



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Additional Inspection Report

Moorland School

October 2022

School's details

School	Moorland School			
DfE number	888/6002			
Early Years registration number	EY421831			
Address	Moorland School Ribblesdale Avenue Clitheroe Lancashire BB7 2JA			
Telephone number	01200 423833			
Email address	info@moorlandschool.co.uk			
Head	Mrs Deborah Frost			
Proprietor	Mr Jonathan Harrison			
Age range	0 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	295			
	Day pupils	195	Boarders	100
	EYFS	119	Juniors	38
	Seniors	123	Sixth Form	15
Date of inspection	4 and 13 October 2022			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Moorland School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school situated in Clitheroe. Members of the same family have owned the school for more than 30 years. The current head took up her post in September 2021. The previous head became the principal director of the company that owns the school in 2021 and is also the proprietor. An advisory volunteer board has been constituted to provide guidance to the proprietor on a range of legal and educational matters.
- 1.2 The school incorporates ballet and football academies. The school includes a registered Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting. Boarders are accommodated in one of three houses. The school has thirty-two pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities, of whom five have an education, health and care plan. Two pupils speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspections were a regulatory compliance inspection in June 2021, and progress monitoring inspections in January and June 2022.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.3 This was an unannounced additional inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) which focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework. Inspectors returned to the school after an initial day of inspection on 4 October following receipt of additional, pertinent information and additional concerns which were communicated to external agencies. Boarding was not a focus of the inspection on either date but boarding regulations pertinent to some specific areas of inspection have been included in section 3 of the report.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraphs 7 (safeguarding) and 8 (safeguarding of boarders); NMS 11; EYFS 3.5 - 3.7 and 3.9 - 3.12	NOT MET
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	MET
Part 3 paragraph 13 (first aid); EYFS 3.25	NOT MET
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision); EYFS 3.28 to 3.37	NOT MET
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment); EYFS 3.65	NOT MET
Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); EYFS 3.7, 3.9 - 3.12	NOT MET
Part 6, paragraph 32 (provision of information)	NOT MET
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	NOT MET

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8; NMS 8; EYFS 3.5 - 3.7 and 3.9 – 3.12]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school does not meet the standard and the requirements.
- 2.4 The school was unable to demonstrate that all staff, including supply staff, in the EYFS had been checked as being suitable. Staff have been moved to the school from other settings to cover for staff absences, and no evidence was provided that they have been checked for suitability. At the time of the first visit, at least one member of staff was removed from the setting when inspectors arrived on site.
- 2.5 The proprietor conducts an annual review of safeguarding, but this procedure lacks sufficient rigour to effectively identify the shortcomings in recruitment procedures identified by the inspection. The proprietor has not ensured arrangements have due regard for the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and KCSIE.
- 2.6 The school has appointed a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for the main school and for the EYFS. All staff, and the proprietor, have appropriate levels of safeguarding training. Staff are required to read the required sections of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022*. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities in some areas. There is a suitable staff code of conduct and staff understand whistleblowing procedures. Safeguarding records indicate that concerns about pupils' welfare are acted upon promptly, including in cases of child-on-child abuse. Pupils confirmed that there are adults they can turn to if they have a concern. When they express a concern they receive a response and action is taken where necessary. The school liaises effectively with outside agencies and other safeguarding partners when advice is required. Staff have completed a declaration relevant to disqualification from childcare as required.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 The proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy. An annual health and safety audit is commissioned from a suitable external consultant and any issues identified are addressed in a timely manner.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – first aid [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 13; EYFS 3.25]

- 2.9 The school does not meet the standard and the requirements.
- 2.10 The school ensures that there is always at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises, or on an outing, and available at all times when children are present. However, the school has not ensured that all staff who completed a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification

on or after 30 June 2016 and are counted in the required staff to child ratio, have gained either a full PFA or an emergency PFA certificate within three months of starting work.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14; EYFS 3.28 - 3.37]

- 2.11 The school does not meet the standard and the requirements.
- 2.12 The school does not ensure that all children in the EYFS are suitably supervised at all times. Staffing levels for children aged two and above are suitable but staffing in the facilities for children under the age of two is insufficient to meet the required ratio of staff to children.
- 2.13 Additionally, the school has counted staff in their ratios when they are not sufficiently qualified to be included, or do not have the required first aid training.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16; EYFS 3.65]

- 2.14 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.15 The school has a suitable risk assessment policy, and staff conduct appropriate risk assessments for each area of the school including the EYFS setting. In the EYFS, staff conduct effective daily checks to ensure that any areas identified as presenting a potential hazard are safe before children arrive.
- 2.16 Systems are in place to inform senior managers in the case of insufficient staff being available to maintain required ratios, but these do not always result in prompt action being taken. As a result, children, particularly those under two years of age, are not sufficiently supervised at all times.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; EYFS 3.7, 3.9-3.12]

- 2.17 The school does not meet the standards and the requirements.
- 2.18 The school does not consistently carry out all the required suitability checks, including DBS and barred list checks, checks of qualifications, right to work in the UK and medical fitness, overseas checks where relevant, checks against lists of those prohibited from teaching and, where relevant, prohibition from management on staff prior to employment.
- 2.19 The absence of relevant personnel files, and the inability of the school to access its SCR at the time of the second visit resulted in inspectors being unable to confirm if or when relevant checks had been completed. Employment dates provided by EYFS staff do not correspond with the school's records which were seen.
- 2.20 The school could not provide records of all required checks having been completed by employment agencies or other providers of supply staff, or of their own checks of a person's identity and DBS status.
- 2.21 The school was therefore unable to verify the suitability of staff and other adults present on site to work with children or show that it keeps an appropriate single central register of appointments (SCR).

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32]

- 2.22 The school does not meet the standard.

- 2.23 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.24 During the second visit of the inspection, the school did not make information, reasonably requested in connection with the inspection, available to inspectors. In particular, personnel files had been taken off the school site and the school's SCR was not accessible.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.25 The school does not meet the standard.
- 2.26 The proprietor and senior leaders do not demonstrate good skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They do not ensure that the regulatory standards for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of children in the EYFS are consistently met.
- 2.27 They have not ensured that all recruitment checks are completed before staff commence employment at the school or that these are recorded appropriately on the SCR or in staff files. Where other adults are deployed onto the site, there are inadequate arrangements to ensure their suitability to work with children in the school. Safeguarding, safer recruitment, PFA, supervision and risk assessment procedures are not implemented in line with current statutory guidance, or with EYFS statutory requirements for registered EYFS settings and, therefore, the welfare of pupils is not actively promoted.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 The school does not meet all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety, paragraph 7; NMS 8; EYFS 3.7, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.12

- ensure effective systems are implemented to ensure that practitioners, and any other person who is likely to have regular contact with children are suitable [paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and 8(a) and (b); NMS 8.1; EYFS 3.7, 3.9 and 3.10].
- the school must ensure that all recruitment checks, including the receipt of suitable references, are carried out before the person commences work at the school [paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and 8(a) and (b); NMS 8.1; EYFS 3.7, 3.9 and 3.10].
- the school must ensure that the SCR and staff files contain accurate information to evidence that the required recruitment checks have been completed [paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and 8(a) and (b); NMS 8.1; EYFS 3.7 and 3.12].

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, paragraph 13; EYFS 3.25

- the school must ensure that all newly qualified entrants to the early years workforce who completed a level 2 and/or level 3 qualification on or after 30 June 2016, also have either a full PFA or an emergency PFA certificate within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff to child ratios at level 2 or level 3 in the early years setting [paragraph 13; EYFS 3.25].

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, paragraph 14; EYFS 3.28 – 3.37

- ensure staffing arrangements in the EYFS meet the needs of all children to ensure their safety, in particular those aged under two, by adhering at all times to the statutory ratios and ensuring that all those counted as staff within the ratios are sufficiently qualified to be included [paragraph 14; EYFS 3.29, 3.30 and 3.32].

ISSR Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, paragraph 16; EYFS 3.65

- ensure that systems to inform senior managers that risk assessment has identified that insufficient staff are available to maintain required ratios in the EYFS are implemented with sufficient effectiveness to remedy the deficiency [paragraph 16(a) and (b); EYFS 3.65].

ISSR Part 4, Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, paragraphs 18-21; NMS 19; EYFS 3.7, 3.9 – 3.12

- ensure all required recruitment checks are carried out for all staff prior to appointment or work beginning at the school, including checks of the person's identity, their medical fitness, their right to work in the UK, their qualifications, an enhanced DBS check, an overseas check if needed, a check against the barred list, and a check against the list of those prohibited from teaching and/or management if relevant [paragraphs 18(2)(a), (b), (c)(i-iv), (d) and (e); NMS 19.1 and for the same reason paragraph 18(2)(f); EYFS 3.7, 3.9 and 3.10].

- ensure that, where the school uses supply staff, confirmation has been received from the employment agency that all recruitment checks, including identity, barred list, prohibition from management, relevant qualifications, right to work in UK and prohibition from teaching have been made to the extent relevant to that person; that the school has received a copy of the person's DBS and has checked their identity [paragraph 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), (bb), (cc), (dd) and (ii), (b), (c), (d)(i) and (ii), (3) and (4); EYFS 3.7, 3.9 and 3.10].
- the proprietor must ensure that all checks required by the standards which are applicable to the school are accurately recorded on a register which is capable of being printed out [paragraph 21(1) and (2); NMS 19.1; EYFS 3.12].

ISSR Part 6, Provision of Information, paragraph 32

- the school must ensure that information reasonably requested in connection with an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act is made available to inspectors, in particular the school's SCR [paragraph 32(1)(g)].

ISSR Part 8, Leadership and Management, paragraph 34

- the school must ensure that those with responsibility for leadership and management, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the standards are met consistently and they actively promote the well-being of pupils, including those in the EYFS [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c); NMS 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.8].

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietor. They visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mr Chris Manville	Reporting inspector
Mr Stephen Holliday	Assistant reporting inspector
Mr Tony Halliwell	Assistant reporting inspector