



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Additional Inspection Report**

**Dean Close Airthrie School**

**September 2022**

## School's details

<b>School</b>	Dean Close Airthrie School			
<b>DfE number</b>	916/6037			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1086829			
<b>Address</b>	Dean Close Airthrie School 27–29 Christchurch Road Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL50 2NY			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01242 512837			
<b>Email address</b>	Admin.office@airthrie-school.co.uk			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jason Dobbie			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Kathryn Carden			
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 11			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	74			
	<b>EYFS</b>	24	<b>Juniors</b>	50
<b>Date of visit</b>	20 September 2022			

## 1. Introduction

### Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Dean Close Airthrie school is an independent co-educational day school. The school was founded in 1940 and is housed in converted Victorian buildings in the centre of Cheltenham. The school became part of the Dean Close Foundation group of schools in June 2021 and is managed by a board of trustees. The warden has oversight of all the foundation schools. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2021. There are 12 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils have an education, health and care plan. Two pupils speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in January 2018.

### 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 requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 9 (behaviour)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 13 (first aid)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 15 (admission and attendance registers)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	<b>Met</b>
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	<b>Met</b>
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	<b>Met</b>

## 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.
- 2.4 Safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively, including in the EYFS. Arrangements reflect the current guidance effectively. Senior leaders draw on the wider foundation to access support and guidance in handling safeguarding matters. There is appropriate support for pupils' needs. Staff listen to children and take appropriate and timely action when concerns are raised. All staff have received suitable training on the recent changes in statutory guidance and online safety. When new staff are appointed, they complete a comprehensive induction process to ensure they understand their safeguarding responsibilities. All staff are familiar with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* Part 1 and Annex B. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy have sufficient status and authority to undertake their roles. They have the appropriate level of training, which is in line with local procedures. The DSL provides regular updates to all staff and opportunities for discussion on any changes to safeguarding policies and their implementation.
- 2.5 Staff throughout the school have a full understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities including for pupils with SEND. They recognise the importance of 'early help' and intervention strategies, including where any physical marks identified suggest potential abuse. Staff, including those in the EYFS, are clear on the procedures for reporting any concerns about pupils and do so appropriately. They understand that children may not know how to tell someone of harmful experiences and act accordingly. Staff are clear on the types of child-on-child abuse that can occur and the seriousness of reacting to and reporting such behaviours. This includes those that might involve senior leaders or other adults working with pupils. Appropriate and detailed records of any safeguarding concerns are maintained and these show timely and appropriate liaison with both parents and local agencies, including the local multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH). Scrutiny of the recording of safeguarding incidents demonstrated a culture in which detailed analysis of any incidents takes place, supported by effective monitoring systems, overseen by the foundation safeguarding leads.
- 2.6 There are appropriate measures to handle any allegations against adults working in the school. Staff understand these and are prepared to report any concerns they may have. The foundation trustees undertake an annual safeguarding review with due diligence. They demonstrate rigour in their oversight of arrangements. This includes undertaking a review of any safeguarding incidents that may occur. If the handling of any incidents demonstrates a need for improved practice, this is required. The trustees have received appropriate training in safeguarding. They implement suitable recruitment procedures. A suitable disability access plan is in place which covers a three-year period.

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

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 The school has a suitable behaviour policy which is available on the school website. It sets out the aims of the school and outlines both rewards to promote good behaviour and the sanctions to be adopted

in the event of pupil misbehaviour. Staff and pupils understand the policy which is implemented effectively. Senior leaders record details of any incidents appropriately and monitor these to identify patterns and any action taken. These show that staff take into account the specific needs of individual pupils, including those with SEND, when dealing with any misbehaviour. Physical intervention is extremely rare, and none has occurred in the EYFS according to records, which are maintained effectively.

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

2.9 The school meets the standard.

2.10 The school has an appropriate anti-bullying policy which is implemented effectively. Pupils in discussion commented that they know when and how to seek help and that they should report any bullying they observe. Records of any bullying incidents are congruent with other behaviour and safeguarding records. Staff understand clearly that child-on-child abuse is a potential safeguarding issue. Records demonstrate that bullying incidents are rare and those that do occur are dealt with promptly. Support is given to both the victim and the perpetrator. All bullying incidents are referred to those with safeguarding responsibilities. Senior leaders maintain a suitable centralised log and review this regularly, together with trustees. This identifies any trends, and appropriate action is taken.

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

2.11 The school meets the standard.

2.12 The school has an appropriate health and safety policy. This is effectively implemented and overseen by the foundation. To ensure site safety, senior leaders have regular meetings supported by the trustees, who conduct at least termly visits to the school. Teaching staff in all sections of the school conduct regular safety checks to ensure the site is safe for pupils. This includes both internal and external play areas for children in the EYFS. Any area or item designated as unsafe for play is immediately removed from availability until either a suitable replacement is obtained, or a repair is made. This ensures that the site is kept as safe as is practicably possible. Staff record incidents and accidents appropriately.

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

2.13 The school meets the standard.

2.14 The school has an appropriate fire risk policy and fire risk assessments are completed on an annual basis to ensure the safety of the pupils. Fire practice drills are completed termly. Appropriate records of drills and equipment checks are kept. Emergency exits routes and exits are suitably maintained. The trustees monitor fire procedures effectively.

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

2.15 The school meets the standard.

2.16 The school implements an appropriate policy for first aid. All staff receive basic first aid training and appropriate numbers of EYFS staff have undertaken paediatric first-aid training. First aid boxes are strategically placed around the school and first aid kits are available from the school office. In the event of a first aid concern or medical issue arising with a pupil, staff act appropriately. Staff are aware of the need to consider a safeguarding referral if any injury they see is unexplained or causes concern.

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

2.17 The school meets the standard.

2.18 Arrangements for the supervision of pupils ensure that pupils' welfare is safeguarded. The arrangements are well documented and planned effectively. School staff are allocated appropriately to break and lunchtime supervision duties. Two-way radios are now available for staff undertaking supervisory duties in order to avoid their use of mobile phones. Staff have recently been reminded to be vigilant when monitoring pupils and of the requirement that they do not use personal phones for communication during the school day. There is appropriate supervision of pupils in remote locations. In the EYFS, ratios of staff to children were seen to be suitable and supervision is appropriate. Areas and times of supervision are adjusted in the light of any incidents that occur. There is suitably close monitoring of any pupils in the school where a specific welfare need has been identified.

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

2.19 The school meets the standard.

2.20 Admission and attendance registers are maintained as required and there are appropriate morning and afternoon registration periods. Suitable contacts are made with the local authority should pupils join the school after the start of the school year or leave before completing the school year.

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

2.21 The school meets the standard.

2.22 An efficient and effective approach is taken to managing risk to ensure the welfare of all pupils in the school. An appropriate risk assessment policy is implemented. Staff have all received training in assessing risk for their respective areas and for organising school outings. Risk assessment documents show that appropriate evaluations are undertaken across all age groups. This includes suitable consideration of the needs of children in the EYFS. Risk assessment is appropriate and comprehensive. It identifies possible risks and specifies appropriate control measure to mitigate these. Where there is a perceived need, the school produces risk assessments for individual pupils to ensure their welfare and safety. Senior leaders review and sign off all risk assessments. Suitable oversight is maintained by the board of trustees.

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

2.23 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 and are provided to parents on request.

**Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]**

2.24 The school meets the standard.

2.25 Trustees and senior leaders ensure that the required policies and records are appropriately maintained, effectively monitored and efficiently implemented. Staff throughout all school sections, are appropriately monitored by senior managers including in the EYFS where there are appropriate supervision arrangements and provision for training. The trustees ensure that senior leaders and managers demonstrate good skill and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

### **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 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and no further action is required as a result of this visit.

## 4. Summary of evidence

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

### Inspectors

Mr Tony Halliwell

Reporting inspector

Mr Graham Sims

Assistant reporting inspector