



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report
For Schools with Residential Provision**

Woldingham School

January 2023

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School's Details

School	Woldingham School		
DfE number	936/6111		
Registered charity number	1125376		
Address	Woldingham School Marden Park Woldingham Caterham Surrey CR3 7YA		
Telephone number	01883 349431		
Email address	info@woldinghamschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Dr James Whitehead		
Chair of Governors	Mr Robert Parkinson		
Proprietor	Directors of Woldingham School		
Age range	11 to 19		
Number of pupils on roll	613		
	Day pupils	397	Boarders 216
	Seniors	452	Sixth Form 161
Inspection dates	25 to 26 January 2023		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Woldingham School is a Roman Catholic independent boarding and day school for female pupils. Founded in 1842, the school transferred to its present 700-acre site in Surrey in 1946. The school is part of the international network of Sacred Heart Schools. It is a charitable trust with its own lay board of governors.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors was appointed in July 2018 and a new head in September 2020. A number of projects have also been completed, including the opening of an outdoor education centre.
- 1.3 Boarding accommodation is on the school site; Years 7 and 8 in Marden House, Years 9 to 11 in Main House, and Years 12 and 13 in Berwick House and Shanley House respectively.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aspires to be a happy and successful school, where pupils develop confidence, compassion and courage. It seeks to encourage pupils to achieve academic success and become independent, enquiring young women who are empowered to make a positive contribution to the world.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come largely from professional and business families, with roughly a quarter from overseas. Data show that the ability profile of pupils in the senior school is above, and in the sixth form is in line with, the average for those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified 127 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), none of whom have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. All pupils with SEND receive additional support, mainly for dyslexia. There are 66 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), and 50 receive additional support which includes individual or small group sessions and strategies implemented in lessons. The school has identified ten per cent of pupils as being highly academically able or as having a particular talent and their needs are met within lessons, co-curricular activities and through an intellectual discernment programme.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022 and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2019 to 2022 confirm that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to ensure good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety and provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 Suitable arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in areas such as making referrals to local agencies and listening to children. In these areas actions taken pay due regard to current statutory guidance. However, not all required recruitment and safeguarding checks have been carried out promptly. Checks on prohibition from teaching have not been carried out on all staff before they began work.
- 2.11 The risks associated with the safeguarding of pupils have not always been fully identified and the school has not taken appropriate action to reduce some of those risks.

- 2.12** The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9–15, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 and NMS 7, 10, 15, 16 and 20 are met, but those in paragraphs 7 [safeguarding], 8 [safeguarding of boarders] and 16 [risk assessment], and in NMS 8 [safeguarding], 9 [safety of boarders] and 19 [staff recruitment and checks on other adults] are not met.

Action point 1

The school must ensure that checks of the list of those prohibited from teaching are undertaken before staff begin work [paragraphs 7(a) and (b); 8(a) and (b); NMS 8.1 and 19.1].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that it identifies the risks to pupils associated with those living on the site and takes appropriate action to reduce such risks [paragraph 16(a) and (b); NMS 9.3].

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.13 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors required under Part 4, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.14 Appropriate checks and a written agreement have not always been completed for all members of staff households who are aged 16 and over (not on the roll of, nor employed by, the school) and who live on the same premises as boarders.
- 2.15** The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 17–21 and NMS 22 are met, but that in NMS 19 [staff recruitment and checks on other adults] is not met.

Action point 3

The school must ensure that an enhanced criminal record certificate with a check of the Children's Barred List is obtained in respect of all members of staff households who are aged 16 or over (not on the roll of, nor employed by, the school) who live on the same premises as boarders [NMS 19.2].

Action point 4

The school must ensure that there is a written agreement between the school and any person aged 16 and over not employed by the school but living in the same premises as children [NMS 19.3].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.16 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.17** The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4 and 7 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.18 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.

2.19 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.20 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.

2.21 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.22 The proprietor has not ensured that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.23 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 and NMS 2 are not met.

Action point 5

The school must ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards and boarding standards are met consistently, and that they actively promote the well-being of all pupils, including boarders [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8].

3. Inspection Evidence

3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended house meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Alison Hewitt	Reporting inspector
Mrs Diane Durrant	Compliance team inspector (Former deputy head, SofH school)
Ms Lucy Matthews	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mrs Karen Pickles	Team inspector for boarding (Consultant director of education, GSA school)