

# Inspection of Ivy Lane School

Ivy Lane School, Ivy Lane, Wakefield WF1 4AZ

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Inspection dates: 5 to 7 October 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

In the short space of time that this school has been open, leaders have created a happy and caring school. Staff care about pupils' well-being and emotional welfare. Staff work well together in supporting pupils to get the most out of school. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school.

There is a nurturing and calm atmosphere in the school. Trusting and respectful relationships are evident between pupils and staff. This has helped pupils to settle into their new environment.

Staff work hard to help pupils to manage their behaviour. The members of the multi-agency team of professionals know the pupils well. They have put plans in place to help pupils feel more in control of their emotions. Staffing levels are high. This means that pupils are well supported in all activities throughout the day. Staff say that there is no bullying in the school.

Parents say very positive things about the school. They feel that their children are safe, and they appreciate the support of the different professionals who work in the school. They are kept well informed about what their child does every day. One parent said, 'I absolutely recommend this school.'

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. However, more thought needs to be given to the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn in some subjects.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

A multi-agency team, which consists of a behaviour therapist, an occupational therapist, a speech and language therapist and teachers, assesses each pupil when they are first admitted to the school. This means that staff have a detailed knowledge of the complex needs of the pupils. Bespoke plans to manage behaviour and develop communication skills help pupils from the get-go.

All pupils are taught a wide range of subjects. These include English, mathematics, science, personal, social, health and economic (PHSE) education and physical education. This meets with the requirements of the independent school standards.

When planning, curriculum leaders have considered the diverse range of pupils who could attend the school. Four pathways have been designed to cater for different ages and learning needs. Curriculum plans are in place for all subjects. Plans set out what pupils will do. In English, for example, pupils learn about rhyming patterns in poetry and how to write a sentence. In mathematics, for instance, pupils learn about mathematics in the everyday world. They learn about money and telling the time. However, in some plans, such as art and food technology, there is not sufficient focus on the knowledge that should be taught. Leaders are aware of this. The headteacher is working with an external consultant to put this right.

Pupils have a reading lesson every day. Most pupils are at an early stage of developing reading. Pupils listen to stories brought alive by puppets and a symbols-based language programme. Books selected are linked to the English topic. During the inspection, the topic was poetry. Pupils joined in the actions to accompany rhymes such as 'five little monkeys'. Some pupils are learning how to use a picture-based communication system to make choices. Visual timetables support pupils in reading activities that have been planned for them. A reading scheme enables some pupils to learn the sounds that letters represent. Pupils develop an interest in reading through choosing books from the school library.

A commercial assessment system is in place to track the progress that pupils make across the curriculum. Teachers use these assessments, together with their knowledge of pupils' knowledge and skills, to plan work and set targets for pupils to achieve. Staff check that pupils remember what they are learning in lessons. They note any gaps in understanding and plan what the next steps will be. The multi-agency team is linking the outcomes in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans to individual learning plans.

The standards related to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are met. Assemblies have been well planned. They incorporate a variety of topics to give pupils an understanding of what it is like to live in a diverse community. Pupils have opportunities to learn how to do things for themselves. For example, they go to the local post office to buy stamps and post letters. They vote on which charities they will donate to through the student council.

Ivy Lane is a new school. It has been purpose built with a separate sports hall. It offers opportunities to teach specialist subjects in the well-resourced art room, library, food technology kitchen, sensory rooms and media suite. There is a very attractive playground, with safe surfaces and a range of swings, a roundabout and climbing frames. This is available to pupils at breaktimes and at other times should they need to regulate their emotions.

Leaders make sure that staff follow the school's health and safety policy. Appropriate safety checks are made on fire and other equipment. Fire evacuations are practised to ensure that pupils can leave the building safely. There are detailed risk assessments in place for staff to follow to keep pupils safe. School policies are available for parents on the website. This includes the school's safeguarding policy.

The proprietor ensures that all of the independent standards are met. The proprietor body is clear about its role in holding the headteacher to account for standards in the school. The proprietor explained that the COVID-19 pandemic had slowed the opening of the school and the further development of the curriculum. Leaders have put in place a three-year accessibility plan. This plan sets out how the school will meet the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' safety and welfare are a high priority for leaders. All staff have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2021). They attend formal safeguarding training as part of their induction and at six-monthly intervals thereafter. Leaders provide informal safeguarding updates regularly.

The multi-agency team supports pupils well. Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about the safety or well-being of a pupil. Safeguarding concerns are referred appropriately and in a timely manner.

Leaders carry out the appropriate checks on the suitability of adults working at the school.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Plans for the full range of curriculum subjects are in place. These plans set out the knowledge and skills that pupils should be taught. However, some plans, such as art and food technology, do not have enough detail about the skills and knowledge leaders want pupils to know, remember and use. Teachers must have access to carefully sequenced curriculum plans for each subject that is taught.

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You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 148241   |
| <b>DfE registration number</b>             | 384/6011   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Wakefield  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10202220   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Other independent special school   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Independent school   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11 to 19   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 5  |
| <b>Number of part-time pupils</b>          | 0  |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                          | Hesley Group   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Graham Smith   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Michael Walsh  |
| <b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>            | £80,075  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01924 927 280  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.ivylaneschool.uk">www.ivylaneschool.uk</a>               |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:ILS.Admin@hesleygroup.co.uk">ILS.Admin@hesleygroup.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- Ivy Lane was registered with the Department for Education on 15 December 2020. It opened on 1 September 2021.
- This is the school's first standard inspection. A pre-registration inspection took place on 10 November 2020.
- The school has been newly built. The site is located in a residential area about one mile from Wakefield city centre.
- Pupils attending the school have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Typically, pupils' primary needs relate to autism spectrum disorder and associated learning disabilities. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school caters for pupils of 11 to 19 years of age.
- The owner of the school is Hesley Group. The group was established in 1975. The group also provides residential and other services for adults. Hesley Group oversees two other independent special schools in Doncaster, Fullerton House School and Wilsic Hall School.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation.
- An inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy director of children's services and the chief executive officer of Hesley Group.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and food technology. This entailed lesson visits, looking at pupils' work, talking to subject leaders and class teachers.
- An inspector scrutinised a wide range of policies, documents and records. These documents provided evidence that the school is meeting the independent school standards.

- An inspector scrutinised the school’s safeguarding policy, documents and records. These documents provided evidence to evaluate the school’s provision for safeguarding pupils.
- An inspector held telephone conversations with a number of parents, a local authority SEND case worker and the school’s improvement partner.

### **Inspection team**

Suzette Garland-Grimes, lead inspector      Ofsted Inspector

Gordon Watts      Ofsted Inspector

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