

# School inspection report

14 to 16 November 2023

## **Bradford Christian School**

Livingstone Road

Bolton Woods

Bradford

BD2 1BT

The Independent Schools Inspectorate is appointed by the Department for Education to inspect association independent schools in England. Our inspections report on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards and other applicable regulatory requirements are met, collectively referred to in this report as 'the Standards'.

## Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS .....</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS THE STANDARDS.....</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS.....  | 4         |
| <b>SECTION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE.....                          | 5         |
| <b>SECTION 2: QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RECREATION .....                 | 6         |
| <b>SECTION 3: PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....</b>   | <b>7</b>  |
| THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING .....        | 8         |
| <b>SECTION 4: PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY .....</b>  | <b>9</b>  |
| THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO PUPILS’ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY ..... | 9         |
| <b>SAFEGUARDING .....</b>  | <b>10</b> |
| THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL MEETS STANDARDS RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING .....  | 10        |
| <b>SCHOOL DETAILS .....</b>  | <b>11</b> |
| <b>INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL.....</b>   | <b>12</b> |
| <b>INSPECTION DETAILS .....</b>  | <b>13</b> |

## Summary of inspection findings

1. Governors and senior leaders work closely and diligently together to ensure a well-organised and clearly led school. Leaders ensure that a consistently positive school environment is created so that pupils enjoy learning and feel safe. Supportive and challenging governors maintain effective oversight to ensure that the school meets the Standards.
2. Pupils, including children in the early years and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress overall. Pupils in the unit for those who have additional needs are supported effectively. Pupils who have English as an additional language are supported well and achieve in line with other pupils. Most teaching enables pupils to make good progress against their set targets. However, some teaching is less effective and does not always ensure pupils make as much progress or perform as well academically as possible.
3. Pupils feel safe in school and learn to trust and communicate well with staff. A close-knit and caring community and effective communication with parents result in an effective setting which supports pupils' learning. The positive values which underpin the school's daily life contribute strongly to a consistent focus on pupils' wellbeing.
4. Leaders and staff instil a strong sense of purpose and aspiration in pupils, so that they are motivated and strive towards personal goals in life. Pupils understand, and seek to live by, the school's positive values.
5. The premises and accommodation are maintained to a suitable standard through regular health and safety checks and maintenance. Appropriate fire safety measures and provision for first aid are in place.
6. Careers guidance is effective in providing pupils across the school with the information they require about future options.
7. Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are effective. Governors regularly review the safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure that this remains the case.

## The extent to which the school meets the Standards

- Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance, are met.
- Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing are met.
- Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society are met.
- Standards relating to safeguarding are met.

### Recommended next steps

Leaders should ensure that:

- teaching consistently enables pupils to extend and maximise their academic performance.

## Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

8. Governors' supportive and challenging oversight ensures that leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Leaders and staff prioritise pupils' wellbeing and mental health and act quickly and sensitively in their best interests, including through effective liaison with external agencies when appropriate.
9. Appropriate management of risk leads to identification and mitigations of risks for a broad range of school activities.
10. Leaders comply with equality legislation. They are proactive in ensuring that access to the curriculum and to the school is available for all pupils. The school provides well for pupils who have SEND or disabilities and gives them an education in line with other pupils in the school.
11. Leaders carry out robust evaluations of the school, know its strengths and understand where improvements are required. They have identified that teaching includes practice that is highly effective in allowing pupils to achieve well. They have also recognised that some teaching is less effective and have introduced a professional development programme to address this. They use the evidence gathered from observations of lessons and activities, careful analysis of progress and achievement data, and the views of pupils and parents, to formulate and carry out actions to improve the school's performance. For example, changes in the school's approaches to mathematics and reading have led to improved outcomes in these areas.
12. Leaders work in close partnership with parents. They respond to any complaints effectively, such as by ensuring that issues that arise are dealt with quickly and in a respectful manner. Any complaints are well documented in a log that identifies actions taken as a result.
13. The school provides parents with all the required information. The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website, along with all other policies that are required to be available. Parents receive regular reports about their own child's progress and much informal information is provided during contact between parents and staff at the beginning and end of the school day.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to leadership and management, and governance

- 14. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

15. Pupils, including those who have SEND, including those catered for by the autism provision unit, receive effective education and a suitable curriculum that meets their needs. For example, for some pupils who have SEND, leaders implement a suitable range of alternative externally accredited curriculum programmes which match their needs well. Teaching, which is sensitive to their needs, prepares these pupils to build on their successes at future learning settings. Some pupils who have SEND access mainstream lessons and achieve higher-level qualifications. Pupils who have English as an additional language are supported well. Staff model the correct use of language and use accurate subject-specific vocabulary during lessons. As a result, these pupils achieve in line with their peers.
16. Almost all children in the early years make expected progress in relation to their achievement of early learning goals. Those children who have SEND make good progress from their starting points and establish a sound basis for the next stage in their learning. The early years learning environment and curriculum are stimulating and encourage children to be curious learners who love to find things out for themselves. Staff are alert to opportunities to facilitate children's learning and skilfully build up their knowledge, understanding and skills.
17. Pupils' progress is assessed every half term using standardised tests and this enables staff to create realistic and challenging targets. Almost all pupils in the primary, middle and upper schools consistently make at least good progress in relation to their individual targets over time.
18. Pupils achieve well at GCSE. The majority of pupils achieve the highest grades. Leavers gain places at their preferred next schools or colleges.
19. At all stages, much teaching engages, challenges and supports pupils' learning well, ensuring that they make good progress overall towards their agreed targets. In history, staff challenge pupils to interpret historical sources and develop lines of argument. In English, staff make effective use of well-chosen poems to stimulate pupils' own poetic writing in a variety of styles. Staff's consistently positive and supportive approach enables pupils to become confident learners and to be aspirational regarding the next steps in their education and future lives. As a result of positive relationships between staff and pupils, pupils feel secure in their learning. However, during the few times that teaching is less effective than that typically in place, pupils do not develop their learning skills or make as much progress as possible.
20. Leaders ensure that pupils have access to suitable recreational activities during the school day. The relatively long distances travelled by many pupils to and from school preclude the provision of a broad range of extra-curricular activities outside of school hours. As a result, a small number of pupils participate in the after-school activities that are provided.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to the quality of education, training and recreation

- 21. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

22. Pupils feel safe in school and learn to trust and communicate well with staff. A close-knit and caring community, and effective communication with parents result in a setting where pupils are valued as individuals. During the school day, leaders' presence is evident alongside staff and pupils. They take a keen interest in what is happening in the moment and positively encourage and affirm pupils' efforts and achievements. These factors provide a bedrock for pupils' emotional wellbeing.
23. Pupils' enjoyment of school life is vibrantly evident from the early years onwards where children quickly develop self-confidence and enthusiasm for new experiences. Pupils develop a can-do attitude so that they are resolute when taking on new challenges. They learn the skills and attitudes to overcome setbacks and develop character and a strong sense of security.
24. Staff are quick to notice if pupils are unhappy for any reason and they act quickly and liaise effectively with parents to address concerns. The school's resident counselling service provides additional support on an informal 'drop in' basis or through a more structured programme over time. These measures help pupils to deal with their worries, and communication with parents is highly effective and much appreciated by parents.
25. The relationships and sex education (RSE) content of the PSHE programme develops pupils' understanding of the differences between appropriate and inappropriate relationships and the importance of consent.
26. Pupils learn how to be physically and mentally healthy. The PSHE programme enables pupils to learn about topics such as diet, physical activity and the importance of good sleep habits. Pupils' enthusiastic engagement with these themes is further supported in cookery classes and assemblies. Pupils enjoy a range of physical education activities, including for the fun of participating in them as well as for their health benefits.
27. Pupils behave well during the school day and any rare instances of bullying are quickly dealt with and resolved by the school team. Pupils establish a personal commitment to being kind and courteous, usually independent of the need for reminders from staff. Pupils' conduct reflects the influence of the school's religious ethos and pupils develop a clear appreciation of the importance of knowing right from wrong. Supervision of pupils is effective and contributes to the school's effective behaviour management.
28. The school carries out health and safety checks and servicing regularly and systematically. These ensure that the premises and accommodation are suitably maintained. Fire safety arrangements are suitable. The school conducts an annual fire risk assessment and holds regular fire evacuation drills. Suitable first aid provision is in place. The medical room includes facilities for pupils with complex needs.
29. Admission and attendance records are suitably maintained. Leaders and staff follow up any unexplained absences and monitor attendance carefully.

## The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

**30. All the relevant Standards are met.**



## Section 4: Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

31. Leaders and staff instil a sense of purpose and aspiration in pupils, so that they are motivated to strive towards personal goals in life. Careers guidance is effective in providing pupils across the school with information required to consider their future steps. Pupils engage with visiting speakers who represent a range of career options and meet with external careers advisers.
32. In the early years, children learn about the world around them and begin to develop social skills, cooperation and conflict resolution. Older pupils enthusiastically explore social and cultural issues and openly share their thoughts and feelings about these. For example, Year 8 pupils presented personal interpretations of biblical advice in plain English during an assembly. These presentations demonstrate the pupils' firm understanding of traditional messages about social and ethical behaviour relevant to modern society.
33. Leaders actively promote fundamental British values, such as respect for individual and cultural diversity and the rule of law. As a result, pupils demonstrate a principled approach to living in a modern United Kingdom and global society. The well-developed personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme is effective in supporting pupils to develop an understanding of the world in which they live, enabling pupils to become independent and responsible young people.
34. Pupils acquire an understanding and appreciation of diverse faiths and cultural traditions. For example, the 'Bar Mitzvah' and 'Diverse Britain' projects enable pupils to develop a wider understanding of British society. Pupils research the demography of their local area, its various faiths and its charities, and develop their understanding of themselves as part of the community and the importance of supporting harmonious relationships between different cultural communities.
35. The PSHE programme increases pupils' understanding of personal, domestic, financial and economic responsibilities to help prepare them well for their future lives. Pupils develop skills in managing budgets and a wider understanding of finance. Pupils in the ASC unit learn about essential functional life skills through coursework designed to effectively prepare them for life in the wider world.
36. Leaders invite visiting speakers to present a range of topics to pupils. These enable pupils to develop their understanding of themes such as democracy and the institution of parliament. For example, pupils were enthused by the visit of a local member of parliament who spoke to them about their role and responsibilities towards constituents and government. Leaders take care to ensure that no partisan views are imparted. Pupils demonstrate what they learn from these experiences through the expression of searching questions in their reflective work.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society

**37. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## Safeguarding

38. Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are effective. The school has appropriate procedures to respond to safeguarding concerns, including any relating to child-on-child abuse or allegations against staff. Leaders promote a culture of transparency and an awareness that 'it could happen here'. There is full commitment to ensuring pupils are safe, protected and listened to. Pupils are encouraged to share any concerns they may have. Safeguarding concerns are acted upon promptly. As a result, pupils feel safe in their school. Leaders work effectively with external agencies when concerns arise. Referrals to children's services, the local authority designated officer and the police, are made in a timely manner.
39. Governors regularly review the safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure that they reflect current legislation and advice. The policy gives suitable regard to the safeguarding needs of SEND pupils, who represent a substantial proportion of the school's population.
40. Staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training when they join the school, and this is updated at regular intervals. Safeguarding leads receive appropriate training. Staff are knowledgeable regarding all aspects of child protection procedures and are alert to any potential risks for the pupils in their care. They understand how to recognise and report a safeguarding concern.
41. A system for filtering and monitoring pupils' online activity is suitably managed by the safeguarding lead. Pupils learn how to stay safe in the school and the wider community, including when online.
42. Safer recruitment checks are completed for all staff, volunteers and governors and an accurate record of appointments is maintained.

### The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

- 43. All the relevant Standards are met.**

## School details

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| <b>School</b>                          | Bradford Christian School  |
| <b>Department for Education number</b> | 380/6110   |
| <b>Address</b>                         | Bradford Christian School<br>Livingstone Road<br>Bolton Woods<br>Bradford<br>West Yorkshire<br>BD2 1BT |
| <b>Phone number</b>                    | 01274 532649   |
| <b>Email address</b>                   | office@bxs.org.uk  |
| <b>Website</b>                         | bradfordchristianschool.com  |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                      | Bradford Christian School  |
| <b>Chair</b>                           | Mr Richard Shackleton  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                     | Mrs Jane Prothero  |
| <b>Age range</b>                       | 3 to 16  |
| <b>Number of pupils</b>                | 151  |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>     | 13 to 15 November 2018   |

## Information about the school

44. Bradford Christian School is an independent, co-educational day school. Founded in 1993, the current building has been in use since 2002. The early years provision was opened in 2009. A governing body oversees the management of the school. The school is divided into three phases: primary, including the early years, middle and upper schools. There is specialist provision for pupils who have an autism spectrum condition diagnosis, and the local authority has selected the school as the named setting for pupils with associated education, health and care (EHC) plans. The school was previously inspected by Ofsted in November 2018.
45. The school has identified 44 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 25 of whom have an EHC plan.
46. English is an additional language for eight pupils.
47. The school states its aims are to provide a holistic Christian education, to inspire discipleship and to be a Christian community in which everyone grows in character, faith, knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

## Inspection details

### Inspection dates

14 to 16 November 2023

48. A team of three inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

49. Inspection activities included:

- observation of lessons, some in conjunction with school leaders
- observation of registration periods and assemblies
- observation of a sample of extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection
- discussions with the chair and other governors
- discussions with the head, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the learning support area and facilities for physical education
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work
- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school.

50. The inspection team considered the views of pupils, members of staff and parents who responded to ISI's pre-inspection surveys.

**How are association independent schools in England inspected?**

- The Department for Education is the regulator for independent schools in England.
- ISI is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect independent schools in England, which are members of associations in membership of the Independent Schools Council.
- ISI inspections report to the Department for Education on the extent to which the statutory Independent School Standards, the EYFS statutory framework requirements, the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools and any other relevant standards are met.
- For more information, please visit **[www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**.

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