

# Inspection of Skipton Girls' High School

Gargrave Road, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 1QL

---

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

---

The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

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

Skipton Girls' High School is a warm and welcoming place. Pupils are extremely polite, courteous and articulate. Staff's expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow an ambitious curriculum and achieve well across a range of subjects. How teachers choose to implement the curriculum is more effective in some subjects than others.

Pupils feel safe in school and attend very well. They feel that they have a trusted adult who they can speak to. Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Teachers cultivate a kind and respectful environment. This helps pupils to learn effectively. Bullying and harassment are not tolerated by pupils or staff. The positive atmosphere in the school is tangible.

Pupils' academic experiences are complemented by an extensive extra-curricular programme. Pupils can participate in sports, art, engineering, outdoor pursuits and many other clubs and societies. Pupils in the sixth form develop their leadership skills by taking an active role in leading clubs, school 'gatherings' or working with younger pupils through the vertical tutoring system.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for pupils. There are detailed curriculum plans in place for each subject. Plans highlight the sequence by which pupils learn important knowledge. In some subjects, such as English and art and design, the most important knowledge is emphasised by teachers. However, elsewhere, for example in mathematics and geography, teachers do not always choose the most appropriate strategies to deliver the curriculum. As such, some pupils are racing through the curriculum at the expense of developing a deep understanding of the subject.

Students in the sixth form are taught by teachers with secure subject knowledge. Students use technical vocabulary when answering questioning or taking part in discussions. The work that students produce is of a high standard. In many subjects, students can talk in detail about what they have learned and remembered across the curriculum.

Reading is prioritised by the school. Pupils develop a love of reading. Sixth-form students act as literacy leaders and support the school's approach to reading. Pupils from across the school have worked with staff to choose appropriate texts to be read during structured personal development time.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Lessons proceed without interruption. Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning. They approach challenging work with enthusiasm. They respond to the feedback they are given to improve their

work. At social times, pupils interact well. Even when there is no direct adult supervision, pupils behave in a sensible and calm manner.

The school is inclusive and celebrates diversity. Equality and tolerance are key features of the school's culture. In addition to a formal personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, leaders have worked with pupils to identify themes and topics to explore during school 'gatherings.' However, the oversight and delivery of the PSHE curriculum is variable. The planning of PSHE does not include Year 13. Some non-specialists and personal tutors have not had sufficient training to teach key material. There is some variation in the quality of delivery. Pupils cannot remember the subject content in as much detail as they do in other subjects.

Leaders have established a programme of careers information, education, advice and guidance. All pupils receive independent advice and guidance, and the school is compliant with the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. Students in the sixth form are well supported with applications to university but are less knowledgeable on non-university career paths. Leaders do not track the provision for individual students closely enough. Leaders recognise there is more work to do in this area.

The school is well led and managed, however, some leaders have an inaccurate view of the effectiveness of the school. This is because monitoring carried out by leaders does not accurately identify strengths and weaknesses in key areas of the school. Governors are passionate and committed to their role. Staff are proud to work at the school. Teachers say that they feel well supported and receive regular training. This includes training to support pupils with SEND. Teachers use the information they receive to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture of safeguarding is strong. Pupils feel safe. Staff are well trained and understand the risks that pupils in the school may face. Staff are clear on how to report concerns.

However, records of concerns are not consistently well kept or managed in a timely manner. For example, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service that should have been made previously was made during this inspection. Sometimes, information about the most vulnerable pupils in school is not shared well enough among staff. Although this has not left pupils at risk, leaders accept that there is more to do to improve internal reporting and information sharing procedures.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not implement the curriculum to deepen pupils understanding beyond the content required for exams. This means that some pupils have a superficial understanding of key knowledge. Leaders need to ensure teaching focuses on pupils developing a deep body of knowledge in each subject rather than just covering the curriculum.
- Although the school's safeguarding culture is effective, the recording and sharing of safeguarding information are inefficient. This means that information on vulnerable pupils is not shared as effectively as it could be among staff. Leaders need to ensure that information is recorded in a timely manner and is more accessible to staff.
- The delivery of the PSHE curriculum is variable and students in the sixth form do not learn enough about employment pathways, such as apprenticeships. As such, pupils are less well prepared for life after school than they should be. Leaders need to carefully plan and monitor PSHE and careers education more closely to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils, including those in the sixth form.

## How can I feed back my views?

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.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136664
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10228951
<b>Type of school</b>	Grammar (selective)
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	903
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	271
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Helen Flynn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Martha Featherstone
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sghs.org.uk">http://www.sghs.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> March 2008 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a selective girls' grammar school.
- The current headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- A small number of boys, from a neighbouring selective school, access the school's sixth form provision.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, art and design, geography and English. As part of the deep dives, inspectors visited lessons, reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with curriculum leaders and teachers. They also talked to pupils about their learning and looked at the work they have completed.
- In addition, inspectors looked at curriculum plans and discussed assessment in history, chemistry and physical education.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinators, spoke to pupils with SEND, reviewed plans to support these pupils and visited lessons to see how these pupils are supported to learn.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for reading to discuss how reading is promoted in the school.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leads and reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding records and policies, to ensure that appropriate actions are being taken to keep children safe.
- Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for careers and PSHE and analysed planning documents for these areas.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through Ofsted surveys, as well as additional communication from parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the multi-academy trust and the local governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to attendance.

### **Inspection team**

Stuart Voyce, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Liz Cresswell	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Powell	Ofsted Inspector
Katie North	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022