



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INSPECTION OF  
CHETHAM'S SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

**6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

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Full Name of School	<b>Chetham's School of Music</b>	
DfE Number	<b>352/6021</b>	
Registered Charity Number	<b>526702</b>	
Address	<b>Long Millgate</b> <b>Manchester</b> <b>M3 1SB</b>	
Telephone Number	<b>0161 834 9644</b>	
Fax Number	<b>0161 839 3609</b>	
Email Address	<b>chets@chethams.com</b>	
Head	<b>Mrs Claire Moreland</b>	
Chair of Feoffees	<b>Mr Paul Lee</b>	
Chair of School Committee	<b>Dame Alexandra Burslem</b>	
Age Range	<b>7-19</b>	
Total Number of Pupils	<b>294</b>	
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed</b>	
Numbers by Age	7-11:	<b>20</b>
	11-19:	<b>274</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>69</b>
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>225</b>
Inspection dates	<b>6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> March 2013</b>	

*This was an announced visit carried out at the request of the Department for Education, which took place at the same time as a multi-agency visit to the school led by Manchester City Council. The context of the inspection was the series of complaints, prosecutions and historic allegations which had recently come to light relating to improper relationships between staff and former pupils. The teams from ISI and Manchester City Council coordinated their work so that each took the lead on specific areas of concern as well as sharing their findings.*

*The focus of evidence gathering and reporting for the ISI team was specifically in relation to the school's recruitment procedures and practices, including those relating to boarding; the adequacy of policies and procedures for making referrals to the local authority; the adequacy of procedures for dealing with allegations made by pupils against staff; the manner in which complaints are handled; and checking compliance with the relevant Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSRs) and National Minimum Standards (NMS).*

## **Context of the school**

Chetham's School of Music is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the ages of 7 to 19. It is the largest specialist music school in the UK and the only one in the north of England. It is based in the centre of Manchester in a number of buildings, including some dating back to 1421 which are still central to the school. The registered proprietor of the school is the Feoffees of Chetham's Hospital and Library. The Music School is one part of the Foundation of Chetham's Hospital School and Library, founded by Humphrey Chetham in 1653. The Foundation is governed by Feoffees (trustees), with routine oversight delegated to a school committee which includes a number of the trustees, forming the governing body of the school. During the middle part of the twentieth century, music became the firm foundation of the school, and in 1969 it became a fully co-educational specialist music school. The aim of the school is to attract, care for, educate and unlock the talent of musically gifted pupils, whatever their social, racial and cultural background, alongside providing as broad an academic curriculum as is possible within a specialist school. It seeks to develop the whole person, furthering the development of each pupil. It strives to maintain its position at the forefront of specialist music education, both nationally and internationally.

At the time of the visit, there were 294 pupils on the roll. A total of 56 pupils have been identified by the school as having special educational needs and one pupil has a statement of SEND. There are 39 pupils with English as an additional language and 19 receive support for their acquisition of English. Approximately one out of every three pupils comes from an ethnic minority background.

## **Summary of evidence**

Policies for safeguarding, complaints and missing children were scrutinised before the visit. Other documents, including the recruitment policy, personal and religious studies (PRS) programme, staff handbook, various boarding handbooks, records of staff supervision and training, boarding job descriptions, staff duty rotas and School Committee minutes, were examined at the school. Confidential parent and pupil questionnaires were issued prior to the visit and 146 parent and 117 pupil responses were received. Records on child protection concerns, including complaints against staff, and other complaints were scrutinised. The single central register of appointments was examined along with a number of staff files, particularly of staff recently appointed. Discussions were held with the chair of governors, the head, deputy head pastoral, all the boarding houseparents, a group of other boarding staff, the human resources officer, the bursar, and two groups of pupils from Years 10 and 13. Other staff and pupil interviews were undertaken by the Manchester City Council team. A tour was undertaken of the three boarding houses and inspectors were accompanied by

pupil guides. Feedback was given to the head and the chair of governors on the findings from the pre-inspection parental and pupil questionnaire responses. No other feedback was given either during or at the end of the visit.

### **Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school (ISSRs 7 & 8, NMS 11)**

The school does not fully meet the regulations specified above.

#### *Child protection policy*

The policy, whilst appropriate in many respects, needs improvement in content as specified below and in its implementation. In particular, the policy is not sufficiently clear on the correct reporting lines for referring child protection concerns, providing written guidance for staff on the conduct requirements for interaction with pupils, and the importance of formal recording procedures. Discussions with staff indicated that not all are clear about the process to be followed when concerns are reported or allegations made, and the procedures specified by the school are not always implemented in practice - for example, the safeguarding concerns form is not always completed and informal discussions are held instead.

#### *Child protection training*

Child protection training is undertaken by all staff every three years and those with designated responsibility participate in child protection and interagency training every two years as required.

#### *Oversight of child protection*

As the registered proprietors of the school, the Feoffees (trustees) of the Foundation have responsibility for ensuring the school's compliance with the relevant regulations. These duties include an annual review of the child protection policy and the effectiveness with which it is discharged. However, scrutiny of written records and discussions with governors and staff indicate that this review has not been conducted as required. Governors' minutes indicate that the school committee review the policy annually as well as receiving written reports from the head, deputy heads and child protection officer at each board meeting. However, there is no indication that beyond this basic reporting the necessary scrutiny occurs to confirm that appropriate action is followed on each occasion, and evidence from inspection indicates that required referrals in relation to concerns about members of staff have not taken place as they should.

#### *Arrangements for dealing with allegations*

During the visit the head indicated that the school had taken disciplinary action or issued a suspension against four staff, because of concerns about their suitability to work with children, between her appointment in 1999 and the present time. No instances have yet met the threshold for referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Independent Safeguarding Authority) and whilst some had been referred to the local authority as required, the concern remains that at least one referral had been made after the school had undertaken an investigation and disciplinary action.

#### *Safety of pupils*

In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, in interviews and in informal discussion, the vast majority of pupils said that they feel safe around the school; relationships are strong and behaviour within the boarding houses is extremely good. Pupils were clear about issues surrounding cyber-bullying and internet safety, although the programme for personal, social and health education, called personal and religious studies,

does not include sufficient teaching on how pupils can keep themselves safe in terms of developing an awareness of risk and inappropriate actions of others. Prefects are trained by the child protection officer about how to respond to a pupil confiding in them, and sixth form pupils are designated as 'guardian angels' to assist younger pupils to settle into the school. However, the 'guardian angels' do not have specific training in how to handle pupil concerns and the effectiveness of this group is inconsistent in practice with many pupils expressing uncertainty about their role.

Differing accounts of arrangements for teaching in tutors' homes were given by staff during the inspection. In interviews, some pupils confirmed that they had received such tuition from instrumental teachers during school holidays. The school has a 'teaching at home' policy which requires a written risk assessment to be completed. In practice this is focused on health and safety matters and not the safeguarding of pupils. The school does not ensure that the policy for home tuition is clear to all staff or that appropriate measures are put in place to safeguard pupils and staff.

### **Suitability of staff and supply staff (ISSRs 7, 19-22, NMS 14)**

The regulations in relation to staff recruitment are not fully met.

#### *Appointment checks on staff and the single central register*

The single central register indicates that some recruitment checks were not made until staff had begun working. For example, at least two staff from overseas had not been checked against the barred list or received an enhanced disclosure for several months after they had begun work at the school. One member of staff appointed from overseas has not been subject to a criminal records check in the UK although appropriate measures had been taken in relation to checks from the home country. Several instances were identified where qualifications had not been verified and there were a few occasions where references and medical fitness checks were late. A number of staff files were scrutinised, particularly of staff appointed recently, and a sample of others, and they confirmed that these weaknesses in procedures remain. Discussion with the human resources officer and the bursar indicated that they have a good understanding of the recruitment process and the head, bursar and human resources officer have undertaken safer recruitment training. The single central register is well structured in its format and clearly laid out with most entries being accurately recorded, although there were some missing dates for when the checks had been carried out.

#### *Arrangements with supply agencies and contractors*

The contracts for supply agencies and contractors clearly indicated the processes which the school required, but the agencies do not always carry out the checks on staff before they began work at the school. In particular, catering staff have not always been subject to barred list checks in advance of appointment.

#### *Checks on other resident adults*

The school has obtained criminal records checks for family members of resident staff and has also obtained the required written accommodation agreement with such residents. All persons visiting boarding accommodation in whatever capacity are always supervised while on site and this was confirmed in interviews and documentation.

#### *Guardianship of pupils*

The school states on its website that all pupils from overseas must have guardians appointed before they join the school. In its letter to parents when a place is offered to their

children, the school reiterates this and also adds that it is the parents' responsibility to find a guardian. It gives important guidance as to the expectations that the school has of the guardians selected. The school confirmed that one current member of staff has been appointed by a parent as a guardian for a pupil. Whilst the school did not appoint the individual, such an arrangement makes the lines of responsibility indistinct between employee and guardian and could be problematic if a difficulty were to arise.

### **The manner in which complaints are handled (ISSR 25(a)-(k), NMS 18)**

The regulations as specified above are not met in full and the complaints policy and its implementation need some improvement.

#### *Complaints policy*

Records of complaints have been kept appropriately but they have not always been formally recorded as concluded. The policy includes inappropriate wording in relation to repeated complaints which may act as a deterrent to parents in bringing complaints against the school. Given the low number of formal complaints, this clause is unnecessary and should be removed. The school has a separate 'appeals procedure' which provides further guidance about the final stage of the complaints procedure. This procedure, whilst clear, does contain wording which is slightly different from the complaints policy.

#### *Parents' views*

The school has carried out a survey with parents very recently about the music experiences provided by the school, and the progress made by their children in music whilst at the school. Approximately one-third of parents responded, the majority positively, but a very small minority of parents indicated their dissatisfaction with the information they are given about their child's progress in instrumental tuition, a factor mentioned at the time of the previous ISI inspection. Comments from parents in response to the ISI questionnaire confirmed that this remains an issue.

### **Boarders' Induction and Support (NMS 2)**

This standard is not met in respect of the independent listener.

#### *Induction and support*

The house handbooks give helpful information for new boarders and induction is stronger for younger pupils than for older ones. The 'guardian angel' scheme for those younger pupils new to the school was considered by the pupils to be inconsistent in its effectiveness. Several of the boarding house staff have been pupils at Chetham's themselves and so appreciate the concerns and issues that the boarders may have within a specialist music school. The boarders say that they appreciate this fact and they know that they have various staff to whom they may turn for support and guidance, including their personal tutor.

#### *Sources of support outside the school*

The school has appointed an independent listener, and contact details are available in the boarding houses and prep diaries, but in discussions some of the pupils were not aware of this person's role. The person appointed is also a governor of the school which, whilst acceptable under the wording of the Standard, is not as demonstrably independent as would normally be expected. Pupils are provided with helpline information for Childline and the Children's Rights Director and these contact details are displayed at various points, such as by the telephones and on the notice boards, in the boarding houses.

## **Management and Development of Boarding (NMS 13)**

This standard is not met in relation to oversight of records.

### *Practice and development of boarding*

Leadership and management of the practice and development of boarding places pupils at the forefront of this aspect of school life. The handbooks for the different roles of boarding staff are also helpful, explaining in detail how the houses operate and the contribution of boarding staff. Led by the deputy head for pastoral care who also acts as the head of boarding, the senior boarding staff contribute to the pastoral care aspect of the whole school development plan. The school is in the middle of a major building programme which will enable the boarding house for the youngest pupils to be upgraded in the very near future. The two other boarding houses have had various planned refurbishments since the previous inspection, ensuring that all boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.

The organisation and structure of boarding means that effective links are made between academic and boarding staff. Every house is divided into tutor groups, each with about eight pupils of the same age within a group; these groups include day pupils who are assigned to the relevant house according to age and gender. The tutor is responsible for the academic and pastoral welfare of his/her tutees, and meets with them once per week for a tutor session. Staff on duty are aware of immediate issues with boarders through the daily diary, which is filled in and directly available to incoming duty staff, as well as issues being entered on to the electronic system of record keeping.

### *Boarding staff training and experience*

Senior boarding staff have an adequate level of experience and house-parents new to this responsibility have availed themselves of the support and guidance. Training sessions have been organised by senior boarding staff to enable others with responsibilities to gain experience as quickly as possible and they are encouraged to ask for any further training from which they feel they would benefit.

### *Monitoring of boarding records*

The records specified in Appendix 2 of the National Minimum Standards are kept and most are monitored by the school as required. Management oversight of child protection and staff recruitment records has not been sufficiently rigorous, as detailed previously in this report.

## **Staffing and Supervision (NMS 15)**

This standard is not fully met in respect of the policy on children who are missing which needs improvement as detailed below.

### *Staff management and appraisal*

All boarding staff have detailed job descriptions which reflect their duties. This includes a safeguarding policy statement and post-holders are asked to sign to say that they have read and understood their job description. Induction training is carried out by the deputy head pastoral and the human resources officer, and each new member of staff is given an induction pack. This process begins before they join the school and important training such as child protection is carried out in advance. Staff also have access to school policies and procedures through the intranet. Regular reviews of each staff member's work are undertaken each term by their line manager with future targets set; this was a

recommendation at the previous Ofsted inspection. At least one training session is organised termly; recently, various staff have undertaken courses on relevant topics such as fire training, first aid, eating disorders, child protection and support of overseas students. Staff are encouraged to participate in external training as relevant and these courses may be identified through the review process. The staff interviewed, of whom one had been very recently appointed, said they valued the training they received from the moment of induction. The role of spouses in the boarding environment is made clear to them.

### *Supervision of boarders*

Sufficient qualified and experienced staff supervise boarders outside teaching time as pupils continue their musical life beyond the school day. Boarders are certain about who is in charge of them at any time; duty rotas give full information about which staff are available and are displayed on the house notice boards. Clear guidelines are laid out as to how, when and where the pupils may go in the city. They are given school-based contact numbers of the staff responsible for them, including emergency numbers. Security measures are followed rigorously, concerning the movement of boarders in and out of the school campus, and in respect of their accommodation. Staff know where boarders are; registers are taken at several points throughout the day, including at meal times to ensure boarders are eating sensibly. All staff know about the policy for searching for children who are missing. They are aware of how to implement it in the unlikely event that a boarder should go missing, but are not fully supported in doing this because the policy does not provide clear guidance about the point in the process at which the school will contact the parent or the police. This could lead to inconsistency in practice and unnecessary delay.

Boarders in interview said that they know how to contact a member of the boarding staff during the night and at least four staff members are in each boarding house each night. Residential staff confirmed in discussion that their accommodation is suitable, and is separate from the pupils'; this was seen to be the case in the house tours undertaken. Pupils confirmed that they do not go into the resident staff accommodation and staff confirmed this understanding. However, school documentation does not specifically set out this advice so that there is no misunderstanding or uncertainty about requirements or expectations.

### **Securing Boarders' Views (NMS 17)**

This standard is met.

#### *Opportunities for pupils to contribute their views*

In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a substantial minority of pupils indicated that they do not feel the school asks for their opinions or responds to them. In the interviews with the pupils, there was a mixed response to the effectiveness of the student forum, where each year group elects one male and one female representative to meet regularly with senior staff and voice comments and concerns from their own peer groups. Some pupils said that this forum had been effective in improving certain aspects of school life, such as the length of break time and uniform. Others felt that it was not sufficiently effective in giving a means of communicating concerns or suggestions. Within the girls' house, there was a suggestions box near the noticeboard where views and ideas could be placed for further discussion in house meetings. An additional avenue for voicing suggestions was the food survey which had been recently carried out. The results from this had been visible to the pupils very quickly with clear improvement in the quality and choice at mealtimes, so they felt their views had been taken into consideration. However, food quality was still raised as a concern by a minority of pupils in the pre-inspection

questionnaire. Pupils were positive about their school and the way in which they are looked after. Pupils said they felt safe in the various areas of the school. They all said that they had a staff member to go to with a problem, citing different staff names with confidence. In discussion, pupils were articulate and demonstrated enjoyment at being given the opportunity to develop their musical talents within this specialist school.

## **Regulatory requirements needing improvement**

### ***Child protection***

At the time of the inspection visit, the school's child protection policy was found to cover most of the requirements which are the duties of proprietors of independent schools. However, the school's written policy is not suitably comprehensive and has not been properly implemented.

As a result, under Regulations 7 and 8 of the ISSRs and NMS 11, the school is required to amend the policy as follows:

- (a) state clearly the status and authority of the main child protection officer;
- (b) remove any suggestion that the school would carry out an investigation [the words 'investigated' and 'investigation' are used without a clear reference to the LADO or external agencies];
- (c) remove any caveats concerning the reporting to the local authority of any disclosure or allegation ['further consideration may then take place...'];
- (d) state that contact is made with the local authority within 24 hours of a disclosure, whether or not it applies to an allegation against staff;
- (e) ensure appropriate guidance is given within the policy to staff to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of abuse;
- (f) remove the sentence attached to the reference about overseas pupils making a disclosure of abuse which has taken place in their home country or abroad, so that this does not deter staff from passing on concerns about these pupils to the CPO.

The proprietor must ensure that the annual review of the policy and the efficiency with which the related duties have been carried out is undertaken by the Feoffees, and not the School Committee.

The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of children is safeguarded and promoted, and that the school has regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State, by requiring full implementation of the child protection policy.

Where the school engages contractors to deliver services, the proprietor must ensure that all required recruitment checks, including barred list and references, are carried out in advance of staff starting work at the school.

### ***Recruitment checks***

In order to confirm the suitability of staff, the proprietor must ensure under Regulations 19(a), 19(b), 19(c), 19(e), 19(3), 22(3)(c) and (d) (ISSRs) and NMS 14.1, that:

- the following checks are made on staff before they begin work at the school: barred list, qualifications and medical fitness;
- criminal record disclosures are obtained either before or as soon as practicable after appointment for all staff including those appointed from overseas; and
- all checks are accurately recorded on the single central register.

### ***Handling of parental complaints***

The complaints policy requires the following amendments in order to meet Regulation 25 (c), (i), (j) and (k); and NMS 18:

- (a) clarify the time scale for stages 1 and 3 of the procedure;
- (b) ensure that a copy of the findings and recommendations is available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor as well as the head;
- (c) keep a written record of all complaints and whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing;
- (d) give an explanation that those to whom individual complaints may be revealed are the Secretary of State (and in practice DfE) and inspectors operating under section 162A of the 2002 Act;
- (e) remove the reference to Ofsted. The school may choose to include the contact details for ISI should parents wish to make a complaint in connection with statutory regulations or standards.

The proprietor must ensure that these amendments are made and that the policy is fully implemented in practice.

### ***National Minimum Standards***

The school must ensure that all boarders know that the independent listener may be contacted about personal problems or concerns. (NMS 2.3)

The missing child policy requires amendment to make clear at what point, and after how long, the parents and police will be informed. (NMS 15.6)

The school must monitor all records specified in the Appendices of the NMS. (NMS 13.3)

**In addition, the key findings of the parallel visit by Manchester City Council must be considered and addressed by the school.**

**The school is also advised to make the following improvements to enhance its current provision:**

- clarify in writing the rules about access by pupils to staff accommodation;
- provide further opportunities for boarders to express their views and raise concerns, so that they can make a legitimate contribution to decisions made on issues that affect them.

### **Conclusion**

Pupils report that they are happy and feel safe and secure in school. A number of weaknesses have been identified in policy and practice in relation to safeguarding, the handling of allegations, staff recruitment, and the handling of complaints and concerns. These issues indicate that oversight of compliance with regulatory requirements by the proprietor and the management team is not sufficiently effective. Since the visit the school has begun to implement improvements to address these deficiencies and these will be monitored by the Department for Education to ensure that they are made within appropriate timescales.