



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

Lincoln Minster School

November 2022

School's details

School	Lincoln Minster School			
DfE number	925/6012			
Registered charity number	1016538			
Address	Lincoln Minster School The Prior Building Upper Lindum Street Lincoln Lincolnshire LN2 5RW			
Telephone number	01522 551300			
Email address	communications@lincolnminsterschool.co.uk			
Interim Head	Mr Jon Tyler			
Proprietor	United Learning			
Age range	4 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	475			
	Day pupils	453	Boarders	22
	EYFS	18	Preparatory	124
	Seniors	244	Sixth Form	89
Date of inspection	23 November 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Lincoln Minster School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. The school comprises a preparatory school for pupils aged 4 to 11 and a senior school and sixth form for those aged 11 to 18. The school's proprietor is United Learning, who delegate specific responsibilities to a local governing body. Senior school pupils who board are accommodated in two houses, one for male and the other for female pupils, close to the senior school campus. The school has identified 99 pupils as having special educational needs (SEND). There are seven pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 21 pupils. The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in November 2021.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the regulatory compliance inspection on 10 to 12 November 2021. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2022. The visit was focused in the senior school.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraph 2A (relationships and sex education); NMS 17	Met
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils); NMS 13	Met
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 8	Met
Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying); NMS 16	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision); NMS 20	Met
Part 4, paragraph 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); NMS 19	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32 (provision of information)	Met
Part 7, paragraph 33 (complaints); NMS 14	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 2	Met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – relationships and sex education [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2A; NMS 17]

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 The school has a suitable relationships and sex education policy for the senior school which is made available to parents and published on the school's website. Parents have been consulted during the development and revision of the policy. Every registered secondary pupil in the school is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5; NMS 13]

- 2.3 The school meets the standards.
- 2.4 The school has taken effective measures to ensure that all pupils, including those with protected characteristics, are treated equally across the school. In particular, male and female pupils are treated equally, including in boarding. Rules in both boarding houses are now standardised so that all boarders are treated equally. Boarders confirmed that the implementation of these rules is consistent across the boarding houses. Boarders have regular opportunities to express their views about the boarding experience and these views are listened to and acted upon.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 8]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.5 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.6 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

- 2.7 The school meets the standards.
- 2.8 Safeguarding arrangements have been sufficiently strengthened since the previous inspection to ensure that the school now implements its safeguarding policy effectively.
- 2.9 Suitable systems operate to listen to pupils, including boarders. Pupils confirmed that they are confident to express any concerns they have; that they receive an appropriate response when they do so; and that action is taken promptly, if needed. This includes any concerns relating to potential child-on-child abuse. The potential for any bullying to reach the threshold of safeguarding referral is understood by senior leaders. Appropriate policies are implemented to promote pupils' safety online and the school operates suitable systems to filter and monitor the internet. Pupils confirm that they are effectively educated about online risks.
- 2.10 The DSL keeps careful records of any pupils of concern and refers to local safeguarding partners promptly and appropriately both for advice and to make referrals. These include referrals to CAMHS and the police, when appropriate. Records of safeguarding matters concerning pupils are suitable and include issues relating to mental health. They show effective communication with pupils, parents and external agencies. They include detailed minutes of any meetings held.

- 2.11 The newly appointed designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies have appropriate advanced level training. All staff have been suitably trained recently. This included an emphasis on the latest update to *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, focusing on child-on-child abuse and the Prevent agenda. Staff who miss the main training are provided with individual catch-up sessions. Records of attendance are carefully kept. Staff demonstrated effective understanding of the content of their training. They receive regular additional updates from the DSL, which include scenarios to consider. They understand that some pupils, such as those with SEND, are particularly vulnerable. Staff now use a digital reporting system to report pupils' behaviour and any concerns with confidence. There is a suitable staff code of conduct which is well understood by staff. They confirmed that they would report any low-level concerns and use the whistleblowing procedures when necessary. Low-level concerns and allegations against adults working with children are correctly managed. For those that meet the threshold, referrals are made promptly to the LADO before any investigation is carried out.
- 2.12 The school's arrangements for the oversight of safeguarding by senior leaders have been suitably improved since the previous inspection and are now effective. A transitional local governing body has been appointed by the proprietors which demonstrates the required knowledge and skills to oversee safeguarding in the school appropriately. The safeguarding governor meets the DSL regularly. Each discussion has a clear agenda and minutes are kept. Safeguarding is a regular item on the agendas of the transitional governing board. An effective annual review of safeguarding has taken place recently. Appropriate recruitment procedures operate for all new staff. These now ensure that all checks on staff required by current statutory guidance are carried out before staff commence work at the school.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – bullying [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 10; NMS 16]

- 2.13 The school meets the standards.
- 2.14 The school takes appropriate measures to guard against bullying. Senior leaders respond effectively to any reports of bullying received, including of peer-on-peer abuse, effectively. Incidences of bullying are rare and pupils, including boarders, confirmed that action is taken swiftly should they occur. They are now effectively recorded on a centralised system which includes all behavioural incidents including those of child-on-child abuse. All are categorised as potential safeguarding incidents. The DSL records the actions taken and the support provided for both victims and perpetrators. Records show evidence of suitable communication with parents and any meetings held.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14; NMS 20]

- 2.15 The school meets the standards.
- 2.16 The school has improved its arrangements for supervising pupils at the senior school effectively since the previous inspection. It consulted pupils to seek their views and has implemented suitably effective arrangements for supervision at unstructured times of the day such as breaks and lunchtimes. Appropriate staff rotas operate and pupils confirmed that arrangements work well. Observation of lunchtime arrangements confirmed suitable supervision. Supervision in boarding houses is effective; boarders state that they feel safe and can always find a member of staff, including at night.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; NMS 19]

- 2.17 The school meets the standards.
- 2.18 The school has carried out all the necessary recruitment checks on all staff appointed since the previous inspection. These include checks on the right to work in the United Kingdom, medical fitness,

qualifications and any relevant overseas checks. In all cases these have been completed before members of staff begin work. There have been no incidences of staff beginning work where an enhanced criminal record certificate has been delayed. The school does not employ supply staff. Governors and senior leaders check recruitment procedures and the single central register regularly and effectively. Those with responsibility for recruitment demonstrate secure knowledge and skills, including with regard to necessary steps should an enhanced criminal record certificate be delayed.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32]

- 2.19 The school meets the standard.
- 2.20 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding and complaints to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website. The school publishes the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure on the school's website.

Manner in which complaints are handled [ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33; NMS 14]

- 2.21 The school meets the standards.
- 2.22 The school has an appropriate policy to handle parents' complaints. It contains suitable time scales for the management of complaints at each stage, informal, formal and a panel hearing. Any complainants are informed of all the stages of the complaints process available to them. The policy now states that any complaints relating to the fulfilment of EYFS requirements will be investigated and the outcome notified within 28 days.
- 2.23 Senior leaders keep appropriate records of all formal complaints, how they are resolved and action taken, regardless of whether they are upheld. The complaints log was made available to inspectors appropriately. It currently holds no complaints relating to boarding provision but those responsible for keeping the log understand the need to identify any such complaints. Boarders confirmed that they make their views known about boarding in weekly meetings with boarding staff and that any concerns expressed receive a prompt response.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 2]

- 2.24 The school meets the standards.
- 2.25 Governors and school leaders have successfully implemented the actions required as a result of the previous inspection. They demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the standards are consistently met and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

4. Summary of evidence

4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with a group of governors. They talked with groups of pupils, including boarders, and scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mrs Kate McCarey

Reporting inspector

Mr Bill Burn

Assistant reporting inspector