

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

Babington House School

September 2019



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School's Details

School	Babington House School			
DfE number	305/6000			
Registered charity number	307914			
Address	Babington House School Grange Drive Chislehurst Kent BR7 5ES			
Telephone number	0208 467 5537			
Email address	sewing@babingtonhouse.com			
Headmaster	Mr T Lello			
Chair of governors	Mr C Turner			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	404			
	EYFS	75	Juniors	210
	Seniors	99	Sixth Form	20
Inspection dates	18 to 19 September 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Babington House School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged 3 to 18. Founded in 1887, the school operates as an educational trust, and a board of governors is responsible for governance. The school comprises an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged 3 to 5, a Prep School for pupils aged 5 to 11, and a Senior School for pupils aged 11 to 18 years.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has begun to accept male and female pupils up to Year 7 and also into the sixth form, with the aim of achieving full co-education by 2024. It has built a new classroom extension, developed its climbing wall, has laid two multi-use sports pitches and has enhanced its sixth-form provision.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to challenge pupils academically within a secure, happy and innovative environment so that they become confident, independent learners and thinkers with high personal values and an awareness of their responsibilities in the outside world. It also seeks to promote a positive home-school relationship.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional and business backgrounds, most from white British families living within a 15-mile radius of the school. A small minority of pupils are from other ethnicities, mainly European and Asian, which reflects the local area. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 79 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 43 of whom receive additional specialist support. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for nine pupils, whose needs are supported in class and through the learning support department. Data used by the school have identified 42 pupils as the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

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.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection 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 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 identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. 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.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) and [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the junior school, the school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2017 to 2018, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools.
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2017 to 2018 have been above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.
- 2.5 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 pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.6 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.8 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.10 Most safeguarding procedures are well managed; staff are knowledgeable and well-trained. However, arrangements to check the suitability of staff and proprietors do not pay full regard to current statutory guidance: not all staff and governors have been checked against the barred list or, where relevant, the lists of those prohibited from teaching or those prohibited from management before they start work. The school has not always ascertained that staff are not disqualified from childcare. The admission register does not always contain the name and address of all persons known to the school to be parents of a child, a record of which parents hold parental responsibility, nor the details of destination schools for all leavers, where this information can reasonably be ascertained.
- 2.11 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9-14 and 16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met but those in paragraphs 7 [safeguarding] and 15 [admission and attendance registers] are not met.**

Action point 1

- the school must ensure that checks against the list of those persons barred from regulated activity and, where appropriate, checks for prohibition from teaching and from management and disqualification from childcare orders, are carried out on staff and governors before they commence work [paragraph (7)(a) and (b); EYFS 3.9, 3.14].

Action point 2

- The school must ensure that the admission register is maintained in accordance with statutory guidance [paragraph 15; EYFS 3.72].

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

2.12 The school ensures that checks on supply staff are carried out as required.

2.13 The school does not always make appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors: checks on the identity of staff, their medical fitness and qualifications have not always been carried out before they take up their posts. The school has not always used appropriate documentation to verify a person's right to work in the United Kingdom. The single central register of appointments does not always record the dates on which all relevant suitability checks on proprietors have been made.

2.14 The standard relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraph 19 [Suitability of supply staff] is met, but those in paragraphs 18 [Suitability of staff], 20 [Suitability of proprietors] and 21 [Single central register of appointments] are not met.

Action point 3

- the school must ensure that all the required checks on staff, including checks of identity, medical fitness and qualifications, are carried out before staff take up their posts [paragraph 18(3), EYFS 3.9].

Action point 4

- the school must ensure that all required checks on governors are carried out and recorded on the single central register of appointments before they take up their posts [paragraph 20(6)(b)(i and ii), 21(6)].

Action point 5

- the school must ensure that appropriate documentation is used to verify the right of new members of staff to work in the United Kingdom [paragraph 18(2)(c)(iii)].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.15 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.16 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.17 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 any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, 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.

2.18 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.19 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.

2.20 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.21 The proprietor does not ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently and pupils' well-being is actively promoted. Leaders have not had a full understanding of how to check the suitability of staff and governors, and have not always carried out the required checks before they take up their posts. They have also not entered all of the required information about pupils' families in recorded in the admission register.

2.22 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 6

- the school must ensure that the leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils [paragraph (34)(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Kerry Lord

Reporting inspector

Mr John Hunt

Compliance team inspector (Assistant head, GSA school)