



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Ghyll Royd School

October 2022

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School's Details

School	Ghyll Royd School			
DfE number	380/6017			
Registered charity number	1070235			
Address	Ghyll Royd School Greystone Manor Ilkley Road Burley-in-Wharfdale Ilkley West Yorkshire LS29 7HW			
Telephone number	01943 865575			
Email address	information@ghyllroydschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr David Martin			
Chair of governors	Mr David Cunningham			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	125			
	EYFS	45	Juniors	80
Inspection dates	4 to 6 October 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Ghyll Royd school is an independent co-educational day school. It was established in 1889 and moved to its current premises near Ilkley in 2000. The main school is housed in a Victorian property. A separate unit accommodates children aged between 2 and 5 years who are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting. The school is a charitable trust that is administered by a board of governors. The current chair of governors took up his position in September 2022.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school seeks to provide a nurturing, engaging and active environment in which every child is valued and encouraged to fulfil their potential. The school aims to achieve this through the promotion of its core values of care and courtesy; concentration and challenge; consideration; and co-operation.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds, most living within a 20-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data indicate that the ability of the pupils is average in relation to those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified seven pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom four receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for two pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. The needs of pupils identified as the most able in the school are met through provision in lessons and additional activities.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management.

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.

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 published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

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 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 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 fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 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.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is 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 as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

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.

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

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used 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>
Little Adventurers	Nursery 2 – 3 years
Great Explorers	Nursery 3 – 4 years

Key findings

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

- Pupils of all ages and abilities make excellent progress, producing work across the curriculum which is well above age-related expectations.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent communication skills.
- Pupils show a particularly well developed ability to analyse, synthesise and hypothesise.
- Pupils enjoy considerable success in a wide range of academic, sporting and artistic activities.

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

- Pupils demonstrate excellent self-knowledge and understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils demonstrate great respect for the diversity of backgrounds and cultures within their school and the wider world.
- Pupils of all ages take much pride in fulfilling a considerable number of meaningful responsibilities in school.
- Pupils are highly successful in their numerous collaborations to achieve common goals outside the classroom.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Enable pupils to utilise fully their well-developed information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all curriculum areas in order to enhance their learning.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Children make excellent progress from their starting points in the EYFS. Almost all reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave Reception. Pupils continue to make rapid progress as they move through the school, as evidenced in work scrutiny, national tests and the school's own assessment data. This fulfils the school's aim to encourage every pupil to achieve their potential. These high rates of progress over time and in lessons are ensured by the school leaders' diligent monitoring of teaching and learning through staff appraisal and professional development. Pupils with SEND make equally good progress. They benefit along with their peers from the school's effective use of assessment data to identify pupils' academic needs. This information is then used well to inform teaching strategies such as the provision of individual tasks for pupils of different abilities, which result in pupils' rapid improvement.
- 3.6 Pupils develop excellent levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. They benefit from small class sizes which allow teachers to focus on their individual development. All the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires said that their skills and knowledge improve in lessons. This view was amply supported by inspectors' observations. Pupils acquire a good understanding and knowledge in science and technology. An extremely mature understanding of historical and geographical topics was evident in pupils' work. Pupils' performance in all these areas indicates the impact on their learning of the ambitious targets they are set. Pupils' attainment in modern foreign languages, sport, music and art is excellent, in response to highly effective specialist teaching. Translations of letters from Spanish to English by Year 5 pupils showed an excellent knowledge of vocabulary and Year 4 pupils read musical notation confidently. The art on display around the school is of an exceptional standard. This was evident in the striking masks of Mayan gods by Year 5 pupils and work in pencil, paint, textiles and clay of pupils of all ages. Highly original pictures of highland cows by older pupils in paint, chalk, pencil and acrylic confirm the benefits of the availability of the high quality resources with which pupils work, evidence of governors' focus on resources.
- 3.7 Pupils maintain exceptional levels of engagement and success in activities outside the classroom. They are inspired by the school's strong encouragement to 'have a go' and by the extensive range of opportunities to take part in sporting, creative and academic challenges. The level and breadth of their achievements is notable in relation to the size of the school. Teams and individuals regularly take part in and win at local, county and national level in sports as diverse as rugby, orienteering, athletics and swimming. These successes are mirrored by those in the performing and creative arts. Pupils' excellence in art has been recognised by their many awards at regional and national level. Many pupils gain certificates for musical performance, their talents being showcased in assemblies and concerts throughout the school year. Pupils' public speaking skills are excellent, as seen in an energetic and expressive class performance of poetry by Year 6. Pupils excel in dance, writing and quizzing competitions. Their successful efforts to support the environment have resulted in national recognition for the school, alongside that for pupils' exceptional art work. Pupils are highly successful in gaining places to academically selective schools, winning academic, sport, music and art scholarships.
- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to their work, regularly referring to the positive learning attitudes promoted by the school in its aims, commonly known as the 'six Cs'. Highly focused and motivated in class, pupils undertake independent and collaborative tasks with equal commitment and enthusiasm. Their pride in their work is evident through its volume and careful presentation. They relish the many opportunities offered to them to take a lead in the content and direction of their learning. The vast majority of parents agreed in the questionnaire that the school equips their children with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life and inspection evidence concurs. Positive attitudes are instilled from the youngest years. Children in the Nursery listened carefully to instructions and then happily and successfully continued with the tasks set for them. Older pupils participated actively in an engaging and well-paced mathematics lesson, eager to contribute

and respond to questions being asked. Excellent collaborative skills were evident as they shared their ideas and then worked with a high degree of concentration and focus on individual and group tasks. Further evidence of highly productive collaboration between pupils is evident in the intricate group textile projects on display around the school.

- 3.9 Pupils' study skills are excellent. These fully confirm the school's successful achievement of its aim to foster pupils' creativity and love of challenge. Pupils' abilities are developed to the highest level by the school's 'learning challenge' approach to the humanities. Here, pupils successfully tackle searching questions and complex independent research tasks. Year 6 science books demonstrate pupils' excellent analytical skills in investigating and experimenting on the impact of friction on different surfaces, for example the effects of UV light and of tooth decay over time. Younger pupils' work includes examples of high quality investigations and analysis when tackling questions such as where leaves go in winter and how the Great Fire of London started. Pupils explain their ideas and decisions with clarity and maturity. Those in Year 4 used their detailed knowledge of the Vikings to hypothesise successfully about whether they were raiders or traders. Pupils in Year 6 explained the reasoning behind the marriage guidance given to Catherine Parr confidently. They used incisive skills of synthesis and deduction to extract the required information from different texts.
- 3.10 Pupils throughout the school are attentive listeners and eloquent speakers, benefiting from their teachers' use of talk partners and collaborative tasks. Children in the Nursery listen attentively and demonstrate mature language skills. They spoke clearly when describing different items in a picture book about going on a journey to the beach. Older pupils develop excellent reading and writing skills and demonstrate a genuine love of books. These are fostered by regular library sessions, and the school's strong focus on reading and writing. Pupils' skills are employed to great effect, particularly in learning challenge lessons. Here, diary entries, personal accounts and letters express not only pupils' knowledge and understanding but also their interpretations of events and the emotions of others who might have experienced them. Year 6 pupils' work demonstrates an excellent understanding of grammatical structures. Year 5 pupils used highly descriptive language when writing first person accounts of witnessing Anne Boleyn's execution. Those in Years 3 and 4 combined their excellent writing and speaking abilities to write and perform speeches for Boudicca with great clarity and expression, demonstrating mature skills of persuasive writing.
- 3.11 Pupils have excellent numeracy skills, benefiting from the provision of challenge and support as required. They work at high levels in lessons, and confidently apply their mathematical knowledge in other curriculum areas. Children make rapid progress from their earliest days in the Nursery, where a two-year-old children take pride in counting to five. Pupils' understanding of number grows in depth and breadth as they move through the school. Year 3 pupils showed an excellent level of mental mathematics recall in a game involving adding and subtracting. By the time they leave the school, pupils' skills are at an advanced level for the age. Year 6 lesson pupils quickly identified and explained what equations are, and calculated missing numbers within them accurately. Other curriculum areas where pupils apply their mathematical skills successfully include ICT, science and geography. Year 6 science books showed a high level of mathematical accuracy, confirming pupils' successful use of their skills when conducting and evaluating experiments. Year 3 pupils measured the height of a ramp in an investigation into friction with strong numerical understanding.
- 3.12 Pupils have good ICT skills. They have benefited from the governors' recent provision of equipment and software and the effective implementation of a well-resourced scheme of work. This has enabled them to develop the confidence needed to apply their skills, and thereby maintain progress in other subjects during periods of home learning and in the longer term. Year 2 pupils demonstrated well-developed coding skills, programming virtual snails to win or lose a race. They understood that problems in software programs can be identified and addressed through a 'debugging' process. Pupils are confident when undertaking online research, creating graphs and completing creative writing and art or design projects. They use their ICT skills effectively in some other curriculum areas. Displays in the computer suite include examples of work using ICT completed by Year 1 and 2 pupils in

mathematics, art and design and a topic on Greece. However, opportunities for pupils to apply these skills in similar ways to enhance their learning in some other subjects are not yet fully utilised by teachers.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils throughout the school are highly self-aware and self-confident. They thrive in an environment which is characterised by extremely positive and trusting relationships. Pupils understand and celebrate their own strengths through the many opportunities provided for them to identify, explore and develop their talents. Children in the EYFS speak with great confidence and self-understanding to visitors, secure in an environment where every child's needs are known and understood. Older pupils demonstrated an excellent awareness of the school's values, which are reinforced on a daily basis in assemblies, lessons, and through the behaviour of adults in the school. Pupils have a mature understanding of the importance of resilience alongside the ability to put this into practice in attaining their ambitious goals. They are very clear as to how to improve their work, due to the detailed feedback given by their teachers and opportunities to assess their own work and that of their peers. Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-esteem throughout the school, reflecting the impact of the governors' swift implementation of ICT resources which enabled the school to support pupils' well-being during periods of remote learning. All parents who completed the questionnaire felt that the school helps their child to be confident and independent. Inspection evidence confirms this. The skills of independent learning fostered by the school alongside excellent pastoral care and celebrations of success enable pupils to leave each stage of their education well-equipped and excited to embark on the next.
- 3.15 Pupils collaborate with each other to achieve common goals in an extremely wide range of activities and see this as an integral part of school life. Some activities, such as sporting and performing arts events, are led by adults in the school, but many are initiated by the pupils themselves. These include working together to arrange charity and sporting events, as well as regular eco days. House captains plan assemblies and activities for younger pupils throughout the year. The school council organises many activities and charitable events. All parents completing the questionnaire agreed that the school helps its pupils to develop strong teamwork and social skills, a view that was strongly supported by inspectors' observations. Pupils engage fully in the school community. They demonstrate excellent social awareness when communicating with those of different ages in the playground, at lunch time and in the school council. Those interviewed spoke with great pride of their school and their teachers. Several referred to the school as a family, their strong social awareness being nurtured by the school's close collaboration with parents, who are involved in many aspects of school life.
- 3.16 Pupils of all ages take great pride in fulfilling meaningful responsibilities in school. From line leaders in the EYFS to heads of school in Year 6, pupils take on many significant tasks both pastoral and organisational. They do this extremely well in roles such as library or register monitors and house or sports captains. Many pupils were keen to explain to inspectors their role as a pupil buddy, and their support for younger pupils. Others highlighted the important responsibilities of school and eco councillors. Pupils have many opportunities in the local and wider community to contribute to and support the lives of others. These include singing at the local church and a care home; changing the flower beds at the local memorial gardens; and baking and collecting food for a local homeless charity. Pupils support a wide range of national and international charities through activities which they organise themselves. They are quick to respond to international crises with ideas as to how to raise funds to help support those who are in difficulty.
- 3.17 Pupils are swift to identify respect as a core value of the school. Their understanding of respect is evident in their mature responses to those from other cultures and backgrounds. They understand that others may be different from themselves and actively seek to learn about others' lives in order to

understand them better. Pupils spoke knowledgeably about different faiths from their experiences in religious education lessons; and with great maturity about the importance of tolerance and respect, referring to the guidance given to them in assemblies and by adults in school. They were eager to tell inspectors about a recent assembly about Black History Month. They explained coherently the importance of understanding how people have been treated differently because of their cultural origins. Pupils have a very well-developed understanding of their own culture and the impact that the cultural history of Britain has on their lives. Their knowledge is broadened by the input of visitors to the school from different walks of life. Pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 showed a lively understanding of the role of the monarchy in British society, expressed through their topic work linking Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II. Those in Year 5 completed a detailed and informed comparison of life in Nepal and the United Kingdom through a study of schools and food in the two countries.

- 3.18 Pupils make informed and sensible decisions in many aspects of their school lives and value the opportunities they are given to do so. Pupils appreciate that the decisions they make academically, in their relationships, and about their lifestyle will have an impact on them both now and in their futures. Pupils begin to make successful decisions in Reception, when they consider which options to choose for lunch. Older pupils talked knowledgeably about the times when they have to select from a variety of tasks in lessons, explaining the reasoning behind the decisions they take. Pupils make informed choices about which clubs to attend. They recognise that decisions often have to be made in regard to friendships and are ready to ask their teachers for help if they need it. Pupils engage thoughtfully in the election process for school councillors and take pride in decisions made by the council they elected which have helped to improve the school.
- 3.19 Pupils demonstrate a strong appreciation of the non-material. This is acquired through a thoughtful and considered approach encouraged in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and throughout their time in school. Pupils appreciate opportunities to engage in learning outside the classroom. They take part in outdoor activities with their friends and engage fruitfully in self-reflection in 'drop everything and write' sessions. Family, friends and pets were readily identified by those interviewed as being some of the most important requirements for a happy life, as well as the freedom to choose. Pupils develop an appreciation of music, art and drama and of the value of helping others. Those interviewed showed a mature awareness of the importance of education and the need to help one's family when considering whether a girl in Malawi should attend school or help her widowed mother at home. Others communicated their appreciation of the importance of kindness through their enthusiastic description of the school puppet, Moz, who is used to celebrate such acts.
- 3.20 Pupils have an extremely strong sense of right and wrong. This reflects successfully the school's aim to instil values of care and courtesy. Pupils understand the school rules and can explain in detail the importance of these and of laws in the wider world. Pupils explained the consequences of not adhering to these, speaking appreciatively about the consistent approach taken by their teachers and school leaders. Pupils interviewed demonstrated a mature understanding of what discrimination is, considering thoughtfully why and how it can be manifested and what it means in practice. They understand the importance of taking responsibility for their behaviour. They have an excellent moral understanding, reinforced by the consistently high expectations of the school. High standards of behaviour are seen as the norm. The success of this approach was observed consistently throughout the course of the inspection in lessons observed, activities, and around the school. This confirms the view of all pupils and parents who completed the questionnaires that the school expects pupils to behave well.
- 3.21 Pupils are highly aware of how to stay physically safe and healthy and why this is important. Their understanding is the result of topics covered in science and PSHE; of healthy lunch options; and of regular opportunities for physical exercise. Pupils recognise that staying safe, eating sensibly and keeping fit and healthy are vital factors in their ongoing personal wellbeing. Pupils' strong understanding of online safety is evident in the posters they have created. These include information about what makes a good citizen on and off line. Pupils' understanding of how to stay mentally healthy

is equally strong, and pupils completing the questionnaire were unanimous in stating that they can speak to an adult in school if they are worried about something. They spoke with confidence of the positive impact of the 'worry monsters' in solving problems. This confirms the school's success in supporting pupils through its well-established understanding of their personal needs.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Karen Williams	Reporting inspector
Mr Richard Raistrick	Compliance team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Evans	Team inspector (Former headmaster, IAPS school)