

# School inspection report

10 to 12 December 2024

## **Bradford Grammar School**

Keighley Road

Bradford

West Yorkshire

BD9 4JP

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. Leadership, management and governance are highly effective, with governors contributing a broad range of expertise to support strategic decision-making and ensure accountability. Senior leaders analyse data effectively to identify areas for improvement, set clear priorities and drive initiatives that enhance teaching quality, pupil outcomes and overall school performance.
2. Robust policies prioritise safety, and effective external partnerships support pupils' wellbeing. Policies are generally well implemented. However, the attendance policy did not reflect statutory guidance and was amended during inspection.
3. Leaders demonstrate a strong understanding of contextual risk, but inconsistencies in risk management highlight the need for tighter oversight and more rigorous staff compliance with risk assessment procedures.
4. An age-appropriate curriculum effectively develops critical skills across subjects, including literacy, numeracy, creative arts and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), fostering reasoning, problem-solving, collaboration and real-world engagement. While tailored support sessions for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have a positive impact on the ability of pupils to access the curriculum, some pupils require more individualised support during lessons to make good progress.
5. Leaders promote pupils' wellbeing through a balanced curriculum incorporating personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons, inclusive activities and strong pastoral support, fostering confidence, respect, resilience and positive behaviours while addressing their physical, emotional and mental health.
6. The school's curriculum builds social and economic awareness through charity events, financial literacy lessons and community projects. Activities such as peer mentoring, volunteering and promoting diversity help pupils develop social responsibility, engage with their community and understand real-world roles and public institutions.
7. Safeguarding measures are appropriate. Leaders ensure regular communication between those with responsibility for safeguarding. Staff are well trained, and leaders work with external agencies effectively.

## 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 that actions from risk assessments are consistently implemented to ensure pupils' wellbeing
- ensure that all policies are kept up to date in line with statutory guidance.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Governors bring a range of professional expertise to their work. This allows them to review and challenge policies and school improvement efforts effectively. Senior leaders demonstrate expertise through their analysis of performance trends across different pupil groups, which informs strategies to raise standards. Leadership of the early years is marked by skilled planning and the appointment of knowledgeable professionals, ensuring the needs of children are met.
9. Leaders actively promote pupils' wellbeing through support structures such as wellbeing rooms and sensory spaces. Strong anti-bullying messages and forums for pupils to share their views enable leaders to identify concerns promptly and foster a positive school culture.
10. Leaders fulfil their responsibilities by implementing a pupil-tracking system that teachers use to analyse progress relative to baseline assessments. Leaders analyse data from pupils, audits of provision and updates, and act on this analysis to improve provision.
11. Leaders successfully embed the school's ethos across all activities, encouraging pupils to strive for excellence. Assemblies themed around excelling and historical examples of alumni achievements reinforce this ethos.
12. Leaders ensure policies are generally well implemented, though some inconsistencies were identified. The attendance policy did not adhere to statutory guidance, with an omission in naming the attendance champion. This was amended on inspection.
13. Strong links with external agencies, such as medical professionals addressing physical and contextual care, enhance pastoral care and ensure the provision of specialised support, nurturing pupils' wellbeing and inclusion. Tailored interventions address complex needs and equip pupils with essential life skills.
14. Governors and leaders ensure health and safety procedures are followed. However, some staff lack consistency in risk management and demonstrate insufficient awareness of everyday risk assessments.
15. Leaders provide a robust complaints procedure with clear timelines and processes, including the involvement of an independent panel member for formal reviews. Accessible documentation and clear communication about the process help address concerns effectively by ensuring that all parties understand how complaints are handled and resolved.
16. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by fostering an inclusive environment that promotes respect for individuality through the curriculum and personal development programmes. A comprehensive accessibility plan, and initiatives such as bursary support, demonstrate leaders' commitment to accessibility and diversity. Leaders provide the local authority with reports on the use of funds allocated for pupils in receipt of an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
17. Leaders responsible for the early years ensure the curriculum is delivered effectively, supporting children's development across key areas. Timely sharing of outcomes with the local authority helps identify and address needs early, resulting in improved readiness for the next stage of learning and fostering children's overall wellbeing.

18. Leaders maintain appropriate staff-to-pupil ratios and oversee medication management to ensure pupils' safety and wellbeing. Clear systems for staff training in administering medication support these goals.

**The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance**

- 19. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

20. Teaching fosters linguistic development across all year groups. In English, pupils confidently articulate ideas and engage in collaborative discussions. Pupils in Year 8 are reflective and utilise teachers' feedback to improve essays, applying new techniques and raising their achievement levels. Junior school pupils are confident and fluent speakers. They are able to articulate their learning in class and peer discussions, demonstrating a clear grasp of relevant vocabulary.
21. Teachers actively support mathematical development through structured lessons and effective questioning that challenges pupils' understanding. In Year 7, teachers use probing questions about prime factors to deepen pupils' reasoning skills. Leaders use baseline testing to set individual targets and implement appropriate support to promote pupils' progress.
22. In science, hands-on experiments, such as Year 8 pupils investigating the digestive system, enhance engagement and deepen understanding. Pupils in the junior school are encouraged to take risks during STEM activities, learning from unexpected outcomes to build critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
23. A-level economics and business teaching utilises technology effectively, centralising resources, supporting retrieval practice and incorporating opinion polls at the start of the lesson to consolidate knowledge. In design and technology, Year 6 pupils explore the manufacturing process through computer-aided designs (CAD), logging processes and evaluating their final design concepts.
24. The curriculum in aesthetic and creative subjects inspires and challenges pupils. In art, pupils in the sixth form produce work of high quality, often reflecting their readiness for higher education or professional opportunities in creative fields. Collaborations with prominent artists, such as Kate Malone, provide valuable industry insights and enhance the real-world relevance of their work. Displays celebrate a wide range of artistic techniques, highlighting the department's dedication to building pupils' creativity, technical skill and confidence.
25. Regular assessments enable teachers to identify gaps in learning and provide appropriate support. Assessment frameworks are robust, with regular reporting to parents. Effective assessment practices include marking against objectives and providing actionable feedback, enabling pupils to demonstrate progress in successive tasks.
26. Pupils achieve well at GCSE and A level. Leaders identify pupils who have SEND effectively and interventions are starting to show impact.
27. Leaders implement robust procedures to identify pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), including parent information, baseline exams and Year 7 and 9 reading and spelling tests. Leaders group pupils who speak EAL according to their level of skill and this enables their needs to be met effectively, including through the use of curriculum adjustments, sixth-form mentors and literacy resources.
28. Recreational activities complement academic learning, broadening pupils' skills through sports, drama and creative pursuits. A wide range of extra-curricular options, such as chess, debating, crocheting and writing clubs, promotes teamwork, leadership and well-rounded development.

29. The curriculum incorporates fundamental British values and actively promotes diversity. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is intentionally integrated into schemes of work, with progress monitored to ensure pupils' development in these areas.
30. The early years provision meets all legal requirements and provides well-designed learning spaces that support children's development in key areas, such as communication, physical skills, and early literacy and numeracy.
31. Ongoing assessment informs planning, ensuring children make good progress towards early learning goals. Individualised strategies support children's development and ensure their readiness for the next stage of their education.

**The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation**

- 32. All the relevant Standards are met.**

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

33. Leaders deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that supports pupils' physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Age-appropriate lessons in the early years foster collaboration and emotional regulation, supported by calm and purposeful learning environments. Assemblies and co-curricular activities, such as nature watch and religious studies (RS) trips, further enhance spiritual, moral and personal development.
34. PSHE lessons are well structured, fostering awareness of mental and physical health. Themes include emotional regulation, stress management and healthy lifestyles. Teaching in the junior school supports positive behaviours and emotional wellbeing through nurturing interactions.
35. Leaders ensure that relationships and sex education (RSE) is tailored to pupils' ages and needs, regularly reviewing content in collaboration with staff to cover topics such as consent, online safety and emotional resilience. Single-sex sessions, for sensitive issues, facilitate open discussions. Through robust pastoral systems, leaders address inappropriate behaviour effectively, reinforcing the objectives of the RSE curriculum.
36. Pupils demonstrate mutual respect and understanding, reflecting the school's ethos. Junior school assemblies incorporate themes of equality and individuality. Senior pupils are role models to the younger children, exemplifying inclusivity through societies and leadership roles. The prefect system instils democratic values and responsibility. Prefects are trained and visible, actively supporting their peers and contributing to the school community.
37. Spiritual development is supported through assemblies, cultural trips and reflective activities in subjects like RS and art. Faith is explored respectfully, with pupils from the junior school visiting diverse places of worship and engaging with contrasting cultural narratives in history, and in the senior school through the 'faiths in the city' programme.
38. Leaders cultivate pupils' self-confidence by providing leadership positions and public speaking opportunities, and by recognising achievements. They encourage prefects to actively support their peers, inspiring responsibility and personal growth. The junior school's 'tick or fix' marking strategy, designed by leaders, helps pupils to view mistakes as opportunities for learning. Leaders plan personal development lessons that equip pupils with the skills needed to navigate modern challenges.
39. Physical education (PE) is a core part of the curriculum, offering a range of activities such as yoga, badminton and traditional competitive sports. Pupils benefit from high-quality coaching that improves their skills and fitness levels. Regular extra-curricular opportunities, including inter-school fixtures, enhance teamwork and sportsmanship. Leaders emphasise the importance of exercise for physical and mental wellbeing and pupils' participation rate in sport is consistently high.
40. In the early years, activities promote physical, social and emotional development, with key adults supporting resilience and positive behaviours. Pupils' achievements are celebrated, fostering self-esteem.

41. Behaviour across the school is generally positive, with pupils demonstrating respect for rules and boundaries. Leaders provide appropriate supervision to ensure that movement around the site is orderly. Sanctions are fair and effective, ensuring isolated incidents of poor behaviour are addressed appropriately.
42. The anti-bullying policy is effective, with rare incidents addressed swiftly and fairly. Younger pupils are taught to recognise bullying and respond appropriately. A supportive culture ensures pupils feel confident in reporting concerns.
43. The school premises are secure, well maintained, and designed to support learning, with light, ventilated classrooms. Fire safety and lockdown procedures are well established, supported by regular drills and properly maintained equipment.
44. Supervision is robust, with effective staff ratios during breaktimes and in high-risk areas such as the adventure playground. School lunches offer varied options, meeting dietary requirements and promoting healthy eating habits.
45. Early years leaders are appropriately trained in paediatric first aid. Health policies are clear and effective, with the medical centre addressing immediate and long-term needs. Medication is managed securely. Accidents are managed effectively, with clear reporting systems in place and support from medical staff ensuring timely care. Training in first aid extends to older pupils.
46. Attendance is monitored rigorously through electronic registration, with prompt follow-up on absences. Clear communication with parents supports procedures for planned and unplanned absences. Leaders provide required information to the local authority regarding pupils who leave and join the school at non-standard transition points, ensuring compliance with statutory obligations and supporting safeguarding.

### **The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing**

- 47. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

48. Leaders ensure the curriculum integrates social, cultural and economic education, promoting an understanding of different perspectives. Pupils in Year 9 participate in workshops led by representatives from various faith groups. A-Level courses such as politics and RS encourage critical thinking about democracy and ethical issues. Assemblies and PSHE lessons emphasise rights and responsibilities.
49. Assemblies, PSHE lessons and practical activities emphasise rights, responsibilities and financial literacy, including budgeting, taxation and entrepreneurship. Pupils in Year 5 explore profit and loss through the charity fair, while pupils in Year 7 gain budgeting experience by running a Christmas café. Together with the Year 9 'faiths in the city' programme, these initiatives help pupils to develop financial awareness and social responsibility.
50. The school's inclusive ethos and curriculum foster respect for individuality. RS lessons explore diverse faiths, while the Islamic society provides a supportive space for personal expression. Leaders promote kindness, anti-bullying and respect for others, nurturing empathy and positive social behaviours.
51. Diversity is valued within the school community, with pupils celebrating their peers' backgrounds through cultural events, shared stories and opportunities to learn about different traditions and perspectives.
52. Events such as mock elections and assemblies on the American electoral process deepen pupils' understanding of democracy. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive, fostering a respectful and supportive culture.
53. Fundamental British values are integrated throughout the curriculum and school life. Mock elections, debates and visits from local members of parliament help pupils to grasp democratic principles. In the junior school, co-curricular clubs develop knowledge about public institutions and services. Visits from police officers, along with curricular content in RS and personal development lessons, deepen pupils' understanding of public institutions.
54. The careers programme begins with personal development lessons in Year 7, including sessions on personal strengths, and develops into individualised guidance in Years 10 to 13. Online resources support career exploration, and initiatives such as the competitive admissions programme prepare pupils for competitive pathways.
55. Pupils contribute to their community through charitable initiatives, such as fundraising for local and global causes. Older pupils mentor younger children, building a culture of responsibility. Volunteering opportunities, including supporting the elderly, enhance pupils' understanding of their role in wider society.
56. Links to the local community are evident through initiatives such as 'Manningham youth talks' and the 'faiths in the city' programme. Fundraising efforts support diverse causes, fostering a sense of social responsibility among pupils. Leaders emphasise the importance of communal engagement and inspire pupils to contribute meaningfully to their local and wider communities.

57. In the early years, children explore and develop an understanding of the physical world through engaging, hands-on activities. They respond well to their teachers' expectations, and support is promptly provided when challenges arise. Children relate positively to one another, with differences acknowledged and accepted, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

**The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society**

**58. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

59. Leaders prioritise safeguarding by holding annual training in relation to statutory guidance, alongside termly updates and weekly briefings to ensure that pupils' welfare remains central to their decisions.
60. Online reporting systems are in place, ensuring all concerns are systematically noted. Detailed records are maintained, with trends analysed to identify and address patterns through targeted support.
61. Collaboration with the local authority ensures staff are knowledgeable regarding safeguarding procedures and local contextual risks, with training covering areas such as online safety, the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism, and identifying concerns.
62. Leaders collaborate effectively with the local authority designated officer (LADO), and the Bradford network and support team, ensuring that external guidance informs safeguarding measures. Leaders engage with agencies to enhance professional understanding and disseminate insights across the school.
63. Pupils are well informed about online safety through PSHE sessions and a clear mobile phone policy. Pupils demonstrate familiarity with steps to manage inappropriate online content, supported by a curriculum that emphasises consent and online responsibility. Tutor discussions further reinforce these messages, equipping pupils with essential digital skills.
64. Effective filtering and monitoring of the internet is in place. Alerts, based on the identification of key words, are analysed and reviewed by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), with suitable follow-up actions in place. Leaders conduct wider analysis annually.
65. Recruitment practices are robust, with all necessary checks completed and recorded. The single central record (SCR) is maintained accurately, ensuring compliance with safer recruitment protocols.

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

66. All the relevant Standards are met.

## School details

<b>School</b>	Bradford Grammar school
<b>Department for Education number</b>	380/6103
<b>Registered charity number</b>	529113
<b>Address</b>	Bradford Grammar School Keighley Road Bradford West Yorkshire BD9 4JP
<b>Phone number</b>	01274 542492
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:hmsec@bradfordgrammar.com">hmsec@bradfordgrammar.com</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bradfordgrammar.com">www.bradfordgrammar.com</a>
<b>Proprietor</b>	Bradford Grammar School Trustee Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Lady Morrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Simon Hinchliffe
<b>Age range</b>	4 to 19
<b>Number of pupils</b>	1050
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 to 15 October 2021

## Information about the school

67. Bradford Grammar School, a co-educational day school, was founded in 1548 and re-established in 1662 by royal charter as the Free Grammar School of Charles II at Bradford. The school operates as a registered charity and is owned and governed by a board of trustees, which oversees both the senior school and the junior school, Clock House, located on the same campus. Since its last inspection, the school has extended its age range to include pupils from age 4 to 19. The site now includes a newly constructed building which accommodates Reception and Year 1 classes.
68. Currently, 127 pupils receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A very small number of pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
69. The school identifies 46 pupils as speaking English as an additional language (EAL).
70. The school states its aims as embracing academic, sporting and creative excellence within an aspirational, caring environment, which builds on its heritage while looking to the future. The school aims to nurture exciting and fulfilling lives shaped by traditional values and believes that happiness is the key to an individual's successes.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

10 to 12 December 2024

71. A team of eight inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

72. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

73. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

**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.
- For more information, please visit **[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**.

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