



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Advice Note for an Additional Inspection**

**Charterhouse School**

**December 2021**

## School's details

<b>School</b>	Charterhouse			
<b>DfE number</b>	936/6041			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	312054			
<b>Address</b>	Charterhouse Godalming Surrey GU7 2DX			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01483 291600			
<b>Email address</b>	reception@charterhouse.org.uk			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Alex Peterken			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Vicky Tuck			
<b>Age range</b>	13 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	892			
	<b>Day pupils</b>	38	<b>Boarders</b>	854
	<b>Seniors</b>	447	<b>Sixth Form</b>	445
<b>Date of visit</b>	1 to 2 December 2021			

## 1. Introduction

### Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Charterhouse is an independent boarding and day school for male pupils in years 9 to 13 and female pupils in years 9, 10, 12 and 13. The school will be fully co-educational from September 2022 onwards. The school is a charitable company limited by guarantee, of which the governing body are trustees. The school has 139 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), none of whom has an education, health and care plan. Eighteen pupils receive additional support for English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a remote material change inspection in August 2021.

### 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.
- 1.3 The inspection was asked to focus on the standards listed below, in particular on the school's provision for, and implementation of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE).

Regulations which are the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraphs 2 (curriculum) and 2A (RSE)	<b>Not Met</b>
Part 1, paragraph 3 (teaching)	<b>Not Met</b>
Part 1, paragraph 4 (framework for pupil performance)	<b>Met</b>
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils)	<b>Not met</b>
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders; NMS 2, 8, 9 and 11)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 9 (behaviour); NMS 12	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying); NMS 12	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); NMS 6	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety); NMS 7	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 13 (first aid); NMS 3	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils); NMS15	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 15 (admission and attendance)	<b>Met</b>

registers)	
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment); NMS 6	<b>Met</b>
Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); NMS14	<b>Met</b>
Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 30 (premises and accommodation); NMS 5 and 6	<b>Met</b>
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	<b>Met</b>
Part 7, paragraph 33 (complaints); NMS 18	<b>Met</b>
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 13	<b>Not Met</b>

## 2. Inspection findings

### Quality of education provided – curriculum, RSE, teaching and assessment [ISSR Part 1, paragraphs 2 to 4]

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the standards.
- 2.2 During the current academic year, the school has an effective plan for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). The scheme of work includes all of the requirements of the DfE's statutory guidance for RSE. The recently revised policy for RSE is available to parents on the school's website. In drawing up the policy and scheme of work the school has consulted pupils, parents and staff taking their views into consideration. The school's arrangements were suitably revised following issues identified in various media regarding sexual harassment. The programme is designed so that topics are revisited in subsequent years in order to build up deeper understanding.
- 2.3 The PSHE programme is taught as part of the regular timetable through *Reach Out* lessons, during tutor time, assemblies and specific targeted events. It ensures that all pupils, including sixth formers, receive suitable guidance in most areas to support their personal development. Each unit of work has specific learning objectives and opportunities for assessment related to these objectives. The scheme of work takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils and does not undermine the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It endeavours to prepare pupils effectively for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. Teaching enables pupils to make good progress in most areas of RSE. A suitable framework operates to assess current pupils' performance.
- 2.4 The implementation of the requirement to encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act, has not been successful for all groups of pupils. In discussions with pupils, female pupils commented that the school has integrated males and females well in co-educational lessons and activities. Overall, female pupils say they are treated with equal respect to males and male pupils confirmed the same. Similarly, pupils said that those of particular race or religious faith are treated equally.
- 2.5 There are some negative occurrences or events which show a lack of respect for the protected characteristics of other pupils. These included the use of the word 'gay' as a derogatory term. Some pupils stated that they did not use the term as a direct insult to gay pupils. However, they then admit that the use of the term had negative connotations, such as when it was used after someone had mishit a football, or to ridicule someone's choice of food at lunchtime. Pupils who identify themselves as LGBTQ+ commented that they found the use of the term in these contexts hurtful.
- 2.6 In order to support staff who teach PSHE, including RSE, leaders have provided a bank of teaching materials. These draw appropriately on those provided by professional organisations whose work is devoted to the teaching of PSHE and RSE. During the inspection, leaders were receiving feedback from pupils and staff as to the suitability of the materials. Review of the pupil comments and suggestions shows that they will be helpful to the school when reviewing PSHE and RSE provision.
- 2.7 Review of staff comments shows that, although they have had training on peer-on-peer abuse, some are less confident when dealing with topics such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. There are currently limited resources which address homophobia. The use of related, derogatory terms by some pupils shows the teaching to be insufficiently effective.

**Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]**

- 2.8 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.9 The PSHE programme reflects the school values, which include perseverance, responsibility, moral courage, open-mindedness and kindness. These values are inculcated in pupils by the ethos and educational provision throughout most of the school population. However, active promotion to encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act is not fully successful.
- 2.10 In responding to the pupil questionnaire, a small minority said that pupils do not treat each other with respect. In discussions with inspectors, a few pupils reported being the subject of insulting comments regarding their gender identity. These pupils stated that they are reluctant to pass their concerns on to staff because they are not convinced the school is ready to address them fully. Discussions with pupils confirmed an admission by some that the use of inappropriate behaviour, regarded as 'banter', can sometimes take place. Inspection evidence shows that there is a loose use of derogatory terms by some pupils, which others interpret as being offensive.

**Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 2, 8, 9 and 11]****Safeguarding policy**

- 2.11 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.12 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**

- 2.13 The school meets the standards.
- 2.14 Scrutiny of records, discussions with pupils and staff indicate that appropriate safeguards are in place and that the school implements its safeguarding policy effectively. Those responsible for safeguarding hold senior positions within the school and are suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained, including for multi-agency working. Key information is shared regularly between safeguarding, pastoral, healthcare and boarding staff, taking into account each individual's physical and psychological needs and wishes. This information is used to agree appropriate action, including the drawing-up and implementation of individual support plans. Such action includes appropriate steps to deal with incidents of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. There is effective liaison with external agencies including referral to Child and Adolescent Health Services (CAMHS). Training for other staff and governors is conducted regularly and includes informal updates. Staff are knowledgeable about changes in recent legislation including the management of children's mental well-being, contextual safeguarding, peer-on-peer abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence. They understand the principles underpinning the staff code of conduct and the procedures for making a referral, including the importance of low-level reporting and whistleblowing.
- 2.15 The governor responsible for safeguarding meets regularly with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies in order to maintain effective oversight of safeguarding policies and their implementation in the main school and the boarding houses. Reports are given regularly to the governing board by the safeguarding governor and the DSL. These highlight appropriate details of any safeguarding incidents including any which occur during school trips or socially in parties that take place outside of school. This ensures that governors have an appropriate level of understanding and are able to provide effective scrutiny and oversight. In addition to continuous monitoring, a suitable annual review of safeguarding is undertaken in line with guidance from the local authority (LA).

- 2.16 Pupils state confidently that they receive a detailed induction when they start school including how to stay safe, who to talk to, how to contact helplines, including Childline and the Children's Commissioner, online safety and behavioural expectations. They can name a number of staff to whom they can turn if they are worried or concerned. Pupils know how to contact the school's independent listeners, and they appreciate the option to share concerns through the school's anonymised online system which they know is monitored and acted upon by the DSL.
- 2.17 Boarders speak positively regarding the range and high quality of food provided at mealtimes in the main dining room. Pupils with special dietary, medical and religious needs are catered for appropriately. Boarders appreciate being able to purchase snacks and other items from the school shop and being able to prepare snacks in well-equipped kitchens located in the boarding houses. A range of hot and cold drinks are available as well as having access to drinking water at all times. There is suitable laundry provision for boarders' clothing and bedding. Boarders appreciate being able to launder some of their own clothes as well as using the laundry service. Boarders have use of lockable drawers and safes in order to keep their possessions safe. They may also arrange for valuables and documents to be stored in the house safe. The school has an appropriate policy and procedures in place regarding the search of boarders' personal belongings.

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

- 2.18 The school meets the standards.
- 2.19 A suitable written behaviour policy is implemented effectively and clearly sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils' misbehaviour. An appropriate record is maintained of positive and negative notifications, including in boarding, as well as sanctions for serious misbehaviour. This provision reinforces a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated. The school's electronic system enables staff to record all behaviour issues. Inspection scrutiny of these records shows there is a clear oversight of recorded incidents of poor behaviour and information from the records informs pupil behaviour management plans, resulting in appropriate actions such as interventions. The records are regularly monitored by senior management to identify patterns. Pupils during discussion commented that they are fully aware of the school rules and sanctions system. They perceive the system to be fairly administered, including in boarding, and inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils observed when moving around the school are polite, courteous and conduct themselves in a responsible manner. They commented that relationships with their peers are almost always harmonious.

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

- 2.20 The school meets the standards.
- 2.21 The school gives suitable guidance to pupils about bullying and appropriate training to staff. Pupils understand the different types of bullying, know when and how to seek help, and that they should report any bullying they observe. Similarly, staff receive effective training about bullying. When pupils report concerns, these are attended to promptly, with support given to both the victim and the perpetrator. These measures include appropriate action where any elements of bullying could be considered name calling or physical assault and for care for any pupils whose mental health may be affected by bullying. Staff are aware of the seriousness of bullying and the need to refer to the DSL any incidents they consider serious. The school logs all bullying incidents in a central record kept by the school senior leaders. The central log is reviewed regularly to identify any trends, with appropriate action taken to address these. For example, when leaders noted that a very few racial incidents were raised as bullying, even though they perceived that hurtful comments were made from time to time,

they took assertive action to promote racial harmony across the school. As a result, pupils are confident that if any incidents take place staff are prompt to intervene and help sort them out.

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

- 2.22 The school meets the standards.
- 2.23 The school has an appropriate policy in place for health and safety which is reviewed and updated regularly and implemented consistently. All aspects of health and safety are monitored regularly by leadership and governance. The roles and responsibilities of staff and governors are stated clearly and there is appropriate delegation of duties and training. Maintenance staff know the site well and are aware of potential risks and hazards. Appropriate checks of school vehicles and drivers are in place including the issue of annual driving permits. The school has a comprehensive asbestos management plan and appropriate measures are in place for the control and storage of hazardous substances (COSHH). The maintenance online call system is used effectively by maintenance staff in order to prioritise work schedules and respond to emergencies without delay.
- 2.24 The health and safety committee monitors health and safety effectively. Those responsible for day-to-day operations provide detailed reports including completion of required maintenance logs and work carried out by internal maintenance staff and contractors.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12; NMS 7]**

- 2.25 The school meets the standards.
- 2.26 The school has a suitable fire risk policy which is reviewed and updated annually. The school's fire risk assessment is undertaken by a suitably qualified person. It is reviewed regularly, and any recommendations are implemented without delay. Appropriate fire procedures are in place including for boarding houses. Competent persons have been appointed to assist in taking preventative and protective measures including ensuring that all parts of the buildings are evacuated if there is a fire. Regular and suitable training is in place for staff and for those with responsibilities including fire wardens.
- 2.27 Staff, pupils and visitors are provided with appropriate fire safety information including how to evacuate buildings and where the fire assembly points are located. Half-termly fire drills are conducted at different times of the day and night. These are recorded accurately including the time it takes for evacuation and any concerns and improvements that need to be made. Suitable emergency exits, escape routes and signage are in place including for the new boarding houses. Effective monitoring systems are in place to ensure that these are maintained consistently to the required standards. Fire equipment including extinguishers and alarms are checked regularly by external contractors. Records of all fire safety checks are maintained appropriately and monitored by governors as part of the role of the health and safety committee.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – first aid [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 13; NMS 3]**

- 2.28 The school meets the standards.
- 2.29 The proprietor ensures that there is a written first aid policy including appropriate policies for the care of pupils who are unwell. This is effectively implemented such that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner to pupils. Staff take into consideration the physical and mental well-being of pupils. The medical team is supported by a sufficient number of first aiders who are appropriately trained and qualified. All medication is safely and securely stored and appropriate records are kept of its administration. Boarders have access to local medical, dental, optometric and other specialist



services or provision as required. Boarders allowed to self-medicate are assessed as sufficiently responsible to do so. The confidentiality and rights of boarders as patients are appropriately respected including the right of a boarder deemed to be Gillick competent to give or withhold consent for his or her own treatment.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14; NMS 15]**

- 2.30 The school meets the standards.
- 2.31 The school has a suitable policy for supervising pupils. Guidance for staff is given when they are inducted and is ongoing in the staff handbook and in regular updates. Staff have clear job descriptions detailing their duties with regard to supervision. Comprehensive duty rotas cover all areas of the school and times of day taking into account the age, number and needs of pupils and the locations and activities involved. Monitoring by senior staff ensures that supervision is effective, and that cover is put in place without delay if it is required.
- 2.32 Boarders know the boarding staff allocated to them and are confident that they can contact staff during the day and at night. They are at all times under the responsibility of an identified member of staff who is suitably qualified and experienced. There is at least one member of staff sleeping in each boarding house at night, responsible for the boarders in the house. Suitable accommodation is provided for boarding staff which is separate from the accommodation and facilities provided for boarding pupils. School policy does not allow boarders to access staff accommodation. Senior pupils are always under the direction of a member of staff if they are carrying out duties in a house. Efficient electronic systems enable staff to know the whereabouts of boarders at all times. Staff are confident with regard to the school's policy and procedures if a pupil goes missing. There are thorough systems in place for searching the premises and for working with the police if necessary.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – admission and attendance registers [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 15]**

- 2.33 The school meets the standard.
- 2.34 Admission and attendance registers are maintained as required.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; NMS 6]**

- 2.35 The school meets the standards.
- 2.36 There is a suitable policy and procedures with regard to risk assessment and the reporting of accidents and near-misses including, where appropriate, to the regulatory body. These are recorded electronically and monitored effectively by the health and safety committee during their termly meetings. There are clear lines of responsibility for assessing risk. Departmental heads, including those responsible for boarding houses, oversee risk assessments in their departments and the senior deputy and DSL monitor those for off-site trips. Individual care plans include the assessment of risk for vulnerable pupils. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for boarders' sleeping accommodation and for all areas of the boarding houses. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly, and appropriate action taken where required to reduce risk. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.37 The policy for off-site visits is detailed and clear with a helpful flow chart identifying risk assessments that are required. Parents are suitably informed of arrangements for school trips including behaviour expectations, safeguarding procedures, activities and travel details. Risk assessments are amended if changes occur and any changes to arrangements are communicated to parents without delay.

- 2.38 Staff confirmed that they had received training regarding the completion of risk assessments and that they are confident in completing them including for boarding, trips and hazardous activities. Risk assessments seen include those for the new boarding houses and COVID-19. They were comprehensive, dated and signed off by senior members of staff.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21; NMS 14]**

- 2.39 The school meets the standards.
- 2.40 There is a suitable recruitment policy implemented which covers the required recruitment checks and procedures. All staff, governors and persons engaged in regulated activity are recorded on the single central register of appointments (SCR). Those responsible for carrying out the required recruitment checks and the maintenance of staff records ensure that checks and evidence are in place prior to commencing work in the school. Appropriate procedures are in place for managing contractors including ensuring that they are accompanied at all times if not checked by the school.
- 2.41 Persons over 16 living in boarding premises are appropriately checked. Suitable written agreements are in place between the school and any person over 16 not employed by the school but living in the same premises as the pupils. All persons visiting the boarding houses are appropriately monitored. They are required to register with the school office and be accompanied at all times. Visitors are not allowed to enter boarders' sleeping accommodation.
- 2.42 The school does not appoint guardians but where parents have appointed private guardians the school monitors pupils from a safeguarding perspective.

### **Premises and accommodation – [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 30; NMS 5 and 6]**

- 2.43 The school meets the standards.
- 2.44 Suitable policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the school premises and accommodation and facilities are maintained to a standard where the health, safety and welfare of pupils is ensured as far as possible. Suitable living accommodation is provided for boarders enabling them to study and socialise outside of school hours. There is appropriate separation between genders, age groups and staff accommodation. A range of suitable furnishings have been purchased taking into account the size, number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated. Boarders are encouraged to care for and personalise their spaces with suitable posters and personal items.
- 2.45 The school, including the new boarding houses, provides suitable toilet, washing facilities, showers and changing accommodation for the sole use of pupils. These are located in the vicinity of the sleeping accommodation. There are designated facilities for male and female pupils. Toilet and washing facilities provide appropriate privacy. Suitable disabled facilities are available for staff and visitors.
- 2.46 Suitable accommodation is provided for the medical examination and treatment of pupils and for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils in boarding houses and in the school's well-equipped health centre. The accommodation is near to toilets and bathroom facilities and is adequately staffed. Separate accommodation is provided for male and female boarders.
- 2.47 Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those boarders designated to use it. Electronic systems enable boarding staff to continuously monitor entry and exit to the boarding houses. Use of surveillance equipment and patrolling of the school by security staff does not intrude upon boarders' privacy. All visitors are required to sign into the main office and are accompanied at all times. Lighting to the footpaths has been increased and vehicular access to the centre of the site stopped in order to improve further the safety and security of those walking around the school.

- 2.48 The new boarding houses have been constructed in accordance with the required acoustic and lighting regulations. Records of appropriate tests and certificates are maintained. Drinking water is clearly labelled and is available in all kitchen areas. Adequate cold water is supplied to toilet and shower facilities. Tap and shower temperatures are suitably tested and records maintained. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education including a number of netball and tennis courts and football, cricket and hockey pitches. Boarding houses have large outdoor garden areas in addition to the school's extensive grounds and outdoor facilities.

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

- 2.49 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/provided to parents on request.

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

- 2.50 The school meets the standards.
- 2.51 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision. Scrutiny of records shows that complaints since the previous on-site inspection have followed the school's policy, including those referring to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

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

- 2.52 The school does not meet the standards.
- 2.53 Senior leaders, including those responsible for boarders, and governors have not demonstrated the necessary skills and knowledge or fulfilled their responsibilities effectively so that all the independent school standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of pupils. Despite the impetus for change and some improvement, particularly in regard to sexist and racist behaviours, not enough has been done to ensure that inappropriate use of derogatory terms has been tackled. In particular, the standards regarding the provision and teaching of RSE contributing to the appropriate spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are not met.

### 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 1, Quality of education provided – curriculum, RSE and teaching, paragraphs 2, 2A and 3**

- Improve the school's provision and teaching of PSHE and RSE to promote the consistent respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act, in particular by discouraging homophobic comments [paragraphs 2(2)(d)(ii), 2A,(1)(d) and 3(c)].

#### **ISSR Part 2, Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, paragraph 5**

- Ensure that principles are actively and effectively promoted which encourage in all pupils respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act [paragraph 5(b)(vi)].

#### **ISSR Part 8, Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, paragraph 34; NMS13**

- The school must ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities use their skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively to promote the well-being of pupils and to ensure the independent school standards are met consistently [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 13.3 to 13.5].

## **4. Summary of evidence**

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