



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Report for an Additional Inspection

Dean Close Preparatory School

April 2021

School's details

School name	Dean Close Preparatory School		
DfE number	916/6034		
Registered charity number	1086829		
Address	Dean Close Preparatory School Lansdown Road Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL51 6QS		
Telephone number	01242 512217		
Email address	dcpsoffice@deanclose.org.uk		
Headmaster	Mr Paddy Moss		
Chair of governors	Mrs Kathryn Carden		
Age range	7 to 13		
Number of pupils on roll	311		
	Day pupils	232	Boarders 79
	Juniors	164	Seniors 147
Date of visit	27 April 2021		

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Dean Close Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged between seven and thirteen years. The school is located in Cheltenham and is part of the Dean Close Foundation. The warden has oversight of the foundation, and reports to a board of trustees who are responsible for governance. The school has 40 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities, none of whom has an education, health and care plan. There are 17 pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in March 2019.

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.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 2, 8, 9 and 11	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 13	Met
NMS 3 (boarders' health and well-being)	Met
NMS 5 (boarding accommodation)	Met
NMS 6 (safety of boarders)	Met
NMS 15 (staffing and supervision of boarding)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 2, 8, 9 and 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.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standards.
- 2.4 Safeguarding is suitably managed to ensure the effective implementation of the policy. Staff, including those with particular safeguarding responsibilities, are trained as required, and demonstrate a secure understanding of their training, including with regard to peer-on-peer abuse. Measures are in place to prevent and respond to instances of peer-on-peer abuse, including any concerning pupils with protected characteristics, including gender, or motivated by discrimination. The school responds appropriately to concerns and liaises with external agencies, including those involved in the support of pupils' mental health. Suitable policies are implemented to promote positive behaviour amongst the pupils and to guide staff in their conduct. There are suitable whistleblowing and recruitment procedures. Appropriate measures are in place to handle any allegations against adults working with children. The school understands its responsibility to refer adults to statutory bodies in certain circumstances. The school provides clear information to pupils, including boarders, as to who they may share any concerns with, and pupils are confident that they are listened to and that suitable action is taken if needed. The board of trustees ensures proper oversight of safeguarding through the annual review of policy and procedure.
- 2.5 Appropriate arrangements are in place for the accommodation of pupils required to isolate or to enter quarantine with regard to COVID-19, including those who arrive from or travel through 'red list' countries. Protocols are in place to adapt normal boarding provision and to ensure the continued safeguarding of pupils in such circumstances; these are reviewed and updated in response to government guidance as required. Appropriate provision is in place to ensure boarders are provided with clear information about the rules and expectations in boarding, including when in quarantine and as to how they will be supported, including through access to an independent listener. Protocols have been established to ensure that the provision of food, drinks and snacks is in line with provision throughout the school and that boarders' laundry is managed appropriately.

Boarders' health and wellbeing [NMS 3]

- 2.6 The school meets the standard.
- 2.7 The school has implemented appropriate arrangements for the accommodation of pupils who need to quarantine or isolate whilst in boarding accommodation. Provision is in place to extend these arrangements so as to ensure the DfE requirements regarding the quarantine arrangements for pupils returning from 'red list' countries will be met should the need arise. These arrangements include the provision of suitable accommodation for boarders who are unwell and storage of medication. Protocols are in place for the administration of first aid and for medical emergencies.

Boarding accommodation [NMS 5]

- 2.8 The school meets the standard.
- 2.9 The accommodation allocated for pupils required to quarantine following their return from 'red list' countries includes suitable sleeping accommodation and is appropriately furnished. The allocated house is appropriately lit, ventilated, cleaned and maintained. It is protected from access by unauthorised persons and is separated from other members of the school community in line with DfE requirements.

Safety of boarders [NMS 6]

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.
- 2.11 The school has implemented appropriate arrangements for the accommodation of pupils who need to quarantine or isolate whilst in boarding accommodation. Provision is in place to extend these arrangements so as to ensure the DfE requirements regarding the quarantine arrangements for pupils returning from 'red list' countries will be met should the need arise. These include protocols for transporting pupils from port to the school and their accommodation in a specifically allocated boarding house.
- 2.12 The accommodation allocated for pupils required to quarantine following their return from 'red list' countries is well-maintained so as to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pupils.
- 2.13 The risks associated with providing quarantine arrangements for pupils returning from red list countries have been assessed and managed appropriately. Specific arrangements for their transport and accommodation are ready to be implemented should the need arise so as to ensure the DfE requirements will be met.

Staffing and supervision of boarding [NMS 15]

- 2.14 The school meets the standard.
- 2.15 The school has implemented appropriate arrangements to accommodate pupils who need to quarantine or isolate whilst in boarding accommodation and to supervise their behaviour. Provision is in place to extend these arrangements so as to ensure the DfE requirements regarding the quarantine arrangements for pupils returning from 'red list' countries will be met should the need arise. These are such that the provision is in line with that provided for other boarding pupils, including the suitability of staff and their availability throughout the day and night.

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

- 2.16 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; NMS 13]

- 2.17 The school meets the standard.
- 2.18 The trustees have ensured the appointment of well-qualified leaders who demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles so that the other standards are consistently met and the well-being of the pupils is actively promoted. Leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the DfE requirements regarding the quarantine arrangements for pupils returning from 'red list' countries and appropriate arrangements are in place to accommodate them should the need arise. Staff involved in

this provision have appropriate experience and policies; documents required in relation to the school's provision for pupils who have been required to quarantine or isolate have been kept up to date and monitored by the trustees.

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, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and no further action is required as a result of this visit.

4. Summary of evidence

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