

# School inspection report

20 to 22 February 2024

## **Tettenhall College Incorporated**

Wood Road

Tettenhall

Wolverhampton

WV6 8QX

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'.

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## Summary of inspection findings

1. Pupils' talents and interests are encouraged from a young age through a wide range of activities both within the broad curriculum and the extra-curricular programme. Well-planned lessons, effective teacher feedback and careful monitoring of progress help pupils learn. This enables pupils to achieve well and discover their talents in line with the school's mission.
2. Leaders and governors monitor and evaluate the school's provision regularly and fulfil their responsibilities effectively in most cases. However, in the most recent safeguarding review, governors did not identify inaccuracies in the school's safeguarding policy, nor training update requirements. Before the end of the on-site part of the inspection, leaders took action to rectify inaccuracies in the safeguarding policy. The safeguarding training for one member of staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities was updated immediately.
3. Leaders and teachers use data effectively to analyse the progress pupils are making and to develop appropriate strategies where needed to enable pupils to raise their attainment. Pupils make good progress including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Progress and attainment are reported regularly to parents. However, there is a lack of clarity and consistency in some of the reporting grades used so the information is not easily understood by pupils and parents.
4. Pupils enjoy and value the opportunity to participate in the wide range of physical and creative activities on offer through the school's enrichment programme. They recognise the positive impact on their physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing.
5. The personal social and health education programme (PSHE), which includes relationship and sex education and careers guidance prepares pupils well for their future lives in British society. The comprehensive PSHE scheme of work is taught through thought provoking activities and this enables pupils to develop a clear understanding of law, democracy, prejudice and discrimination.
6. There are positive relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff. These relationships are underpinned by the mutual respect actively promoted by leaders and teachers. Pupils recognise the diversity of the school community and the insight this provides into a range of faiths and cultures. They are tolerant of the views of others. Pupils have a strong sense of justice and take responsibility for their own actions.
7. Leaders set clear expectations for behaviour and pupils behave well in lessons. Outside of lessons pupils' behaviour is generally appropriate. However, the behaviour of a small minority of older pupils occasionally falls short of leaders' expectations.
8. Leaders promote the safety of pupils through the effective implementation of policies and procedures relating to health and safety, first aid, risk assessment and the prevention of fire. Premises, accommodation and facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard.
9. The school offers a variety of opportunities for pupils to contribute to the lives of others within the school community. However, the opportunities for pupils to be involved with wider society are limited.

10. Boarders' needs are fully understood and met effectively by the supportive staff, well-organised routines and the school's comfortably furnished accommodation.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

### Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- ensure that all staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities undertake appropriate training that meets the requirements of statutory guidance in a timely manner
- ensure that reports of pupils' progress and attainment can be easily understood by pupils and parents
- ensure that the safeguarding policy always contains accurate and up-to-date information
- ensure that the behaviour of older pupils is consistent with the high expectations set by leaders
- increase the range of opportunities for pupils to contribute to wider society.

### Material change request

11. Inspectors considered the school's request for a change to the details of its registration. The proprietor requested to increase the maximum number of pupils from 515 to 565.
12. An appropriate risk assessment which has identified the related risks associated with increasing pupil numbers has been prepared by leaders.
13. The existing buildings, facilities and grounds are appropriate for the gradual increasing of numbers to a maximum which is less than 10% above current numbers.
14. The school recognises there will be the need for some additional staffing and has budgeted for these increased costs.
15. It is recommended that the requested material change be approved.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

16. In general leaders and governors understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement for the education pupils receive, because of effective self-evaluation. Leaders' on-going development of the prep pathway and scholars' programmes provides opportunities for pupils to broaden their knowledge and learn new skills and is effective in promoting the school's values of ambition, opportunity, creativity, community and character.
17. Leaders and governors check the school's provision regularly and fulfil their responsibilities effectively in most cases. However, their oversight of safeguarding has not been rigorous enough. Governors and leaders have not ensured that the required training for one member of staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities has been kept up to date. In the most recent safeguarding review, they did not ensure that the safeguarding policy was accurate in references to the local safeguarding partners, the latest statutory guidance and the annex for training of staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities.
18. Governors ensure that effective health and safety arrangements are in place, commissioning external audits to provide independent evaluation. Leaders implement effective systems for the management of risk. Leaders regularly review risks and are alert to new risks that may arise and take appropriate action. Examples include their provision of additional support for pupils' mental health and wellbeing through the listening hub operated by the school's surgery team and the pod, a designated wellbeing space in the school.
19. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are met and an appropriate accessibility plan is in place. Leaders respond in a timely and appropriate manner to concerns and complaints from parents in line with a suitable complaints policy.
20. The school publishes written reports and/or grade cards to parents at the end of each learning cycle, which provide information about their child's progress and attainment. However, there is a lack of clarity and consistency in some of the reporting grades used which are not easy to understand. Staff are devising a new reporting system but this is not yet fully developed.
21. Leaders actively promote the wellbeing of children in the early years setting. Regular monitoring and review of practice ensure children are well cared for in a caring and stimulating environment which helps to develop their self-confidence and emotional wellbeing. Staff ensure activities are well matched to children's needs and interests and this helps children to make good progress in their learning.
22. The boarding provision is effective and meets pupils' needs. Boarding staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their role effectively and have undertaken regular and relevant training. Boarders quickly settle in and are known as individuals due to the supportive leadership and organisation of boarding.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

#### **23. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

24. Leaders have designed a broad and balanced curriculum which is well suited to the ages, aptitudes and needs of the pupils and which provides an appropriate range of subjects and experiences. Following a recent curriculum review, leaders have designed option blocks which facilitate a wide variety of career pathways for pupils and increased the time allocation for teaching some subjects. It is too soon to assess the impact of this initiative.
25. The programme of activities in the early years is delivered through topics based on the interests and needs of the individual children. Staff use a variety of activities to encourage children to listen carefully and to put forward their ideas. As a result, children communicate confidently. Children develop their physical, mathematical and creative skills through play and discovery. For example, staff encourage children to explore a range of painting techniques and investigate the different dots produced or count the number of dinosaurs they are playing with. Children make good progress in their learning and development. Staff check each child carefully and ensure they are actively engaged in activities to further their progress. Adults develop positive relationships with children and effectively question them to promote learning, such as asking them to describe the features of their favourite toy car when involved in making a book on transport.
26. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and encouraging. Consequently, pupils have the confidence to answer questions, express their views, ask for clarification and to hypothesise when they approach new learning material. Pupils have well-developed speaking and listening skills and readily contribute to class discussions.
27. Pupils' mathematical skills are well developed. because of the implementation of the carefully sequenced mathematics curriculum. Pupils are proficient in applying their mathematical knowledge in a range of contexts. For example, in chemistry pupils successfully calculate the energy change for the reaction between ethene and bromine.
28. Teachers utilise their specialist subject knowledge and awareness of pupils' needs to plan lessons with a range of activities which actively engage pupils with their learning. The well-chosen teaching strategies coupled with individual support are effective in supporting pupils of all abilities to make good progress. For example, in English, teachers encourage and question pupils deeply to develop their linguistic skills. As a result, pupils develop their use of detail and extend their vocabulary.
29. Since the previous inspection, the school has increased the focus on higher-order thinking skills in lessons and further challenge is provided via the scholars' programme which includes the Extended Project Qualification and the Higher Project Qualification. Systems for helping pupils to understand how to improve their answers have also been improved. Feedback from teachers is successful in enabling pupils to identify the next steps in their learning.
30. Leaders use pupil data information and the results of regular assessments to check and track that the progress pupils' make is good. Leaders and teachers use this information to tailor provision and to develop appropriate strategies where needed to enable pupils to raise their attainment. These strategies include academic mentoring and extra subject support sessions. The current assessment and reporting procedures are not clearly understood by pupils and parents.

31. Leaders have a well-structured approach to considering the effective provision for pupils who have SEND so their individual needs are met. Qualified specialist staff provide tailored support which is reviewed regularly and enables pupils to make good progress.
32. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) typically develop their fluency in English quickly as a result of specialist teaching and timetabled EAL lessons which meet their needs.
33. At GCSE, most pupils attain grades in line with or above predictions. Leaders have introduced appropriate strategies to improve pupils' achievements at A level to ensure that all pupils make good progress, which has not previously been the case.
34. In the preparatory school, the enrichment programme provides opportunities for pupils to widen their learning experiences through a broad range of physical and creative activities. In addition to lunchtime and after school activities, pupils from Year 6 upwards participate enthusiastically in the school's regular extended day programme. Pupils appreciate both the range of options available and the ownership they are given over their choices. Pupils can pursue new interests in areas such as digital art, musical theatre and the volunteering club which enhance their collaborative, creative and communication skills. A diverse programme of activities both in the evening and weekends provides boarders with the opportunity to relax through activities such as pizza making and cinema trips.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation**

- 35. All the relevant Standards are met.**



## Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

36. There is a suitable PSHE programme in place to promote pupils' wellbeing. The programme includes age-appropriate provision for relationships and sex education. For example, scenarios are used to help younger pupils identify the features of healthy relationships and older pupils consider whether telling your partner what to wear might be indicative of coercive control. Assessments at the start and end of topics enable pupils to check their own knowledge and understanding. Teachers regularly review pupil feedback on PSHE lessons to ensure that content is relevant and useful to pupils. For example, reviewing whether the lesson activities improve pupils' understanding of online safety.
37. Through the PSHE and tutorial programme, pupils are taught a variety of strategies to support and develop their mental wellbeing including how to be mindful and how to develop resilience. Pupils in the preparatory school enjoy the opportunity to learn outdoors each week and recognise the positive impact that learning in the natural environment has on their physical and mental health. Teachers know their pupils well and this enables them to monitor pupil wellbeing and, when necessary, to offer additional support, such as leading a form time session on dancing yoga to relieve any tension in the lead up to examinations.
38. Pupils, including children in the early years, are encouraged to participate in a range of physical activities both within the well-planned physical education lesson programme and through wider sporting activities at lunchtime and after school. There are plenty of opportunities for team sports such as playing hockey, netball, football, rugby and cricket in addition to individual pursuits such as squash and the morning swim. Leaders listen to pupils' views on the provision of sporting activities and a volleyball club run by sixth-form pupils has been set up as a result of pupils' suggestions.
39. Teachers carefully manage discussions in PSHE especially when debating emotive or sensitive issues, such as prejudice and discrimination. Pupils learn to listen to different and sometimes opposing views to their own, building respect and tolerance for those who may be different to themselves. Pupils' spiritual, cultural and moral understanding is developed through regular assemblies and an effective range of activities and topics in PSHE and religious studies lessons. The international dimension of the school's population also contributes to pupils' cultural awareness.
40. Pupils learn to challenge themselves and develop new skills in a variety of areas, and this leads to growth in their self-confidence in the enrichment programme. Many pupils hold positions of responsibility such as being anti-bullying ambassadors in the preparatory school, prefects and school council representatives and this furthers the growth of their self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are proud of their active leadership roles and the contribution they make to the school community. As part of the house system pupils can contribute and feel valued by taking part in a variety of competitions, from quizzes and science to sports and performing arts. There are leadership opportunities for house and team captains which ensure that older and younger pupils work together towards a common goal, reinforcing the strong sense of community.
41. Pupils are appropriately supervised during the school day and in boarding hours. Clear expectations of behaviour and positive relationships between staff and pupils results in pupils behaving well in lessons. Outside of lessons pupils' behaviour is generally appropriate, however, the behaviour in the corridors of a small minority of older pupils is occasionally overly boisterous. The school utilises PSHE

lessons, assemblies and tutor time to educate pupils as to how to behave appropriately towards one another and to raise awareness of bullying.

42. The school has effective procedures for responding to any incidents of bullying. At the start of the inspection, details of the school's anti-bullying strategy was contained within the safeguarding policy and did not reflect the school's appropriate practice regarding the particular needs of boarders. This matter was addressed before the end of the inspection.
43. School premises and accommodation, including boarding houses are maintained appropriately and suitable health and safety arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Precautions are taken to reduce the risk from fire. Fire evacuation drills take place at least twice each term; one day time evacuation and one out of school hours practice for all resident staff and boarders. Staff receive regular fire-safety training.
44. Suitable arrangements and accommodation are in place to care for pupils who become unwell or who have specific medical needs. First aid is administered in a timely manner and staff receive regular training in first aid. The attendance and admission registers are properly maintained and stored.
45. Boarding staff prioritise boarders' health needs and ensure that they are fully met. The boarding houses provide a welcoming and comfortable environment. Boarders have suitable privacy, and security for their personal possessions. All boarders are provided with good quality nutritionally balanced meals and enjoy being able to prepare snacks in the well-resourced communal kitchen in the evenings and this is a popular social space for cooking, chatting and relaxing.
46. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is made available to parents and is known and understood by boarders. The views of boarders are sought and acted upon through a variety of means including daily house meetings, various committees and the communication box which provides a method for pupils to pass on their thoughts, suggestions and any concerns. Pupils feel confident that boarding staff will listen to any concerns they have about boarding and that there is an adult at school they can easily speak to if they are worried about something. Boarders can always contact a member of staff, including at night.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing**

- 47. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

48. Throughout the age range, including in the preparatory school, pupils are encouraged to think about their aspirations for the future, regarding personal goals and careers. Effective transition processes are in place to support the pupils as they move to the next phase of their education. The school's comprehensive careers guidance programme is underpinned by the Gatsby benchmarks. There are careers events, specialist advice, coverage in PSHE lessons, and work experience placements to equip pupils with information for the next stage of their lives. Sixth-form pupils go on to study a wide range of courses at a variety of institutions.
49. Mutual respect underpins the positive relationships between members of the school community. Pupils successfully build a sense of respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs through assembly themes and activities in form time, religious studies and PSHE lessons. Pupils recognise and appreciate the diversity of the school community and the insight this provides into other faiths and cultures. By complying with the code of conduct in PSHE lessons pupils listen respectfully to the views of others even if they disagree with the point of view being expressed.
50. Pupils are equipped well for their future lives in British society. Economic wellbeing and money matters are taught in an age-appropriate way from Year 1 through to Year 13 enabling pupils to develop their financial awareness. Pupils' understanding of law and democracy is developed through thought provoking activities. For example, when pupils suggest the motivations for crimes committed in various scenarios.
51. The charity committee promotes pupils' involvement in activities such as raising money for others less fortunate than themselves or collecting items for the Christmas gift appeal. This involvement encourages pupils to consider the lives of others and raises their social awareness as well as being successful in reinforcing the school's value of community. Many pupils make positive contributions to the life of the school through their involvement in roles such as school council representatives or mentors. The programme of sixth formers undertaking at least one hour each week of service benefits their personal development as well as supporting others in the school community.
52. A wide range of opportunities help pupils to develop a strong sense of belonging and of service to the school community. The school aims to inculcate a lifelong desire to contribute to the wider community. However, opportunities for pupils to contribute to wider society are currently limited. Leaders are starting to develop more links with other local organisations to address this limitation.
53. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Assemblies and discussions on absolute and relative morality encourage pupils to think more deeply about the ethics of various situations. Pupils are highly reflective of their own behaviour, take responsibility for their actions and recognise that sometimes it takes courage to do what is right. Opportunities for this deep reflection, prepare pupils well for life beyond school.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

**54. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

55. Leaders and governors have not ensured that the required refresher training for one member of staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities has been kept up to date. The training for that member of staff had recently lapsed. This was immediately rectified.
56. For other staff and governors, they receive appropriate safeguarding training when they join the school, and this is updated at regular intervals to ensure that the statutory guidance is met. Both teaching and non-teaching staff understand child protection procedures and those for on-line safety and the risks posed by extremism and radicalisation. They know how to recognise and report a safeguarding concern, including potential child-on-child abuse.
57. The school has a suitable safeguarding policy which is published on the school's website and reviewed at least annually by the governing body. However, the most recent review of the school's safeguarding policy did not identify inaccuracies relating to references to statutory guidance and incorrect terminology was used in relation to safeguarding partners. These inaccuracies were rectified during the inspection.
58. Leaders ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to help pupils know how to stay safe while online. There are suitable monitoring and filtering processes in place.
59. When child protection concerns arise, any referrals to children's services, the local authority designated officer and the police are made in a timely manner.
60. Appropriate safer recruitment checks are completed for all staff, volunteers and governors. The single central record of appointments is kept appropriately and regularly checked.
61. Staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities, the school nurse and the safeguarding governor meet termly to discuss safeguarding issues including an analysis of trends, and a review of the school's response strategies. The findings of these meetings are discussed by the governing body as part of their management oversight.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 62. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## School details

<b>School</b>	Tettenhall College Incorporated
<b>Department for Education number</b>	336/6013
<b>Registered charity number</b>	528617
<b>Address</b>	Tettenhall College Incorporated Wood Road Tettenhall Wolverhampton West Midlands WV6 8QX
<b>Phone number</b>	01902 751119
<b>Email address</b>	info@tettcoll.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.tettenhallcollege.co.uk
<b>Proprietor</b>	Tettenhall College Incorporated
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Jeremy Woolridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Christopher McAllister
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 18
<b>Number of pupils</b>	506
<b>Number of boarding pupils</b>	93
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 to 10 October 2019

## Information about the school

1. Tettenhall College Incorporated is a co-educational boarding school located in Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, West Midlands. The school comprises a preparatory school, which includes the early years setting, and a senior school, which includes a sixth form. The school is a charitable trust, administered by a council of governors who have oversight of all sections of the school. Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher took up post in January 2020.
2. The school offers boarding from the age of eleven to eighteen in two houses, one for female pupils and one for male pupils. Both boarding houses are located on the school campus.
3. The school has identified 81 pupils as having SEND. Nine pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
4. English is an additional language for 57 pupils.
5. The school states that its mission is to nurture pupils so that they achieve their potential and discover their unique talents in an educational setting where they will thrive, succeed and be happy. It aims to build self-confidence and inculcate a lifelong desire to contribute to the wider community. The school has core values of ambition, opportunity, creativity, community and character.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

20 to 22 February 2024

6. A team of six inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.
7. Inspection activities included:
  - observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
  - observation of registration periods and assemblies
  - observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
  - discussions with the chair and other governors
  - discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
  - discussions with pupils
  - visits to the facilities for physical education
  - visits to boarding houses accompanied by pupils and staff
  - scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
  - scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.
8. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

**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)**.

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For more information, please visit [isi.net](http://isi.net)