



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Progress Monitoring Inspection Report

AKS Lytham School

June 2023

School's details

School	AKS Lytham School			
DfE number	888/6014			
Early Years registration number	2624458			
Registered charity number	1016538			
Address	AKS Lytham School Clifton Drive South Lytham St Annes Lancashire FY8 1DT			
Telephone number	01253 784100			
Email address	info@akslytham.com			
Headmaster	Mr David Harrow			
Chair of governors	Mr Philip Owen			
Proprietor	United Church Schools Trust			
Age range	0 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	801			
	EYFS	188	Prep	148
	Seniors	373	Sixth Form	92
Date of inspection	26 June 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 AKS Lytham is a co-educational day school on the Fylde Coast. The school is the result of the merger in 2012 of two schools, Arnold School in Blackpool and King Edward VII and Queen Mary School in Lytham. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which includes a registered setting, and prep school occupy separate purpose-built accommodation on the senior school site. The school is part of United Learning, which includes the charitable trust, The United Church Schools Trust (UCST). The UCST, supported by a local board of governors, is the legal proprietor of the school. The school has 65 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil has an education, health and care plan. 13 pupils speak English as an additional language. The school's previous inspection was an educational quality inspection in October 2022.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the educational quality inspection in October 2022. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18-21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors); EYFS 3.7, 3.9 and 3.12	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7; EYFS 3.7 and 3.9]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standard and the requirements.
- 2.4 Safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively to promote pupils' welfare, including that of children in the EYFS. A suitable level of understanding of statutory requirements ensures that the school provides appropriate support for pupils' needs, including listening to children and taking appropriate action when concerns are raised. Pupils confirmed this to be the case and records of safeguarding show appropriate management of concerns. All staff have received suitable training on the most recent changes to statutory guidance and online safety. New staff complete an appropriate induction process to ensure they understand their safeguarding responsibilities. This includes details of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* Part 1 and Annex B; the staff code of conduct; whistleblowing procedures; procedures for children missing education; and the school's behaviour policy. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies have sufficient status and authority to undertake their roles, and have appropriate levels of training, which is in line with local procedures. The DSL provides regular informal updates to staff and opportunities for discussion on any changes to safeguarding policy and its implementation.
- 2.5 Staff have a secure understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities, including for any pupils with SEND and the particular needs of children in the EYFS. They recognise the importance of 'early help' strategies, know how to report any concerns about pupils or other staff and adults working with children, and do so appropriately. They understand the varied types of child-on-child abuse and the seriousness of such behaviours. Appropriate records for safeguarding concerns are maintained, which are regularly monitored by the DSL. These show timely and appropriate liaison with both parents and local agencies. Members of the governing body are suitably trained. They undertake an annual safeguarding review with appropriate knowledge and due diligence, demonstrating thorough oversight of arrangements. A full review of the recruitment of new staff has been undertaken since the previous inspection and all staff and governors involved in the process have completed training for safe recruitment and for the management of the single central register of appointments (SCR). Suitable references are now received for all staff before they commence employment. Governors undertake regular spot checks on recruitment files and the SCR. They provide suitable support and challenge.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21; EYFS 3.7, 3.9 and 3.12]

- 2.6 The school meets the standards and the requirements.
- 2.7 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Senior staff and governors undertake a regular process of review of the recruitment process including of the management of the single central register of appointments

(SCR). The school now ensures that that where the role of a member of staff changes the full range of checks are completed. The school now ensures that it sees a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by the employment business before an agency worker is due to begin work at the school and that this information is recorded on the SCR. It requires, in the contract or other arrangements which the proprietor makes with any employment business, that such arrangements are fulfilled.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]

- 2.8 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

- 2.9 The school meets the standard.
- 2.10 The school has fully and successfully implemented the action plan required by the previous inspection. Since that inspection, governors and senior leaders have completed a full review of the recruitment process and ensured that all staff involved have completed training on all aspects of the systems employed. Senior leaders and governors now undertake regular, effective monitoring of recruitment processes. The school's leadership and management now demonstrate good knowledge and skills and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently. Proprietorial review is suitably thorough and supportive to ensure that policies are effectively implemented and the school actively promotes the wellbeing of all pupils, including children in the EYFS.

3. Regulatory action points

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the chair of governors. She visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. She scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mrs Diane Gardiner

Reporting inspector