

# School inspection report

10 to 12 October 2023

## The Grammar School at Leeds

Alwoodley Gates  
Harrogate Road  
Leeds  
LS17 8GS

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 governors are knowledgeable and experienced. The wellbeing of pupils underpins planning, decision making and school development planning. Leaders self-evaluate, assess risk and plan effectively in order to ensure the school meets the Standards and the school's aims.
2. Governors provide effective support and appropriate challenge to the leadership. They have an informed overview of the school's strategic and operational development and ensure that the school meets its responsibilities and objectives.
3. Leaders provide a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the needs of pupils. Pupils develop a wide and diverse range of knowledge and skills. They make good progress as a result of carefully planned and effective teaching and attain well in public examinations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress as a result of the effective support provided. The positive relationships between teachers and pupils helps to promote good behaviour and engagement in lessons.
4. Children in the early years make good progress and are prepared well for their next stage of education. Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are effectively supported so that they can achieve a functional level of English, enabling them to make good progress.
5. The primary and senior schools use different systems to track pupils' achievement. This can affect the pace of pupils' progress at the point of transition from the primary to secondary schools.
6. Governors and leaders have made the decision to teach male and female pupils of secondary age in single-sex groups. They monitor the equality of provision with care and ensure that both groups make good progress. Leaders also provide a range of opportunities for all pupils to socialise together and engage in joint extra-curricular activities.
7. Leaders have put in place personal, social and health education (PSHE), relationships and sex education (RSE) programmes to support pupils' personal development. However, the teaching of RSE to older pupils is less effective as they do not understand why some of the content is repeated and do not engage with the topics.
8. There is an extensive extra-curricular programme to support pupils' learning and help support the leaders' focus on inclusion. Leaders' focus on equality, diversity and inclusion means that pupils are aware of current issues in society and the importance of respect for others. Pupils feel safe in school, and there is appropriate staff supervision. Pupils grow in confidence from an early age.
9. There are some instances of inappropriate and disrespectful language between a small proportion of pupils outside of lessons. Governors and leaders are aware of this and have

help, if required.

11. The curricular and extra-curricular programmes provide effective social and economic education. Major events such as Black History Month are regularly celebrated to heighten awareness and promote debate. Multi-faith assemblies promote pupils' understanding of the beliefs and cultural traditions within the community.
12. Pupils contribute to wider society by taking part in charity fundraising and community work.  
Through āhrough

## 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:

ensure effective transition arrangements to track pupils' achievements are in place so that pupils make the consistently good progress as they move from the primary to the senior school

strengthen pupils' progress in relationships and sex education by ensuring the curriculum is effectively planned and taught in such a way as to engage pupils

ensure there are effective strategies to address issues of pupil behaviour outside of lessons, in particular, instances of the use of inappropriate language between pupils.



21. Leaders engage and work with other leaders in the wider community to host events and undertake partnership projects with local schools and to support local organisations, including those for the homeless. Pupils benefit not only from direct involvement in such activities, but they learn the importance of supporting their local community.
22. In the early years, leaders' effective planning and their knowledge of the children's needs promote children's development. Children make good progress in the early years. Leaders work closely as a team and self-evaluate to constantly improve their practice, whilst maintaining ongoing communication with parents. The safeguarding procedures are rigorous and children are well cared for within a supportive environment.
23. The management of risk is a high priority for leaders. There are comprehensive risk assessments in place and regular staff training takes place to enhance their knowledge and practice. Leaders are aware of potential contextual risks. For example, staff support pupils to manage any academic pressure they may feel, in order to promote the wellbeing of pupils.
24. Leaders provide the required information to parents using the school's website. This includes details of the safeguarding and behaviour policies. Parents receive regular reports that detail information about their child's achievements. Complaints are taken seriously, addressed promptly and managed in accordance with the school's appropriate policy. Regular reviews of complaints are undertaken and discussed at board level, showing reflective practice to support pupils' wellbeing. Leaders fulfil the requirements of the Equality Act to improve access to the school and its curriculum for groups of pupils.

### 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

25. The curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of subjects, including the opportunity to extend their learning in the



practical play. Children's skills are developed through topics, with well-planned schemes, structure and assessment in place. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support children's learning and children respond well to their help and support.

32. The warm relationships between staff and pupils in the early years enable children to develop trust in adults from a young age. Children are inquisitive and learn through their activities. Staff ensure that children engage with growing confidence in a range of activities, building their communication, language and physical skills. For example, when children work co-operatively together constructing a tall house with wooden blocks.
33. Children develop their physical skills through play and discovery, for example using scissors safely to make love hearts in contrasting colours and through activities where music provision is carefully woven to engage children in movement.
34. Leaders have established tracking systems to measure pupils' progress within the individual sections of the school to help leaders identify pupils whose progress is slowing. However, the primary and senior schools use different systems. This can affect the pace of pupils' progress at the point of transition from the primary to secondary schools.
35. The school's activity programme enables pupils to develop their confidence and skills through an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. These include sport, music, drama, yoga, enterprise and intellectual societies. Leaders check these carefully to ensure high participation rates are maintained amongst pupils of different ages. Leaders also look to provide opportunities for pupils of all ages to explore their aptitudes and interests.

### The extent to which the school meets standards relating to

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

36. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing by ensuring there is a carefully developed programme of physical, personal and health education appropriate to the needs of pupils. The school has undertaken a 'big listen' to ascertain levels of anxiety and resilience amongst pupils. This has led to enhancement of the curriculum focused on wellbeing and helping pupils manage their emotions, for instance when taking part in sport. Pupils feel safe in school and are supported well through an effective pastoral system which is responsive to pupils' feedback, as demonstrated in the changes to supervision, PSHE content, anti-bullying events and the use of peer mentoring.
37. The wide range of physical activities and sports enables pupils to be active, develop a healthy lifestyle and broaden their interests. The programme for PSHE effectively supports pupils' personal development, including their understanding of world faiths, The





specific talks covering a range of options. Leaders track former pupils through a dedicated careers hub, which helps pupils understand and engage with the range of future career pathways.

52. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of finance. Younger pupils learn

## Safeguarding

53. Governors and leaders ensure there is an effective safeguarding culture throughout the school. Through the safeguarding committee, governors provide consistent support and appropriate challenge to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. Governors have a comprehensive overview of safeguarding and identify any required areas for action, such as heightening awareness of the dangers presented by right wing extremism.
54. The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest requirements. Leaders have created a well-trained safeguarding team. The team readily engages with local agencies for guidance and support, including to provide training for governors. Referrals to children's services, the police or other agencies are made in a timely manner.
55. Leaders recognise and regularly review contextual risks related to radicalisation, extremism, violence and child-on-child abuse.
56. Staff are knowledgeable and receive regular training to ensure they are aware of the most recent safeguarding guidance. They know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Induction for new staff is comprehensive and carefully planned, covering key areas of safeguarding. This enables new staff to have a thorough understanding of the expectations of the school and their responsibilities in keeping children safe.
57. Pupils learn about aspects of safeguarding through the curriculum. Pupils are well informed about how to keep themselves safe, including when online.
58. Governors and leaders ensure there are robust recruitment procedures in place that reflect the latest requirements. These are regularly reviewed and checked. This includes scrutiny of the record of appointments that records the pre-employment checks on adults to ensure correct practices are implemented consistently.

### The extent to which the school meets standards relating to safeguarding

All the relevant Standards are met



## Information about the school

59. The Grammar School at Leeds is an independent co-educational day school. The school is a registered charity which is overseen by a governing body whose members are the charity's trustees. The school teaches pupils predominately in single-sex classes between the ages of 11 and 16 years. There is an early years setting comprising Nursery and Reception classes located on the same site as the primary school.
60. Since the previous inspection, the pre-prep has moved to the main school site, creating a new primary school for pupils aged three to eleven. The leadership team has been restructured, and sports facilities and libraries have been developed.
61. The school has identified 270 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
62. English is an additional language for 11 pupils.
63. The school states that it aims to be a place of learning and success in all areas which inspires young minds academically, in wider co-curricular life and in personal relationships. It seeks to create a positive, caring and inclusive environment where every child is valued and supported to become confident, resilient and capable. The school inspires pupils to grow, reflect, be kind and have respect for themselves and others, aware of the impact they can have, both locally and nationally.

## Inspection details

Inspection dates                      10 to 12 October 2023

64. A team of eight inspectors visited the school for two and a half days. The onsite inspection was quality assured by a monitor.
65. The inspectors:
- observed lessons, including joint lesson walks with school leaders held



66. The inspection team considered the views of pupils,

## 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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