workshop on positive language as an example, which they say, made them more aware of the effect their manner and language have on pupils and colleagues. Both pupils and staff report that relationships, and consequently the atmosphere in school, have greatly improved as a result of this change in approach. Having undertaken additional training in relation to whistleblowing, staff state they would be confident to use this procedure should it be necessary. They confirm that they would not avoid reference to a colleague in completing a pupil concern form, should this be relevant. The leadership monitors the implementation of the safeguarding policies with regular learning walks and lesson observations, which now include particular consideration of safeguarding issues. Senior dance pupils who have undertaken mindfulness and cognitive behavioural therapy training state that this has been helpful for developing their resilience and general well-being. The school has trained a number of its staff in youth mental health first aid, to support the work of the counsellors. Staff assert that these measures are creating a more positive learning environment and that pupils' progress is greater as a result.

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

- 2.8 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]**

- 2.9 The school meets the standards.
- 2.10 The school has a suitable complaints policy, published on its website. This details a three-stage procedure with appropriate time scales. The school treats all parental concerns as a complaint and records these centrally. In response to the previous inspection, records now show the school's actions as a result of a complaint, and how, and at which stage, it has been resolved. Governors now maintain stronger oversight of parental concerns by considering a termly analysis of complaints which indicates the nature of the concern and the department to which it refers. Records indicate that there have been no formal complaints since the previous inspection visit.

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

- 2.11 The school meets the standards.
- 2.12 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, including those related to safeguarding, so that the Independent School Standards are met consistently, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. In particular, governors and school leaders have fully implemented the action plan prepared following the previous inspection. Practices within the school which previously compromised the well-being of pupils are being robustly addressed.

### **3. Regulatory action points**

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this visit, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015, and no further action is required as a result of this visit.

## 4. Summary of evidence

### Written materials

- Safeguarding policy
- Acceptable contact policy
- Alcohol, smoking and drugs policy
- Eating disorder policy
- Online safety IT and acceptable use policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Equal rights policy
- Complaints procedure
- Code of conduct for staff
- Mental health policy
- Boarding Handbook for pupils
- Boarding Handbook for staff
- Records of staff training with particular reference to safeguarding
- Governors' minutes with regard to the annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures
- Minutes of senior leadership team meetings
- Records and correspondence relating to safeguarding/behavioural incidents and bullying;
- Evidence of referrals/consultations [Children's Services, local authority designated officer (LADO), Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)]
- Evidence of allegations reported to principal or to the chair of governors
- Log of complaints, stage of resolution, parental communications and school replies.

### Meetings with school personnel

- Introductory meeting with principal and senior leadership team – to discuss arrangements for the day and to provide initial thoughts on areas specified as focus for the visit
- Meeting with the DSL and deputy DSLs – to discuss implementation of safeguarding policy, training and induction of new staff
- Meeting with boarding staff selected by inspectors to discuss the pastoral care of boarders
- Meeting with medical staff/counsellors to discuss physical and emotional support for pupils
- Meeting with two groups of staff selected by inspectors, one group being directors of vocational departments and the other rank and file members of staff
- Meeting with chair of governors

### **Activities on site**

- Further scrutiny and evaluation of implementation of policies and documentation (as detailed above)
- Observation of a dance class
- Interviews with pupils, including boarders, in Years 10, 12, 13 and 14 chosen by inspectors
- Meeting of inspectors