



**ISI**

Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports**

**Bradford Grammar School**

**October 2021**

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### School's Details

<b>School</b>	Bradford Grammar School		
<b>DfE number</b>	380/6103		
<b>Registered charity number</b>	529113		
<b>Address</b>	Bradford Grammar School Keighley Road Bradford West Yorkshire BD9 4JP		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01274 542492		
<b>Email address</b>	hmsec@bradfordgrammar.com		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Simon Hinchliffe		
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Lady Morrison		
<b>Age range</b>	6 to 19		
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	1013		
	<b>Juniors</b>	143	
	<b>Seniors</b>	638	<b>Sixth Form</b> 232
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12 to 15 October 2021		

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Bradford Grammar School is a co-educational day school, founded in 1548 and re-established by royal charter in 1662 as the Free Grammar School of Charles II at Bradford. The school is owned and governed by a board of trustees and is a registered charity. The governing board have responsibility for both the senior school and the junior school, Clock House, which is located on the same site.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, a new head of the junior school has been appointed. The school has constructed covered outdoor courts for netball and tennis, as well as made improvements to the sports hall and other sports facilities. A new scheme to teach study skills has been embedded.
- 1.3 During the period March to August 2020, the school remained open only for children of key workers and vulnerable children.
- 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.
- 1.8 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed grades and teacher-assessed grades were awarded.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.9 Bradford Grammar School aims to provide every opportunity for its pupils to embrace academic, sporting and creative excellence within an aspirational and caring environment, in which happiness is the key to an individual's success. The school seeks to build on its heritage, aspire to excellence, move forwards and remain relevant, and for pupils to play an active role in making the world around us a better place.

### About the pupils

- 1.10 Pupils come from a range of professional and cultural backgrounds from families living within a large catchment area. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. Twenty-five pupils have English as an additional language. The school has identified 90 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mainly dyslexia, dyspraxia and mild autism, of whom ten receive specialist support. The school supports the more able through additional curriculum activities.

## 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. 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 FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection 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 in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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](#).

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

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 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 junior 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 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 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2017 to 2019 have confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

### **PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 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.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] 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.

**2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] 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 pupils 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.

**2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is 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.

**2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is 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 well-being of the pupils.

**2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.**

### 3. Educational Quality Inspection

#### Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

**The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.**

#### Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils demonstrate very strong attitudes to their own learning, evident in high levels of success in public examinations.
- Pupils achieve outstanding communication skills, developed through an understanding and application of subject-specific terminology and discourse.
- Pupils demonstrate notable success in their sporting endeavours and take every advantage of the extensive opportunities.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils show outstanding levels of respect, inclusivity and cultural awareness of different ethnicities, beliefs and cultures.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent decision-making skills, making age-appropriate decisions about their learning, the activities they wish to pursue, subjects to study and possible career paths.
- Pupils show notably strong levels of self-awareness, developed through the comprehensive advice and guidance they receive in the personal development programme.
- Pupils have a very well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, both physically and mentally.

#### Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider the following:

- Enable all pupils with SEND to make consistently good progress by ensuring all teaching takes their needs into account.

#### The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 Pupils develop an excellent range of knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of areas of learning. Pupils in a sixth-form chemistry lesson demonstrated excellent practical skill in a complex experiment to synthesise, purify and recrystallize paracetamol. They understand that different subjects have particular methodologies and terminology. They learn to work within subject frameworks and to apply them to new material and challenges. In a middle school lesson, pupils progressed from describing characters in their novel *A Christmas Carol* to the higher level conceptual skills of analysing authorial intention in characterisation. They demonstrated a perceptive and mature understanding of the writer's craft. In the junior school, pupils demonstrate high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in all subject areas. The core subjects of literacy and numeracy are strongly

reinforced across a range of subjects. In a mathematics lesson, pupils showed competent understanding of the concept of inverse operations. The artwork produced by pupils across the school is very powerful and of a high quality. Younger pupils displayed great skill when creating pieces on the dark sky in the style of Van Gogh's *Starry Night*. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, the vast majority of pupils stated that their teachers know their subjects well. High-quality material, excellent planning and mutual respect enable pupils to share responsibility for their development. As a consequence, pupils become well-rounded, successful individuals who achieve high levels of attainment fulfilling the school's aims.

- 3.6 Pupils' attainment at A level has been consistently high during the years 2017–2019, with over half of the results at A\* or A grades. Results in centre-assessed grades in 2020 and teacher-assessed grades in 2021 were higher. Pupils' performance at GCSE is similarly high, with around three-quarters achieving grades 9–7 or equivalent. Similar attainment was achieved in 2020 and 2021. Evidence from lesson observations, interviews with pupils and scrutiny of their work, together with standardised assessments confirm that pupils make rapid progress over time. An overwhelming percentage of parents and pupils, in the pre-inspection questionnaire, agreed that the teaching helps pupils learn and make progress, and that lessons were interesting or used the time well. In the vast majority of lessons observed, time was used effectively and progress was often excellent. Similarly the majority of pupils stated that feedback and marking helped them improve, and the inspection team found some excellent practice, especially in the junior school. Pupils with particular talents are highly accomplished in their own area of expertise and achieve considerably in advance of expected levels for their age. Pupils with SEND are tracked individually and data show that they achieve mostly in line with their peers in external examinations at GCSE and A level. They are supported by subject-based clinics, the learning support department and individual education plans (IEPs). However, the school does not monitor these pupils as a cohort nor evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the IEPs. In the junior school, teaching strategies to support these pupils were evident in all lessons observed by the inspection team; this was not always the case in the senior school.
- 3.7 Throughout the school pupils have outstanding communication skills. They listen very carefully, as evidenced in their focus and engagement in lessons and in their willingness to work collaboratively with their peers through discussion. This was demonstrated by groups of pupils in the junior school when discussing how to plan a successful expedition to Antarctica. They articulate their views and ideas with developing precision. In a GCSE lesson, pupils showed excellent development of close reading skills which enabled them to develop a probing analysis as they shared their answers on the effects of poetic techniques in the poem *Originally*. Through peer feedback they were able to refine their ideas further. This was achieved because the teaching meets the needs of the individuals within the class, giving encouragement to share and contribute. In a religious studies lesson, pupils spoke eloquently and passionately when expressing their opinions on the five precepts of Buddhism. Pupils maturely and powerfully demonstrated the ability to build on previous points made, and then develop a thorough and detailed argument. Proficient classroom management encouraged the respectful atmosphere throughout this challenging topic.
- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate high levels of proficiency, agility and competence in numeracy and the application of their knowledge and skills in mathematics across the curriculum. In a GCSE physics lesson they were able to apply mathematical knowledge very effectively to a set of complex problems on the moments of forces involving beams with mass. Many junior pupils display excellent use of calculation and precise measurements, as seen in a design technology (DT) lesson where they used highly accurate divisions to make sure their simple structure was even and balanced.
- 3.9 The pupils are very confident in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). In a sixth-form lesson, pupils used online sources effectively to research haemodialysis, discerning in their use and evaluation of the authenticity of the websites. Junior pupils' ICT skills are also accomplished, as demonstrated by an excellent presentation on rust and magnetism, which was embedded and hyperlinked into a science lesson and shared with the class. Pupils demonstrate their ICT aptitude and

skill across the curriculum, as shown when Year 7 pupils used digital photography with dexterity to capture an image of a poppy-head as part of a lesson to develop their drawing skills. In a German lesson, pupils used technology independently to make excellent progress in their understanding through listening and vocabulary building exercises. In discussion, pupils stated that ICT was not as widely employed across the curriculum as they would like, and inspection evidence concurred.

- 3.10 Pupils develop their study skills very effectively, particularly through synthesis and analysis. The development of study skills is embedded within younger pupils; it strengthens as they move through the school as they are presented with ever-greater challenges, following a recent whole school initiative. In a religious studies lesson, pupils were accomplished in their critical analysis of the question 'Was Jesus God on earth?' They drafted and edited their work proficiently following further class discussion and paired work. These higher-order skills of synthesis and comprehension, facilitated by targeted open questioning and clear expectations of writing technique, exemplify the very high expectations for development of study skills throughout the school.
- 3.11 On leaving school most pupils gain entrance to universities with demanding entrance requirements for competitive courses. Pupils are keen to extend their expertise through academic activities and national competitions, such as Olympiads and essay writing, where they achieve high levels of success. They are particularly proud of their success in computing and coding competitions. Pupils are very keen to be a part of the comprehensive 'competitive admissions programme', developed for gifted and talented pupils. A large number of pupils gain prestigious qualifications in music and public speaking, regularly winning regional competitions. Many gain places in local, regional and national choirs and orchestras. Junior pupils win many awards in the local festival of music and drama on a regular basis. Parents and pupils in the questionnaires were very appreciative of the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided. Many pupils achieve gold in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, as well as participating successfully in national cadet force competitions.
- 3.12 Sport is a very strong and notably successful aspect of the school. Individually and in teams, pupils enjoy considerable success, competing at a high level in regional, county and national competitions in rugby, hockey, orienteering, cross country running and table tennis. The school strongly promotes participation for all pupils of all abilities, which the pupils very much appreciate. Elite athletes' needs are accommodated very successfully. The provision of specialist coaches and the extensive facilities are contributory factors for this success, demonstrating effective leadership, management and vision.
- 3.13 Throughout the school, pupils have outstanding attitudes to their learning and are determined to succeed. They settle quickly to their work, sustain high levels of concentration, and show that they are keen to learn, value feedback and collaborate effectively, which helps them to progress. Pupils in a GCSE biology lesson demonstrated an excellent ability to work collaboratively in the dissection of a lamb's heart, identifying in pairs the external and internal features. In the questionnaire, a very small minority of pupils expressed the view that lessons were not always interesting, and the evidence from the inspection supports this view. In a small number of lessons, pupils were hindered in the application of their skills or the joy of discovery of learning; such as when pupils in Years 7 to 9 were not given sufficient time to work out answers for themselves, thus preventing their ability to develop their learning skills.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.15 Pupils are outstanding in developing their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence as they move through the school. They are able to contribute confidently and maturely to discussions and debates, and approach challenges assertively and resiliently. For example, pupils in Year 5 showed high levels of resilience during a problem-solving exercise in mathematics, referring to themselves being 'in' and 'out of the pit' when faced with challenges and difficulties. In a GCSE Latin class, pupils demonstrated particularly strong self-confidence when furthering their skills needed for textual

analysis, supporting those who were less confident. In interviews, pupils said that they take responsibility for their own learning, and feel extremely well supported by their teachers, particularly when they find the work difficult. In junior DT, all pupils showed great resilience in building a simple structure when given excellent opportunities to trial their ideas. Their self-esteem and self-confidence were challenged and developed through the failures and successes of their structures. In all discussions, pupils recognised the excellent opportunities for them to develop in any and every arena, and their pleasure and pride were palpable. The successful fulfilment of the school's aims is testimony to the high quality of governance, leadership and management.

- 3.16 Pupils demonstrate excellent decision-making with increasing sophistication as they progress through the school. They make age-appropriate decisions about their learning, the activities they wish to pursue, subjects to study and possible career paths. Pupils spoke very highly about the school's personal development programme and the advice and guidance they receive for the next stage of their lives. In the junior school, pupils were given opportunities to plan and decide upon a filtration experiment, whilst Year 9 pupils were supported to make appropriate choices for their research project on sustainable development in Borneo. By the time pupils are in the sixth form they operate with increasing independence, for example in choosing creative processes and techniques in art. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a few pupils felt they were not prepared for the next stage in their career; this was not supported in discussion with pupils and the programme of study was seen by the inspection to be fully comprehensive.
- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate an ability to think deeply and to reflect on contemporary issues since they are given a wide range of opportunities to debate topics which challenge their thinking, such as: 'This house regrets youth-led global movements'. Many pupils engage enthusiastically with the spiritual and philosophical aspects of religious studies. In their study of Buddhism, pupils in Year 9 analysed the different ways of thinking with spiritual understanding and there was a clear appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. In the junior school, the calm atmosphere of assemblies gives pupils the opportunity to think and they showed an excellent understanding of what it is to be grateful.
- 3.18 Pupils demonstrate well-developed moral understanding, which is underpinned by a mutual respect between those of all backgrounds, and they assert that the unwritten rules of common courtesy are the norm. They take responsibility for their actions and accept that there are consequences where they may fall short of the school's expectations. In the junior school, pupils think about being responsible for their own behaviour through the use of a series of questions written onto mirrors. In the questionnaires, a very small minority of pupils disagreed that pupils and staff treated them with kindness or respect, but this was not upheld by inspection observation. In discussion, pupils were adamant that they challenge unkindness when encountered and that the school shows zero tolerance for bullying, which confirmed the questionnaire results.
- 3.19 Pupils show extremely high levels of social awareness and are positive about the benefits of working collaboratively in a wide range of activities. The attendees of the 'building and painting miniature action figures' club showed exemplary collaboration, sharing the uniqueness of their interest. Pupils attending a music rehearsal demonstrated a very enthusiastic approach for a planned school production, keen for a successful outcome. The board games club was well attended by younger pupils and led by a pastoral prefect with evident enthusiasm, giving all present a positive experience.
- 3.20 Many pupils have a strong sense of community and are aware of their responsibilities to contribute positively to the school. They enthusiastically take on roles such as digital leaders, membership of the school's councils and leadership of interest groups. Prefects, trained in safeguarding and mental health, show significant levels of leadership and act as role models in supporting younger pupils. Pupils appreciate that many people in the local community are less fortunate than themselves, and respond with enthusiasm and initiative in, for example, helping in a local school for pupils with additional needs. Pupils spoke passionately about, and are keen to support, through fundraising, a wide range of charities: locally, nationally and overseas.

- 3.21 There is particularly strong evidence that pupils are very inclusive of those from backgrounds different to their own, mixing readily with those of other ethnicities and beliefs. Pupils showed this excellent understanding in leading a thought-provoking assembly on unity and tolerance, which made links from wider societal issues to the school, emphasising that all in the school community have their part to play. Pupils listened with sustained focus and engagement to the very thoughtful and sensitive portrayal of the school, which reflected the culture of respect and tolerance that was observed by the inspection team. In the questionnaire a very small number of pupils made unfavourable comments about racism and favouritism within the school. This was not supported in any interviews or discussions with pupils throughout the inspection. Pupils were very keen to share their pride in the school's culture; its tolerance of difference and positive inclusivity.
- 3.22 Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are fully aware of potential threats posed by the internet because of the school's clear and recurrent emphasis on this. They understand very well how to maintain their mental and physical health as a result of the school's effective teaching. They participate with real enthusiasm in the extensive range of co-curricular sport and exercise opportunities available to them in addition to physical education and games lessons. They understand the importance of good nutrition, and make wise choices regarding their diet, because the school teaches them from an early age about the importance of healthy eating. They are fully aware of the importance of maintaining good mental health, and assert that they feel no stigma in asking for help or advice if it is needed. Junior pupils are confident in their understanding of how they should stay safe, in the real world and online, and why differences between these environments occur, as a result of the excellent programme of study. In discussion senior pupils commented that there is always someone to talk to including pastoral staff, the counsellor and pastoral prefects. They all commented upon the strength, and their appreciation, of the pastoral care system and the personal development programme.

## 4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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 Louise Robinson	Reporting inspector
Mr Michael Phipps	Assistant reporting inspector
Mr Andrew Murphy	Compliance team inspector (Senior deputy head, GSA school)
Mr Lloyd Beecham	Team inspector (Senior deputy head, HMC school)
Dr Martin Boulton	Team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Sarah Haslam	Team inspector (Head, GSA school)
Ms Julia Langford	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr David Tickner	Team inspector (Head, SofH school)
Mr John White	Team inspector (Director of sixth form, HMC school)