



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report**

**Hallfield School**

**May 2023**

## Contents

<b>School's Details</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>1. Background Information</b>		<b>4</b>
About the school		4
What the school seeks to do		4
About the pupils		4
<b>2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection</b>		<b>5</b>
Preface		5
Key findings		6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided		6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils		6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors		6
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools		6
PART 6 – Provision of information		7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled		7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools		7
<b>3. The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>		<b>8</b>
Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision		8
Quality of education		8
Behaviour and attitudes		8
Personal development		9
Leadership and management		10
Compliance with statutory requirements		10
Recommendation for further improvement		10
<b>4. Inspection Evidence</b>		<b>11</b>

## School's Details

<b>School</b>	Hallfield School			
<b>DfE number</b>	330/6004			
<b>Early Years registration number</b>	257164			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	528956			
<b>Address</b>	Hallfield School Church Road Edgbaston Birmingham West Midlands B15 3SJ			
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 454 1496			
<b>Email address</b>	office@hallfieldschool.co.uk			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Keith Morrow			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Guyon Ralphs			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Hallfield School Trust			
<b>Age range</b>	0 to 13			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	583			
	<b>Nursery</b>	132	<b>Pre-prep</b>	190
	<b>Prep</b>	242	<b>Seniors</b>	19
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11 to 12 May 2023			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Hallfield School is an independent co-educational preparatory school. The school was founded in 1879 and is governed by the Hallfield School Trust. Since the last inspection, the trust has appointed a new chair of governors, developed the school campus and extended the age range to include Years 7 and 8. The school is organised into four sections. The nursery is a registered setting for children from three months to three years, the pre-prep is for pupils up to the age of seven years and includes the non-registered Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 attend the prep and pupils in Years 7 and 8 are in the seniors.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school seeks to provide a safe, caring, happy and high-achieving culture, based on Christian principles, whilst welcoming children of all faiths and none. It aims to enable each child to reach their potential in academic, cultural and sporting areas whilst providing them with a foundation to develop a love of learning and curiosity about the world around them. The school seeks to enable each child to develop socially and emotionally into resilient citizens, displaying courtesy and compassion to each other as members of a community.

### About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a range of professional families, the majority living within a 12-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised tests indicate the ability profile of the school is above average. The school has identified 59 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism, 13 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The majority of pupils experience a different language at home in addition to English, and eight pupils receive additional support for English as an additional language (EAL). The curriculum is modified for pupils identified as more able.

## 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 COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such 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 and the school is required to take the actions specified.

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, the 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 in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. 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 wellbeing of the pupils.

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

### **3. The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

#### **Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision**

- 3.1 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 3.2 The curriculum and care practices meet the needs of all children in the setting due to the rich experiences created for each child. Staff create a caring and happy environment where each child can thrive. All children's needs are met, including those who have SEND and whose first language is not English and support from external agencies is welcomed if necessary.
- 3.3 The children make consistently rapid progress and are very well prepared for the next stage in their education because staff are quick to identify their needs and to provide next steps. There is a culture of constant reflective practice within the nursery which enables progress to be accelerated.
- 3.4 Children's personal and emotional development is given high priority. They have an exceptionally good relationship with staff, are secure and cared for, so are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 3.5 Recommendations from the previous report are met. Leaders have excellent procedures in place for constantly evaluating practice and securing continuous development that improves the education of the children.

#### **Quality of education**

- 3.6 The quality of education is outstanding.
- 3.7 Leaders and managers ensure that an ambitious and well-planned curriculum meets the needs of all the children across the provision. Based on half-termly themes, it fully considers the interests and backgrounds of all the children, as well as the experiences staff wish their children to have. Much learning is centred around real-life experiences such as playing with real fruit and vegetables and visits to the hens and guinea pigs. Children are at the heart of everything that the staff do. They have consistently high expectations of what every child can achieve and each day plan specific activities to challenge individual children. For example, they may use their interest in cars to incorporate a concept or skill they wish them to learn.
- 3.8 Children are immersed in a communication-rich environment where there are consistent opportunities for high-quality conversations with practitioners, making children feel valued and listened to. The love of singing, nursery rhymes and stories is securely embedded. There are opportunities for children to read books alone, with another child or a member of staff, and the staff sing favourite nursery rhymes to children who are upset or becoming distracted. For example, staff know that a child who has EAL enjoys nursery rhymes, so they sing them with them, share their favourites with parents and provide appropriate resources.
- 3.9 All staff and leaders use their comprehensive knowledge of child development to provide a welcoming and safe environment where children are settled and able to progress from their starting points at an appropriate pace. Activities are carefully thought out and there is a purpose for each one, linking to the carefully considered next steps for each child. For example, the staff provide more messy play activities and reassurance to engage with them, to support the progress of those children who do not enjoy getting dirty.
- 3.10 There is a very strong emphasis on partnership between parents and staff. Parents are fully involved in their child's journey, because staff share their observations, explain what they are working on and what they want them to achieve next.

#### **Behaviour and attitudes**

- 3.11 Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.



- 3.12 Children are happy and active in their learning. This is because staff have excellent relationships with the children, know them well, what they like, what their next steps are, and in response, provide exciting and appropriate activities. Mathematical language is developed through exploration and play at every opportunity. Books with numbers are placed in the reading area, cards with patterns are placed with cubes, and children are encouraged to count when walking carefully over a bridge outside and when building with bricks to make a tower.
- 3.13 Children show excellent concentration and persistence. This is because staff know what each child is interested in and how best to gain their attention. During a bug hunt outside, the children spent considerable time using magnifying glasses, looking for different insects, closely observing the area including the bark on logs, and commenting on what they saw. Staff used open-ended questions effectively to encourage children to talk about what they could find.
- 3.14 Children show excellent habits for their future learning. Patience is encouraged as was seen when a young child tried unsuccessfully to get into a toy car; they were quietly observed and then support was given when they looked defeated to enable them to engage purposefully in their chosen activity. The children enjoy choosing activities where they can demonstrate high levels of thinking for themselves. For example, when children were creating their own models, they carefully put pieces together showing excellent fine motor skills and showed it to the visitors with pride.
- 3.15 Children demonstrate exceptional behaviour and show respect for one another. They take turns, follow instructions, and are encouraged to use good manners, being gently reminded if they forget. If children need reminding about their behaviour, there is a quiet conversation about what has happened, why it happened and if it is the right thing to do. Good behaviour is praised. Children are encouraged to be kind and cooperative.

### **Personal development**

- 3.16 The personal development of children is outstanding.
- 3.17 Staff know the children extremely well and plan activities to suit each child's need. The key person system is embedded, enabling children to be sufficiently confident to make secure attachments with all staff. This is because staff take time to talk to the children at their level, console them if they are upset and provide activities which they enjoy. Staff are punctilious in ensuring the children's personal hygiene needs, sleeping routines and mealtimes are sensitively managed. For example, children are allowed to sleep when they need to. If they are unsettled, key staff stay with them to calm and reassure them. If they wake whilst asleep, they are comforted.
- 3.18 The children are constantly encouraged to be independent and are given opportunities to do so. For example, as younger children walk up the stairs to their room, their hand is held and they receive constant praise. They are also given the time to develop independence such as when a toddler was encouraged to put their own coat on and attempted to fasten it.
- 3.19 Children are encouraged to take risks at every opportunity through the provision of appropriate resources and an exciting environment. For example, children were observed challenging themselves when climbing, trying new activities, moving unaided up and down slopes, attempting to use a hoop around their waist and then rolling it.
- 3.20 An excellent range of home cooked meals and snacks contributes not only to the children's health but also to their social and personal development. Whilst eating lunch or snack, staff engage in constant conversation with the children about the food, what it is and what it looks like. This is a relaxed time and they are not rushed. During carpet times, healthy eating is also promoted.
- 3.21 Staff develop children's understanding of life in modern Britain highly effectively. They are effective role models in showing respect for one another and children are encouraged to take turns. Children were frequently observed cooperating with one another, such as when sharing a box to look over the fence and sharing the food they had created in the mud kitchen. The diverse nature and differing

needs within the setting are celebrated with parental involvement, displays and the marking of a range of festivals.

### **Leadership and management**

- 3.22 Leadership and management are outstanding.
- 3.23 Leaders have a clear, realistic yet ambitious vision which demonstrates their constant desire to improve experiences for every child.
- 3.24 Leaders have established a rigorous process for professional development which takes into consideration the needs of both staff, children and the vision of the nursery. This contributes strongly to the high standard of provision. Staff are encouraged to try new ideas and systems within their room, with the expectation that if they work, they will be cascaded throughout the nursery. This contributes positively towards staff wellbeing. There is a culture of continuous evolution and improvement.
- 3.25 Leaders have created a curriculum based on clear learning objectives which room leaders adapt to allow for the children's interests and tailor to the particular needs of those with SEND or EAL. This ensures that all children in the setting receive appropriate support which enables them to progress well.
- 3.26 There is a strong emphasis on partnership between parents and staff. This incorporates diaries for the youngest babies and children to ensure parents have a clear picture of their child's response to daily routines of feeding, sleeping and changing. Parents are involved in their child's learning journey which acts as a two-way digital means of communication. Staff also discuss how a parent can help at home and parents will also ask staff to help them with areas that they are finding difficult at home, for example, toilet training.
- 3.27 Safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of the children and staff at the nursery are highly effective. Leaders ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities and receive appropriate training so that they have a clear understanding of policies and procedures. The induction process involves many departments within the school so that staff have the necessary knowledge when they start work. Leaders then continue this with regular update training and supervision which supports staff in focusing on each child's individual development and setting personal targets.

### **Compliance with statutory requirements**

- 3.28 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.**

### **Recommendation for further improvement**

The school is advised to make the following improvement to its provision for children in the early years.

- Create further opportunities for staff to share excellent practice across the department.

## 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 form meetings and assemblies. 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 Claire Osborn	Reporting inspector
Mrs Suzie Longstaff	Compliance team inspector (Former head, GSA and HMC school)
Mrs Lisa Boulton	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Deputy head, ISA school)