



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

MOORLANDS SCHOOL

JANUARY 2017



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Moorlands School
DfE number	383/6002
Registered charity number	529216
Address	Moorlands School Foxhill Drive Weetwood Lane Leeds West Yorkshire LS16 5PF
Telephone number	01132 785286
Email address	info@moorlands-school.co.uk
Acting headteacher	Mr Simon Dunn
Chair of governors	Mr Alan Wintersgill
Age range	2 to 11
Number of pupils on roll	147
	Boys 87 Girls 60
	Day pupils 147 Boarders 0
	EYFS 57 Juniors 90
Inspection dates	18 to 19 January 2017

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.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards following their inspection may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

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.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting 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.

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 the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. 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 work.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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 assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Graham Gorton

Reporting inspector

Mrs Sarah Morris

Team inspector (Headmistress, ISA school)

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Moorlands School is an independent day school for boys and girls between 2 and 11 years. The school was founded as a boys' school in 1898 and moved to its current location in 1967. It became co-educational in 1981 and a member of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST) in 2012. The current acting headmaster took up his post in December 2016.
- 1.2 The Directors of Moorlands School consist of the proprietor and Woodhouse Grove School Trustee Company, while the Moorlands Committee oversees the day to day management of the school.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide every pupil with a happy environment and a broad curriculum which foster warmth, confidence, courtesy, independence, and purpose. It seeks to equip pupils with the skills, values and attitudes with which they can fulfil their potential.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional and business families and ethnic backgrounds. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is above average. The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is 18. They require support with dyslexia and dyspraxia. One has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Nine pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), none of whom receive additional support for their English. Data used by the school have identified 15 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 41 other pupils because of their special talents in music, art or sport.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Squirrels	Nursery (aged 2-3 years)
Foxes	Nursery (aged 3-4 years)

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.6 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was an interim inspection in March 2011. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Establish a formal system to share best practice and to develop teaching methods which raise standards even further.
 - Ensure that all teachers provide clear written targets for pupils to enable them to progress further.
 - Further develop the EYFS provision for knowledge and understanding of the world by providing more opportunities for independent investigation.

- Develop the outdoor area to include more opportunities for imaginative play, particularly for Reception children.
- 1.7 The school has successfully met all the recommendations of the previous inspection. Further detail is given in the main text of the report.

2. KEY FINDINGS

2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.

- Pupils display an excellent approach to their learning.
- Pupils of all ages excel in communication skills.
- Pupils are successful in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils' acquisition of knowledge and development of skills is sometimes restricted when the teaching limits opportunities for pupils to show what they can do, especially in relation to higher order thinking skills.

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

- Pupils' moral development is outstanding. They modify their behaviour in a mature fashion.
- Pupils treat each other with excellent consideration and respect.
- Pupils show abundant self-awareness of themselves as learners and delight in improving their understanding and their work.
- Pupils' social development is extremely highly developed and they reflect sensitively upon the needs of the world around them.

Recommendation

2.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement:

- Ensure that pupils' higher order thinking skills are fully developed.
- Strengthen pupils' acquisition of knowledge and development of skills by providing even more opportunities for them to show what they can do.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.2 Throughout the school pupils display an excellent approach to their learning. Their enthusiasm for their school ensures that they always give of their best. When the teaching encourages them, they show independence and initiative. Pupils show leadership skills and take responsibility for their own learning. They exude an attitude to learning which is mature beyond their years and display a genuine warmth when speaking about their interests. For example, they overflow with questions about the Titanic, ahead of an upcoming project. Pupils show excellent levels of co-operative learning and instinctively work well together. They are supported by clear target setting which enables them to remodel their work to achieve the best outcome. This more formal review of pupils' work is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. In pre-inspection questionnaires, the vast majority of pupils agree that marking helps them to improve their work, whilst every pupil who completed the questionnaire feels that teachers are supportive and helpful if they have any difficulties with tasks set.
- 3.3 Pupils' communication skills are excellent. This represents a clear area of strength at the school. The youngest pupils in the EYFS show outstanding qualities in this area, exhibiting excellent listening skills when the class teacher gave instructions to the whole room. Pupils of all ages excel in speaking prowess, selecting careful and thoughtful phrasing teamed with humility and natural inner-confidence. For example, pupils expressed insightful views when debating the inclusion of exotic animals in zoos. They demonstrate abundant maturity and empathy when taking turns to answer questions in an interview. They are accomplished writers which is reflected in the high quality and creativity of their work. More able writers use figurative language to excellent effect. An exceptional standard is set by all abilities of learners in this area. This is due to dedicated staff who act as excellent role models. Pupils' communication skills are also enhanced by the rich opportunities for discussion and expression offered by the school's curriculum and a highly innovative extra-curricular programme.
- 3.4 The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests, but the available evidence shows attainment to be above national-age related expectations. All children in the EYFS reach the level of development typical for their age, and many attain higher than typical standards in reading. Pupils are highly successful in achieving places at their first choice of senior schools, and several scholarships are awarded each year.
- 3.5 Pupils of all ages and abilities make at least good progress over time with some making excellent progress. Progress is rapid for children in the EYFS. Throughout the school the pupils' good levels of achievement are reflected in their standardised test scores and in their success at the point of secondary transfer where some pupils achieve awards and scholarships. Pupils benefit from small class sizes and subject specialists and the school is beginning to realise the impact of the newly-introduced monitoring programme. Early intervention is now in place for certain age groups of pupils and is already having a positive effect upon pupils' achievement. Since the previous inspection, leaders have developed a performance review system which focuses successfully on improving the outcomes for the pupils. In questionnaires, an overwhelming majority of parents agree that teaching enables their child to make good progress and develop skills for the future and almost all agree that their child's educational needs are met effectively by the school. All pupils responding to the questionnaire agree that the school gives them the opportunity to learn and make good progress.
- 3.6 Pupils from an early age in the EYFS develop good levels of skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. The youngest pupils work and play confidently both within the

classroom and in the outside areas, thus meeting a recommendation from the previous inspection. Across the school pupils' skills in literacy are particularly strong. Pupils' demonstrate sporting prowess and excellent skills in music and art. Teaching at its best provides ample opportunities for pupils to demonstrate a full breadth of skills. When teaching is too prescriptive, such opportunities become limited, particularly for the more able learners. In questionnaires, an overwhelming majority of parents agree that the range of subjects that the school provides is suitable for their child, and most parents and all pupils feel that there is a good choice of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are extremely successful in the excellent range of activities on offer and take part eagerly in events outside school which develop pupils' skills by encouraging strong levels of participation. The level of success in sporting events and music is above expectations for the size of the school.

- 3.7 Pupils display good basic skills in numerical fluency and are developing confidence and knowledge in higher order reasoning skills. However, an emphasis upon formal methods for recording can inhibit learning opportunities. Levels of progress increase at a faster rate when teachers use practical examples and interactive resources, as with the younger pupils. For example, children in the EYFS confidently use the interactive whiteboard to count to ten and work out how many more meatballs would be needed to load a lorry. Older children in the EYFS can count in twos accurately up to 20 and find how many more they need to collect 30 pom-poms. Pupils successfully apply their knowledge of different subjects and their mathematical skills to other areas of the curriculum when the opportunity arises. Their skills in ICT have developed well since the previous inspection. Pupils exhibit effective coding awareness and produce algorithms to demonstrate their skills in sequencing. They display confidence when using a wide variety of programs such as for word processing and spreadsheets. They can use a selection of programs effectively to present their topic work in an eye-catching manner.
- 3.8 Pupils' study skills are strong and are well developed. In the EYFS, children confidently acquire skills in knowledge and understanding of the world through a range of stimulating activities that encourages independent investigation. This meets a recommendation from the previous inspection. Older pupils demonstrate a highly reflective approach to learning. Leaders' emphasis upon the acquisition of thinking skills equips pupils to fulfil their potential, in accordance with the school's aims. When the occasion allows, more able pupils, in particular, relish the challenges of problem solving and developing their higher order thinking skills, such as during debates. However, pupils' pace and concentration lessen during the few times when tasks do not offer sufficient challenge.
- 3.9 The success of the pupils in the school across a wide variety of disciplines is testament to effective leadership and management. In questionnaires a majority of parents felt that the school was led and managed well, and several stated that leaders had maintained consistency during changes to key personnel and minimised the potential impact on pupils. Leaders and managers have supported the successful outcomes of pupils by maintaining continuity in curricular and extra-curricular provision and ensuring that teachers have high expectations of their pupils.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' moral development is outstanding. They fully understand the need to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to modify it when necessary to be successful participants in the school and wider communities. Their excellent behaviour comes naturally and pupils conduct themselves with maturity and commendable self-control. During interviews pupils spoke about the importance of being kind to everyone and showed considerable understanding of the positive impact of their behaviour on their peers. Pupils of all ages have a strong understanding of right and wrong and the need for rules and laws. They appreciate that rules are there to protect people. Children in the EYFS actively seek to demonstrate how mature and sensible they can be, while older pupils speak eloquently about how prejudice and stereotyping can be factors that bring about instability in society. The curriculum supports the moral development of the pupils by encouraging the pupils to focus on matters such as bullying and e-safety. Staff and pupil interactions play an important role in the pupils' moral development. Staff believe that self-modification is key to success and that pupils only require the gentlest of guidance to ultimately make the right decisions. The positive messages from staff meet with an enthusiastic response from the pupils as they enjoy rewards issued for their excellent behaviour, equally celebrating the success of others.
- 4.3 The pupils' cultural understanding is excellent. Pupils throughout the school, irrespective of their backgrounds, forge strong relationships in a natural and mutually respectful manner. They love to learn about one another's cultural background and heritage. Leaders successfully foster a harmonious atmosphere where individuality is championed. Pupils of mixed abilities work alongside each other comfortably, respecting each other's differences. All the parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaires agree that the school actively promotes and encourages values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Many displays around the school evidence the significance that the school places on ensuring the pupils' cultural understanding is of the highest quality.
- 4.4 Pupils show abundant awareness of themselves as learners and readily embrace the responsibility this carries. Drawing upon high levels of self-confidence, they eagerly share the values they hold dear with adults. They will happily re-examine and re-draft their work to achieve the desired outcome under the direction of supportive teaching. They show true resilience and take pride in living up to the school's motto of being intrepid. From an early age in the EYFS children are encouraged to be resilient through characters such as the 'Persevering Parrot' and 'Go for it Gorilla'. Older pupils show determination and perseverance as they strive to find solutions to problems. Pupils reflect honestly and effectively upon their own tendencies to select tasks by order of difficulty, showing telling maturity of thought and insightful understanding of themselves as learners. Pupils participate in communal activities, such as assemblies, with excitement and self-confidence. They convey a sense of being thrilled by the sense of joy and community being created.
- 4.5 Pupils' decision-making skills are well developed and they relish the opportunity to use their initiative. Pupils are very aware of how any decisions they make can impact upon those around them. Staff encourage pupils to take decision making seriously from an early age. Children in the EYFS demonstrate the capacity to make informed choices when selecting activities and when determining the appropriate course of social interaction. Older pupils speak eloquently and thoughtfully about adopting greater control over their own learning and how they have developed important decision making skills. Pupils speak fondly about how their teachers and friends help them to make the right choices. Teachers provide excellent opportunities for

pupils to be involved in important decisions such as when planning curriculum topics. Pupils feel that they are encouraged to put forward ideas and feel valued for their contributions. These experiences and others prepare pupils well for transition to the next stages in their education. Shared story times, and staff swaps help prepare the children as they move from the EYFS into Year 1. Older pupils' transition to their secondary schools is well managed, ensuring that they are ready to face the challenges ahead.

- 4.6 Pupils enjoy a sense of wonder at the natural beauty of the school's grounds. Pupils delight in making music together whether it be through the orchestra or the choirs, where they take enormous pleasure from the sounds created by the outstanding harmony of their singing in unison. For example, in one assembly pupils demonstrated an excellent spirit of togetherness and enjoyed community singing and clapping to a hymn, their faces lit up with smiles. This exciting opportunity to appreciate the joys of classical music also energised the spirits of pupils entering the hall, setting an uplifting tone for the day ahead. In the EYFS children listen to music to unwind and reflect, with even the youngest children using imagery skilfully to express their feelings. Vibrant and accomplished artwork is displayed around the corridors and in the classrooms. Pupils clearly take pride in this work and reflect on the positive impact that it has. The pupils' spiritual development is heightened by the staff who skilfully pose questions which encourage the pupils to consider the wider world. Mindfulness sessions and the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme provide excellent opportunities for the pupils to strengthen their spirituality. Pupils are extremely accepting of their peers and possess a strong sense of identity. They are intensely proud of the school's values and readily impart them into discussion and practice.
- 4.7 Pupils' social development is excellent and is core to their lives. They demonstrate an extremely well developed social awareness and reflect with great sensitivity upon the needs of the world around them. Pupils work together effectively towards a set of common goals, such as when fund-raising. They can be seen to practise the school values consistently and apply them in their dealings with others. Pupils relish the opportunities to take on responsibilities and support their school community and one another. This is reflected in the family feel that exists throughout the school, where older pupils enjoy working with younger members of the school community, acting as exemplary role models.
- 4.8 Pupils speak with a high level of insight, knowledge and reflection when discussing their health and safety and how to keep themselves well for the needs of the world around them. They understand how to minimise the risks that may occur in areas such as on-line safety. Healthy lifestyles are extremely well promoted and Early Years children as well as older pupils take advantage enthusiastically of the exercise opportunities in the outdoor learning facilities.
- 4.9 The outstanding personal development of the pupils is underpinned by excellent pastoral care and outstanding staff pupil relationships which have been consistently prioritised by key managers within the school. Pupils benefit greatly from school systems which offer a variety of exciting opportunities to ensure their voice is heard. Procedures such as worry boxes and books where pupils can discreetly share their concerns greatly enhance the richness of the pupils' personal development. In questionnaires, an overwhelming majority of parents agree that the school promotes an environment which successfully supports their child's personal development.