



**Material Change Inspection Report**

**Merchant Taylors' School**

**April 2024**

## School's details

<b>School</b>	Merchant Taylors' School			
<b>DfE number</b>	919/6036			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1063740			
<b>Address</b>	Merchant Taylors' School Sandy Lodge Northwood Hertfordshire HA6 2HT			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01923 820644			
<b>Email address</b>	info@mtsn.org.uk			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Simon Everson			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Duncan Eggar			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Merchant Taylors' Educational Trust			
<b>Age range</b>	11 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	962			
	<b>Seniors</b>	660	<b>Sixth Form</b>	302
<b>Date of inspection</b>	25 April 2024			

## 1. Introduction

### Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Merchant Taylors' School is an independent day school situated to the north of London in Hertfordshire. It is registered as a school for male pupils. The trustees of Merchant Taylors' Educational Trust, a registered charity, provide governance of the school. The school consists of a senior school for pupils aged 11 to 16 and a sixth form. The school has identified 216 pupils as having Special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are two pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and three pupils who require support for English as an additional language (EAL).

### Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase its capacity from 940 to 990 pupils in the senior school. The prep school, which has separate registration, is not part of the material change proposal and was not inspected. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs).

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraphs 11 (health and safety) and 12 (fire safety)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraphs 14 (supervision of pupils) and 16 (risk assessment)	<b>Met</b>
Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	<b>Met</b>
Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29 (premises and accommodation)	<b>Met</b>
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	<b>Met</b>
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	<b>Met</b>

## 2. Inspection findings

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

#### Safeguarding policy

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

#### Safeguarding implementation

- 2.2 The school meets the standard.
- 2.3 Safeguarding procedures are suitably implemented in line with *Keeping children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023* and other statutory guidance. The school demonstrates a suitably rigorous approach to promoting the wellbeing of all pupils, including those with SEND. In discussions, pupils confirmed that they can raise concerns freely. They expressed confidence that, should they do so, the school would take prompt and effective action. Effective, secure and confidential safeguarding records confirm that the school acts swiftly to respond to any concerns it receives about pupils and that it refers concerns appropriately to local agencies. Pupils receive suitable advice about online safety and the school has effective systems in place to filter and monitor the internet.
- 2.4 Senior leaders respond effectively to any incidents of child-on-child abuse, whether they occur within its community or beyond it. Senior staff liaise effectively with other local schools, including those for female pupils, and respond appropriately to any reported incidents of misogyny or harmful sexual behaviour. There have been no incidents which have met the threshold for referral since the previous inspection; senior safeguarding leads confirmed that they would refer to local agencies, including the police, without hesitation. Senior leaders educate pupils about the importance of respectful behaviour, whilst continuing to be vigilant in their approach to any incidents.
- 2.5 Staff confirm that they are regularly and effectively trained in all aspects of safeguarding, including in the risks associated with extremism. Induction training is comprehensive. Other training takes place at the start of each year and regular updates are given to staff as and when necessary. Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of their code of conduct. They understand the necessity to report any concerns they have about adults working in the school community and say that they would do so without hesitation. They report concerns about colleagues which do not meet the harm threshold. The school keeps a suitable log of these low-level concerns and takes appropriate action.
- 2.6 The safeguarding team have up-to-date advanced level training; governors are trained appropriately in safeguarding and the safeguarding governor liaises closely and effectively with school safeguarding leaders. Scrutiny of the annual safeguarding report to governors confirms that governors receive suitable summaries of all safeguarding matters from senior leaders. Governors have safeguarding as a standing item on all meeting agendas and carry out an effective annual review of the safeguarding policy. The school has carefully considered arrangements for the ongoing safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils as numbers increase.
- 2.7 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with an increase in pupil numbers from 940 to 990.

**Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety and fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 11 and 12]**

- 2.8 The school meets the standards.
- 2.9 There are suitable policies for health and safety and for fire which are effectively implemented. Systematic procedures promote the health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors. Traffic is well managed around the site and effective signage and the use of railings separate pupils and traffic appropriately. The school has addressed any recommendations made in the last external fire risk assessment. Fire drills are regular and suitably recorded and fire infrastructure is regularly checked. Fire signage is appropriate. Pupils understand the fire evacuation procedures and a suitable number of staff are trained as fire marshals.
- 2.10 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in numbers from 940 to 990.

**Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils and risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 14 and 16]**

- 2.11 The school meets the standards.
- 2.12 Senior leaders ensure that pupils are appropriately supervised by the implementation of effective supervision rotas. These cover outside recreational areas at break and lunchtime and busy areas such as the lunch queue. There are sufficient staff in place to maintain effective supervision once the proposed increase in pupil numbers occurs. The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy. This sets out a suitable approach to the management of risk and senior staff operate close and effective oversight of risk assessments for the site, specialist buildings and for trips and visits. Risks associated with those pupils who are vulnerable or have particular needs are assessed effectively and suitable measures are implemented to mitigate these.
- 2.13 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in numbers from 940 to 990.

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

- 2.14 The school meets the standards.
- 2.15 The school implements a suitable recruitment policy effectively. This has due regard to the procedures required by *KCSIE*. Appropriate and timely checks ensure the suitability of staff and proprietors and a register is kept as required. The information on the register reflects documentation seen in staff files. The school does not currently employ supply staff.
- 2.16 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in numbers from 940 to 990.

**Premises and accommodation – [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23 to 29]**

- 2.17 The school meets the standards.
- 2.18 The school occupies a large site with buildings which are spacious; large classrooms already contain sufficient furniture to accommodate the proposed increase in the total number of pupils. The dining room is sufficient in size and the school already staggers lunchtimes across year groups effectively. The school already has sufficient specialist facilities to cater for the proposed increase, such as science classrooms, design and technology facilities, a sports hall and swimming pool, music and drama

performance spaces and outdoor sports facilities. There are enough toilets, washing and changing facilities to cater for the proposed increase in pupil numbers. These facilities are well maintained and clean. There is a large centrally placed medical centre which is appropriate for the first aid and medical needs of pupils. The school is well maintained, and a programme of refurbishment ensures all buildings and outdoor areas are maintained to a suitably high standard. Acoustics promote effective learning and lighting, both internal and external, is appropriate. Effective provision is in place to ensure access to drinking water and the large site provides ample space for physical education and recreation.

- 2.19 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in numbers from 940 to 990.

### **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.

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

- 2.21 The school meets the standard.
- 2.22 Senior leaders and managers demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and they fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the other standards are met consistently and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted. Proprietors and senior leaders have ensured that the school is suitably prepared for the proposed material change.
- 2.23 The school is likely to continue to meet the requirements with the proposed increase in numbers from 940 to 990.

### **3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection**

#### **Recommendation**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the school's proposal to increase its registered capacity from 940 to 990 be approved. Current arrangements are sufficient to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers.

## **4. Summary of evidence**

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the second master, senior leaders and other members of staff and held a discussion with the chair of governors. She visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. She scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.