



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report
For Schools with Residential Provision**

Moreton Hall School

May 2023

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School's Details

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| School | Moreton Hall School | | | |
| DfE number | 893/6005 | | | |
| Early Years registration number | EY331318 | | | |
| Address | Moreton Hall School Weston Rhyn Oswestry Shropshire SY11 3EW | | | |
| Telephone number | 01691 776020 | | | |
| Email address | admin@moretonhall.com | | | |
| Principal | Mrs Sarah Davis | | | |
| Chair of governors | Mr Duncan Murphy | | | |
| Proprietor | Moreton Hall Education Limited | | | |
| Age range | 6 months to 18 years | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 417 | | | |
| | Day pupils | 273 | Boarders | 144 |
| | EYFS | 75 | Juniors | 67 |
| | Seniors | 172 | Sixth Form | 103 |
| Inspection dates | 17 to 18 May 2023 | | | |

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Moreton Hall School is an independent day and boarding school for male pupils aged from 6 months to 13 years and for female pupils from 6 months to 19 years. Established in 1913, the school transferred to its current site in 1919. The school is administered by Moreton Hall Education Limited supported by a governing body.
- 1.2 The school comprises the prep school, for pupils aged 6 months to 11 years; the senior school, for pupils aged 11 to 16 years; and the sixth form, for pupils aged 16 to 18 years. There are nine boarding houses, seven of which were in operation at the time of the inspection: six for female boarders and one for male boarders. Boarding is available to pupils from the age of 8 years.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection the school has moved from being a charitable trust to being owned by a limited company. A new principal was appointed in September 2022 and a new chair of governors was appointed in October 2022. The upper age for provision for male pupils has been increased from age 11 years to age 13 years.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to provide academic excellence, a tailored curriculum, outstanding pastoral care and extra-curricular activities of an extraordinary range and quality.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come from a range of professional and business backgrounds living in the surrounding counties. Standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is broadly average compared with those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 98 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) including dyslexia, 62 of whom receive additional support. Two pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 88 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), almost all of whom receive additional support for their English. The school modifies the curriculum for pupils it identifies as the most able in the school's population.

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, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. 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 (EYFS) 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, including the boarding NMS. 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, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the prep school, 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 In the senior school, the school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2020 to 2022 confirm 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. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 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. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; 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 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.**

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

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.13 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 and 22 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.14 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.15 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4, 7 and 23 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.16 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.17 **The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.18 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.19 **The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.20 The proprietor ensures 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 wellbeing of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.21 **The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 2 are met.**

3. The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

- 3.1 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 3.2 Leaders and staff use their experience and understanding of child development to implement an extremely well-structured, bespoke curriculum that meets the relevant statutory requirements of EYFS. It supports the children's development in the prime areas of learning extremely well.
- 3.3 Excellent understanding of each child's level of development and rigorous care practices meet the needs of all children, ensuring they are extremely happy and safe. All children under the age of two make excellent progress relative to their starting points and are well prepared for their next stage in their education. Transitions are managed carefully to ensure children move seamlessly from one stage to the next. Thorough procedures are in place to pass information on and offer parents the chance to meet new staff.
- 3.4 Due to the excellent levels of care that the setting provides, the personal and emotional development of the children is excellent and they consistently demonstrate that they feel safe, secure and happy. Relationships formed between the children and their key persons are strong and positive.
- 3.5 All requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare have been fully met. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to protect children and keep them safe. Robust procedures are in place and are regularly monitored by leaders and managers to ensure the safety of the children in their care.
- 3.6 There is secure evidence of leadership and management's strong commitment to continuous improvement through cohesive self-evaluation and a clear vision for future developments. This ensures that all children receive the best possible support and care.

Quality of education

- 3.7 The quality of education is outstanding.
- 3.8 Curriculum intentions are based on the staff's understanding of each child's level of development, individual needs and interests, enabling them to have an excellent start to their education.
- 3.9 The homely environment provides all children with a wealth of opportunities to choose from high quality resources and experiences and so consolidate and deepen their knowledge and skills.
- 3.10 Staff have consistently high expectations for the children in their care. They have an excellent understanding of how babies and young children learn and develop. When exploring paint, babies use their hands to make marks on paper and toddlers use their developing fine motor skills by grasping chunky paintbrushes to make marks. Children are introduced to early mathematics skills by counting dinosaurs in a story and joining in with number songs and rhymes at circle time. Staff seize every opportunity to introduce new vocabulary such as 'loud' and 'quiet' when children were using shakers.
- 3.11 Staff readily engage with children during routine activities and take every opportunity to develop communication and language skills. Children consistently hear and repeat words and phrases modelled to them and successfully increase their vocabulary. They respond to questions and make their requests clear. Babies babble, toddlers use single words and point, others are beginning to put words together. Staff read and sing with the children, encouraging them to repeat words, answer simple questions and join in with songs and rhymes. Core books are used successfully as a resource to consolidate children's vocabulary and develop speech and language skills.
- 3.12 Children enjoy walks in the wider school grounds to see the sheep, chickens and rabbits. They have planted vegetables in the garden and they check on them regularly to see how much they have grown.
- 3.13 Regular assessments, tracked against curriculum goals and milestones, ensure that each child's progress is carefully monitored and their needs are met effectively. Observations are shared on the

on-line system with parents, who are able to contribute to this by sharing with the setting their child's significant experiences at home. 'WOW' moment folders document children's significant achievements and are always available to share with parents.

- 3.14 Staff readily use praise and encouragement effectively to enable children to gain the skills they need to learn. The stimulating curriculum provides children with a solid foundation on which their future learning can be built. All children under the age of two are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Behaviour and attitudes

- 3.15 Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
- 3.16 Children show great enjoyment in their learning and they make excellent use of the available resources in the rooms that allow them to explore and make choices. They have direct access to a large outdoor area. However, the outdoor area would benefit from further development in order to provide a more natural extension to the stimulating environment of the classrooms.
- 3.17 Children maintain their focus on activities for appropriate amounts of time. As they access resources and activities, children have clear ideas about what they want to play with and show high levels of independence in their choices.
- 3.18 Children demonstrate excellent behaviour and show respect for one another. They respond well to gentle reminders from staff about using 'kind hands' how to share things and how to play co-operatively. The setting has a highly effective partnership with parents which successfully promotes children's attendance. Suitable procedures are in place to investigate unexpected absences.

Personal development

- 3.19 The personal development of children is outstanding.
- 3.20 The exceptional relationships that children have with adults around them are built on strong, secure attachments. There is an extremely effective key person system in place. Staff interact extremely warmly and positively with all children and build excellent relationships. Children, therefore, form strong bonds with caring staff who support their emotional security, so that children feel happy and safe. At sleep times children were observed being comforted by staff and gently rocked or stroked to sleep, demonstrating that they feel emotionally secure.
- 3.21 Staff effectively build children's language and physical skills, which promotes the development of their character and provides opportunities for children to develop confidence, resilience and independence. Toddlers ably feed themselves using forks, and babies are given spoons to encourage independent feeding skills whilst being fed by adults. Toddlers demonstrated great independence by collecting their bags off their peg ready to change their clothes.
- 3.22 Children are encouraged to take risks and be adventurous in various activities such as, negotiating inclines when riding trikes in the outdoor area, and walking up the steps to access the balance bridge and slide in the indoor area.
- 3.23 A healthy diet is provided each day and staff ensure that food preferences and allergy needs are catered for appropriately. All children have regular access to outside areas that are equipped to promote physical activity. Hygiene practices, which are followed by everyone, ensure that the personal needs of the children at this age are met appropriately. Staff encourage children to understand the need for, and importance of, handwashing before eating. With adult support, babies and toddlers wash their hands before meals and wipe their hands and faces after eating.
- 3.24 All staff give high priority to safeguarding and are aware of their responsibilities to ensure that they meet the requirements for safeguarding, welfare and learning and development.

- 3.25 The setting is highly successful in preparing children for life in modern Britain by teaching them how to show respect, share and take turns. Staff are excellent role models and consistently promote these values. The voice of the child is evident as staff respectfully seek consent from the children before attending to their personal needs. A range of multicultural resources support a developing understanding of diversity. Festivals from other religions and cultures are celebrated.

Leadership and management

- 3.26 Leadership and management are outstanding.
- 3.27 The strong direction from the leadership team results in an enthusiastic and able team of staff who share an ambitious vision to provide high quality education and exemplary levels of care. Leaders and managers consistently monitor the standards of care and regularly scrutinise the impact of the curriculum to ensure that high standards are maintained. This ensures that all children have excellent learning opportunities, are extremely happy and well cared for.
- 3.28 Staff are well qualified and are extremely well supported by leaders and managers. They benefit from regular high quality one to one supervision meetings. Staff wellbeing is of the upmost importance to leaders and managers. Professional knowledge, which translates into improvements in the children's learning experiences, has a very positive impact on children's outcomes. Training opportunities which build knowledge are provided for all staff, together with training for all compulsory requirements. In addition, leaders identify other training needs through evaluation and individual meetings with staff.
- 3.29 Leaders, managers and staff have high expectations of what all children can achieve. They know the children very well and respond quickly to the needs of all children, including those with SEND and additional needs when needed. The setting can access internal specialist help when required, together with support from outside agencies. Thorough systems are in place to ensure that every child's needs are met.
- 3.30 The setting has strong links with parents. In interviews with inspectors, they reported that they are overwhelmingly appreciative of the care their children receive and of the significant progress their children have made. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire reveal that parents have an extremely positive view of the setting.
- 3.31 The needs of the setting are well-known and understood by the school's governors. They are kept well informed about the practice and standards of the setting.
- 3.32 High priority is given by the leaders and managers to safeguarding and the implementation of all health and safety policies to ensure that children are kept safe. They fully comply with statutory duties, for example under the Equality act 2010 and other duties in relation to the 'Prevent' strategy and safer recruitment.
- 3.33 The recommendations from the previous inspection are met.

Compliance with statutory requirements

- 3.34 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.**

Recommendation for further improvement

The school is advised to make the following improvement to its provision for children in the early years.

- Enhance and further develop learning opportunities in the outdoor area for all children under the age of two.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and an assembly. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Mr Alasdair McBay | Reporting inspector |
| Dr Susan Ley | Compliance team inspector (Former deputy head, SofH school) |
| Mr Henry Marshall | Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, IAPS school) |
| Mr Christopher Sparrow | Team inspector for boarding (Head of boarding, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Valerie Holloway | Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of nursery and kindergarten, IAPS school) |