

THE ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL

46 Floral Street, London, WC2E 9DA

2ND NOVEMBER 2016

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Royal Ballet School is based in two sites in London, although it operates and is managed as a single co-educational day and boarding school. Both sites have specialist ballet facilities and academic classrooms, together with health care and physiotherapy provision. Pupils aged from 11 to 16 are educated at the White Lodge in Richmond Park, Surrey. The Upper School, for pupils aged 16 to 19, is located in Floral Street, adjacent to The Royal Opera House in Covent Garden; this part of the school provides a third year of study preparing pupils for entry into professional dance companies. Pupils are selected on the basis of an audition designed to identify their potential in ballet; most pupils are supported financially by the Department for Education's Music and Dance Scheme. Boarders are accommodated either at White Lodge (for ages 11 to 16) or in central London (for ages 16 to 19). The school is a registered charity and the governors, drawn from professional and educational backgrounds and from prominent positions in the world of ballet, act as its trustees.

At the time of the visit there were 217 pupils, 108 boys and 109 girls, in the school, with 207 being full boarders and the remainder being day pupils. The three-year sixth form currently has 86 pupils. The school has identified 14 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist support for a range of learning difficulties. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 39 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), with 21 receiving specialist support. The previous ISI Integrated inspection took place in November 2015.

PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

This was an unannounced progress monitoring visit at the request of the Department for Education to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the Integrated inspection of 3 to 6 November 2015. The focus of the visit was on:

- Part 3, paragraphs 7 (a) and (b) and paragraphs 8(a) and (b) under Welfare, health and safety of pupils and, for the same reason, National Minimum Standard 11, under Child Protection.
- Part 4, paragraphs 18 (2) (a), (b), (c) (i), and 18 (3) and 21 (3) (b) under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b), and Part 3 paragraphs 8(a) and (b), and for the same reason, National Minimum Standard 14.1 under Suitability of Staff.
- Part 8, paragraphs 34 (1) (a), (b) and (c), under the Quality of leadership and management of schools.

INSPECTION FINDINGS

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b) & 8(a) and (b); NMS 11]; Provision of information to parents [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32 (1) (c)]

The school meets the Regulations and Standard.

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. The school also meets the requirements for its safeguarding policy. It has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding procedures are implemented consistently to ensure the welfare of pupils, including boarders, by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the three deputy DSLs have appropriate and up-to-date levels of safeguarding training for their roles, which includes working with external agencies. The school liaises closely with the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) in Richmond and central London and ensures appropriate interventions both for pupils in need of external support and for those at risk of abuse, making sure that pupils receive the right help to minimise risks. Suitable procedures are in place to deal with any disclosures from pupils and with any allegations against members of staff. Child protection records are suitably detailed, held securely and demonstrate that any concerns or necessary referrals are promptly addressed.

All members of staff, including those with boarding roles, and governors have received suitable safeguarding training which is regularly updated in line with locally agreed procedures and *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) (September 2016). There is a clear code of conduct which provides suitable guidance for members of staff on their relationships with pupils. Staff induction is well-planned and includes all required safeguarding elements, ensuring that all new members of staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. The members of staff interviewed knew how to refer safeguarding concerns and were aware of the possible types and signs of abuse. Safeguarding training records are held electronically by the leadership and include confirmation that all members of staff currently working in the school have read and understood Part 1 of KCSIE and that relevant staff have been issued with Annex A.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18(2) (a), (b), (c) (i), 18(3) and 21(3) (b); Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b); Part 3, paragraphs 8(a) and (b); National Minimum Standard 14.1 under Suitability of Staff]

The school meets the Regulations and Standard.

All required recruitment checks are now carried out prior to the starting date of all new members of staff, including boarding staff. These checks are recorded in a suitable manner in the single central register. Staff files are well-organised and allow straightforward verification of the checking process. Appointment panels always include at least one member of staff with safer recruitment training.

Quality of leadership in and management of schools [Part 8, paragraphs 34(1)(a) and (b)]

The school meets the Regulation.

The leadership and management of the school, including its governors, demonstrate the skills and knowledge required to fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the Independent Schools Standards relating to safeguarding and staff recruitment checks are met consistently. Since the previous inspection the governance and leadership have improved their understanding of regulatory requirements and have put into place robust and effective monitoring procedures.

REGULATORY ACTION POINTS

The school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.