

Wakefield Tutorial Preparatory School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	383/6098
Unique Reference Number	108109
Inspection number	323203
Inspection dates	11 - 12 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Christine Inkster HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Wakefield Tutorial Preparatory school is a small independent day school which was established in 1937. It is situated in the town centre of Morley, West Yorkshire and has occupied a church building since 1958. It is a non-denominational school for boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 11 and currently has 34 pupils on roll. None of these pupils has a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and a small number from a minority ethnic background are fluent in English.

The school aims to offer children 'a balanced education in a quiet, caring and secure environment in which they are able to reach their full potential both academically and as people'. The school welcomes pupils from a broad range of backgrounds and faiths, and aims to prepare pupils 'not only for their secondary education but also to take up their place in society'.

Evaluation of the school

Wakefield Tutorial Preparatory School is a good school that is successful in fulfilling its aims. Pupils receive a good quality of education and care and, consequently, they make good progress and achieve well. They make outstanding progress in spoken English and the performing arts. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school meets all but two of the regulations.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good and has some outstanding features. It enables pupils to make good progress in their learning and outstanding progress in their personal development. It is generally well-planned and closely linked to the National Curriculum. In Years 5 and 6 increased attention is given to work related to the entrance examinations of selective secondary schools and all pupils have gained a place of their choice in recent years. The curriculum provides a good breadth and balance of subjects giving pupils a well-rounded education. The provision for spoken English and performing arts is outstanding. Pupils are very successful in passing the English Speaking Board examinations and they are extremely confident in speaking with expression, particularly in plays and for example, when reading poetry. There are also excellent opportunities to participate in music and drama and pupils perform for parents and members of the community on a regular basis. The quality of singing is exceptional. In addition to the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious

education, pupils also have the opportunity to learn French from Year 3 and also have the option to learn to play a variety of musical instruments including drums, violin, piano and woodwind. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and is now used more widely across the curriculum. The provision for design and technology and physical education is also strong. There is a good range of educational visits which enhance pupils' learning, including a residential visit to the Lake District. There is also a wide range of extra-curricular activities including the opportunity for pupils to learn German and to develop their skills in arts, sports, first aid, recorder, needlework and communication skills.

The school bases its early years' curriculum on the six areas of learning, following the guidance for the Foundation Stage. Too many activities are directed by adults so that children have too little opportunity for independent learning. However, the school is preparing to introduce the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum from September 2008. The school is currently unable to provide continuous outdoor provision for Reception pupils, because of limitations in the use of the building, but staff take every opportunity to enable pupils to benefit from activities outside and particularly within the local environment.

The quality of teaching is good with some that is outstanding. All teachers have high expectations of their pupils and in the Junior section of the school, they take responsibility for teaching areas of the curriculum in which they have particular strengths. The features of the outstanding lessons include extensive opportunities for active participation and pupils' experience of excitement and fun in their learning. Pupils make excellent progress and achieve high standards in spoken English and the performing arts. Other positive features of all lessons include the good relationships between staff and pupils and the probing open questions asked by teachers which promote pupils' thinking skills. Pupils have good attitudes towards their learning and are confident in their responses to questions. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide learning experiences which interest and motivate pupils. Teachers know pupils well and small class groups enable them to ensure that pupils get appropriate help and support when needed. Support from teaching assistants and volunteers is also good. Consequently, pupils make good progress in their work. Standards in English, mathematics and science are high.

Assessment procedures are good and carried out on a regular basis. There are school examinations twice a year and assessments are carried out at the end of each unit of work. There are annual tests giving the reading and spelling ability of all pupils in relation to their chronological age and these results are tracked carefully in the Junior section of the school. However, although staff know pupils' abilities well, there is not currently a tracking system to enable the school to have an overview of how much progress pupils are making from their starting points in all subjects and in particular, English, mathematics, and science. Written marking is not entirely consistent across the school and does not always inform pupils how they can improve their work, although verbal feedback is good and pupils say they receive appropriate help and guidance when needed.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils greatly enjoy school and this is reflected in their very good attendance and good behaviour. The school provides a warm, welcoming environment and there is a 'family atmosphere'. Pupils form very positive relationships and demonstrate high levels of care in their interactions with others. Older pupils look after younger ones and enjoy opportunities to take responsibility, for example, as 'buddies', librarians and first aid helpers. The school council is taking an increasing role in decision making within the school. Pupils take great pride in their school and in their accomplishments. They have very positive attitudes towards their learning and have great confidence and high self-esteem. They are very polite, well-behaved, considerate and friendly towards one another and any minor disagreements are quickly resolved. They have a good understanding of right and wrong. They have many opportunities to develop their social skills through working together on projects and through good links with other schools and members of the community. Pupils develop their knowledge of public institutions and services very well through research, the citizenship curriculum, discussions and debates and visits to places such as the Town Hall to meet the Mayor. They run stalls and take part in activities to raise funds for charities as well as visiting nursing homes to sing for the residents. They develop a good awareness of cultural diversity by learning about other countries and have welcomed visitors from Germany, Poland and China. Special cultural days are held to enable pupils to learn more about the food and customs of other nationalities, for example, a French day. Spiritual development is very good and there are excellent opportunities in assembly for prayer and reflection as well as developing spirituality through art, music, drama and dance. Pupils are prepared very well for their future by developing good basic skills and through their confidence in speaking, taking part in debates and through opportunities for teamwork.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The overall provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. Staff are highly committed to ensuring that pupils are well cared for. They know each pupil very well as an individual. There are small classes and highly effective supervision and, consequently, pupils say they feel safe and cared for. Instances of bullying are rare and pupils say any which do occur are dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and many opportunities are provided for sport and exercise. Pupils have access to healthy food at lunchtimes and fruit and drinks during the day. The school has devised and implemented a wide range of policies for anti-bullying, child protection, health and safety on visits outside school and for safeguarding children. However, the child protection designated teacher has not yet undertaken up-to-date training and there has not been recent training for all members of staff. The school reacted promptly when told of this omission and the designated member of staff has been booked on to an appropriate course. Robust risk assessments are carried out in all areas of school life; electrical equipment has

been tested and fire risk assessments are in place. Accidents and incidents are properly recorded. The school fulfils its duties with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 in partnership with the landlords.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school is vigilant in the way it carries out the necessary checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. The necessary checks regarding the identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references are carried out rigorously.

School's premises and accommodation

The school comprises a two-storey building providing a hall, four classrooms, an ICT suite and a library. In addition, there is a school office and a staffroom. The Reception class is located downstairs near appropriate toilet facilities. Classrooms are of a good size and they are well decorated and well maintained. There is currently no separate room for pupils who are ill as this has recently been required for use by the landlords. The school is currently negotiating alternative provision to provide a medical room. The building is leased from a local church and is used by the church at weekends and other groups in the evenings. There are adequate separate toilet facilities for male and female pupils and different facilities for staff and visitors.

There is a good sized, hard-surfaced playground which provides ample space for playtimes, but there is no grassed play area. The school makes good use of a local sports centre for larger indoor facilities and has links with a local rugby football club for an outdoor grassed area.

There are appropriate and hygienic catering facilities on the site, providing a breakfast club and meals at lunchtime. The kitchen is situated adjacent to the dining room and provides suitable accommodation for the serving and consumption of food.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides parents, carers and others with a good range of information through the school prospectus and an attractive website which is regularly updated.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a complaints policy and set of procedures, which meet all of the regulations. The school has taken steps to ensure that all parents are aware of these. There have been no formal complaints within the last 12 months.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- ensure that all staff are fully trained in child protection, particularly the designated teacher (paragraph 3 (2) (b)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5 (l)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Improve the systems in place to track the progress of pupils.
- Ensure consistency in the marking of pupils work so that they are clear about how to improve their work.

School details

Name of school	Wakefield Tutorial Preparatory School
DCSF number	3836098
Unique reference number	108109
Type of school	Independent day school
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1937
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 16 Girls: 18 Total: 34
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 4080 - £4575
Address of school	Commercial Street Morley Leeds West Yorkshire LS27 8HY
Telephone number	0113 253 4033
Fax number	0113 253 3581
Email address	headteacher@wtschool.co.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Tanner
Proprietor	Mrs Julie Tanner; Mr Raymond Favell
Reporting inspector	Christine Inkster HMI
Dates of inspection	11 - 12 June 2008