



ISI

Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

The Worthgate School

June 2023

School's details

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|---------------------------------|--|----|-------------------|-----|
| School | The Worthgate School | | | |
| DfE number | 886/6075 | | | |
| Address | The Worthgate School 68 New Dover Road Canterbury Kent CT1 3LQ | | | |
| Telephone number | 01227 866540 | | | |
| Email address | studentcommunications@worthgateschool.com | | | |
| Principal | Dr Nicola Robinson | | | |
| Chair of Proprietors | Mr Christopher Stacey | | | |
| Proprietor | CEG Colleges Ltd | | | |
| Age range | 13 to 22 | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 271 | | | |
| | Day pupils | 10 | Boarders | 261 |
| | Seniors | 70 | Sixth Form | 164 |
| | Pupils aged 19 to 22 | 37 | | |
| Date of inspection | 12 June 2023 | | | |

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 The Worthgate School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. The school caters primarily for international pupils and is owned by CATS Global Schools, the trading name of Bright Scholar (UK) Holdings Ltd. The directors of CEG Colleges Ltd (the proprietor) form the governing body with the Chief Executive Officer as the chair. The school has eight boarding houses, all of which are within a short walk of the main school site. The school has identified 14 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), none of whom requires additional specialist help. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 229 pupils, all of whom receive English lessons in addition to their other academic subjects. The previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection in January 2023. This inspection focused on pupils under the age of 19.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the focused compliance and educational quality inspection of January 2023. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs), and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2022.

| Regulations which were the focus of the inspection | Team judgements |
|---|-----------------|
| paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 7 and 8 | Met |
| Part 3, paragraphs 16 (risk assessment); NMS 9 | Met |
| Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); NMS 19 and 22 | Met |
| Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information) | Met |
| Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 2 | Met |

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding, safeguarding of boarders and boarders' health and wellbeing [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 7 and 8)

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 Implementation of all aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures is effective in providing appropriate support to ensure the welfare of pupils.
- 2.5 Safeguarding procedures are implemented to safeguard children at risk and those in particular need. Staff show effective understanding of their responsibilities, including with regard to child-on-child abuse and any such abuse linked to those with protected characteristics. Staff show appropriate awareness of the staff code of conduct, whistleblowing policy and safeguarding procedures and are confident to use them. They have a suitable knowledge of the thresholds for reporting issues. Staff are appropriately informed about issues that put pupils at risk. They are aware of the divergent attitudes towards relationships held by pupils from a wide range of national backgrounds. Staff understand that they can make a direct referral to children's services if necessary. They take appropriate action when needed.
- 2.6 The safeguarding arrangements include suitable definitions of abuse and have been reviewed effectively in line with the latest statutory guidance. They provide appropriate guidance regarding possible abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil, including linking such abuse to bullying. Proprietors and school leaders review the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements regularly and institute improvements where needed. Discussions with staff, pupils and an inspection of safeguarding records confirm that pupils receive suitable help to address risks. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies act on and refer to appropriate agencies the early signs of risk or need and monitor any potential for radicalisation. They ensure the school listens to the views of individual pupils as required by *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. This, too, is confirmed in written evidence from safeguarding records. All behavioural issues are treated as potential safeguarding concerns and addressed effectively. Pupils receive guidance on staying safe and show understanding of what they have been taught, including in relation to e-safety. Monitoring and filtering of technology is effective. In discussion boarders identified the positive impact of advice they have received on remaining safe in a busy city. The physical and mental health of all pupils are given a suitably high priority. In particular the decision to prohibit pupils from smoking on site further promotes their wellbeing and helps them to understand how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The school's associated education campaign has been sustained and effective, and the majority of pupils spoken to support the decision.
- 2.7 The safeguarding policy gives contact details for required local safeguarding partners. The training for those with specific safeguarding responsibilities is in line with local requirements and statutory advice and is up to date. Training in safeguarding for teaching and non-teaching staff is of sufficient quality and frequency. Proprietors are trained appropriately in safeguarding.
- 2.8 Suitable arrangements for handling allegations against staff, senior leaders or the governors, and potential misconduct, are included in safeguarding procedures; they include seeking immediate advice

from the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO). Records show that such procedures are followed effectively, and the school follows up actions promptly. The school understands its role in reporting any person to relevant regulatory bodies if circumstances require it.

- 2.9 Recruitment procedures are in line with statutory advice and are followed with suitable rigour. Those responsible for recruitment decisions have received appropriate training.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; NMS 9]

- 2.10 The school meets the standards.
- 2.11 The school's risk assessment policy clearly describes appropriate lines of responsibility for identifying and managing risk and the approaches to be taken to do so. There is an effective culture of assessing risk to pupils in any decision taken, in particular regarding potential risks associated with students over the age of 18 living on the same site. This is reflected in the revised arrangements for the use of toilets. Appropriate assessments are also made for the needs of individual pupils both while in school and in the surrounding area. In all these areas, appropriate action is taken to mitigate risks identified.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors; educational guardians [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; NMS 19 and 22]

- 2.12 The school meets the standards.
- 2.13 All the required checks on staff are now carried out and completed before they take up their posts including checks of identity, right to work in the United Kingdom and all relevant qualifications where relevant. Similarly, all required checks are completed on governors before they take up their appointment. All proprietors have the right to work in the UK. Appropriate recruitment checks are now undertaken on contractors, including taxi drivers, with suitable confirmation received from the contractor for checks not undertaken directly by the school.
- 2.14 Arrangements for the appointment and monitoring for suitability of guardians have been reviewed effectively and now promote the welfare of boarders appropriately.
- 2.15 The school maintains correctly an accurate single central register of appointments which includes the dates on which all checks have been completed, including those relating to the proprietors.

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 2]

- 2.17 The school meets the standards.
- 2.18 Appropriate procedures are implemented which allow the senior leaders and the proprietor to manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements and monitor compliance with standards and other statutory advice, including those concerned with safeguarding and staff recruitment. In this way the leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted. The action plan required following the previous inspection has been implemented fully and successfully.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

4. Summary of evidence

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

Inspectors

Mr Stephen Cole

Reporting inspector

Dr Pamela Edmonds

Assistant reporting inspector