



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT

CASTLE HOUSE SCHOOL

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2018



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Castle House School		
DfE number	894/6002		
Registered charity number	510515		
Address	Castle House School Chetwyn End Newport Shropshire TF10 7JE		
Telephone number	01952 811035		
Email address	admin@castlehouseschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Ian Sterling		
Chair of governors	Mrs Carol Gibbs		
Age range	2 to 11		
Number of pupils on roll	89		
	Boys	53	Girls 36
	Nursery	26	Juniors 63
Inspection dates	31 st January to 1 st February 2018		

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Castle House School is a co-educational, day preparatory school for girls and boys from age two to eleven. It is located in Newport, Shropshire with spacious gardens. The School was founded in 1944 on the site of a former school. The school is owned and run by Castle House School Trust Ltd, a charitable trust with a governing body, which was established in 1980. A new Chair of Governors was appointed in the week before the inspection. A new Headmaster took up the post in January 2018, the fourth head since the last inspection.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school strives to help children understand their own unique talents and motivate their passions through a creative, comprehensive and challenging curriculum. This is delivered in a nurturing and stimulating environment to enable children to start their journey to becoming inspired, compassionate and fulfilled citizens. The ethos of the school is outlined in the Castle House Way which culminates in the line: Do your best to be your best.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils are predominantly from professional, farming and business families and they come from Newport and many local villages in the area. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity and a small proportion represent a range of other nationalities. The school is non-selective, but the school's own assessments indicate that the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified twelve pupils as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), which dyslexia and dyspraxia. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs and none have English as an additional language (EAL). A number of pupils have been identified as being the most able and are supported by a curriculum that has been suitably modified.

2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records 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, the inspection reports 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. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was 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 in the relevant section of the report 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 full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

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 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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.
- 2.4 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to most aspects of current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as is reasonably practicable; and provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admissions and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 The school does not ensure that pupils are safeguarded by ensuring that a barred list check is obtained and suitable arrangements made when staff start work before a disclosure and barring service check is available. It does not have a consistent approach to health and safety requirements. Fire risk assessments have not been carried out regularly.
- 2.9 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 6, 9, 10 and 13-16, 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), (b) [safeguarding], 11 [health and safety] and 12 [fire] are not met.**

Action point 1

- the school must ensure that pupils are safeguarded by ensuring that barred lists checks are obtained and suitable arrangements made when staff start work before the disclosure and barring service check is available [paragraph 7 (a) and (b)].

Action point 2

- the school must ensure that it has a systematic approach to health and safety requirements [paragraph 11].

Action point 3

- the school must conduct fire risk assessments regularly [paragraph 11].

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 However, these checks are not always completed before staff begin work.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 19, 20 and 21 are met, but those in paragraph 18 (suitability of staff) are not met.**

Action point 5

- the school must ensure that all the required recruitment checks are completed before staff begin work [paragraph 18 (2) (b), (d) and paragraph 18 (3)].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.13 Suitable toilet, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their 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.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.15 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include 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 those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, and its results in public examinations, 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.
- 2.16 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 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.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.19 The proprietor ensures that leadership and management actively promote the well-being of the pupils.
- 2.20 The proprietor does not ensure that leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge to ensure that Independent School Standards are met consistently.
- 2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in sub-paragraph 34 (c) are met but those in paragraphs 34 (a) and (b) [having the skills and knowledge to consistently meet the standards] are not met.**

Action point 8

- **the school must ensure that leadership and management responsibilities have the skills and knowledge to ensure that the school fulfils its duty to meet the Independent School Standards consistently [paragraph 34 (a) and (b)].**

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 chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Adrian Palmer

Reporting inspector

Mr Guy Cowper

Compliance team inspector (Director of Finance, ISA school)