



Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

Vita Et Pax School

July 2024

School's details

School name	Vita et Pax Preparatory School			
DfE number	308/6056			
Registered charity number	281566			
Address	Vita et Pax Preparatory School 6a Priory Close Green Road Southgate London NA14 4AT			
Telephone number	020 8449 8336			
Email address	info@vitaetpax.co.uk			
Acting Headteachers	Mrs Helen Lynch and Mrs Kate Newton			
Chair of governors	Mrs Anna Westcott			
Proprietor	Vita et Pax School (Cockfosters) Limited			
Age Range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	98			
	EYFS	35	Pre Prep	18
	Prep	45		
Date of inspection	Wednesday 3 July 2024			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Vita et Pax Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school located in north London. The proprietor has responsibility for oversight and is supported by an advisory governing board. The school is organised into: the early years setting for pupils aged three to five; the pre prep for those aged five to seven; and the prep for those aged seven to eleven. The school has nine pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and five have an education, health and care plan. Ten pupils speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was a routine inspection in November 2023.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the actions required following the routine inspection on 21 to 23 November 2023. The initial action plan, deemed unsatisfactory when submitted by the school was later revised by the school. It was shared with inspectors during the visit and reviewed by them at the request of the DfE. Inspectors reviewed a number of additional concerns at the request of the DfE. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 13 (first aid)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18-21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, single central register of appointments)	Met
Part 5, paragraph 23 (toilet, washing and changing facilities)	Met
Part 5, paragraph 25 (maintenance of premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 7, paragraph 33 (complaints procedure)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school now has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 Implementation of all aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures is now effective in providing appropriate support for the needs of pupils, including children in the early years. The school has followed effectively the advice given after visits from the local authority in December 2023, and April and May 2024. This has enabled senior leaders and governors to remedy those areas of safeguarding identified as not meeting requirements previously. A number of areas identified by the local authority as needing improvement have also been addressed effectively.
- 2.5 Staff demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the safeguarding procedures including those for whistleblowing, children missing in education and the code of conduct for staff. Procedures are implemented effectively to safeguard pupils at risk and those in need. There are now suitable safeguarding records in place to promote the wellbeing of the pupils. The additional requirements of pupils who have SEND are understood and these pupils receive appropriate support for their welfare and education. Staff show suitable understanding of their responsibilities and have a suitable knowledge of the thresholds for reporting potential issues to safeguarding leaders, including child-on-child abuse. Safeguarding leaders have recently changed, and staff are very clear of who to go to if they have a concern or receive a disclosure. They understand that they can make a direct referral to children's services if necessary.
- 2.6 Discussions with safeguarding leaders confirmed that both pupils and staff receive suitable guidance on how to address issues when they arise and receive appropriate support. Records of safeguarding confirm that the school acts appropriately in any situation that arises. Safeguarding leaders act on any early signs of risk and monitor pupils' wellbeing effectively. There is now a strategic, comprehensive and inclusive approach to identifying and managing the risk of harm to pupils' wellbeing. The safeguarding policy provides contact details for the required local agencies. Suitable recruitment procedures for staff are outlined in the policy. The training for staff with specific safeguarding responsibilities is in line with local requirements and statutory advice. Training for all staff is of sufficient frequency and quality. Training records are kept centrally. A member of the safeguarding team has undertaken online safer handling training on the recommendation of the local authority. The school has arranged and booked safer handling training for all teachers and teaching assistants for September 2024 inset.
- 2.7 Suitable arrangements for handling allegations against all staff are included clearly in the safeguarding policy. Procedures are followed effectively, and leaders consider advice given appropriately. The school understands its role in reporting any person to the relevant regulatory bodies where necessary.
- 2.8 Staff, including senior leaders, listen to the views of the pupils effectively. Pupils spoken to confirmed this and said that staff respond to issues they know about quickly and take action when needed. This is confirmed in records of safeguarding incidents. The school has a suitable relationship with outside agencies, including the local authority. Referrals to children's services and the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO) are detailed and timely. New software for monitoring

behavioural and safeguarding incidents has been purchased and is being used effectively. Senior leaders understand potential links between bullying or poor behaviour and safeguarding, including sexualised behaviour. Thresholds for referring such incidents to external agencies are understood. Any incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are handled appropriately with due care taken to safeguard the welfare of the bully or victim. Pupils are supported in learning how to keep themselves safe, including online. Monitoring and filtering of technology is effective following advice given during visits from the local authority. Pupils are not permitted their mobile phones in school.

- 2.9 The proprietors are trained appropriately in safeguarding. They provide effective oversight and carry out an annual review of safeguarding appropriately.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.
- 2.11 There is a suitable health and safety policy which is implemented effectively by the school, ensuring that all relevant laws are complied with. Governors have ensured that a site manager has been appointed to oversee health and safety on their behalf. This system is operating successfully. Records show that testing of utilities is systematically undertaken. External contractors are used where required and issues dealt with promptly. Training in health and safety is comprehensive throughout the school and trends are monitored.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – first aid [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 13]

- 2.12 The school meets the standard.
- 2.13 There is a suitable first aid policy and procedure. First aid is administered by trained staff from the office and communication to parents about any pupil who is unwell or is injured is suitably systematic. Records are kept of such incidents and accidents and are suitably monitored.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16]

- 2.14 The school meets the standard.
- 2.15 The school has a whole school risk assessment policy and effective risk assessments for the premises, educational visits and for the early years. All appropriate risk assessments are clear and include approaches to be taken to identify and mitigate risks. There are daily checks that assess premises risks. Suitable welfare plans assess risks for vulnerable pupils, which are then managed through the wellbeing team. Risks for any pupil travelling by taxi are suitably assessed and appropriate mitigations are implemented, including staff accompanying any pupil who needs to do so. Staff are suitably trained in how to write risk assessments and mitigate risks.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; EYFS 3.4]

- 2.16 The school meets the standards and the requirements.
- 2.17 All the required checks on staff and members of the governing body have now been carried out. Current practice ensures that all checks are now completed before any staff or governors take up their positions. A suitable single central register (SCR) of appointments is kept. This is now an accurate record of checks which have been undertaken. Those who have recently been appointed to undertake senior leadership responsibilities now monitor the SCR effectively.

Premises and accommodation – toilet and washing facilities and maintenance [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23 and 25]

- 2.18 The school meets the standards.
- 2.19 The school has an effective system to ensure that the premises and facilities are suitably maintained so that the health, safety and welfare needs of the pupils are safeguarded. There are suitable and sufficient toilet and washing facilities. These are clean and well stocked with appropriate supplies. Other areas of the school were observed to be kept suitably clean.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

- 2.20 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Manner in which complaints are handled [ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33]

- 2.21 The school meets the standard.
- 2.22 The school has a suitable complaints policy for parents which is in line with statutory requirements. Informal complaints are dealt with effectively by the class teachers. Suitable written records are kept.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.23 The school meets the standard.
- 2.24 The leadership and management have taken appropriate and proactive steps to address the failings of the previous inspection. Those staff currently acting as senior leaders have suitable experience and are qualified to do so. The school's revised action plan, reviewed by inspectors, is appropriate and has been fully implemented.
- 2.25 Senior leaders and the proprietors demonstrate suitable knowledge and skills. Suitable practices and procedures are implemented which ensure that they manage safeguarding and welfare arrangements appropriately and monitor compliance with the standards. The leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are consistently met and the pupils' wellbeing is actively promoted.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the acting headteachers and other members of staff and met with the chair of governors. They visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.