



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Worth School

September 2021

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School's Details

School	Worth School		
DfE number	938/6208		
Registered charity number	1093914		
Address	Worth School Paddockhurst Road Turners Hill Crawley West Sussex RH10 4SD		
Telephone number	01342 710200		
Email address	information@worth.org		
Head Master	Mr Stuart McPherson		
Chair of governors	Mr Tim Pethybridge		
Age range	11 to 18		
Number of pupils on roll	640		
	Day pupils	354	Boarders 286
	Seniors	398	Sixth Form 242
Inspection dates	15 to 17 September 2021		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Worth School is a co-educational independent Catholic boarding and day school near Crawley, West Sussex, located on a 500-acre site alongside the community of Benedictine monks at Worth Abbey. The school was founded in 1933 and became fully co-educational in 2012. It is a charitable trust administered by governors, who are also trustees. There are five boarding houses, situated on the main school site, and five day houses, which accommodate pupils across all age groups.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers.
- 1.3 No boarders remained on-site.
- 1.4 During this period of closure the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home, or with guardians in the case of overseas boarders.
- 1.8 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.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.9 The school aspires to provide an education with heart and soul and encourage pupils to strive for academic success and to develop a love of learning. It seeks to promote the school's values, derived from its Benedictine foundations, in order to form young people who are centred, conscious both of their strengths and their weaknesses, and able to separate beauty, truth and goodness from noise and distraction.

About the pupils

- 1.10 Almost half the pupils are boarders, with most coming from London and the home counties, and others from overseas. Day pupils live within an hour's travel radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils on entry to the school is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 193 pupils as having special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and related issues, of whom 61 receive additional specialist help. No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 119 pupils, 18 of whom are supported by additional specialist teaching. Data used by the school have identified 100 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, because of their academic ability and talents in art, drama, music or sport, and the curriculum is modified for them.

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. 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](#).

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, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 At GCSE in the years 2019 to 2021, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2019 to 2021 have 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 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. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.8 The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are 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 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 and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.11 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils do not pay due regard to current statutory guidance. The school does not always carry out prohibition from management checks on staff, when appropriate, before they commence working at the school. The school does not consistently ensure that it obtains at least two references before staff begin working at the school. The school does not always carry out prohibition from management checks on proprietors before they take up their responsibilities.
- 2.12 The standard on child protection (NMS 11) is not met and represents a failure to safeguard boarders.

- 2.13** The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9–16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 and NMS 2–4, 6–9 and 15–16 are met, but those in paragraphs 7 [safeguarding] and 8 [safeguarding of boarders] and NMS 11 are not met.

Action point 1

The school must ensure that it obtains at least two references and, where appropriate, carries out prohibition from management checks on staff before they commence work at the school [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8(a) and (b); NMS 11].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that it carries out prohibition from management checks on proprietors before they take up their responsibilities [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8(a) and (b); NMS 11].

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

- 2.14 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of supply staff, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised.
- 2.15 The school does not make appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff. In particular, it does not ensure that checks of all relevant qualifications and medical checks are undertaken before a member of staff begins work.
- 2.16** The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraph 19 are met, but those in paragraph 18 [suitability of staff] and NMS 14 are not met.

Action point 3

The school must ensure that checks of all relevant qualifications and medical checks are undertaken before a member of staff begins work [paragraphs 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(f) and 18(3); NMS 14.1].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.17 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.
- 2.18** The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.19 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.

2.20 The standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.21 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.

2.22 The standards relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.23 Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

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

2.25 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are not met.

Action point 4

The school must ensure that leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards and boarding standards are met consistently, and that they actively promote the well-being of the pupils, including boarders [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 13.1 and 13.3–5].

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the learning support and 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

Mrs Fiona McGill	Reporting inspector
Mr Toby Mullins	Compliance team inspector (Headmaster, SofH school)
Mr Jonathan Reddin	Team inspector for boarding (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr Adam Reid	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, HMC school)