

School inspection report

21 to 23 November 2023

Hipperholme Grammar School

Bramley Lane

Hipperholme

Halifax

HX3 8JE

Contents

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS	3
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....	4
RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS.....	4
SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....	5
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....	5
SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION	6
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION	7
SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	8
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING	9
SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY.....	10
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY	10
SAFEGUARDING	11
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING	11
SCHOOL DETAILS	12
INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....	13
INSPECTION DETAILS	14

Summary of inspection findings

1. Leadership is successful at all levels in promoting the wellbeing of pupils. The nurturing care is characteristic of a culture which is inclusive and supportive of all pupils whatever their background and ability.
2. The school provides dedicated and compassionate care and creates a sense of community where pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and welcome all, irrespective of background or circumstance.
3. Pupils have the confidence to be open in their discussions about their experiences within the school. Their comments reflect maturity and extremely thoughtful and balanced viewpoints, which reflect the school's leaders' efforts to establish rapport and harmonious relationships.
4. Leadership at all levels enables pupils to make good progress and gain the skills and experience necessary for the future. Teachers demonstrate an effective understanding of the aptitudes and prior attainment of all groups of pupils in the school to ensure that their educational needs are met. Staff provide effective support to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) that enables them to make good progress.
5. Leaders maintain effective self-evaluation. For example, they have accurately identified that collaboration between the junior and senior sections of the school could be strengthened to benefit pupils' transition and continuity of learning between the two departments.
6. The school has a robust approach to safeguarding. Leaders encourage pupils to share any concerns that they might have. Pupils feel safe in school.
7. Throughout the school, pupils of all ages display an appropriate awareness, appreciation and understanding of diversity and different cultures. Pupils representing diverse backgrounds mix and work with each other happily and comfortably.
8. Pupils welcome leadership opportunities as enhancing their sense of self-worth and self-esteem. However, the range of such opportunities is not as extensive as possible.

The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance, are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

Recommended next steps

- Leaders should extend the leadership opportunities available for pupils.
- Leaders should strengthen the effectiveness of collaboration between the junior and senior sections of the school to ensure pupils' smooth transition and continuity of learning between the two departments.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. The governing body carries out effective oversight of the implementation of policies and ensures the school meets the Standards. Leaders promote pupils' wellbeing. They maintain appropriate links with a range of external agencies, such as those related to safeguarding, to ensure that pupils' needs are met.
10. Senior leaders identify and manage risk effectively, take effective measures to mitigate against potential risk in all areas and ensure that the school site is secure and well maintained and reviewed at regular intervals.
11. Leaders at all levels are committed to continuous improvement. For example, they have identified the need for more effective collaboration between the junior and senior sections of the school. Leaders' work to address this has begun to result in pupils' smoother transition between these sections of the school in some subjects.
12. Leaders regularly assess plans to improve the physical environment of the school and enable pupils who have SEND to participate in the school's curriculum, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act. Senior leaders have increased the time allocated and training provided for leadership of provision for pupils who have SEND, with the result that the needs of these pupils are met.
13. Leaders of the early years provide an effective, nurturing and caring environment that strongly promotes the education and wellbeing of the children in their care.
14. School leaders ensure that required policies available to parents of current and prospective pupils on the school website. Parents receive regular reports about their own child's progress.
15. Leaders implement the complaints policy effectively. Leaders respond to parental complaints promptly and appropriately.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

- 16. All the relevant Standards are met.**

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

17. All groups of pupils learn and make progress through well-planned schemes of work and units of study in all subjects. Effective teaching methods and utilisation of a range of resources help pupils progress well. For example, in science, effective questioning enables pupils to express their knowledge of food hygiene and draw conclusions related to voltage and solar panels. In mathematics, younger pupils make effective use of practical resources such as number squares to help them complete number sentences correctly. Pupils across the school enjoy regular opportunities to widen their learning through a wide range of trips and excursions that support their studies.
18. Attainment at GCSE show that pupils achieve results above national standards. Teachers demonstrate thorough subject knowledge and promote good behaviour which enables pupils to learn, enjoy their lessons and remain focused. Pupils contribute to lessons with confidence. Secure and respectful relationships between pupils and staff enable the pupils to feel safe and flourish. Schemes of work map the progression of knowledge and skills for each subject. Teachers use these effectively to build on pupils' prior knowledge.
19. The curriculum is implemented effectively, allowing pupils to acquire new knowledge and experience a wide range of subjects. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. Pupils who have SEND are provided with structured support both in lessons and, for mathematics and English, in additional support sessions which enhance their learning. For example, in English, pupils who have SEND are able to complete writing tasks effectively as a result of clear guidance from teaching assistants and the use of visual prompts to help focus their work. Pupils with higher prior attainment increase their skills, knowledge and understanding both in class and through extra-curricular clubs, such as the French and German grammar clubs.
20. Children in the Nursery explore, create, collaborate and investigate the world around them. They experience an effective programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs. In Reception, staff utilise assessment data effectively to provide activities matched well to the children's needs. As a consequence, children in the early years make good progress which results in them meeting the early learning goals.
21. Leaders identify the needs of those pupils who have SEND effectively to draw up plans to help individual pupils overcome any difficulties and progress. Teachers make good use of these plans to promote good progress by, for example, improving reading speed or increasing numerical understanding.
22. Staff analyse the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) effectively and respond to these with structured teaching that reduces any barriers to learning effectively. As a result, these pupils make rapid progress.
23. Pupils engage in the extensive programme of recreational, intellectual, social, creative and physical co-curricular opportunities available to them. In doing so, they develop their life skills. Pupils are well educated in using their unstructured time positively, making choices that support their wellbeing.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation

24. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

25. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE) programme contains appropriate content. It is supported by the tutor-time programme which covers a wide range of associated topics effectively. Leaders and staff communicate about the protected characteristics, such as disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation, in assemblies, form-time sessions and PSHE lessons. The wide celebration of diverse cultures through assemblies, culture days, trips and curricular activities promotes tolerance and respect between those of different faiths, background and race. As a result, pupils' respect for those with the protected characteristics is enhanced. Pupils articulate an appreciation of and respect for people with diverse faiths, cultures and backgrounds.
26. Physical education lessons develop pupils' physical skills efficiently. For example, in a basketball lesson, pupils improved movement and dribbling skills effectively through reflecting well on how they could further develop these skills.
27. Children in the early years experience an age-appropriate programme of activities which promotes their personal, emotional and physical development. They demonstrate a positive and enthusiastic attitude to learning and are resilient when faced with difficulties. Staff know the children well, respond positively to their needs and, in doing so, promote a caring environment in which children feel safe and secure. Children interact with each other well during structured teacher-led activities and during free-play activities. Leaders deploy staff to ensure that pupils are suitably supervised throughout the school day.
28. Leaders encourage pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour effectively. The junior school identifies 'responsibility, respect and readiness' as the three main principles that inform school rules. Pupils respond to these rules effectively and show due respect for others in terms of their interaction and conduct. They behave well both in and out of lessons.
29. Leaders respond appropriately to any bullying and behavioural issues, as reflected in the comprehensive logging of incidents and appropriate follow-up actions. There are low rates of bullying behaviour. Any bullying behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively.
30. Medical facilities are appropriate and cater adequately to the needs of pupils who are unwell or injured. All junior school staff and office staff are trained paediatric first aiders and a large number of other staff members are trained in first aid.
31. Leaders implement comprehensive and detailed processes to ensure that all the standards relating to health and safety, fire safety and first aid are met. Appropriate precautions are in place to reduce the risk from fire. The school premises and accommodation are well maintained. Health and safety policies are implemented effectively.
32. Attendance and admission registers are maintained as required. Leaders review attendance regularly to check for any trends. Leaders ensure that information is obtained and recorded about the destinations of pupils who leave the school. They notify the local authority when pupils join or leave the school.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

33. All the relevant Standards are met.

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

34. The school provides pupils with up-to-date, impartial careers advice so that they can make informed choices about a broad range of career and further education options. Leaders work with local organisations and provide a work experience week in Year 11 which pupils find worthwhile.
35. Pupils learn about managing finances in lessons such as business studies. They learn about democracy and vote for which pupils should have particular positions of responsibility. Pupils actively participate in the school council on behalf of others.
36. Pupils can distinguish between right and wrong. They demonstrate respect for fundamental British values such as those of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty.
37. School leaders help pupils to develop an awareness of issues relating to inequality, such as gender inequality, including through assemblies and the PSHE programme. Pupils support those beyond the school, such as older people in the local area, through whole-school and house-based fund-raising events for local, national and international causes, such as 'rotary in the community' and an international children's charity.
38. The school provides student leadership opportunities which enhance pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. For example, older junior pupils act as 'buddies' to support younger pupils if they are having playtime issues or need a friend. Leadership roles in the school are well established and help all pupils to uphold the 'responsibility' aspect of the school rules. However, the range of leadership roles is not as developed as possible.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

39. All the relevant Standards are met.

Safeguarding

40. Safeguarding is effective. Leaders respond to any safeguarding concerns in accordance with local inter-agency procedures. Leaders communicate appropriately with external agencies with regard to safeguarding concerns that arise, including those relating to child-on-child abuse. Governors ensure that a thorough, in-depth and effective annual safeguarding audit takes place.
41. Leaders maintain an effective overview of safeguarding concerns through an efficient, comprehensive and detailed record of these. Leaders respond to safeguarding concerns robustly and effectively.
42. Systematic safer recruitment practices ensure that all staff are subject to appropriate checks before commencing work at the school. These checks are recorded as required in a suitable single central record of appointments.
43. Staff receive regular and suitable safeguarding training. As a result, staff know how to respond to any safeguarding concerns, including any allegations against adults. Staff understand the school's expectations of their behaviour in relation to their interactions with pupils and use of the internet, including social media. Leaders provide appropriate guidance on these matters in the staff code of conduct.
44. Pupils of all ages are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 45. All the relevant Standards are met.**

School details

School	Hipperholme Grammar School
Department for Education number	381/6006
Registered charity number	517152
Address	Bramley Lane Hipperholme Halifax HX3 8JE
Phone number	01422 202256
Email address	info@hgsf.org.uk
Website	hgsf.org.uk
Proprietor	Trustees of Hipperholme Grammar School Foundation
Chair	Reverend Canon James Allison
Headteacher	Mr Nicholas James
Age range	3 to 16
Number of pupils	294
Date of previous inspection	28 January 2020

Information about the school

46. Hipperholme Grammar School is an independent co-educational day school located close to Halifax in the village of Hipperholme in Calderdale. There is a board of governors who act as trustees with overall financial and governance responsibility. The school is organised in two sections, one for junior pupils, which includes the early years, and one for senior pupils. Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and deputy head of the senior department have been appointed.
47. There are 27 children in the early years comprising one Nursery and one Reception class.
48. The school has identified 28 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Five pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
49. English is an additional language for 15 pupils.
50. The school states its aims are to provide an all-round education for its pupils, through which excellence, achievement and self-confidence are developed and nurtured both within and beyond the classroom. It seeks to ensure that every child is happy, safe and secure and to enable every pupil to achieve their academic potential. The school endeavours to develop pupils' self-confidence and social skills and to ensure every pupil exemplifies universal moral and spiritual values.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

21 to 23 November 2023

51. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

52. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders;
- observation of registration periods and assemblies;
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection;
- discussions with the chair and other governors;
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff;
- discussions with pupils;
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education;
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work;
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

53. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

How are association independent schools in England inspected?

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **www.isi.net**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HA

For more information, please visit [isi.net](http://www.isi.net)