

# Material change inspection report

20 June 2025

## **Thomas's Kensington**

17-19 Cottessmore Gardens

London

W8 5PR

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'.

## Inspection outcome

The school has requested a material change request to change its premises from 17-19 Cottesmore Gardens, London, W8 5PR to 1 St Alban's Grove, London, W8 5PN and to increase its capacity from 390 to 400.

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school Standards if the material change is implemented. It is recommended that the material change be approved.

## Inspection findings

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 11, 12, 14, 16(a) and (b)

1. Implementation of the school's safeguarding procedures is effective in providing appropriate support for pupils' needs. Safeguarding procedures are implemented appropriately to safeguard children who may be at risk of harm. Staff receive relevant training to ensure that their knowledge is up to date. Staff understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
2. Safeguarding leaders have considered and mitigated any changed safeguarding risks associated with the move of two age groups to one site and the increase in numbers.
3. Leaders follow robust protocols in identifying and addressing concerns relating to pupils' attendance.
4. Suitable recruitment procedures for staff are clearly set out within the safeguarding policy.
5. Leaders have put in place effective software to monitor and filter the use of the internet. Records are regularly viewed by the safeguarding team and reviewed by a member of the proprietorial body.
6. Staff show appropriate awareness of the staff code of conduct and safeguarding procedures. Staff who teach in the prep school have been made aware of the particular requirements of the early years, for example those relating to the use of mobile telephones and the storage of medicines.
7. Staff use the school's procedures appropriately to report any low-level concerns they may have about their own conduct or the conduct of other staff. Staff are knowledgeable about statutory guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) 2024. They know who to go to if they have a concern. They also know that they can make a referral to children's services or the local authority designated officer, if necessary.
8. Suitable risk assessment procedures are in place for determining where immediate action is required when issues arise, including referral to local agencies. The school has an effective understanding of the local guidance on reporting child-on-child abuse. Records are detailed and are kept confidential. Pupils receive early help to address risks and to help prevent issues escalating.
9. Staff with particular pastoral responsibilities monitor children in need effectively. Suitable communication is maintained with parents where appropriate. Staff are clear that they must always act in the best interests of the child.
10. The oversight of safeguarding by those with proprietorial responsibility for the Thomas's group of schools is appropriate and includes an annual review. There is regular contact between safeguarding leaders and the group's safeguarding leader regarding safeguarding arrangements at the school.
11. The training for the safeguarding team and proprietors is up to date and in line with local requirements. Training is held in the school for teaching and non-teaching staff. Staff have a clear

understanding of the school's safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding arrangements are likely to be appropriate to meet the needs of the change of premises and the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

12. The proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy. Systematic procedures ensure that testing of electrical, water and other utilities is regularly undertaken. Staff are effectively trained in health and safety and deal promptly and appropriately with accidents if they occur, including through the reporting of serious accidents. Health and safety issues are addressed promptly. The arrangements are likely to be appropriate to meet the needs of the change of premises and the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
13. The school has an effective fire risk prevention policy which includes the elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances. A fire risk assessment of the current and proposed new buildings has been undertaken by a suitably qualified person. Fire procedures are understood by staff, and training is provided for them. Termly fire drills are carried out and recorded. Pupils understand the steps to take if a fire alarm sounds. The arrangements are likely to be appropriate to meet the needs of the change of premises and the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
14. Pupils are properly supervised by qualified and well-trained staff. Leaders have planned in detail appropriate supervision arrangements for the new site, including at the beginning and end of the school day. The arrangements are likely to be appropriate to meet the needs of the change of premises and the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
15. The risk assessment policy clearly describes the lines of responsibility and the approaches to be taken to identify and mitigate risk. There are appropriate assessments of risk for in-school activities, school visits, and for the needs of individual pupils, both while in school and in the surrounding area, and appropriate action is taken to mitigate risks identified.
16. Leaders have reviewed the traffic arrangements at the beginning and end of the day in the context of the move to one main building. These include limiting motorised traffic in front of the school at certain times. The arrangements are likely to be appropriate to meet the needs of the change of premises and the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
17. The school meets the Standards and is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

#### **Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

ISSR paragraphs 18 to 21

18. All the required checks on new staff and governors are carried out and completed before they take up their posts. The school undertakes appropriate checks on the supply staff it occasionally employs. Contractors send the school up-to-date information on checks they have undertaken on their employees, and the school makes appropriate further checks when contractors arrive at the school to carry out work.
19. The school maintains correctly an accurate single central record of appointments which includes the dates on which all checks have been completed.
20. The school meets the Standards and is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

## **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

ISSR paragraphs 22 to 29

21. Suitable toilet and changing facilities, showering facilities, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The school has planned effectively to provide suitable facilities for the different ages of pupils. Accommodation for children in the early years will allow them to move freely between indoor and outdoor activities. The new facilities provide enhanced sports, dance and science facilities. Provision has been made for the needs of those who have physical disabilities. Older pupils will continue to use the adjacent annex for art and drama.
22. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is sufficient. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education, outdoor play, and for pupils to relax quietly.
23. The school meets the Standards and is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

## **Part 6. Provision of information**

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

24. 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.
25. The school meets the Standards and is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

## **Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools**

ISSR paragraphs 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

26. Governors and those with proprietorial responsibility maintain effective oversight of leaders' work to ensure the effective safeguarding of pupils and staff, the maintenance of health and safety across the school site, and to promote the wellbeing of pupils. Governors and leaders fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school Standards are met consistently.
27. Leaders actively promote the wellbeing of pupils through strategic and detailed operational planning including the proposed move of all pupils to the new 1 St Alban's Grove site and the increase in numbers of pupils.
28. The school meets the Standards and is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

## School details

<b>School</b>	Thomas's Kensington
<b>Department for Education number</b>	207/6317
<b>Address</b>	Thomas's Kensington 17-19 Cottessmore Gardens London W8 5PR
<b>Phone number</b>	020 7361 6500
<b>Email address</b>	kensington@thomas-s.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.thomas-s.co.uk/thomass-kensington/">www.thomas-s.co.uk/thomass-kensington/</a>
<b>Proprietor</b>	Thomas's London Day Schools
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Ben Thomas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kelly Miller
<b>Age range</b>	4-11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	323
<b>Number of children in the early years</b>	50
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 to 23 May 2024

## Information about the school

29. Thomas's Kensington is an independent co-educational day school in Kensington, London. It is part of Thomas's London Day Schools, which is a limited company. The school has three sites, located within 500 yards of each other. The school consists of a lower school and a prep school.
30. There are 50 children in the early years comprising three Reception classes, based in the lower school.
31. The school has identified 28 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A very few pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
32. English is an additional language for 183 pupils.
33. The school states its aims are to offer an exceptional education to young people which is forward-thinking and outward-looking, with kindness at the core. It aims to ensure that every member of the school community learns and lives by a strong set of values and to enable its pupils to achieve academic success through a broad curriculum and a four-dimensional approach to education which develops knowledge, skills, character and metacognition.

## Purpose of the material change

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the DfE to make a material change to the school's provision. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards and the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements if the material change is implemented.

## Inspection details

**Inspection date**

20 June 2025

34. One reporting inspector visited the school for one day.

35. Inspection activities included

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- tour of the proposed new site to look at its suitability, health and safety and security arrangements
- discussions with the chair of governors and members of the proprietorial body
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils.

### **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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