



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Report for a Progress Monitoring Visit

Ackworth School

July 2022

School's details

School	Ackworth School			
DfE number	384/6000			
Registered charity number	529280			
Address	Ackworth School Pontefract West Yorkshire WF7 7LT			
Telephone number	01977 233600			
Email address	reception@ackworthschool.com			
Headteacher	Mr. Anton Maree			
Chair of governors	Mr. David Bunney			
Age range	2 to 19			
Number of pupils on roll	513			
	Day pupils	436	Boarders	77
	EYFS	63	Juniors	111
	Seniors	265	Sixth Form	74
Date of visit	6 July 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Ackworth School was founded in 1779 on behalf of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). It is a co-educational boarding and day school. The school is situated in the centre of the village of Ackworth, near the town of Pontefract in West Yorkshire. It includes an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting. Boarding is offered from the age of eleven in one of two boarding houses. The school is an incorporated registered charity and is administered by a board of governors known as the school committee, whose chair is called the clerk.
- 1.2 The school has 65 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 25 have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 72 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was an additional inspection in September 2021.

Purpose of the visit

- 1.3 This was an unannounced progress monitoring visit at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the additional inspection in September 2021. The visit focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs), the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2015 and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraphs 2 (curriculum), 2A (relationships and sex education) and 3 (teaching)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 11	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); NMS 6	Met
Part 3, paragraph 13 (first aid); NMS 3	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment); (NMS 6)	Met
Part 5, paragraph 24 (accommodation for medical needs); NMS 3	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management); NMS 13	Met

2. Inspection findings

Quality of education provided – curriculum, relationships and sex education, and teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraphs 2, 2A and 3]

- 2.1 The school meets the standard.
- 2.2 A suitable written curriculum policy is implemented, supported by appropriate schemes of work for all required areas of learning. These include all ages from EYFS to the sixth form. The school ensures that the curriculum reflects the school aims and ethos and meets the needs of all pupils including those with SEND, EHC plans and EAL. Where pupils need extra help and support, they receive additional one-to-one small group support from specialist teachers.
- 2.3 The personal, social, health and economics (PSHE) programme along with the relationships and sex education (RSE) schemes of work have been allocated more teaching time since the previous inspection and are now embedded successfully into the curriculum. The RSE policy has been revised and the programme of study now meets the requirements comprehensively. It reflects the school's aims and ethos and covers the needs of the pupils at all ages and has clear learning goals. Staff have received external advice and training on the teaching of PSHE and RSE which they pass on to colleagues. Pupils have many opportunities to discuss matters covered in RSE in Quaker meetings and in tutorials. These encourage respect for others, paying particular regard to those with protected characteristics. Pupils' responses in discussions showed suitable awareness of relevant issues such as abortion and respect for others whatever their views may be. The curriculum fully prepares pupils for life outside school.
- 2.4 Lessons are planned effectively to stimulate pupils' motivation to learn, and plans are implemented successfully in lessons. Pupils' work shows the positive impact of teaching. Teachers know their pupils' needs well and this enables good progress to be made for all abilities, including the more able. Pupils behave well in lessons and respond to the high expectations set by staff. Suitable assessment processes are implemented to measure and assess pupils' attainment in PSHE and RSE in line with those in other academic subjects. Pupils' approaches to learning in these areas are assessed in a grade which is included in the half-termly reports to parents. During discussions, pupils commented that their teachers are always supportive, ready to listen and that they enjoy learning.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 11]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.5 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.6 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

- 2.7 The school meets the standards.
- 2.8 Safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively in line with current statutory guidance in all areas of the school, including the EYFS and in boarding. Pupils, during discussions, said they know who to go to with a concern and are aware of the safeguarding arrangements in school including safety online. They said that staff are very approachable should they have a worry or a concern and that they feel they are listened to. Records of safeguarding show that appropriate action is taken when pupils raise concerns. Staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities including the need to provide appropriate support for pupils' needs, to listen to pupils and give appropriate

responses. They recognise the importance of early help strategies and know the seriousness of child-on-child abuse, including the additional vulnerability of those with SEND and/or EHC plans. The school ensures awareness of links between bullying and potential abuse and thresholds for referring serious bullying to external agencies. They understand how to report any concerns to the DSL and deputies.

- 2.9 All staff and governors have received suitable training on recent changes to statutory guidance and online safety. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies receive appropriate levels of training, in line with local procedures. They are able to provide regular updates to staff and opportunities for discussion on any changes to the safeguarding policy and its implementation. Staff induction training includes details of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* Part 1 and Annex A, the staff code of conduct, whistleblowing procedures, children who are missing from education and the school's behaviour policy. School leaders and key staff have also undertaken safer recruitment training and have effective oversight of the school's recruitment procedures. These ensure that all checks are carried out before staff start at the school.
- 2.10 Appropriate records for safeguarding concerns and bullying logs are maintained and regularly monitored by both the DSL and the safeguarding governor. These show timely and appropriate liaison with parents and local agencies. Safeguarding is correctly managed, and procedures are reviewed annually by the committee which demonstrates suitable rigour in the oversight of safeguarding arrangements.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11; NMS 6]

- 2.11 The school meets the standards.
- 2.12 The school ensures that the relevant health and safety regulations are complied with by the drawing up and effective management of a written health and safety policy. This ensures that teaching, boarding and medical accommodation is maintained safely and securely, and is clean. The school's arrangements clearly define those people with specific responsibility for health and safety and ensure that all are appropriately trained. There are suitable procedures for recording any health and safety matters, and school leaders and governors maintain effective oversight of all related matters.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – first aid [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 13; NMS 3]

- 2.13 The school meets the standards.
- 2.14 The school has a suitable policy for first aid which is implemented effectively. The school ensures that first aid is always administered in a timely and competent manner. A school nurse is available during the school day. At all times, day and night, there are staff who are suitably trained in First Aid on duty. This ensures suitable provision for boarders' medical needs and the secure dispensing of medication. All EYFS staff are trained in paediatric first aid and they are required to retrain every 3 years.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; NMS 6]

- 2.15 The school meets the standards.
- 2.16 The risk assessment policy describes the approaches to be taken to identify and mitigate risk. It clearly defines the lines of responsibility. There are appropriate, detailed assessments of risk made for all off-site school visits, the needs of individual pupils and in-school activities including sports day. Any areas where risks may be greater such as the swimming pool, sports day, trip to a national adventure playground, science laboratories and workshops have suitable risk assessments in place. Staff receive guidance in their preparation, and they are reviewed regularly by management.

Premises and accommodation – medical facilities [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 24; NMS 3]

2.17 The school meets the standards.

2.18 The school has suitable facilities to accommodate pupils and boarders who are unwell. Pupils are treated in the medical centre which is furnished with first-aid equipment and medicine storage which are kept locked. Medical records are stored confidentially and securely. There is appropriate accommodation for pupils who are unwell, including boarders who may be ill overnight.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

2.19 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; NMS 13]

2.20 The school meets the standards.

2.21 The school's leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent standards are consistently met. The school's management and leadership actively promote the well-being of pupils at all stages and ages. Senior leaders have undertaken additional training and ensured suitable provision within the PSHE and RSE curriculum. The implementation of this provision is monitored appropriately. The action plan prepared following the previous inspection has been implemented effectively.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this visit, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and no further action is required as a result of this visit.

4. Summary of evidence

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