



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

Branwood Preparatory School

June 2022

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School's Details

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|----------------------------------|---|----|----------------|-----|
| School | Branwood Preparatory School | | | |
| DfE number | 355/6004 | | | |
| Registered charity number | 515073 | | | |
| Address | Branwood Preparatory School Stafford Road Eccles Manchester M30 9HN | | | |
| Telephone number | 0161 7891054 | | | |
| Email address | office@branwoodschool.co.uk | | | |
| Headteacher | Mr Andrew Whittell | | | |
| Chair of governors | Mrs J Wilcox | | | |
| Age range | 3 to 11 | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 155 | | | |
| | EYFS | 31 | Juniors | 124 |
| Inspection dates | 8 to 10 June 2022 | | | |

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Branwood Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school. The school was founded in Eccles, Manchester in 1928 and moved to its current purpose-built site in 1984. Branwood School Trust is a charitable trust administered by a board of trustees and governors. The school was last inspected by Ofsted in 2017.
- 1.2 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points during the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to nurture the advancement of each child, to promote their learning and personal growth and to help them to become their best selves. The school seeks to provide a culture of challenge, opportunity and high standards for all learners, enabling them to acquire the skills necessary to flourish, and to prepare them for the fast-changing world of the 21st century as responsible, active, and compassionate global citizens. The school's prime focus is to prepare its pupils for independent senior school and neighbouring local authority grammar school examinations.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The majority of pupils live within a three-mile radius of the school and their backgrounds reflect the diversity of the area. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability profile of the pupils is above average for those taking similar tests of ability.
- 1.5 The school has identified eight pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional specialist support in school. There are 42 pupils who have been identified as having English as an additional language (EAL); one pupil requires additional specialist support in school. Pupils with particular gifts and talents are given opportunities to excel and provision is made to extend these pupils further.

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](#).

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 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.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The school's procedures for checking the suitability of staff are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and do not have due regard to the government's statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. In addition to the failings identified in Part 4 below, checks on the employment history of all staff and on the lists of those prohibited from teaching and/or management have not always been carried out, and two satisfactory references have not always been received before work commences. The school does not have sufficiently robust systems for keeping records of all staff employed by the school and recording data which support entries on the single central register of appointments (SCR).
- 2.10 Health and safety procedures are insufficiently effective to ensure the safety of those on site. Staff do not demonstrate the required skills, knowledge and experience to comply with some areas of the relevant health and safety legislation or to assess risk adequately and identify suitable control measures. A suitable fire risk assessment has not been compiled by an appropriately competent person, nor implemented, and fire doors are not maintained in an effective condition.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9, 10 and 13 to 15, 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 those in paragraphs 7 [safeguarding], 11 [health and safety], 12 [fire] and paragraph 16 [risk assessment] are not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that all relevant recruitment checks are carried out on all staff before commencement of employment; in particular with regard to checking employment history, obtaining at least two satisfactory references and checks of those prohibited from teaching and/or management [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that all staff records and files contain sufficient, accurate information to evidence the required recruitment checks [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7, 3.9 and 3.12].

Action point 3

The school must ensure that it delegates a person with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to manage health and safety risks to enable compliance with health and safety legislation, including with regard to fire safety; and that all staff receive adequate training to enable effective implementation of the health and safety policy [paragraph 11; EYFS 3.55].

Action point 4

The school must ensure that it meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, by implementing a suitable fire risk assessment compiled by a competent person, and ensuring all other required provisions are met [paragraph 12; EYFS 3.56].

Action point 5

The school must ensure that adequate detail is included in risk assessments for both on-site activities and off-site visits, including the identification of areas of risk and suitable measures to mitigate such risks [paragraph 16(a) and (b); EYFS 3.65 and 3.66].

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

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of supply staff and proprietors, however it does not make appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of all its staff. In particular, checks of qualifications, right to work in the UK, medical fitness and overseas checks are not always undertaken before a member of staff starts work and, in some cases had not been undertaken at all prior to the inspection. An SCR is kept, however not all checks are recorded as required.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 19 and 20 are met, but those in paragraph 18 [suitability of staff] and 21 [single central register of appointments] are not met.

Action point 6

The school must ensure that all relevant checks on the suitability of staff are completed before commencement of work, in particular those relating to checks of qualifications and medical fitness [paragraph 18(3); EYFS 3.9]

Action point 7

The school must ensure that accurate checks are carried out on staff's right to work in the UK and that checks on staff who have lived overseas include police checks from the relevant country where these can be obtained [paragraph 18(2)(c)(iii) and (e); EYFS 3.9].

Action point 8

The school must ensure that all relevant recruitment checks are recorded accurately and comprehensively on the SCR, in particular those relating to qualifications, the right to work, and where relevant, overseas checks, together with the date when such checks were made [paragraph 21(1), (3)(a)(iv), (vii) and (viii); EYFS 3.9 and 3.12].

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. Acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.15 Not all aspects of the school's premises are maintained to the required standard, in particular fire doors do not meet the required standards.
- 2.16 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation in paragraphs 23 to 24 and 26 to 29 are met, but that in paragraph 25 [maintenance] is not met.**

Action point 9

The school must ensure that the school premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety, in particular that fire doors and all other aspects relating to fire safety are maintained to the required standards [paragraph 25; EYFS 3.56].

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 does not ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They have not always ensured that relevant requirements for health and safety, including risk assessment and maintenance are met. Safeguarding and safer recruitment procedures are not correctly implemented. The welfare of pupils is not actively promoted.

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

Action point 10

The school must ensure that those with responsibility for leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that all of the 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 a governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with 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 Valerie Dunsford MBE

Reporting inspector

Mr Neil Walker

Compliance team inspector (Headmaster, GSA school)