



ISI Inspection Date 19th October 2022 – Report Published May 2023

The College was inspected by the Independent School Inspectorate (ISI) for a Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report. This unannounced inspection took place on the 19th October 2022. The outcome of the visit and the subsequent report is listed below. This follows on from the most recent visit and Inspection Report from February 2022, when all requirements across the standards were met.

This was a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. Compliance is not evaluative; it assesses whether or not the Independent School Standards, the regulations by which we are bound, are met. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or **not met**.

The most recent report indicated that **aspects** within some of the standards have been identified as not meeting the level as reviewed by the Inspection Team.

Of the varying aspects of the standards that were not met, most were largely administrative, but nevertheless we take this extremely seriously: compliance with legislative requirements is vital and as a school we care passionately about getting these matters right.

It was pleasing to see the Inspection Team recognise the wide range and talents of our pupils and their own enjoyment of being at Ellesmere.

“During the visit, pupils were observed behaving well in lessons and at other times, displaying mutual respect”.

*Where **aspects** of a standard were not met, further context has been provided below.*

2.3 – 2.10 Safeguarding Implementation.

There are many areas to highlight from the Inspectors' positive comments in relation to the standards met, set against the College's safeguarding policy.

“These are understood and implemented effectively by staff.” “Staff training in safeguarding is comprehensive.”

And, their comments about the pupils.

“Pupils confirmed that they can express concerns and are listened to. They receive appropriate support in most cases, including early help. There is due regard for pupils' mental health. Pupils confirmed they feel safe in school.”

2.6 & 2.20

In relation to this report and the subsequent findings, it is important to say that inappropriate sexual behaviour in this context can and does include kissing. The Inspection Team felt there was more that could have been logged and risk assessed, and this has been noted as an action point going forward.

2.8 The new CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring Systems) digital system was only implemented during the Summer Term 2022 and the Inspection visit was October 2022, this short time frame inevitably highlighted that further training was needed on how to design reports to analyse trends and patterns. Further training has now been carried out in this area, with new categories added for clarity.

2.9 The issue of social media misuse is one all schools and parents find a constant challenge and that is why we regularly communicate with families about such issues and display such support guidance on the school website.

“The use of technology by pupils is suitably controlled in most areas”.

The College can at times become involved and have a responsibility in the action of the pupils whether at home or school and the College can be drawn into and involved in events outside of any school activity.

2.18 – 2.20 Welfare, health and safety of pupils. (risk assessment)

In context and to the best of our knowledge, we dealt with things in an appropriate way, as previously described but the Inspection Team disagreed with this judgement. At all times, the College is always considering the risks posed and adequate measures are immediately put in place.

2.21 – 2.22 Provision of Information.

It was reported that all previous inspection reports should be on the school website. An administrative error meant we inadvertently took the previous one down, which should not have happened; this has now been rectified.

2.23 – 2.25 Manner in which Complaints are handled.

Although the report states that complaints are handled correctly, the recording of lessons learnt and detailed records of complaint outcomes from the incident had not been noted for the last complaint. This has now been rectified and a framework is being looked at to prevent this happening again.

2.26 – 2.27 Quality of Leadership and Management.

Such is the importance placed on the Welfare, Health and the Safety of pupils, any issue of this kind identified in the Inspection Report will automatically trigger a finding of non-compliance in this area.

Likewise, it is important to highlight the comments made by the Inspection Team.

“The supportive relationships that prevail between pupils at the school and the effective guidance and care provided by senior leaders and staff ensure that, in practice, behaviour is predominantly good and bullying is rare”.

The Inspection Report was carried out in October 2022, and we have been in discussion with ISI since then in order to be clear on the specific aspects that need to be addressed, to add further refinement and distinction to the points of action. We have further developed our own system for monitoring and recording. Issues identified from the inspection have been addressed and rectified as required by ISI.

There are recommendations for further development in the report, which we fully support, and which form part of our action plan.

The next step is for the ISI to review the action plan that will be submitted and then to return to verify that all necessary actions have been completed and to reassess compliance. We understand the critical importance of compliance: any breach, no matter how minor, needs to be addressed with urgency.

We look forward to this opportunity to demonstrate that all arrangements fully comply with regulations. This supports and underpins the basis for the many positive areas acknowledged in the inspection report.

Full text of report

The full text of the ISI report is available [here](#).