



Advice note for DfE following a material change inspection

School name	Greenwich Steiner School
DfE registration number	203/6299
Inspection dates	5 December 2017
Reporting inspector	Jane Cooper

SECTION A: Information

Information about the inspection

This inspection was conducted by the School Inspection Service (SIS) at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹ The inspection covered specific matters related to Part 1 of the Standards.

Information about the school

- Greenwich Steiner School is an independent school registered to take boys and girls between the ages of three and 14. This school is a member of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship.
- The school was last inspected on 7-9 February 2017. At that time inspectors found that the school's leadership and management and its safeguarding of pupils' welfare, health and safety required improvement, because paragraphs 15 (attendance) and 34 a, b and c (effectiveness of leadership and management) were not met. The school subsequently produced a satisfactory action plan to address these matters.
- There are currently 173 pupils on roll, 25 of whom have been identified as needing help for their additional needs.
- The school has requested permission to make a material change by increasing its registered capacity to 200 pupils. Its intention is to provide a pre-nursery class for 12 three-year-old children which will open in January 2018. Seven children have been enrolled for January 2018. The school intends to provide this pre-nursery class for three-year-olds for six months before they are admitted to kindergarten. There will be two intakes through the year: one in September; one in January.
- Although registered for pupils aged three to 14, there are currently no pupils in Classes 7 and 8 (national curriculum years 8 and 9). The additional registered capacity will provide headroom for pupils growing through the school to fill these classes as well as the nursery class.

Purpose of the inspection

- The purpose of the inspection is to check whether the material change requested by the school is suitable and is likely to lead to the independent school standards continuing to be met. The school wishes to increase its registered capacity only. The registered age range will remain the same.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents.

- The DfE requested that SIS check that the following independent school standards are met: 7, 11, 12, 14, 16, 34 and all paragraphs in Parts 4 and 5. DfE also requested that the inspection include a check of the school's safeguarding policy and its implementation (Part 3) and that the safeguarding policy is published on the school's website or otherwise made available (Part 6).

SECTION B: Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014²

Part 1: The Quality of Education

- Teaching and learning were not inspected. A brief walk through the school indicated that it was operating effectively as a productive learning environment and that pupils were being supervised and cared for appropriately, including at break time. The Class 6 pupils had written and produced a play about homelessness at Christmas which they were rehearsing to show to younger pupils and parents later in the day.

Part 3: Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- **Paragraph 7 is met.** The school has a suitable safeguarding policy which meets the latest published guidance. It does not include information about children missing from education or e-safety, but these aspects are part of other linked safeguarding policies which are not on the school's website. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has received appropriate and up to date training for the role. He has an excellent understanding of safeguarding matters and has established close links with the local authority designated officer (LADO) who has provided advice, support and staff training to the school. The staff have also received relevant and updated safeguarding training and have received and read the relevant guidance and annex. There is a strong and vigilant safeguarding culture in the school coupled with an uncompromising attitude that 'it could happen here'. All incidents are recorded appropriately on a standard form and kept on confidential child protection files. The cases are 'RAG-rated' and reviewed on a regular basis. This ensures that all child protection issues are actively monitored and referred to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) as required. The last inspection drew attention to weaknesses in e-safety, particularly in teaching pupils to stay safe online. The school has since done some very good work with pupils on this topic including involving parents in ongoing consultations about suitable ways to help very young children understand how to stay safe online.
- **Paragraph 11 is met.** The health and safety policy is extensive and detailed. It is available on the school's website and covers first aid, checking of electrical and other equipment, incidents, accidents in the buildings or grounds, hazardous substances, school trips, emergencies and risk assessment. It includes procedures, standard forms and checklists. It also contains advice on fire prevention and safety. All accidents are appropriately recorded and can be analysed by individual or type of accident so that any necessary action can be taken to reduce the risk of harm to pupils.
- **Paragraph 12 is met.** The procedures for fire prevention are referred to in the health and safety policy. The school's records show that regular checks are made of fire alarms and equipment and that a fire drill is held on a termly basis and documented appropriately.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/contents/made.

- **Paragraph 14 is met.** The pupils are supervised appropriately during lessons and at break time. The school employs two ‘gap year students’ from the ‘Freunde’ group in Germany, and these young people provide additional protection for pupils by supervising the gate from the school grounds into the adjacent park where they go to play at break under the supervision of their teachers. The proposal for the new pre-nursery class includes appropriate supervision plans and risk assessments for when these young children are engaged in outdoor activities.
- **Paragraph 15 is met.** This standard was not met at the time of the last inspection, but the school has subsequently improved considerably its registration procedures and now has tight and efficient systems for recording and monitoring attendance and following up any absence or lateness. Attendance is currently at the national average, and this represents good improvement. The school now analyses attendance data and monitors carefully any individuals with persistent low attendance. A helpful link with an attendance officer in the local authority has been established. The school understands fully the relationship between safeguarding and attendance and knows its duty to report children missing from education.
- **Paragraph 16 is met.** There is a clear risk assessment policy which meets requirements. Risk assessments are appropriate and are drawn up in accordance with this policy. The Nursery Manager has undertaken a range of risk assessments for the proposed new pre-nursery class. These relate to the designated accommodation and outdoor space and the activities the children will undertake. These documents are sensible and thoughtful, indicating that the children’s health and safety have been considered carefully.

Part 4: Suitability of proprietor and staff

- **All standards in Part 4 are met.** The school has a clear recruitment policy. Key staff have been trained in safer recruitment and follow these principles when recruiting and checking potential staff. The school is in the process of recruiting a new early years teacher and assistant for the proposed nursery class. References have been taken up and qualifications checked for the short-listed candidates. The interview process contains a safeguarding element and an opportunity for candidates to be observed interacting with children.
- The school’s single central record (SCR) is immaculate and provides excellent evidence of exceptionally thorough checking and vetting procedures. Information in the SCR is fully supported by evidence on file showing that the school’s recruitment and vetting procedures are applied rigorously.
- The recruitment of the new early years practitioner and assistant will ensure that the staff-to-pupil ratio for three-year-olds continues to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS).

Part 5: Premises of and accommodation at schools

- **All standards in Part 5 are met.** The school’s accommodation met all the independent school standards at the last inspection and continues to do so. The proposed increase in registered capacity will not pose any difficulties to the current arrangements.

- The room designated for the new pre-nursery class is one that had been previously used by a separately owned playgroup which is moving out. It catered for children of this age. The room is appropriate for the number of places envisaged and there are lavatories located adjacent to this room for the young children to use. Some redecoration and refurbishment are planned to take place over the school holidays but basic equipment and resources are already to hand. The only negative aspect is that this room is located away from the other kindergarten classes on the second floor of the main school building. While this is not ideal, the Nursery Manager has undertaken a thorough risk assessment of how to get the three-year-olds up and down the stairs safely at play time. Their break time will be staggered, so that no other pupils are using the outdoor play space or moving through the school at the same time. These children will go home at 13:15. Space and time for young children to rest during the morning has been considered and built into the plan. The school plans to expand and acquire further accommodation for all kindergarten classes in due course.
- The last inspection identified signs of wear and tear in the basement area of the school and this is gradually being refurbished.

Part 6: Information to parents and carers

- **Paragraph 32(1)(c) is met.** The safeguarding and child protection policy referred to above is published on the school's website as required.

Part 8: Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- **The school's leadership and management meet all parts of standard 34.** The headteacher who was relatively new in post at the time of the last inspection ten months ago has now tightened management systems considerably and created a small and efficient team of staff to manage the administration of the school, leaving teachers free to discuss and develop teaching and learning. The team of trustees has grown to eight, and their complementary skills and expertise are used to good effect in ensuring that all independent school standards are met. They reportedly work well with the school leaders and provide challenge for new developments while also acting as critical friends. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection and morale is high. Careful consideration has been given to the prospect of starting the new pre-nursery class which has been led by parental demand in the community. There is a clear plan for this development which is being implemented.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school meets these requirements.

SECTION C: Advice to the registration authority for independent schools

Overall outcome	The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented without modifications or conditions.	
Recommended number of pupils	200	
Recommended age range	3-14 (no change)	
Recommended gender of pupils	mixed	
Recommended type of special educational needs	N/A	