



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

Sutton High School

September 2022

School's details

School	Sutton High School GDST			
DfE number	319/6069			
Registered charity number	306983			
Address	Sutton High School GDST 55 Cheam Road Sutton Surrey SM1 2AX			
Telephone number	020 8642 0594			
Email address	office@sut.gdst.net			
Head	Mrs Beth Dawson			
Proprietor	Girls' Day School Trust (GDST)			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	845			
	EYFS	35	Prep	265
	Seniors	461	Sixth Form	84
Date of inspection	30 September 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Sutton High School is an independent day school for female pupils. It is a member of GDST. The council of the GDST has overall responsibility for the school, and a local governing board provides additional advice and support.
- 1.2 The school was opened in 1884 and comprises three sections: the prep school for pupils aged 3 to 11, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); the senior school for those aged 11 to 16; and the sixth form. The school has identified 111 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Four pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 92 pupils. The school's previous inspection was a focused compliance and educational quality inspection which took place in November 2021.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.3 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase pupil capacity from 850 to 950. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29 (premises of and accommodation at schools)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

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 standard.
- 2.4 Scrutiny of records, discussions with pupils and staff indicate that appropriate safeguards are in place. The school implements its safeguarding policy effectively, including in the EYFS. Pupils stated confidently that they know how to stay safe, including online. They confirmed that they can talk to staff if they are worried or concerned, will receive a response and that action will be taken when they express concerns.
- 2.5 Those responsible for safeguarding hold senior positions within the school. They are suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained, including for multi-agency working. Key information is shared regularly between safeguarding, pastoral and healthcare staff, taking into account each individual pupil's physical, psychological and learning needs and wishes. This information is used to agree appropriate action, including the drawing-up and implementation of individual support plans. Such action includes appropriate steps to deal with any incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour, including sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. There is effective liaison with external agencies including referral to Child and Adolescent Health Services (CAMHS) and the local authority designated officer (LADO) for safeguarding. Training for other staff and for governors is conducted regularly as required. It is effective and includes informal updates. Staff are knowledgeable about changes in recent legislation including the management of children's mental wellbeing, contextual safeguarding, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence. They understand the principles underpinning the staff code of conduct and the procedures for making a referral, including the importance of low-level reporting and whistleblowing. Senior leaders take appropriate action if any perceived breach of the staff code of conduct occurs. They understand their responsibility to make referral to relevant statutory bodies once investigations by external agencies are completed. They fulfil this effectively.
- 2.6 The board lead responsible for safeguarding meets regularly with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies and maintains effective oversight of safeguarding policies and their implementation. Reports are given regularly to GDST by the executive board and the DSL. These highlight appropriate details of any safeguarding incidents and GDST reviews these effectively. This ensures that GDST provides effective scrutiny and oversight, including of the use of technology. In addition to continuous monitoring, a suitable annual review of safeguarding is undertaken in line with guidance from the local authority. There are sufficient numbers of trained deputy safeguarding leads and other staff to cater for the proposed increase in the number of pupils, including those in EYFS.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 The school has an appropriate policy for health and safety. This is reviewed and updated regularly and implemented consistently. Senior leaders and GDST monitor all aspects of health and safety regularly.

The roles and responsibilities of staff and governors are stated clearly and there is appropriate delegation of duties and training. Estate staff know the site well and are aware of potential risks and hazards. The lines of communication, particularly between GDST and the estate manager, are used effectively by maintenance staff in order to prioritise work schedules and respond to emergencies without delay. The current arrangements are likely to meet the needs of the proposed increase in the number of pupils.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12]

- 2.9 The school meets the standard.
- 2.10 Procedures relating to fire safety are correctly implemented. A suitable fire risk assessment has been made and actions required are implemented effectively. Regular fire drills are carried out and staff and pupils understand what to do in the event of a fire. The fire alarm system, emergency lighting and firefighting equipment are regularly tested and maintained; signage is appropriate and comprehensive fire safety records are kept. Plans and records show that new buildings, classrooms and refurbished accommodation have been added to the school fire alarm system by appropriately qualified personnel. These contain suitable firefighting equipment. The current arrangements are likely to meet the needs of the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14]

- 2.11 The school meets the standard.
- 2.12 The school has a suitable policy for supervising pupils. Staff receive appropriate guidance on induction and this is maintained through regular updates. Staff have clear job descriptions detailing their duties with regard to supervision. Comprehensive duty rotas cover all areas of the school, including in the EYFS where ratios of staff to children are suitable. Arrangements for different times of day take into account the age, number and needs of pupils and the locations and activities involved. These are all implemented effectively. The school has sufficient numbers of suitably trained staff who pupils can talk to should they require assistance, including in the EYFS. Monitoring by senior staff ensures that supervision is effective, and that cover is put in place without delay if it is required. The current arrangements are likely to meet the needs of the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

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

- 2.13 The school meets the standard.
- 2.14 The school has a strategic approach to risk assessment which covers all areas of the site and future building development, including in the EYFS. It also includes the recently constructed buildings and expansion of the school. Appropriate action is taken to reduce risks. The current arrangements are likely to meet the needs of the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21]

- 2.15 The school meets the standards.
- 2.16 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.

Premises and accommodation – [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 23–29]

- 2.17 The school meets the standards.
- 2.18 Suitable toilet and changing facilities are provided where required, and appropriate accommodation exists for pupils' medical and therapy needs. The recent construction of buildings and refurbishment provides sufficient and appropriate classrooms to accommodate the proposed increase in pupil numbers, including in the EYFS. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; and water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

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

- 2.19 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]

- 2.20 The school meets the standard.
- 2.21 Senior leaders, governors and GDST demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that all the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils. Measures planned or implemented for the proposed increase in pupil numbers are likely to ensure pupils' continued wellbeing.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

- 3.1 It is recommended that the request to increase pupil capacity from 850 to 950 is granted.
- 3.2 Welfare health and safety practices meet the standards. Recently constructed buildings and refurbishments to accommodate additional classrooms and facilities, including those for the EYFS, indicate that the standards are likely to continue to be met with the increase in numbers. This is likely to take place within the next twelve months. The school meets the standards for recruitment of staff and has already employed new staff to meet the increase in pupil numbers.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the chair of governors and director of education. He visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. He scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mr Desmond Dunne

Reporting inspector