

Wotton House International School

Wotton House, Horton Road, Gloucester GL1 3PT

Inspection dates

12 November 2019

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 3, 3(a)–(d)

- Pupils access a broad curriculum, which is based on eight distinct subject groups. Curriculum plans provide teachers with an overview of the content they must teach. Teachers then decide what it is they will teach and in what order. They share these plans with leaders to ensure they are suitably challenging and enable pupils to work toward key milestones. The curriculum remains broad throughout pupils' schooling. Pupils enjoy these subjects and focus well in lessons.
- Leaders have adopted a curriculum that helps pupils make links between their studies. For example, during the inspection, the lead inspector witnessed a pupil applying his scientific and English language knowledge to a mathematics lesson.
- Pupils' books show that in most subjects they make progress. This is particularly strong in older pupils' books where lessons build on pupils' prior knowledge and help prepare them for future learning. However, this is not yet consistently strong across all subjects and year groups. Where less strong, lessons are not as well-sequenced, and pupils are not able to demonstrate their knowledge.
- Teachers have an increasing knowledge of the subjects they are teaching. When they use this well they remind pupils of prior learning to help them tackle new learning. Teachers promote pupils' positive attitudes toward learning. They provide pupils with meaningful opportunities to discuss, and reflect on, their learning. Teachers use time in lessons effectively and provide pupils with the resources they need to be successful. But on occasion, pupils do not have the appropriate resources for activities where technical accuracy is necessary, such as map drawing.
- Teachers are showing an increasing awareness of pupils' aptitudes, needs and prior attainment. However, this is not yet consistently strong. Some pupils who arrive with particularly low starting points struggle with new learning. Teachers are attempting to support pupils by adapting the curriculum to meet their needs, but this still requires greater precision. In addition, some pupils present their work less well in some subjects than others. This is because teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation vary.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a)–(b)

- Leaders continue to ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place. They have adopted a safeguarding policy which follows guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This is published on the school's website. Leaders have a strong understanding of recent changes made to 'Keeping children safe in education', September 2019. They ensure that staff are aware of these changes through ongoing training.
- Leaders have carried out all the compulsory recruitment checks on staff in good time. They have recorded these, in line with current requirements on the school's single central record.
- The designated safeguarding leader demonstrates a secure knowledge of how best to maintain pupils' welfare. A deputy safeguarding leader assists her in this work. Leaders have had suitable training, so they can effectively fulfil these roles. Leaders have made sure they have trained staff. This helps staff to notice concerns about pupils' welfare, should they occur.
- Leaders have clear systems in place for staff to record any concerns they may have about pupils' welfare. These concerns form part of a useful chronology, which enables safeguarding leaders to evaluate any patterns or trends. This informs their decision-making about whether these concerns meet thresholds, and, where it may be necessary, to seek support from external agencies. They do this in a timely manner. Leaders act on advice sought from the external agencies. These actions minimise risk to pupils and help to keep them safe.
- Leaders maintain close contact with the local authority. Staff have benefited from safeguarding training from representatives from the local authority. This helps further strengthen the school's safeguarding practice.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)(a)–(c)

- Leaders have ensured that previously unmet independent school standards are now met. They have carried out checks on these standards, in consultation with the school's advisory board. These checks are based on compliance. Leaders have recently introduced a colour coded system to determine how well each standard is met. These checks are wholly suitable when checking standards such as those to do with premises and accommodation. However, for standards relating to the quality of education that the school provides, this method lacks the necessary detail. Leaders' notes do not make clear their findings or what will help secure further improvements. Nonetheless, despite this lack of detail, leaders' actions have been successful.
- Leaders have made efforts to strengthen the leadership across the school. This has brought about improvements. They have put in place subject specialists to lead and teach subjects across the school. Leaders check that teachers' curriculum plans are suitable. Teachers are clear about the school's curriculum and implement it with increasing quality. As a result, previously unmet standards contained within part 1, are now met.

- The school's headteacher is also the proprietor. To help secure increased accountability and to support the school to ensure the independent school standards are met in full, an advisory board was introduced during the previous academic year. They are increasing their responsibility and are asking for useful information about the school's performance. This enables them to ask increasingly challenging questions of leaders. But, it is not yet clear, from the advisory boards' minutes of meetings, how they follow up on reports which evaluate the quality of the school's work and how well the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
 - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	143018
DfE registration number	916/6006
Inspection number	10118366

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Number of part-time pupils	13
Proprietor	Daniel Sturdy
Chair	Daniel Sturdy
Headteacher	Daniel Sturdy
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,300 to £14,847
Telephone number	01452 764248
Website	www.wottonhouseschool.co.uk
Email address	info@iveuk.com
Date of previous standard inspection	28–30 November 2017

Information about this school

- Wotton House International School is a small independent school, which opened in September 2016. It is registered for a maximum capacity of 250 pupils. In addition, it was previously registered as a boarding school, but the proprietor has suspended boarding provision.
- The school is owned by International Village Education Ltd. The owner of this company is the proprietor of the school and is currently the school's principal.
- Some pupils spend one day a week at the Wilderness Centre, an outdoor education provision separate from the school.

- The school has small numbers in each year group from Year 7 to Year 11.
- The last standard inspection took place in November 2017. At this time, the school was judged to be inadequate, with many failings in the independent school standards. Since then the school has had two progress monitoring inspections, one in September 2018 and one in March 2019.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the third progress monitoring inspection. The previous progress monitoring inspection took place in March 2019. The Department for Education required the school to complete an action plan. This was accepted in June 2019.
- This inspection was conducted without notice.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher to discuss progress since the previous progress monitoring inspection. Together, they discussed leaders' priorities for improvement and leaders' actions to ensure that the independent school standards are met in full.
- The lead inspector considered the school's curriculum plans to determine the breadth of subjects on offer to pupils and how well teachers plan lessons to promote pupils' progress.
- The lead inspector considered minutes from meetings carried out by the school's advisory board.
- The lead inspector scrutinised the school's single central record. He also met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss the school's safeguarding practice. Together, they looked at records of concerns about pupils' welfare and leaders' actions to keep children safe.
- The lead inspector carried out lesson visits to a range of curriculum areas, including English, mathematics, art, French and humanities.
- The lead inspector carried out a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks across all subjects to determine how well teachers are implementing the school's curriculum and how this supports pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Nathan Kemp, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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