



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

WOODHOUSE GROVE SCHOOL

BOARDING WELFARE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Woodhouse Grove School

Full Name of School	Woodhouse Grove School		
DfE Number	383/6113		
Registered Charity Number	529205		
Address	Woodhouse Grove School Apperley Bridge Bradford West Yorkshire BD10 0NR		
Telephone Number	0113 2502477		
Fax Number	0113 2505290		
Email Address	enquiries@woodhousegrove.co.uk		
Headmaster	Mr David Humphreys		
Chair of Governors	Mr Alan Wintersgill		
Age Range	3 to 19		
Total Number of Pupils	995		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (578 boys; 417 girls;)		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS)	68	5-11: 231
	11-18:	696	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	914	
Number of Boarders	Total:	81	
	Full:	76	Weekly: 5
Inspection dates	14 to 16 Oct 2014		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in June 2011 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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 in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgement.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, held discussions with senior members of staff and with governors who carry out checks on boarding, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited each of the boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Ruth McFarlane

The Revd Graeme Rainey

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding (Assistant Head, Head of Boarding, (HMC/GSA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Woodhouse Grove School is situated near Bradford, in West Yorkshire. It is a co-educational school for day and boarding pupils aged three to eighteen years set in grounds of approximately 80 acres. The school is one of ten belonging to the Methodist Independent Schools Trust, which has ultimate ownership of the school. Governance is delegated to the school's board of governors.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1812 by the Methodist Conference as a boarding school for the boys of Methodist ministers but is now open to all who support its aims. The junior section of the school, situated about half a mile away from the main site, and known as Bronte House, opened in 1934. The senior school became co-educational in 1979, and Bronte House followed in 1985.
- 1.3 The school aims to educate its pupils in the context of Christian values; to develop the academic potential of each pupil, successfully and enjoyably; to foster mature, caring behaviour and high standards of social responsibility; encourage sound judgement, discipline and integrity; develop talents and skills whether physical, cultural, technical or social; and prepare pupils for the world they will encounter when they leave school.
- 1.4 There are 995 pupils in all (578 boys and 417 girls) of whom 68 aged from three to five years are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and 231 aged from five to eleven are in Bronte House. There are 696 pupils in the senior school. Over the whole school, 46 pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) and 176 pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 The families of the 81 boarders come from a diverse range of countries; just over half of them are from a wide range of overseas locations. All boarders are senior school pupils. Of the 53 boys and 28 girls, six are weekly boarders, and 32 boys and 12 girls are sixth-form boarders.
- 1.6 Boarders are accommodated in two boarding houses on the school site. Miller House is for girls, and Brodwell House, for boys. Since the previous boarding inspection, the former junior boarding house adjacent to Brodwell has been developed to house boy boarders in Year 13. Girl boarders in Year 13 are accommodated on the newly-developed top floor of Miller House.
- 1.7 A new Head of Boarding and an Assistant Head of Boarding were appointed in September 2013.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. Where the sixth form is referred to, this includes Year 12 and Year 13.

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Simplify policies and paperwork, avoiding unnecessary duplication, while ensuring recording is thorough.
2. Ensure the consistency of application of arrangements to promote positive behaviour.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in June 2011. At that time, not all of the NMS were met. Failures related to required policies, accommodation, monitoring of records and the performance management of boarding staff. All have been fully dealt with.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 Induction includes a welcome pack, handbooks, house and individual meetings. 'Buddies' are allocated to act as personal guides. Boarders readily turn to a choice of staff for guidance and support. Contact details are clear for helplines, the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England and an independent listener. [NMS 2].
- 3.3 A small minority of responses to the boarders' questionnaire indicated dissatisfaction with their care when ill. Inspection found all arrangements fully meet requirements. Policies include those for chronic conditions. The medical centre is staffed by qualified personnel, is adequately separated from other accommodation and contains suitably segregated areas. Care plans are provided for boarders with specific medical needs. Household remedies kept in school are appropriately stored and checked but stock is not recorded systematically enough to be sure what is available. Boarders are permitted to self-medicate only when assessed by a doctor; medication is given only to the named boarder. Confidentiality is appropriately respected. Boarders have access to local specialist health services, as required. [NMS 3].
- 3.4 Most boarders use personal mobile telephones to contact family and friends outside school and report that the current provision fully meets their needs. A minority of questionnaire responses indicated difficulty due to poor signal coverage. The school is taking steps to enhance the signal. Contact is readily available through suitably filtered internet and payphones. [NMS 4].
- 3.5 Boarding houses are reserved for boarders only and offer suitably-furnished social and study space, together with single, two- and three-bedded rooms. They are appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained. Boarders can and do personalise their areas. Toilet and washing facilities provide appropriate privacy. Security arrangements do not intrude unreasonably. [NMS 5].
- 3.6 All boarders, including those with special dietary, medical or religious needs, are provided with meals which are adequate in nutrition, quantity, quality, choice and variety, and have ready access to drinking water and snacks in boarding time. A small minority of questionnaire responses suggested otherwise, but inspection found that provision was suitable. All kitchens, centrally and for the use of boarders in the houses, are suitably hygienic. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Daily laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing, and bedding is changed regularly. Items are satisfactorily stored and returned. Boarders may buy stationery and personal items outside school. Every boarder has lockable storage. Money and other valuables can also be secured centrally for boarders when required. [NMS 9].
- 3.8 Activities and free time are appropriately balanced and include local and school facilities, such as the swimming pool, sports hall, squash courts and theatre. Boarders use the school grounds for calm space, and internal designated social areas. Ready access to newspapers, television and internet news services keeps boarders informed about world events. [NMS 10].

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures assure the health, safety and welfare of boarders. Risk assessments, prompt attention to maintenance, and unobtrusive security measures help achieve this, along with first aid training undertaken by most staff. [NMS 6].
- 3.11 Records, training certificates and other documentation show compliance with all current fire safety orders. There are regular checks of systems and equipment. An unplanned fire drill that occurred during the inspection showed that the procedures work in action. Evacuations are also practised during boarding time. [NMS 7].
- 3.12 The child protection policy and its implementation undergo appropriate annual review by the governing body. The policy was updated during the inspection to fully incorporate all the latest official guidance. Its implementation safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare properly. All staff and governors have received training at the appropriate levels and frequency. Training is included in induction procedures for new staff. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 School policies meet requirements to promote good behaviour, set out rewards and sanctions to be used, include measures to reduce bullying, and restraint and searching protocols. However, there is considerable repetition within, and overlap between, policies. In questionnaire responses a small minority of boarders felt bullying is not dealt with successfully and a few felt that the use of sanctions is not fair. In interviews, boarders expressed complete confidence with both these matters and records confirmed that action is prompt and fair. Boarders had previously reported that their experience of the promotion of positive behaviour is inconsistent across the houses and, they say, in school. School leaders agree and a new rewards system was being trialled in Miller House during the inspection. [NMS12].
- 3.14 Recruitment procedures follow all requirements for staff working with children. Details are recorded correctly in a single central register. All residents on the site who are not employed by the school sign a written agreement covering their use of the accommodation, any contact with boarders and supervision of their visitors. They have undergone appropriate checks and child protection training. Visitors and contractors working in the boarding houses are carefully supervised. The school does not appoint guardians for boarders. [NMS 14]

3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 The school's boarding principles and practice are readily available in handbooks and on the school website, and are implemented in practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 Leadership and management of boarding is clearly defined. Comprehensive self-evaluation guides, development within houses and a boarding working party involves governors and staff in the strategic development of boarding. Boarding staff are suitably qualified and experienced, and maintain appropriate training. Effective links are forged among academic and boarding staff. All required records are monitored and maintained, with appropriate action taken where necessary. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All boarding staff have job descriptions. Staff undergo regular training and reviews of their performance; new staff receive induction training. The role of partners or

spouses is made clear. Levels of supervision are sufficient for boarding activities and in the houses. Observation by staff and the signing in and out system ensure that the whereabouts of boarders is known at all times. All staff are aware of the 'missing boarder' policy. Several staff live in the boarding houses, all in suitably separate accommodation. The names of overnight duty staff are clearly displayed. Contact overnight is effected through a central mobile telephone in each house. Boarders do not visit staff accommodation. [NMS 15].

- 3.19 Boarders do not experience discrimination. Due care and attention are paid to cultural needs or additional needs, for example due to EAL and SEND. [NMS 16].
- 3.20 In questionnaire responses, a small minority of boarders, mostly boys, felt that their views are not heard or acknowledged. Inspection found that this view was not replicated in discussion. Boarders can identify action that has improved boarding as a result of their requests, expressed in a weekly forum, various committees and regular surveys. [NMS 17].
- 3.21 Records show that complaints and concerns are dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints policy which covers all requirements. Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the school and their child's experience of boarding. [NMS 18].
- 3.22 Guidance is given to boarders holding positions of responsibility to ensure there is no abuse of the role. Training includes an introduction to child protection. [NMS 19].
- 3.23 Long-term lodgings are not used by the school. [NMS 20].