



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

Beech Hall School

July 2021

Contents

School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection	5
Preface	5
Key findings	6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	7
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	7
PART 6 – Provision of information	8
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	8
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	8
3. Inspection Evidence	9

School's Details

School	Beech Hall School			
DfE number	895/6008			
Address	Beech Hall School Beech Hall Drive Tytherington Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 2EG			
Telephone number	01625 422192			
Email address	secretary@beechhallschool.org			
Headmaster	Mr James Allen			
Proprietor	Chatsworth Schools Group			
Age range	6 months to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	234			
	EYFS	82	Juniors	39
	Seniors	113		
Inspection dates	30 June to 2 July 2021			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Beech Hall School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged between 6 months and 16 years. It was founded in 1926 as a boarding school for boys and became co-educational in 1981. In March 2021 the school became part of the Chatsworth Schools Group, which provides the governing body.
- 1.2 The school comprises three sections: Nursery for the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), junior school comprising pupils aged 5 to 11 years, and senior school for pupils aged 11 to 16 years.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection a new teaching block has been built providing a science laboratory, a design technology workshop and changing facilities for sports. A small multi-gym has recently been installed.
- 1.4 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers. During this period of closure the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.5 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.6 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.7 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.8 In 2020 and 2021 public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed grades and for 2021 teacher assessed grades were awarded. Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.9 The school aims to develop responsible, well informed, confident and caring individuals by providing a range of opportunities in a friendly, supportive and stimulating environment that inspires students to achieve their personal best.

About the pupils

- 1.10 Pupils come from a range of professional and business backgrounds, mostly from families living within a 15-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the senior pupils is above average. The school has identified 71 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia and autistic spectrum disorder, all of whom receive additional specialist help. Fifty-two pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. English is an additional language for four pupils all of whom receive additional support. Data used by the school have identified 14 pupils as the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 11 other pupils due to their special talents in sport and music.

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. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. 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. 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](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

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, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the junior school, the school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 Pupils take GCSE examinations in their final year at the school. The small numbers involved prevent reliable comparison with national averages, but inspection evidence confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress context of Part paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, 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.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 In most respects arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance. Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place. The safeguarding policy and procedures are appropriate, and staff are suitably trained.
- 2.10 However, recruitment checks on staff, including barred list checks, receipt of application forms and references, checks against lists of those prohibited from managing in schools and checks of qualifications and medical fitness made as part of having regard to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* are not always carried out before staff commence employment at the school. When criminal record checks have been delayed the school has not always carried out separate barred list checks or ensured that an appropriate system of supervision is in place.
- 2.11 The school's procedures for safer recruitment, including systems for record keeping and the accurate recording of data within the single central register (SCR) are not sufficiently robust to support the welfare of pupils.
- 2.12 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9–16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the**

Education Act 1996 are met, but those in paragraphs 7(a) and (b) [safeguarding] and, for the same reason, EYFS 3.7 and 3.9 are not met.

Action point 1

- the school must ensure that all recruitment checks including barred list checks, checks against the lists of those prohibited from managing in schools and the receipt of references and application forms and checks on qualifications and medical fitness are carried out before the person commences employment at the school [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9]

Action point 2

- where an individual is allowed to start work in a regulated activity before a DBS certificate has been seen, appropriate supervision must be arranged, and a separate barred list check must have been completed [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9]

Action point 3

- ensure that all staff records and files contain accurate information to evidence the required recruitment checks [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9]

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

2.13 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of supply staff and proprietors.

2.14 Barred list checks, checks on the person's qualifications, receipt of references and application forms have not consistently been undertaken on staff prior to the start of their employment. The school has not obtained and recorded a declaration of medical fitness from all staff prior to commencement of employment. Relevant staff have not been checked against the list of those prohibited from management of schools.

2.15 Some dates for checks were incorrectly entered into the SCR and these were not always consistent with dates recorded in staff files.

2.16 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 19 and 20 are met. Paragraphs 18 and 21 are not fully met.

Action point 4

- the school must ensure that before appointment it obtains and keeps a record of medical fitness for each member of staff [paragraph 18(2)(c)(ii); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9]

Action point 5

- the school must ensure that all the required recruitment checks on staff are carried out before each person commences working at the school [paragraph 18(3); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9]

Action point 6

- the school must ensure that all required checks are accurately recorded in the SCR [paragraph 21(3)(a)(iii) and 21(3)(a)(v); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9]

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.17 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.

2.18 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.19 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.

2.20 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.21 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.

2.22 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.23 The proprietor has ensured that the large majority of regulatory standards for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are consistently met. However, they have not ensured that all recruitment checks are completed before staff commence employment at the school or that these are recorded appropriately on the SCR or in staff files.

2.24 Safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures are not correctly implemented in line with current statutory guidance, and thus the welfare of pupils is not actively promoted.

2.25 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is not met.

Action point 7

- **the school must ensure that those with responsibility for leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that all of the standards are met consistently and they actively promote the well-being of pupils [paragraph 34 (1)(a), (b) and (c)]**

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr William Ibbetson-Price

Reporting inspector

Mrs Valerie Dunsford

Compliance team inspector (former head, GSA school)