



# The Shrubbery School

**Celebration 94 Years 1930 – 2024**

Headteacher: Mrs A Lees BA (Hons)

Walmley Ash Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B76 1HY  
0121 351 1582 – [info@shrubbery.bham.sch.uk](mailto:info@shrubbery.bham.sch.uk) – [www.shrubberyschool.co.uk](http://www.shrubberyschool.co.uk)

25<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Dear Parents/Guardians.

As you will be aware, the school was inspected in January by the Independent School's Inspectorate, we are therefore writing to notify you that a copy of the inspection report is now on the school's website.

The inspection was a demanding process that occurred earlier than expected as the three-year anniversary wasn't due until March. For staff, this was a particularly challenging time as the school had just completed a mock inspection three days previously.

As the inspection report has now been finalised, I am very pleased to tell parents that the school has met all the independent school's standards for:

- the quality of education training and recreation
- pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing and
- pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society.

Inspectors noted that **'all children made good progress'** with teachers in the early years **'setting high expectations so that children flourished'**. Teachers were considered **'knowledgeable and planned lessons with care so that they catered for pupils' prior attainment and learning needs.'** Leaders had also implemented **a 'comprehensive review of assessment, introducing new measures to monitor pupil's attainment over time.'** As a result, by the end of Year 6 pupils were considered **'well-prepared for senior school, equipped with the skills they required for the next stage of education and their future lives'**.

Inspectors noted that, **'teachers set high expectations for pupils' behaviour'** and as a result, **'pupils were well behaved, courteous and considerate of others' needs.'** Also, **'a clear behaviour policy had been implemented with leaders responding promptly when behaviour fell below standard'** and that, **'pupils trusted their teachers to address their concerns.'** They also felt leaders had set, **'a clear vision for the school's continuing development'** and that success was **'evaluated regularly'** which **'reflected the school's commitment to ongoing improvement in pupil's outcomes.'**

Inspectors also found health and safety was, **'regularly monitored by leaders'** and **'detailed risk assessments were in place'** that were **'reviewed regularly so that they remained relevant.'** **'Comprehensive measures were also in place to minimise the risk of fire'** and **'staff were suitably trained and respond swiftly when action was required.'**

The school, however, did not meet all the independent school standards for **safeguarding** as detailed below.



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**62. Standards are not met with respect to staff suitability checks, the recording of checks on the SCR and the implementation of statutory attendance guidance.**

For the re-assurance of parents, we would like to confirm that the suitability checks for teachers and support staff were all fully compliant. The issue raised by the inspection team related specifically to agency staff which we have detailed below.

1. A pre-employment medical questionnaire was not completed in 2013 for a self-employed afterschool coach. (All other areas of safeguarding checks were met, including an enhanced DBS, children's barred list check and police check.)

We appealed this decision on the basis:

- we were unable to rectify the issue as it occurred 12 years ago,
- that it had already been held to account by Ofsted in their 2017 inspection,
- that the record had already been scrutinised in our 2022 ISI inspection where it was deemed compliant,
- that we felt the decision represented an inconsistency in inspection standards and
- that the decision constituted double jeopardy.

**The inspectorate did not uphold this appeal.**

2. A prohibition from teaching check was not recorded on the safeguarding assurance letter provided by the agency that supplies extra-curricular music coaches. (All other areas of safeguarding checks were met, including enhanced DBS, children's barred list check and police check.)

We appealed this decision on the basis:

- the checks made at the time returned a result of 'no record found' as the individuals concerned are not teachers and do not appear on records held by the Teaching Regulations Agency,
- this information was recorded on the school's online single central record,
- the same record was deemed compliant during a mock inspection conducted by an off-duty ISI inspector three days earlier and
- that we felt the decision represented an inconsistency in inspection standards.

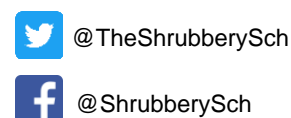
**The inspectorate did not uphold this appeal.**

3. A date was recorded incorrectly on the single central record for a member of staff provided by our catering agency. The date recorded on the single central record was the date the letter of assurance was seen by the school rather than the date the agency sent the letter to the school.

We appealed this decision on the basis:

- the error had no bearing on the validity of safeguarding checks made,
- the change in date constituted two days and only had a positive effect on the employment timeline,
- the same record was deemed compliant during a mock inspection conducted by an off-duty ISI inspector three days earlier and
- that we felt the decision represented an inconsistency in inspection standards.

**The inspectorate did not uphold this appeal.**



4. The schools attendance policy had not been updated to reflect current guidance from the Department of Education.

We accepted this decision and the policy was updated during the inspection, we appealed however that our attendance process was aligned to current DfE guidance on the basis we demonstrated:

- accurate and up-to-date attendance and admissions registers,
- comprehensive attendance reporting and monitoring,
- interventions for pupils with low attendance, including referral to the Local Authority and
- that school attendance exceeds local and national averages.

**The inspectorate did not uphold this appeal.**

All other areas of safeguarding were deemed to have met inspection standard and we are pleased that the inspection team recognised that the school works ***'with various external safeguarding partners to seek advice and make referrals when required.'*** That the school, ***'maintains detailed safeguarding records in accordance with statutory guidance'***, reacting ***'promptly and sensitively'*** to incidents. That ***'staff, including those new to the school, receive regular online and in-person training.'*** That the school has implemented a ***'range of strategies to safeguard pupils from online harm'*** and that ***'pupils are able to share concerns with their teachers'*** and ***'have access to a wellbeing mentor.'***

As not all the standards were met for **safeguarding**, the school automatically did not meet all the standards for **leadership and management and governance**.

Whilst we are obviously disappointed the inspectorate chose not to uphold our appeal, we respect their decision and celebrate the achievement the school has made in all other areas.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank parents and pupils for the feedback they provided to inspectors also to our staff who have worked diligently to achieve this result.

We will be offering a drop-in session for parents should they wish to discuss any element of the inspection report in more detail, the school office will issue details of this later in the week.

Kind regards.

Mrs A Lees  
Head Teacher

**Respect   Responsibility   Resilience   Reasoning   Resourcefulness   Reflection**

