



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

## **Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report**

**Heathfield Knoll School**

**September 2018**



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### School's Details

<b>School</b>	Heathfield Knoll School			
<b>DfE number</b>	885/6014			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1098940			
<b>Address</b>	Heathfield Knoll School Wolverley Road Kidderminster Worcestershire DY10 3QE			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01562850204			
<b>Email address</b>	info@hkschool.org.uk			
<b>Head</b>	Mr Lawrence Collins			
<b>Chair of trustees</b>	Mr Douglas Jackson			
<b>Age range</b>	0 to 16			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	220			
	<b>Boys</b>	132	<b>Girls</b>	88
	<b>Early Years</b>	57	<b>Lower School</b>	61
	<b>Middle School</b>	47	<b>Upper School</b>	55
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19 to 20 September 2018			

## **1. Background Information**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 Heathfield Knoll School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between three months and sixteen years. The school was created in January 2017, following the merger of Heathfield School, founded in 1620, and Knoll School, founded in 1917. It is located just outside the village of Wolverley near Kidderminster. It is a charitable trust governed by a board of trustees.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the structure of the school has changed to a four-tier system: Early Years for children under the age of four years; Lower School for pupils in Reception to Year 4, Middle School for pupils in Years 5 to 8 and Upper School for pupils in Years 9 to 11. Since the previous inspection, new Nursery accommodation has been completed, the curriculum provision has been re-structured and school management and governance re-organised.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.3 The school aims to provide learning that is fun and engaging, enabling pupils to fulfil their potential, regardless of ability. It seeks to treat pupils as individuals and nurture their development of tolerance and respect, so that they leave the school as well-rounded, informed and balanced young adults.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional and business backgrounds, mostly from White British families. Assessment data provided by the school indicate that the ability profile throughout the school is broadly average. The school has identified 37 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include physical, cognitive and emotional difficulties, 32 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational need. English is an additional language for one pupil, whose needs are supported by classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified 35 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 11 other pupils because of their special talents in sport music and creative arts.

## 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](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

### **PART 1 – Quality of education provided**

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2014 to 2017, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools.
- 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 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.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

### **PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], 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.**

### **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 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

## **PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, 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.

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

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

2.14 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 any 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, 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.

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

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.16 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.

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

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.18 The proprietor ensures 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.

**2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.**

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE EARLY YEARS PROVISION**

- 2.20 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good.
- 2.21 Children make good progress in relation to their starting points and are well prepared for transitions within the setting. Staff are fully aware of children's needs, including those with SEND, and plan efficiently for their next steps in learning. They communicate effectively with each other to support the development of all children in the setting. On occasions, children's problem solving and critical thinking development are not fully supported because staff miss opportunities to promote independent and investigative skills.
- 2.22 Children's personal and emotional development is well supported. Children feel safe and secure in the setting and settle quickly with their key person. They also form secure bonds with other staff who children readily go to for reassurance.
- 2.23 The safeguarding and welfare requirements are all fully met. Effective policies and procedures are in place. Staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities for protecting children and leaders ensure they are kept up to date through regular training updates.
- 2.24 Since the last inspection, and following the merger of two schools, there has been considerable change to the setting. This includes a new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) leadership team, changes to staffing and alterations to the accommodation. Leaders have a strong awareness of the setting's strengths and the areas for its development to secure its continuous improvement. The regulatory action point and recommendation from the previous inspection have been fully addressed.

### **EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- 2.25 The effectiveness of leadership and management is good.
- 2.26 Leaders and managers share an ambitious vision for the further development of the setting, to promote the best outcomes for children. Detailed plans, which are regularly evaluated, are in place to support these ideas. Staff are also encouraged to offer suggestions, which make a positive contribution towards improving the quality of the provision. Effective systems for supervision and performance management enable staff to review their practices and identify areas for professional development. Where needs are identified, these are mostly met by the school through in-house training and, as a result, opportunities for staff to develop and share good practice beyond the setting are limited. The setting has recently implemented new initiatives to gather the views of parents in evaluating the quality of the provision and the outcomes for children, such as parental questionnaires and the 'question of the month'.
- 2.27 Staff are well qualified and fully aware of the learning and development statutory requirements. They plan a broad and balanced curriculum of learning activities, which reflects the needs and interests of the children well. This good provision prepares children fully for their next stage in their learning. The setting actively promotes equality and diversity, by ensuring an inclusive environment that fully supports children's cultural and welfare needs. For example, careful thought is given to accommodating particular dietary requirements related to specific faiths. Good behaviour is promoted and children are encouraged to share toys and be gentle with their friends.
- 2.28 All statutory requirements are met and stringent safeguarding arrangements are in place. Managers ensure staff are up-to-date with training and keep detailed logs. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and during discussions, a very large majority of parents expressed highly positive views about the setting. They commented on how happy and settled their child is, how pleased they are with progress their child is making and how approachable staff are.

## **QUALITY OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

- 2.29 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good.
- 2.30 Staff have high expectations of what each child can achieve and are fully aware of the range of children's needs. They have a secure understanding about promoting the learning and development of young children. Staff make good use of information provided by parents when they join the setting, so that children's next steps in learning accurately match their developmental needs. This information is also effectively incorporated into long term and weekly planning. Regular observations identify children's progress successfully and contribute positively to assessment processes, which are completed half termly. The setting has recently introduced the use of an electronic tracker to monitor children's progress, which assists in highlighting any children who are not achieving as expected, or who may be achieving beyond expectations.
- 2.31 Children interact happily with staff who supportively encourage them to engage and participate. For example, a child building a small brick tower clapped excitedly with a staff member who was praising his efforts. Most staff carefully listen and question children to support and extend their learning. On a few occasions, staff miss opportunities that present challenge and develop children's problem solving and investigative learning skills.
- 2.32 Staff form good relationships with parents and continually encourage them to contribute towards their child's learning. The setting operates an open-door policy, enabling parents easy access to staff and perusal of their child's assessment records. Recently, parents' evenings have been introduced to provide a formal opportunity for staff to discuss children's progress. Additionally, a half-termly newsletter provides an overview of what the children have been doing. A parent handbook provides good information about the EYFS and relevant information is also displayed within the setting.
- 2.33 Staff recognise the importance of promoting equality and diversity in teaching and learning. Children's awareness of the wider world is well promoted through the celebration of cultural festivals and events. Words in different languages, such as those relevant to children's heritage, are on display, and staff incorporate these effectively when interacting with children during activities. Resources to support cultural understanding are currently limited, but leaders have identified this need within development planning. Staff provide good support for children, which ensures they are well prepared for the next stages in their learning and develop necessary skills for the future.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE**

- 2.34 The personal development, behaviour and welfare of children are good.
- 2.35 Staff create a welcoming environment for children both indoors and outside, and encourage them to explore the resources available. For example, children confidently use both their hands and brushes to explore the texture of paint. Children develop good levels of self-confidence because staff use praise effectively to celebrate their achievements. They demonstrate good developing skills of independence, as observed when they moved plastic cups from one area to another for their play in the sand pit. Children enjoy investigating the outdoor area and show curiosity and imagination when playing with water and mud. On occasions, children's natural curiosity is curtailed by staff, which limits opportunities for them to use their imagination and instigate their own creative play.
- 2.36 Children form secure bonds with their key person, enabling them to feel safe and happy in the setting. Staff know the children well and ensure that individual sleep routines and preferences are catered for. They provide comforting reassurance to children when they are upset, tired, or have just woken up from their nap, which reassures them and effectively nurtures their well-being. Children are developing good social and emotional skills. They eat together for meals and snacks and have opportunities to play together. This inclusive approach enables younger children to learn from older ones and helps prepare them well for their next stage in the setting.

- 2.37 Staff strongly encourage regular attendance to provide children with consistency and enable them to settle quickly. High priority is given to children's safety, and good attendance procedures are in place for signing children in and out of the setting. Staff promote good behaviour and manners at all times. For example, children are encouraged to sit at the table until all their friends have finished eating their lunch and snack. Staff use effective strategies to promote children's understanding of positive interaction, such as encouraging them to share toys, respect the feelings of their friends and understand why any negative behaviour can cause upset to others.
- 2.38 Children are encouraged to move safely around the setting and use resources appropriately. The setting provides varied well-balanced healthy meals and snacks, which supports healthy eating habits well. Hygiene wipes and flannels are used at mealtimes, although these routines limit children's independence and the development of personal hygiene skills, such as washing their own hands. Good use is made of the outdoors and children greatly enjoy using an appropriate range of activities to develop their physical skills.

## **OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN**

- 2.39 Outcomes for children are good.
- 2.40 Children make good progress from their differing starting points. They display developing levels of concentration, when sitting with staff and listening to stories. Children are keen to show their knowledge of animal noises during an activity in the outdoor area. Older children communicate well, trying to pronounce sounds and words correctly, encouraged by the language that staff model to develop their speaking skills. Outside, children develop good levels of confidence with their early writing skills during an activity using chalk to make marks on a large blackboard. Indoors, they have limited opportunities for independent mark-making. Children are developing a good understanding of early numeracy skills through staff interaction during their play. For example, staff use language such as 'big' and 'little' and count objects as children move them around. Children enjoy musical opportunities and engage enthusiastically with staff during singing activities at lunchtime.
- 2.41 The youngest children are developing good physical skills through staff encouragement, thus gaining confidence in their own ability as they attempt to walk unsupported across the room. Older children concentrate with a high degree of perseverance when placing rings correctly on a stacker. Younger children sit in highchairs and independently feed themselves using a spoon and at times their fingers, whilst older children sit on chairs and confidently use a fork and spoon. Children are meeting the expected levels of development for their respective ages and this helps to ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

- 2.42 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENT**

The school is advised to make the following improvements to its provision for children in the early years.

- Provide opportunities for staff to develop their teaching expertise beyond the setting to improve outcomes for children.
- Increase opportunities which challenge children's thinking and develop creativity during their learning experiences.
- Provide more opportunities for children to develop their independence and self-care skills.

### 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, the chair of trustees and the safeguarding trustee, and attended form and registration times. 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

Mrs Sue Bennett

Reporting inspector

Mr David Gajadharsingh

Compliance team inspector (Head, Society of Heads school)

Miss Victoria Plenderleith

Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of pre-prep, IAPS school)