

STOKE COLLEGE

**REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION
FOR SCHOOLS WITH RESIDENTIAL PROVISION**

04 TO 06 OCT 2016



School's Details

Full Name of School	Stoke College
DfE Number	935/6003
Registered Charity Number	310487
Address	Stoke College Ashen Lane Stoke-by-Clare Sudbury Suffolk CO10 8JE
Telephone Number	01787 278141
Email address	info@stokecollege.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Frank Thompson
Chair of governors	Mr Jonathan Burchell
Age Range	4 to 16
Total Number of Pupils	113
Gender of Pupils	Mixed
Number of day pupils	109
Number of boarders	Total: 4 Weekly: 4
Pupils' Ability	<p>The prep school does not use externally moderated standardised tests. However, its own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is similar to the national average.</p> <p>Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils in the senior school is in line with the national average.</p>
Pupils' Needs	<p>The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is thirty-six. Six pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The support provided includes that for dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, ADD and ADHD. No pupils have English as an additional language (EAL).</p>

School's Details

History of the School	Stoke College is a rural prep and senior school founded in 1951. It traces its roots to 1415, with the founding of a monastic college on the site occupied by the school.
Ownership and Governing Structure	The school is a registered charity with a board of six governors.
School Structure	The school is co-educational and takes day pupils, and also accommodates weekly and flexi-boarders. It has 2 sections: the prep school for pupils from 4 to 11 years of age and the senior school for pupils aged between 11 and 16 years.
Inspection Dates	04 to 06 Oct 2016
Other Useful Information:	The school closed its Nursery provision in July 2016. The school still offers a Reception class. At the time of inspection there were no Reception children.

About the Inspection

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.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (“boarding NMS”). It also comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or 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, including the boarding NMS, following their inspection 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 and any qualitative concerns identified at their previous inspection.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school’s compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. 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.

The inspection does not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as:

- (i) the school’s aims;
- (ii) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (iii) compliance with data protection requirements;
- (iv) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (v) contractual arrangements with parents;
- (vi) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups. Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Independent School Standards Regulations](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

SUMMARY EVALUATION

The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

PART 1

Quality of education provided

In the prep school, the school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.

At GCSE in the years 2014 and 2015, performance has been in line with the national average for maintained schools.

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 pupil performance is in place.

The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1 - 4] are met.

PART 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.

The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5 and NMS 17 and 19] are met.

PART 3

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and a disability access plan is in place.

An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' food and drink and for managing their laundry and possessions. Boarders have access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.

The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9, 10, 13, 14 and 15, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 2, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 7.2, 8 – 12, 15.1 – 15.8, 15.10 and 16 are met but those in paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8, 11, 12 and 16, and NMS 3.2, 4.1, 6, 7.1 and 15.9 are not met.

The room provided for sick or injured boarders and day pupils is not near a toilet facility. Boarders do not have suitable opportunities for private contact with friends and family, a point noted by the majority of boarders and a few parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses. Accommodation for female residential boarding assistants lacks suitable access to toilet and washing facilities. Parts of the school premises, facilities and boarding accommodation are poorly maintained, which was indicated by a few parents in their questionnaire responses. Risk assessments do not identify all significant risks to pupils' welfare, health and safety whilst they are on school premises. Appropriate action has not always been taken to reduce the risks identified, including fire risks notified in a fire inspection report. Some fire exits are locked or obstructed, some doors in the boarding house are mislabelled as fire escape routes, and some external and emergency lighting is not in working order.

Action point 1

- **the school must ensure that accommodation for sick pupils is located near to a toilet facility [NMS 3.2, and in consequence paragraph 8(b)].**

Action point 2

- **the school must ensure that boarders can contact their parents or carers, and families in private [NMS 4.1, and in consequence paragraph 8(b)].**

Action point 3

- **the school must provide suitable toilet and washing facilities for residential staff [NMS 15.9, and in consequence paragraph 8(b)].**

Action point 4

- **the school must effectively implement a written health and safety policy [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), NMS 6.1, and in consequence paragraph 8(b)].**

Action point 5

- **the school must ensure that the premises, accommodation and facilities are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), and 11, and NMS 6.2, and in consequence paragraph 8(b)].**

Action point 6

- **the school must take appropriate and timely action to reduce risks (including fire risks) that are identified [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 11, 12 and 16, and NMS 6.3 and 7.1, and in consequence paragraph 8(b)].**

PART 4

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised.

The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17 – 21] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 5

Premises of and accommodation at schools

Acoustics are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

The standards relating to the premises and accommodation in paragraphs 22, 23, 26, 27(a), 28 and 29, and NMS 5.1, 5.2 and 5.5 – 5.8 are met but those in paragraphs 24(1)(a) and (b), 25, 27(b) and 30, and NMS 5.3 and 5.4 are not met.

The room provided for sick or injured boarders and day pupils is not near a toilet facility. The bathroom for female boarders is not maintained to a suitable standard, is not accessible to boarders with restricted mobility and does not afford adequate privacy. Parts of the school premises, facilities, boarding accommodation and equipment are poorly maintained, which was noted by a small minority of parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses.

Action point 7

- the school must ensure that accommodation for sick pupils is located near to toilet facilities [paragraph 24(1)(a) and (b)].

Action point 8

- the school must ensure that toilet and washing facilities are suitably maintained, make reasonable adjustments to provide access for any boarders with restricted mobility and provide appropriate privacy for boarders [NMS 5.3 and 5.4, and in consequence paragraph 30].

Action point 9

- the school must ensure that premises and equipment are suitably maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured [paragraph 25].

Action point 10

- the school must ensure that external and emergency lighting is working in all areas to ensure the safety of pupils and visitors [paragraph 27(b) and NMS 5.4, and in consequence paragraph 30].

PART 6

Provision of information

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. 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.

The standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and statement of boarding principles [NMS 1] are met.

PART 7

Manner in which complaints are handled

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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.

The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.

PART 8

Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

The standards relating to leadership and management of the school in NMS 13.2, 13.3 and 13.6 – 13.9 are met but those in paragraphs 34(1)(a), (b) and (c) and NMS 13.1, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5 and 13.8 are not met.

Governance has not carried out its responsibilities effectively with regard to ensuring that regulatory standards are met consistently. Oversight of risk assessment, health and safety and fire safety policies and procedures has not been exercised with sufficient rigour and scrutiny to ensure their effective implementation.

Action point 11

- **Governors must ensure that those with leadership and management responsibility demonstrate good skills and knowledge, fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the Independent School Standards are met consistently, and actively promote the well-being of pupils. [paragraphs 34(1)(a), (b) and (c), and NMS 13.1, 13.3, 13.4, 13.5 and 13.8].**

About the inspection

The inspectors observed a small sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with teachers, senior members of staff, and with the chair and deputy chair of governors. They observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Susan Marks	Reporting Inspector
Mr Desmond Dunne	Accompanying Inspector
Ms Alison Baines	Compliance Team Inspector (Principal, ISA school)
Mrs Elizabeth Worthington	Boarding Inspector (Senior Deputy Head, HMC school)