

RGS Dodderhill

Crutch Lane, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire WR9 0BE

Inspection date

9 July 2020

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(f), 2(2)(h) and 2(2)(i)

- RGS Dodderhill is operating under its current registration as part of The Royal Grammar School Worcester (RGSW). Curriculum plans and schemes of work are, therefore, well established.
- The curriculum policy is published on the school's website. It sets out clearly the aims of the curriculum, including ensuring that pupils have experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, creative and aesthetic and physical activities. The policy gives an overview of the organisation and planning of the curriculum, and outlines how it will be adapted so that it is inclusive for all pupils.
- The policy is supported by highly detailed schemes of work for all subjects, and specific topics and activities within subjects. For example, there are detailed schemes of work for a wide range of sporting activities, design and technology projects and history topics. The schemes of work show how staff and leaders propose to adapt the work to meet the needs and ages of all pupils.
- The proposed plans and schemes of work are likely to promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils currently at the school have opportunities to learn about a range of different faiths, including Islam and Judaism. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum also supports pupils' personal development from Year 1 through to Year 11. The PSHE education curriculum teaches pupils about respect for all, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The PSHE education curriculum also includes sex and relationships education. It is likely that these opportunities will continue.
- Current pupils can participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including musical and sporting activities, languages, debating clubs, information technology and crafts. The extra-curricular activities enhance pupils' educational experiences.

- Pupils currently at the school have access to impartial careers information, advice and guidance, which includes visits to an annual 'careers expo' and the Worcestershire Skills Show. They are provided with information about post-16 pathways and university courses. Year 11 pupils have the opportunity to undertake work experience. These arrangements are likely to continue.
- The range of subjects on offer, along with the supporting extra-curricular opportunities, are likely to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain and the next steps in their education.
- The early years curriculum includes the prime and specific areas of learning. These are threaded through the children's learning activities. The curriculum is based on a series of topics such as the Chinese New Year. Medium-term plans identify intended outcomes which are based on the appropriate ages in the early years foundation stage curriculum. Throughout the plans there is a clear focus on developing children's personal, social and emotional development and their communication and language skills.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j) and 4

- GCSE examination results reported on the school's website shows that outcomes at the end of Year 11 are consistently high in a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science. This suggests that the teaching is very effective and enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress.
- There is a clear assessment policy in place. Leaders provide parents with annual reports which detail their child's attainment and progress in all subjects.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii) and 5(d)(iii)

- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) policy details how pupils' SMSC development will be supported through the curriculum, extra-curricular opportunities, assemblies and enrichment days. The policy states that pupils will be given opportunities to develop this aspect of their education through opportunities to, for example, talk about personal experiences and feelings, develop self-esteem and a respect for others and express and clarify their own ideas and beliefs.
- The PSHE and religious education curriculums are comprehensive and are likely to further support pupils' SMSC development well. For example, in Year 4, pupils learn about human rights and the role of the United Nations. In Year 8, pupils learn about the British political system and democracy, and in Year 10 pupils have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of politics and how laws are passed through the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Throughout key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4, pupils learn about the beliefs and traditions of the world's major religions.
- Pupils' moral and social development is likely to be supported well through the well-being programmes of study, which includes health and emotional well-being. Respect

for all is likely to be promoted throughout the learning, with a clear focus on the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

- The visiting speaker policy states: 'Our responsibility to our pupils is to ensure that they can critically assess the information they receive as to its value or themselves and that the information is aligned to the ethos and values of the school and British values.' The school takes all reasonable measures to protect pupils from partisan views, radicalisation or extremist views.
- Leaders have ensured that these parts of the standards are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), and 32(1)(c) [Part 6 provision of information]

- The school's safeguarding policy reflects current government guidelines and is published on the school's website.
- There is currently a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff training is regularly updated, and leaders ensure that staff understand the training delivered. All new staff receive safeguarding training prior to starting at the school.
- All staff are highly vigilant to any potential signs that pupils may be suffering from harm. They report concerns quickly and leaders ensure that pupils and families receive any additional support they may need. Leaders work closely with external agencies, such as social care, to ensure that more specialist advice and guidance is sought and followed where needed.
- The PSHE education curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities to teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, both in and out of school. For example, e-safety lessons include information on how to use the internet and social media safely.
- Leaders proactively and continually explore ways that they can further enhance their safeguarding procedures to ensure that pupils are kept as safe as possible.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c) and 10

- The school's behaviour policy clearly sets out the expectations for behaviour. All staff follow the policy. There are very few instances of poor behaviour recorded in the school's existing management information system, which indicates that pupils understand, and follow, the school's rules.
- The anti-bullying policy demonstrates that bullying will not be tolerated in the school. There are no recorded incidents of bullying. Leaders state that there are very positive relationships between pupils across the school.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- The school's health and safety policy is comprehensive. The policy sets out the responsibilities of all parties associated with the school, including the governing body, senior leaders, employees and pupils. The staff handbook includes all relevant health and safety policies, such as lone working, manual handling, fire policy and procedures and the critical incident plan. There is a dedicated health and safety officer in the

school to oversee the implementation of the policies. The school's site is well maintained throughout. During the inspection, no hazards were observed in any part of the building. This indicates that all aspects of the health and safety policy are adhered to.

- A fire risk assessment was carried out in June 2016. A number of recommendations were made to improve fire safety, such as improving the functionality of fire doors and recording staff training. During the inspection, all actions identified on the risk assessment were found to have been completed. Fire extinguishers are serviced annually. Leaders undertake regular fire drills, which are recorded along with any required actions. Records show that emergency lighting and fire alarms are tested regularly. Fire exits are clearly marked and free of obstructions. A further fire risk assessment was carried out in May 2019 where the overall fire risk level was found to be low.
- The first-aid and medications policy outlines the procedures to follow when administering first aid and medication. It identifies the location of first-aid equipment, medication storage for particular conditions such as diabetes and asthma, and infection control. The policy also details the early years first-aid procedures. There is an appropriate number of first aiders, including paediatric first aiders, named in the policy. During the inspection, records showed that first aid and medication is administered in line with the policy.
- There is a policy in place which clearly details how pupils will be supervised. The policy identifies appropriate supervisory procedures. These arrangements are likely to be maintained.
- Attendance registers are maintained appropriately, with accurate use of coding to explain absences.
- The risk assessment policy is comprehensive and clearly outlines the purpose of risk assessments and how to carry them out. Risk assessments are detailed and identify any potential hazards, the possible harm they may cause, control measures in place and any additional control measures required to mitigate the identified risks. A tour of the school's site shows that risk assessments are implemented in line with the policy.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(1), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c) and 21(6)

- Leaders follow safer recruitment procedures exceptionally well. For example, all pre-employment checks on staff's suitability are completed prior to staff commencing work. As part of the interview process, candidates complete an interview solely

focused on safeguarding. This ensures that staff do not pose a risk to pupils. All checks are recorded and maintained appropriately.

- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b) and 24(2)

- There are adequate and clean toilet facilities throughout the building. The changing room is large and provides facilities for pupils to shower following physical activities. The medical room has washing facilities, is located next to a toilet and has a bed for the short-term care of sick pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraph 25

- The school's site is well maintained. The facilities manager reviews the premises regularly and records any remedial works needed. The site manager ensures that any required work is carried out. The whole site, including the outdoor spaces, is clean, tidy and hazard free.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraphs 26, 27, 27(a) and 27(b)

- The acoustic conditions in all classrooms are appropriate. All classrooms are well lit. External lighting is operational and provides sufficient illumination when needed.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a) and 28(2)(b)

- There are a number of drinking fountains located throughout the school. All drinking water is clearly labelled. The water from the hot taps does not pose a scalding risk to pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Paragraphs 29(1), 29(1)(a) and 29(1)(b)

- The school has large outdoor spaces. Pupils are able to participate in sporting activities and benefit from outdoor play areas which are both grassed and hard surfaced. The grounds are exceptionally well maintained.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f) and 32(3)(g)

- During the inspection, leaders provided all the relevant documentation and policies required under Part 6. For example, admissions and attendance registers are maintained accurately and in line with government legislation. All required information is published on the school's website, including the school's ethos.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii) and 33(k)

- The school's complaints policy sets out the school's procedures for handling complaints. It adheres to government guidance, including setting out the informal and formal processes and the timescales in which complaints should be dealt with. There was one recorded complaint in the last 12 months, which was resolved satisfactorily.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- The RGSW is a family of schools that work together to ensure there is compliance with the independent school standards across the group. Representatives of the governing body demonstrate a strong understanding of the independent school standards. The range of expertise and skills across leaders, governors and directors enables them to hold the school to account for compliance with the standards.
- Leaders and governors regularly review all school policies and procedures. Swift action is taken where improvements could be made, and all policies actively promote the well-being of pupils.
- Clear leadership structures and support mechanisms across the proprietorial body means that the leadership and governance is likely to be highly effective and the independent school standards are likely to be continually and consistently met.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. There is an accessibility plan in place which details how all pupils will be supported to access learning and the physical environment. Adaptions to the physical environment, such as the provision of a lift, ensures that the building is fully accessible. Curriculum plans demonstrate how the teaching and learning will be inclusive for all pupils.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

- The early years environment supports children's development well. Both the indoor and outdoor classrooms are safe and well maintained. Resources are matched to the developmental needs of the children. The resources are carefully chosen to stimulate children's learning and enable them to learn in an active way. The environment is safe and appropriate supervision ratios are adhered to. Children have access to healthy snacks and drinks.
- The school's safeguarding policy encompasses the early years. There is full paediatric first-aid cover. Medication is stored securely, and detailed records are kept of first-aid

administration. The leader and all staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Daily risk assessments and checks are made of the environment to ensure there are no risks posed to children.

- Every child has a key worker and there is close communication with parents through diaries and face-to-face meetings. Children are handed over safely to parents and carers at the end of the school day. The leader for special educational needs also oversees the specialist provision in the early years.
- Leaders have ensured that all early years welfare requirements are likely to be met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	147783
DfE registration number	885/6057
Inspection number	10149823

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	The Royal Grammar School Worcester
Chair	Mr Quentin Poole
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Atkinson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,200 to £12,3000
Telephone number	01905 778290
Website	https://www.rgs.org.uk/dodderhill
Email address	sea@rgs.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	142
Number of pupils of compulsory school age who have an education, health and care plan, or who are looked after by a local authority	0
Total hours operating as a school per week	50
Total hours of teaching provided per week	26 hours 15 minutes

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	2 to 19	2 to 16	2 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	142	250	250

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	142	250
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	34	34
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	0	0
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	0

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	9	9
Number of part-time teaching staff	12	12
Number of staff in the welfare provision	1	1

Information about this proposed school

- RGS Dodderhill is operating under its current registration as part of RGSW. The school is seeking re-registration to enable it to be inspected independently of the RGSW group.
- The proposed school will not have any religious denomination.
- The proposed school does not intend to use alternative provision.
- The school does not propose to cater for specific special educational needs.
- The school currently has a co-educational Nursery. The four to 16 provision is girls only.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children and offers before- and after-school care. This is managed by the governing body.
- The school is sited in large grounds. It comprises of three buildings.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic of 2020, to determine whether or not the proposed school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is given permission to open. This is the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- This inspection was conducted remotely with an on-site element to assess the suitability of the premises. This was due to restrictions placed on non-essential travel during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- I had a tour of the premises with the headteacher, facilities manager and site manager.
- I reviewed a wide range of documents and policies from the school's website and documents submitted electronically by leaders. I also reviewed some documents on the school's site.
- During the site visit, I met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, representatives of the governing body, the headteacher of the RGSW, the early years leader and the school's business manager.
- I discussed safeguarding and welfare arrangements with the safeguarding leads.
- The school is operating under its current registration. The school has been open since September 1973 when the first pupil was admitted. Due to the nature of changes in the school's organisation, including merging with the RGSW, over the last 47 years, I was not able to establish the number of pupils recorded on the school's admissions register.
- Teaching was not observed during the inspection. The school is not operating fully due to the COVID-19 restrictions.
- No pupils have an education, health and care plan. No pupils are looked after by the local authority.

Inspection team

Ann Pritchard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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