



ISI

Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

The Mount School, Huddersfield

December 2021

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School's Details

School	The Mount School, Huddersfield			
DfE number	382/6006			
Address	The Mount School, Huddersfield 3 Binham Road Edgerton Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD2 2AP			
Telephone number	01484 426432			
Email address	info@themount.org.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Euan Burton-Smith			
Proprietor	Mr Christopher Sellers			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	111			
	Kindergarten	19	Juniors	92
Inspection dates	8 to 10 December 2021			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Mount School, Huddersfield, is an independent co-educational day school. Situated in the suburbs of Huddersfield, it occupies a converted family home. It is owned and governed by the proprietor. The head teacher was appointed in 2019. The school was previously inspected by Ofsted.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers. During this period of closure the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than vulnerable pupils or the children of key workers received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.6 Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.7 The school sets out to provide pupils with a wide and challenging education with an emphasis on English and mathematics. It aims to create a nurturing atmosphere in which pupils can feel safe and happy while developing into independent, successful learners.

About the pupils

- 1.8 The school uses standardised tests for assessment which indicate that pupils are of average ability in comparison to pupils of their ages who take similar tests. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds reflecting the diversity of the city; none speak English as an additional language. There are 18 pupils identified with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), such as dyslexia and hypermobility. They are supported within class. Pupils identified as being the more able are provided extra challenge by extension activities such as debate or investigative work.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are inadequate and do not pay due regard to current statutory guidance. At the time of the inspection the school did not have a suitable safeguarding policy in place. A new policy was written during the inspection, and awaited review by the proprietor. It was not possible for staff to demonstrate clear understanding of the most recent requirements or successful implementation of this new, unratified policy. Discussions confirm that staff are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils and that the pupils feel safe, listened to and well-cared for.
- 2.10 The school has not ensured that all required checks on staff have been completed prior to their starting work. It has failed to carry out disqualification from childcare checks where required, and checks against the barred list, including when Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) results have been delayed, prior to employment commencing. The school was not able to provide clear evidence that checks of prohibition from teaching were carried out in advance of appointment.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9–16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met, but those in paragraphs 7(a) and (b)[safeguarding] are not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that an appropriate safeguarding policy, ratified by the proprietor, is in place and that all staff, including senior leaders, are trained so that they fully understand their responsibilities in its implementation [Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.4 and 3.6].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that appropriate checks to verify prohibition from teaching, disqualification from childcare and against the barred list are carried out prior to staff starting work [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.12 The school makes many of the appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept.
- 2.13 The school has not ensured that all the required checks are completed in advance of employment starting, including medical fitness. The central register of appointments does not provide all the required information, since it does not indicate whether all required checks have been undertaken, together with accurate dates when the checks have been confirmed. Staff files do not consistently contain sufficient information to confirm correct recruitment procedures.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 19 and 20 are met but those in paragraphs 18 and 21 are not met.**

Action point 3

The school must ensure that all the required checks are completed in advance of an individual starting work, and that staff files have clear evidence to confirm this [paragraphs 18(2)(a) and (b), 18(2)(c)(ii) and (d), 18(3); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

Action point 4

The school must ensure that the single central register is an accurate record of staff appointments, and includes the date that each check was completed [paragraphs 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(b); EYFS 3.12].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.15 Suitable toilet and changing facilities and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.16 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.17 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.

2.18 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.19 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.20 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.21 The proprietor has not ensured that the leadership and management have the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and that they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.22 Leadership and management had not ensured that a suitable safeguarding policy was in place prior to this inspection. Senior leaders have not familiarised themselves with the independent schools standards regulations and show an insecure understanding of these requirements, with resulting errors in implementing them.

2.23 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 5

The school must ensure that all those responsible for the leadership and management of the school undertake the training necessary to ensure a good understanding of the regulatory requirements, so that these can be consistently met [paragraph 34 (1)(a), (b) and (c)].

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended an assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Colette Culligan

Reporting inspector

Mr Christopher Wright

Compliance team inspector (Former headmaster, IAPS school)