

# Material change inspection report

28 March 2025

## **Royal Russell School**

Coombe Lane

Croydon

Surrey

CR9 5BX

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

## Inspection outcome

The school has requested a material change request to increase the capacity from 1250 to 1350 pupils. The present accommodation is sufficient and suitable to allow this change.

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school Standards if the material change is implemented. It is recommended that the material change be approved.

## Inspection findings

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR Paragraphs 7(a) and 7(b); 11 health and safety; 12 fire; 14 supervision; 16(a) and (b) risk assessment

1. The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, including boarders, at the school.
2. Leaders ensure that the safeguarding policy is implemented effectively and understood by staff. Suitable measures are taken to reduce the risk to pupils of radicalisation. The designated safeguarding lead and their deputies ensure that safeguarding concerns are reported, recorded, collated and monitored effectively and that appropriate actions are taken. Safeguarding records are suitably detailed and securely stored. There are effective relationships with local agencies and safeguarding leaders make appropriate referrals without delay. The safeguarding arrangements are reviewed annually by the governing body with suitable diligence and any necessary actions are followed up promptly. The safeguarding team has sufficient capacity to ensure effective safeguarding implementation regarding the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
3. Pupils know that they can share concerns with staff and that prompt steps will be taken to support them. Staff understand the importance of early help provision and how to respond to allegations of child-on-child abuse and take appropriate timely action when required. Pupils feel safe at school.
4. Leaders ensure that training in safeguarding for staff, all members of the safeguarding team and the governors, is comprehensive. Leaders have placed due emphasis on the continuing and frequent provision of this training, recognising the additional safeguarding demands which may result from the planned increase in pupil numbers. The use of technology by pupils is suitably controlled, including by effective monitoring and filtering of the internet. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online.
5. Where allegations are made about the conduct of staff, the school responds appropriately, making prompt referral to external agencies, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency if necessary.
6. The school meets health and safety requirements. The proprietor and senior leaders oversee and monitor health and safety effectively. Staff have an effective understanding of health and safety matters and receive suitable training. Leaders have reviewed health and safety procedures with regard for the planned material change so that current and future additional pupils will continue to benefit from being safe, and feeling safe, in school.
7. The school's fire risk policy is implemented effectively. Recommended actions from the most recent assessments have been appropriately prioritised and carried out in a timely manner. Staff receive appropriate fire safety training and demonstrate suitable awareness of risks, prevention and procedures in a fire emergency. Appropriate equipment is provided, and maintenance of alarms and

other equipment is recorded carefully and effectively. Regular fire drills are held. Pupils are confident regarding evacuation procedures, including boarders regarding evacuation at any time, day or night. Leaders have reviewed the current fire safety arrangements to make sure that they will be suitable for an increased number of pupils on site.

8. Suitable guidance and procedures are in place to ensure pupils are supervised effectively throughout the school day, including when offsite and engaged in outdoor activities, and in boarding. Leaders have ensured that the intended increase in pupil numbers is being matched by appropriate staffing levels, so that effective supervision can be maintained.
9. There is an appropriate risk assessment policy which provides for systematic risk assessment and pays attention to key areas of risk and pupils' welfare, including in boarding. These include pupils' activities onsite and offsite. Staff receive relevant training and completed risk assessments are checked, monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness. Leaders have risk assessed the school's provision regarding the proposed increase in numbers of pupils.
10. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

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

ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21

11. The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and that these are noted accurately in the single central record. Leaders' effective safe recruitment procedures are applied consistently in the appointment of any additional staff related to the planned expansion of the school roll.
12. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

#### **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

ISSR paragraphs 23 toilet, washing and changing facilities; 24 accommodation for medical needs; 25 maintenance; acoustics, 26-29 lighting, water supply and outdoor space

13. Toilet, washing and changing facilities are suitable in number and quality, particularly regarding pupils' hygiene, personal privacy and dignity.
14. The school has suitable accommodation, which includes washing and toilet facilities, for the medical examination and treatment of pupils.
15. The school premises are maintained to a suitable standard. Routine and emergency maintenance tasks are carried out efficiently. There are effective means whereby staff can report any concerns regarding the premises.
16. Acoustics, internal and external lighting, drinking water, water supply and outdoor space are each of a suitable standard.
17. Leaders have accurately evaluated the sufficiency and quality of the school's present premises and accommodation, including boarding provision, to ensure that the planned increase in pupil numbers can be provided for without the need for refurbishment or extension of existing buildings, or the addition of new buildings. Similarly, they have considered the sufficiency of existing outdoor space and facilities and there is no need for extra provision to proceed with the material change.
18. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

## **Part 6. Provision of information**

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

19. The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. The arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.
20. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

## **Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools**

ISSR paragraph 34

21. The proprietor ensures that leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the Standards are met consistently, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.
22. The proprietor, leaders and managers have prepared comprehensively regarding the proposed material change with a well-documented, clearly expressed intention to enhance the school's educational provision through carefully planned expansion. They have systematically reviewed the school's provision to identify potential risks associated with an increase in pupil numbers and have put suitable arrangements in place to mitigate such risks.
23. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

## School details

<b>School</b>	Royal Russell School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	306/6009
<b>Registered charity number</b>	271907
<b>Address</b>	Royal Russell School Coombe Lane Croydon Surrey CR9 5BX
<b>Phone number</b>	02086574433
<b>Email address</b>	reception@royalrussell.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.royalrussell.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	Russell School Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Andrew Merriman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Christopher Hutchinson
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 19
<b>Number of pupils</b>	1268
<b>Number of boarding pupils</b>	176
<b>Number of children in the early years/registered setting</b>	76
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 September 2022

## Information about the school

25. Royal Russell School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school located in Croydon. The school has three sections, the Early Years Foundation Stage, the junior school and the senior school. They are in distinct buildings and share some facilities. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors. Since the previous inspection, the school has increased boarding and day accommodation providing additional learning and community spaces, science laboratories, a health and wellbeing centre, a woodland learning area and additional classrooms in both the junior and senior sections of the school.
26. There are four boarding houses; two for male pupils, and two for female pupils in the main senior school building with an additional boarding annex currently used for male pupils. Pupils board from the age of 11.
27. There are 76 children in the early years comprising one nursery and two reception classes.
28. The school has identified 284 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Five pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
29. The school has identified 193 pupils for whom English is an additional language.
30. The school states its aims are to provide an outstanding academic education and to nurture pupils' intellectual and personal development. It sets out to help every pupil strive for their vision of success and to take a wider view of what their personal ambitions are. It aspires to embrace and support the community and appreciate its diversity, inclusivity and international connections.

## Purpose of the material change

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the DfE to make a material change to the school's provision. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements if the material change is implemented.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

28 March 2025

31. One reporting inspector reporting inspector visited the school for one day.
32. Inspection activities included:
  - scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
  - tour of the school site to inspect health and safety and fire safety arrangements and the suitability of premises and accommodation
  - discussions with the chair of governors and the designated safeguarding governor
  - discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff

- discussions with pupils
- visits to the boarding houses accompanied by staff
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school
- scrutiny of information published on the school's website.

### **How are association independent schools in England inspected?**

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant Standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**.

#### **Independent Schools Inspectorate**

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

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