



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

RISHWORTH SCHOOL

BOARDING WELFARE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Rishworth School

Full Name of School	Rishworth School
DfE Number	381/6001
Registered Charity Number	1115562
Address	Rishworth School Oldham Road Rishworth Sowerby Bridge West Yorkshire HX6 4QA
Telephone Number	01422 822217
Fax Number	01422 820911
Email Address	admin@rishworth-school.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Alastair Gloag
Chairman of Governors	Dr Andrew Brooks
Age Range	3 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	464
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (278 boys; 186 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 33 11-19: 343 5-11: 88
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 365
Number of Boarders	Total: 99 Full: 96 Weekly: 3
Inspection Dates	28 Jan 2014 to 30 Jan 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in March 2010 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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 in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgement.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chairman of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited all the boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr David Bunkell

Mrs Nathalie Hart

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding
(Head of Sixth Form Boarding, GSA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Rishworth School was founded as a co-educational school by John Wheelwright in 1724, and established in a building which is now the chapel. The school has a Christian ethos, but welcomes pupils of other faiths or none. It stands in over 130 acres of parkland near Sowerby Bridge in West Yorkshire, with a wide range of newer buildings. Currently 464 pupils attend the school, including 121 aged from 3 to 11 who are educated half a mile away at Rishworth's junior school, Heathfield.
- 1.2 The school's aims are to enable pupils to develop a love of learning and the will to succeed, a sense of responsibility, self-discipline, purpose and fulfilment, and a capacity for self-reliance and co-operation. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate personal virtues and spiritual values including honesty, dependability, perseverance, commitment, humility and respect for others. The school is overseen by a board of governors, whose members are also the trustees.
- 1.3 Boarding is offered for pupils aged from 10 to 19. Currently 99 pupils board, mainly as full or weekly boarders, although more flexible arrangements are also available. Girls are accommodated in a single house area at the centre of the site. Boys are housed in two central buildings or in one of two smaller houses in the grounds.
- 1.4 Day pupils travel from a large area on both sides of the Pennines, from a mix of urban and rural communities. Some boarders also live relatively near the school while many come from various parts of the world, including other European countries and the Far East. Of the 84 pupils who speak English as an additional language, 72 receive support from the school as necessary. The school has identified 92 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 Since the previous inspection, changes have taken place to senior management, including the appointment of a new headmaster and a new bursar. Changes have also been made to the management of boarding, which is now overseen by the deputy headmaster.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure that the quality and presentation of food are made more appealing to boarders.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in March 2010. The report made no recommendations.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 A three-day induction programme is held at the beginning of each academic year, with a simplified scheme for any boarders starting at other times. If they wish to do so, boarders may approach a variety of staff for guidance or help with a concern. In addition, a local clergyman is available for boarders to contact. His details, together with those of various helplines, including the Children's Rights Director, are displayed throughout all boarding houses. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Suitable policies ensure that any boarders who become unwell are cared for. First aid is included, as are procedures for any boarders with ongoing medical conditions or disabilities, and the use of household remedies. A sanatorium is adjacent to toilet and washing facilities specifically for the use of boarders who are sick or injured. Matrons are on duty for 24 hours each day, and are suitably qualified. Two separate bedrooms within the sanatorium enable both boys and girls to be housed there separately if necessary. If required, boarders may be accompanied on visits to local health professionals. Care is taken to ensure that only the correct boarder receives any prescribed medicines. Those deemed sufficiently responsible are allowed to self-medicate for ongoing conditions. Medical confidentiality and rights are respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 All boarders may have mobile telephones to enable them to contact their parents and families, and they all have internet access in their study bedrooms for their own laptops which are used in accordance with school safeguarding arrangements and supervision. Landline telephones are also available. In addition they may use school computers in boarding house common rooms. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Accommodation for boys and girls is in entirely separate buildings, with the exception of a small area for boys' boarding in a separate and secure part of the building that houses the girls. All boarders have study bedrooms, with a maximum of four occupants, although many rooms are single. Private study may also be undertaken in the common rooms and in the library or sixth-form centre. Each house has various leisure facilities, and evening use is made of a communal boarders' social centre. All the study bedrooms are near to toilet and washing facilities, with suitable privacy. All boarding accommodation is suitably lit, heated and ventilated. Cleaning is carried out daily. All the boarding houses have internal staircases, within historic buildings that are not suitable for lifts. However, any boarders with temporary mobility problems have been safely assisted. All accommodation has suitable furniture, and room sizes are ample for the number of boarders occupying them. The boarding houses, or individual rooms within them, are allocated according to the age of the relevant boarders. All bedding is clean, warm and suitable. All study bedrooms are equipped with pin-boards to enable boarders to personalise their accommodation. Boarding accommodation is used solely by the boarders, with the exception of day pupils visiting the sanatorium when necessary. Care is taken to ensure total segregation between the boarders and external groups using some school facilities outside school hours, for example the sports hall. Measures to implement the security of buildings and the safety of occupants do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]

- 3.6 A majority of boarders expressed in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire dissatisfaction with the provision of food. Inspectors found that three nutritious main meals are provided each day, with a wide choice of food and careful provision for those with medical or religious dietary needs. In discussion, boarders repeatedly confirmed discontent with food, but acknowledged the wide variety that is available at each meal. They said that some items are always provided which they are happy to eat. All food is prepared hygienically in the kitchen, adjacent to the main dining room. Snacks are available at additional times during the day and evening, and all boarders have access to kitchens in their boarding houses where they may prepare drinks and further snacks themselves. In response to the questionnaire, a small minority of the boarders felt that drinking water is insufficiently available. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Drinking water is widely available from taps or water dispensers throughout the school. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Younger boarders may have their clothing laundered by school staff, and older boarders carry out their own laundry in specially equipped rooms, in or adjacent to each boarding house. When items are laundered by school staff, care is taken to ensure that they are returned to the correct boarder. Necessary items of stationery may be obtained from a stationery room at set times. The boarders may purchase their own toiletries and additional personal items when visiting local shops. The boarders may lock their own study bedrooms, and each boarder has a safe within his or her room to keep any personal items secure. Staff keep any other valuables securely on behalf of the boarders. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 The boarders may participate in activities at lunchtime and immediately after the end of the teaching day, and a further range of activities is arranged later each evening and at weekends. In addition, the boarders have a suitable amount of free time scheduled each day. Full use is made of the school's sporting and other facilities, such as the art room, music school and performing arts centre. In addition there are safe areas where boarders may be alone should they prefer. There are no unusually onerous demands on boarders. Newspapers are provided in the library and in the sixth-form centre, and many boarders use the internet to keep up to date with current affairs. During their free time, groups of boarders may visit local shops. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The school has a clear and suitable policy regarding health and safety matters. The standard of maintenance and decoration of all boarding houses promotes pupils' welfare, health and safety. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school complies with all the relevant requirements for fire safety. Regular fire drills are held and carefully logged. In addition to those which take place during the school day, drills are also held at least once each term at times when the day pupils are not on the premises. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 All necessary measures are in place to promote and safeguard the welfare of the boarders. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school's policy regarding the promotion of good behaviour includes all required details. It is understood by the staff and boarders. [NMS 12]

- 3.14 Care is taken to check the suitability of all staff who work with the boarders. All people aged over 16 who live on the school site but are neither pupils nor members of staff have also been subject to similar checks. These people have signed written agreements relating to such matters as contact with boarders and supervision of visitors. Other than in exceptional circumstances, all maintenance work is carried out in boarding houses when the boarders are not present. In the event of external contractors needing to access the accommodation, careful supervision is always arranged. Parents, rather than the school, make all arrangements for the appointment of guardians. [NMS 14]

3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A brief summary of the school's ethos for boarding is available on the school website, included in the staff handbook and displayed on notice boards throughout the boarding houses. Boarders understand it, and it accurately reflects current practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 Boarding provision has a clear leadership and management structure, and the development of boarding is promoted in the school. Careful links are in place between teaching and residential staff, enhanced by the fact that several teachers carry out regular boarding duties. All staff with senior responsibilities for boarding are highly experienced and well trained. All necessary records are carefully maintained and monitored, with remedial action taken when necessary. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All those who work with the boarders have a clear job description. Induction training is held in boarding routines, and regular reviews are carried out of individual boarding practice, identifying any possible training opportunities. The roles of all adult members of staff households who live on the school site are clear. Sufficient staff are on duty to supervise the boarders at all times, in the variety of locations where they may be. It is always clear to the boarders which member of staff is officially in charge of them. This person is always appropriately experienced and qualified. Regular roll calls and systems of signing in and out when leaving the premises ensure that staff always know the whereabouts of every boarder. The school has a policy of the action to be taken in the event that a boarder cannot be found, and staff are aware of the procedures to be followed. Adult members of staff reside in all boarding houses at night, with responsibility for the boarders in that house. Boarders are able to contact nearby staff during the night if necessary, or to contact the duty matron at any time. Residential staff accommodation is entirely separate from that provided for the boarders, and includes toilet and washing facilities, sleeping accommodation and areas where meals may be taken. Boarders are allowed no access to staff accommodation. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders do not experience discrimination for any reason. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 The boarders have many ways in which they may contribute their views regarding the operation of boarding provision, and due notice is taken of their opinions. They are able to raise any concerns or make complaints, and are not penalised for doing so in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school has a suitable policy to enable formal complaints to be made and this has been implemented correctly on the few occasions that complaints were made. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that the overwhelming majority of parents are highly supportive of all that the school does for their children. [NMS 18]

- 3.22 Systems of school and boarding prefects assist the smooth day-to-day running of the school and the boarding houses, and careful training and supervision ensure that these roles are not abused. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school states clearly that parents must make all arrangements to accommodate their children when not residing on the school premises, for example for occasional weekend breaks during term time, and provides the necessary level of oversight to ensure that accommodation is suitable. [NMS 20]