

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

The Grammar School at Leeds

November 2019

School's Details

School	The Grammar School at Leeds
DfE number	383/6112
Registered charity	

1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 The Grammar School at Leeds is an independent

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration is detailed in Part 8.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the 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 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 uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2016 to 2018, performance has been well above the national average for maintained schools.
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2016 to 2018 have been above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.
- 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 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.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 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

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.13 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.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.15 A range of information is variously 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,

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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's

Key findings

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

- Nationally standardised exam results, and the school's own assessment in the junior school, indicate consistently excellent levels of attainment throughout the school.
- Pupils of all ages show exemplary attitudes towards their learning, consistently demonstrating very mature and advanced levels of initiative and independence.
- Pupils greatly value and frequently make very effective use of

- 3.6 The pupils throughout the school, including those with EAL and SEND, make excellent and sometimes outstanding progress. Pupils with SEND are well-supported both in class and whilst receiving specialist support. The most able pupils consistently achieve at the highest level due, in part, to the challenge they receive in lessons through enrichment and extension tasks. All pupils benefitted from the highly effective and encouraging assessment feedback they received. Pupils are well-motivated, and the effective teaching strategies used by trusted, passionate and knowledgeable teachers, successfully engenders high expectations in the pupils. This reflects fully the school's aim for the pupils to flourish in an ambitious and aspirational environment. The excellent progress made by pupils of all ages is strongly encouraged by the interpretation and use of assessment data by senior staff and teachers, to identify pupils' individual needs and ensure each pupil is effectively supported. In the questionnaires an overwhelming majority of both the parents and pupils agreed that the teaching enabled progress to be made. School leavers also succeed in gaining places at a wide variety of universities, many of which have demanding and highly competitive entry requirements.
- 3.7 The development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills across all areas of learning is excellent. Reception pupils sang with gusto about angels and the Christmas message in their nativity preparations. Junior pupils in a gymnastics class were able to develop their understanding and skills as they developed individual sequences of balances and moves, and in an English class were able to show excellent knowledge and understanding of the social context of the texts they were studying. Senior drama pupils showed excellent performance skills and understanding when rehearsing scenes in a Brechtian style. This excellent level of knowledge, skills and understanding is strongly supported by the confidence and trust the pupils have in their teachers and the easy, open communication that exists between teachers and pupils. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of parents and pupils agreed that the teaching enables pupils to make progress, and almost all parents agreed that the school helps develop their child's skills for the future.
- 3.8 The pupils of all ages demonstrate very strong and highly effective communication skills. They listen and assimilate information in a mature and effective manner and, in interviews, the pupils explained eloquently their well-reasoned points of view. Pupils' written work is of a high standard and exceptionally neatly presented and well organised, and this was consistently the case across all ages and subjects. For example, these excellent communication skills were evident when Year 1 pupils discussed a voyage into space during role play as they willingly took turns to speak and then listen, and the vocabulary they used was relevant and detailed. Year 13 pupils engaged in debate and discussion about literature, listening attentively to ideas from both the teacher and other pupils, and responding naturally and confidently, using a broad range of technical and analytical language. These excellent communication skills were greatly encouraged through the teachers' open ended and well-structured questioning and the time they give for pupils to communicate with one another, as they develop their knowledge and understanding.
- 3.9 The pupils display excellent levels of numeracy, and they use these skills highly effectively across the curriculum. Children in Reception could be heard excitedly counting down from twenty, in order to complete their subtraction of numbers, and pupils in a Year 9 class demonstrated a very secure understanding of the mathematics of rotating shapes. High standards in numeracy throughout the school was successfully encouraged through teachers' high expectations and their enthusiastic and engaging approach. Throughout the junior and senior schools, pupils regularly applied their mathematical skills in support of their other learning. This was seen when a Year 9 class calculated 'dependency population ratios' accurately and effectively, and when a Year 12 biology class successfully calculated the 'mitotic index' for reproducing cells with a high degree of confidence. The teaching in a wide range of subjects frequently used the pupils' excellent numeracy skills to develop the use of data and to solve problems.

- 3.10 The pupils develop strong and effective ICT skills in support of their academic progress. Senior pupils in particular, make effective use of the very helpful and well-organised 'virtual learning environment - GSALWorld'. The recent introduction of computer laptops for all pupils successfully complements and supports much of the ICT teaching much

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.15 The pupils show excellent self-confidence, resilience and self-understanding which develop from an early age. Children in Reception confidently explained to visitors what they were doing; they frequently explained the purpose of the activity, for example when converting mathematical stories into addition and subtraction equations. Year 9 pupils in a science lesson show great confidence when expressing their ideas and show empathy when listening to and clearly valuing alternative views put forward by others. Sixth form pupils talked enthusiastically about their plans for life after school and how well the school prepared them for this next step. The school successfully encourages pupils to become increasingly self-aware; as a result, they demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and self-knowledge, and a clear understanding of how to improve their own learning and performance. Pupils spoken to, including those with SEND and EAL, show a strong awareness of their own needs and have a clear understanding of how to develop their skills and achieve success. This was seen, after both music and sport, when pupils received feedback, not only from the staff, but also from other pupils who were observing; these pupils gave very helpful, sensitive and perceptive comments which were well-received and understood by the participants. Both senior and junior pupils spoke warmly and confidently about how well-prepared they feel, both for the move onto the senior school and about leaving the senior school. In the questionnaires, most parents and a very large majority of pupils agreed that the school helps the pupils become confident and independent. Very effective leadership and management

- 3.18 The pupils have a deep and secure understanding of moral issues and of the importance of accepting responsibility for their own behaviour. This is a significant contributory factor to the exceptionally cohesive culture and outstanding behaviour that prevails within the school community. Children in the EYFS were seen to happily take turns and share resources, and older pupils viewed the harmonious nature of relationships as a real strength of the school. A small minority of the pupils responding to the questionnaire were of a view that the school may show favouritism or treat pupils unfairly with gender, faith, race or needs. All the pupils spoken to felt that the staff are fair and there was no such favouritism. Excellent levels of open communication with trusted and respected teachers ensure that the teachers know their pupils well. Discussions with staff, and scrutiny of records,

3.22 Throughout the school, pupils show an excellent and well-informed understanding of how to be physically and mentally healthy, particularly in terms of diet, exercise and a balanced lifestyle. Senior pupils spoken to demonstrated a good understanding of mental health and the dangers of stress, and commented perceptively that such issues are not as easy to monitor and address as physical health issues. Pupils spoken to had a clear understanding of how to stay safe. They have a confident and well-informed understanding of the perils of the internet and social media, and appreciate the many channels through which the school seeks to keep them abreast of the dangers, such as in the personal, social and health education programme (PSHE), ICT lessons, tutor periods and assemblies. The pupils benefit from, and clearly much appreciate, the wide range of excellent food on offer. Menus feature healthy options and provide well for the individual needs of students from a wide variety of cultures. There is a wealth of physical, aesthetic and spiritual opportunities for the pupils that help to underpin pupils' health and welfare, including the recent introduction of a 'Sport for all' programme. Very effective leadership and management successfully encourages the personal development of pupils, ensuring they are very well prepared for life after school.

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 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

Mr Richard Mannix	Reporting inspector
Mrs Daphne Cawthorne	Deputy reporting inspector
Mr Jeffrey Shaw	Compliance team inspector (Head, ISA school)
Dr Jennifer Burns	Team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mr Jeremy Hallows	Team inspector (Deputy