

# School inspection report

7 to 9 November 2023

## **Westville House School**

Carter's Lane  
Ilkley  
LS29 0DQ

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

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## Summary of inspection findings

1. Leaders and managers at all levels in the school prioritise the school's mission of promoting family values and nurturing happy children. Governors provide the school leaders with appropriate support. Leaders understand how to implement strategy in pursuit of these objectives. They prioritise staff training to ensure that their ambitious plans for the school are achieved.
2. Respect for and tolerance of others permeate all aspects of school life. The pupils report that they feel safe and secure. They consider that everyone is treated equally and fairly by teachers and other pupils.
3. School leaders ensure that pupils are taught a range of subjects. The overwhelming majority of lessons enable pupils of all ages and abilities to make good progress. However, in a few lessons, teachers do not focus sufficiently on challenging pupils to learn as much as they could. Effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) enables them to make progress.
4. Teachers' marking and feedback helps the pupils to improve their work. In some cases however, this is not detailed enough to help them to make the progress of which they are capable.
5. Pupils have a wide range of options in the extra-curricular and sports programmes. These activities enable them to develop a variety of individual and collective skills, including teamwork and leadership.
6. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme ensures that fundamental British values are taught effectively. This programme, together with relationships education, contributes positively to the warm, friendly atmosphere in the school. Behaviour is good and pupils enjoy being together. Leaders have introduced a behaviour monitoring system which is not yet fully embedded.
7. Leaders ensure that pupil supervision and risk management are highly effective. School leaders take all necessary action to promote the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of the pupils.
8. The effective system of rewards and sanctions contributes positively to pupils' understanding of moral values. PSHEE lessons, assemblies and form periods help pupils understand the importance of supporting the needs of others both in the school and in the wider community.
9. Appropriate arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the pupils' wellbeing. Those with safeguarding responsibilities are appropriately trained and work closely, as required, with the relevant local authorities. All staff receive the required training and know how to respond to concerns about pupils' safety and wellbeing. The safeguarding policy is available to current and prospective parents on the school's website. All those who work with pupils at the school have been properly checked during the recruitment process.

### **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**

- Ensure that all teaching has consistently high expectations so that lessons provide sufficient challenge, and feedback is detailed and clearly supports pupils to make progress.
- Ensure the recently introduced behaviour monitoring systems are fully embedded so that leaders can track issues and identify themes effectively across the school.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

10. Senior leaders have an effective and up-to-date understanding of the ongoing work and progress of the school. They keep the school's aims central to the implementation of their strategic decision making. After a period of change in leadership, senior leaders communicate and implement policies and procedures effectively and consistently. As a result, staff and pupils understand what is expected of them and contribute positively to school life. Adults in the school know the pupils well. This enables them to help pupils participate positively in school life and to prepare them for a number of opportunities in and beyond school.
11. Governors commission external assessments of strategic areas of the school's provision and use these to inform their oversight of policy and practice. The school premises are well maintained and secure. The school has effective links with local authority agencies concerned with the welfare of young people and leaders take account of the views of pupils in all aspects of school life. As a result, pupils' opinions are taken seriously by their teachers and they feel safe in school.
12. Leaders' effective understanding of risk is supported by training for all staff and assessment reports by external experts to ensure risk management is both comprehensive and secure. Suitable approval and oversight arrangements by the headteacher and governors are in place. The management of risk, both on site and on educational visits, is a high priority for the school.
13. School leaders respond promptly to parental concerns and resolve them quickly. Any complaints are recorded thoroughly and trends are analysed carefully.
14. Positive relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils, are evident and this leads to a culture of mutual trust and security. Leaders and managers at all levels ensure pupils are treated fairly and that discrimination is not tolerated. Provision at the school meets the requirements of equality legislation. The use of corporal punishment is explicitly rejected.
15. Pupils feel safe physically and emotionally when they are at school. Pupils feel confident in approaching a wide range of adults in the school if they have concerns. They identify that the Junior Leadership Team, which represents classes from Reception to Year 6, is an effective forum for discussion of school matters and that school leaders respond positively to their ideas.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

16. Leaders plan the curriculum effectively to ensure that a range of subject areas is covered. The variety of subjects taught ensures pupils have many opportunities to gain knowledge and develop skills in numeracy, literacy, speaking and listening and science. Pupils also acquire skills in the creative and performing arts and in technology.
17. The provision of specialist subject teaching throughout the age range contributes positively to pupils' progress. Pupils are encouraged to use a wide vocabulary and are able to apply this in their independent work. Pupils' arithmetic skills are well developed and there is evidence of the development of critical thinking and evaluation within the curriculum.
18. In the early years, children make good progress from their starting points. They are stimulated by well-planned and personalised activities, such as name writing, pencil control and cutting skills. As a result, the children are enthusiastic and engaged in their learning.
19. Teachers encourage children in the early years to be independent. For example, children can manage removing and replacing their own shoes and coats and can put their work away. Teachers give pupils opportunities to speak, and they listen carefully to them. This contributes to confident, articulate communication in a range of situations, and listening skills are well developed.
20. There is some highly effective teaching throughout the school which results in pupils making progress across the ability range. However, in some lessons teaching lacks challenge which means that, in these cases, pupils do not learn as much as they could.
21. Standardised assessment of the core subjects enables senior leaders to track pupils' progress and to set appropriate targets. Teachers identify strengths and weaknesses and provide guidance as to how pupils might improve their learning. However, in some cases the feedback to pupils lacks this level of detail.
22. Strategies for identifying and supporting pupils with SEND are effective across the school. Carefully structured tasks and individual help from teaching assistants enable pupils to improve the quality of their work.
23. Pupils with EAL receive appropriate support and make rapid progress in line with pupils for whom English is their first language.
24. Leaders have designed an extra-curricular programme which offers a range of activities and promotes pupil wellbeing. Trips and outings are organised for pupils of all ages. Activities such as cake baking, cycle training, a visit to the local fire station and Great Fire of London workshops extend pupils' experience and knowledge. Music and drama develop key skills for individual pupils, enhance teamwork and provide opportunities for leadership.
25. The school teaches fundamental British values through an effectively planned PSHEE programme. Appropriate displays around the school, trips, assemblies and talks by visiting speakers enhance this provision. As a result, pupils show consistently high levels of openness, tolerance and respect for others.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

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

26. Pupils participate in a wide range of physical education and personal development activities. These enable pupils to learn about the importance of physical health through a co-ordinated provision of competitive sport and wider participatory activities, for example, yoga, dance and "marathon in a month".
27. Leaders carefully plan the sports curriculum, including matches and swimming galas against other schools, which enables pupils to acquire and develop a range of physical skills. Leaders have broadened the curriculum so that female pupils can play football, rugby and cricket and male pupils can opt for netball. There is mixed football, cricket and rugby, until contact rules dictate alternative arrangements. This inclusive approach is much appreciated by both pupils and parents who value this equality of opportunity. As a result, pupils are highly enthusiastic about the opportunities they have which leads to high levels of participation in a wide range of activities.
28. The physical development of children in the early years is nurtured by opportunities to explore and play both indoors and outdoors. Children access the woodland area regularly to support and extend their learning. In these ways, the staff enable pupils to develop their fine and gross motor skills.
29. The school provides a comprehensive programme of PSHEE, including relationships education, which supports the school's aims and ethos. This programme effectively encourages pupils to develop respect for others, in an age-appropriate way. As a result, pupils demonstrate empathy towards those with different emotional needs.
30. Pupils talk openly about equality, diversity and inclusion in PSHEE lessons and form time. They demonstrate understanding of the importance of self-care, self-regulation and support for others. Staff are alert to pupils' emotional needs and act to resolve any issues. Worry boxes are provided in all classrooms and pupils report that concerns are followed up promptly by their teachers. Teachers immediately challenge instances of discriminatory language. As a result, such instances are rare.
31. As a result of their teachers' encouragement, pupils in all years show respect for each other, are courteous and take turns. Clear, consistent behaviour management, which takes account of the need to make adjustments for pupils with SEND, ensures that pupils appreciate right from wrong, understand from an early age that they should accept that others may think differently from them and resolve disputes independently.
32. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour have a direct impact on pupils' conduct in lessons and around school, their effective collaboration skills, and their relationships with adults. As a result of leaders' and managers' commendations, consistently good behaviour is evident throughout the school. Supervision is highly effective in supporting positive pupil behaviour, particularly in the playground before school and during break times. Pupils feel confident that any bullying issues are dealt with quickly and effectively. Leaders have recently introduced behaviour monitoring systems however these are not yet fully embedded.
33. Staff in the early years know the children well and understand each child's strengths and weaknesses. They use this knowledge to develop strong relationships with the children, who are well-supported to manage their emotions and to self-regulate.

34. Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained. School leaders and managers ensure that the school is safe and secure for pupils. The school premises and accommodation are well maintained, health and safety practices are implemented effectively and precautions are taken to reduce the risk from fire. Fire evacuation drills take place termly and staff receive regular fire training. Leaders maintain suitable arrangements and accommodation to care for pupils who become unwell or who have specific medical needs. Staff receive regular training in first aid and there is always a member of staff at school who is paediatric first aid trained.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

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

35. The school's enriching curriculum enables pupils to learn about aspects of society and the wider world. Teachers relate their subject matter to broad themes so that pupils have opportunities to learn about social and economic concepts. This was evident when pupils spoke confidently about social hierarchies with an understanding of how the concept relates to both Tudor history and contemporary society. Enterprise Week, and an extra-curricular entrepreneurial activity to raise funds, enabled pupils to acquire an understanding of financial matters. In addition, younger pupils explore how different products are made and consider the advantages of using particular materials in their manufacture.
36. Pupils' economic understanding is enhanced by activities to support school improvements. As a result of encouragement by school leaders and the parents' association, pupils take part enthusiastically in fundraising. Pupils understand that, through the achievement of well-publicised targets, they contribute positively to the development of the school and the promotion of their own wellbeing. Positive links between parents, pupils and school staff reflect family values and enable pupils to learn the importance of local action.
37. The culture of the school places a strong emphasis on responsibility within society. This is evident in pupils' enthusiastic fundraising for national charities, for example, a palliative care and bereavement charity and a mental health organisation.
38. School leaders actively promote fundamental British values through the PSHEE programme and provide opportunities for pupils to engage with life beyond the school. In addition to regular assemblies and visiting speakers, pupils study democracy, which is enhanced by trips, for example, to Buckingham Palace and the Houses of Parliament. Pupils' understanding of modern British society is further enhanced by discussion of current affairs in PSHEE lessons. An odd socks day during Anti-bullying Week underlined the importance of respecting differences between people. As a result, pupils are knowledgeable about different institutions in British society and learn to respect the values upon which they are founded.

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

All the relevant Standards are met.

## Safeguarding

39. Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are effective. A suitable safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. School leaders ensure that all staff are familiar with the policy, are trained in safeguarding procedures, and understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. New staff have appropriate induction training which covers all required topics, including keeping pupils safe online.
40. Staff are regularly updated on changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education. They understand how to recognise and report a safeguarding concern and are alert to the need to monitor pupil attendance. There is an appropriate filtering and monitoring system on the school network to prevent inappropriate use, and staff record concerns on the school's safeguarding and child protection monitoring system.
41. Those with designated safeguarding lead responsibilities receive appropriate training, including in the early years. Leaders work effectively with external agencies when concerns arise. Any referrals to children's services, the local authority designated officer and the police, are made in a timely manner.
42. Safer recruitment checks are completed for all staff, volunteers and governors and a suitable central record of appointments is maintained.
43. Pupils feel safe in school and the school acts promptly in response to any reported safeguarding concerns.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding**

All the relevant Standards are met.

## School details

<b>School</b>	Westville House School
<b>Department for Education number</b>	815/6101
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1086711
<b>Address</b>	Carter's Lane Ilkley LS29 0DQ
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://westvillehouseschool.co.uk">westvillehouseschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Proprietor</b>	Westville House School
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Adam Holdsworth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Walker
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 11
<b>Number of pupils</b>	131
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	November 2018

## Information about the school

44. Westville House School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged two to eleven years. It is located in Ilkley, Yorkshire. The school is a charitable trust overseen by a board of governors. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2023.
45. There are 43 pupils in the early years comprising one Nursery and one Reception class.
46. The school has identified 14 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
47. English is an additional language for one pupil.
48. The school states that its aims are to deliver educational excellence to maximise the potential of every child; promote a family ethos and values; and nurture well-rounded and happy children prepared for life beyond Westville.

## Inspection details

**Inspection dates**                      7-9 November 2023

49. A team of 3 inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.
50. Inspection activities included:
- discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff
  - a meeting with the chair of governors
  - a tour of the school with a member of the governing body
  - lesson observations
  - discussions with pupils
  - scrutiny of a range of documents, records and policies.
51. 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.
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