



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

Ballard School

January 2022

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School's Details

School	Ballard School			
DfE number	850/6012			
Registered charity number	307328			
Address	Ballard School Fernhill Lane New Milton Hampshire BH25 5SU			
Telephone number	01425 626900			
Email address	secretary@ballardschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Andrew McCleave			
Chair of governors	Mr Peter Goodfellow			
Age range	2 to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	498			
	EYFS	52	Juniors	149
	Seniors	297		
Inspection dates	19 to 21 January 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Ballard School is a co-educational independent day school. The school is an educational charitable trust managed by a board of governors. Set in a rural location, the school has developed from an amalgamation of schools, the most recent being in 1995.
- 1.2 The current head joined the school in 2018. A whole-school structure of deputy head academic and deputy head pastoral was introduced in 2019. In 2021, the leadership team expanded to incorporate a director of co-curricular.
- 1.3 During the period from March 2020 to June 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers and vulnerable children. In June 2020 the school was open for pupils in EYFS, Years 3 to 5 and Year 10. During the period of closure the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils in Year 1 and above who were not in school.
- 1.4 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.5 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.6 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than vulnerable pupils or the children of key workers received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.7 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed and teacher-assessed grades were awarded.
- 1.8 Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.9 Ballard School endeavours to provide a supportive and caring environment for learning, based on Christian values, designed to ensure all pupils achieve their personal best. The school aims for high academic standards and the effective preparation of pupils for future education and the world of work, underpinned by an ethos of concern for others, unselfish attitudes and an awareness of the rights and duties of a good citizen. Through its curriculum and co-curricular activities, it seeks to nurture the self-confidence of pupils, and help their personal development, engendering lifelong interests and stimulating a desire to serve the community.

About the pupils

- 1.10 Pupils come from towns and villages within a 20-mile radius. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils of all ages is above the national average. The number of pupils identified by the school as requiring support for special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) is 104, with 76 pupils receiving additional support from the school for their needs. There are four pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. One pupil has English as an additional language and receives additional support. Pupils identified as the most able and those with particular talents may have their curriculum modified or enhanced.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2017 to 2019, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.10 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in most areas by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance. However, not all recruitment checks have been carried out correctly. The school has not carried out required prohibition checks on all relevant staff prior to staff starting work. These were completed during the inspection and no staff were found to be prohibited. The school has not assessed the appropriate supervision required for staff whose original enhanced criminal record certificate has not been seen prior to them starting work. The school has not ensured at least two references are always obtained prior to staff starting work.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9–16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met, but that in paragraph 7 [safeguarding] is not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that checks on prohibition are carried out on all relevant staff before they take up their role [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that, in the case of late acquisition of an enhanced criminal record certificate, appropriate supervision arrangements are in place [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

Action point 3

The school must ensure that at least two references are received for all staff before they begin work [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. The school does not use supply staff.
- 2.13 The school has not recorded the date of qualification checks on staff on the single central register of appointments.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 18 and 20 are met, but that in paragraph 21 [single central register of appointments] is not met.

Action point 4

The school must ensure that the date on which a member of staff's qualifications are checked is recorded in the single central register of appointments [paragraph 21 (3)(a)(iv); EYFS 3.12].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.15 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.16 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.17 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.19 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are

communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.20 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.21 The proprietor has not ensured that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.22 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 5

The school must ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and they actively promote the well-being of pupils [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors and observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Andrew Gillespie

Reporting inspector

Miss Melanie Eaton

Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)