

School inspection report

23 to 25 September 2025

AKS Lytham

Clifton Drive South

Lytham St Annes

Lancashire

FY8 1DT

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'.

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Summary of inspection findings

1. Trustees and the local governing board maintain a knowledgeable oversight of all areas of school life. They have an array of effective methods for gathering evidence with which to evaluate the school's fulfilment of its aims. They ensure that leaders fulfil their responsibilities in meeting the regulatory requirements, including in the early years, and that the requirements of the Standards are met consistently.
2. The curriculum and co-curricular programme meet the abilities, interests and aspirations of pupils. The taught curriculum allows pupils to learn and achieve qualifications in a broad range of subjects. Trustees and leaders have provided high-quality classroom and recreational resources to support pupils' learning. The co-curricular programme provides variety and, in many cases, directly supports work in lessons. Teachers have secure knowledge in their subject. Most teachers use teaching methods that are effective in enabling pupils to acquire new knowledge. In a few lessons, planned activities do not encourage those pupils who are ready to apply their learning in more complex ways. As a result, they lose interest and do not learn as effectively as they could.
3. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified effectively and a range of strategies is put in place to support their learning. Teachers adjust planning and teaching appropriately to ensure pupils' individual needs are met. Leaders in the senior school evaluate the effectiveness of the support given to pupils who have SEND. However, the quality of leaders' evaluation for younger pupils in the prep school does not ensure that they have sufficient insight into how well pupils' needs are being met.
4. Pupils' physical and mental health are very well cared for. Buildings and grounds are well maintained. Those responsible ensure that risks to pupils are minimised through the systematic and detailed checks of health and safety and fire procedures. The behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy are understood by staff and pupils and are effective. Pupils are well behaved, and bullying is rare. The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is enhanced by a programme of visiting speakers. It includes issues relevant to pupils' ages. The programme includes all the requirements of relationships and sex education (RSE).
5. Leaders in the early years, including in the separately registered setting, successfully help the youngest children to be very well prepared for transition into Reception and into Year 1. They provide a well-planned and well-delivered curriculum. Teachers are knowledgeable about how young children learn and develop. They use this knowledge to support children to thrive.
6. The curriculum enables pupils to deepen their understanding of the importance of respect for those with different backgrounds and lives. Pupils support others through a variety of leadership initiatives in the school and through volunteer work in the local community. The 'PEAKS' programme (pursuit of excellence at AKS) successfully cultivates pupils' mature awareness of themselves and others, as well as providing opportunities for leadership.
7. Leaders have developed a precisely planned curriculum for careers education which starts with the youngest children. Teachers are very well trained and confident in the content of the course, which provides pupils with consistently high-quality lessons. In addition to the broad curriculum, pupils receive exceptional quality individualised advice about a range of decisions at all key transition points in their education. Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to meet those from a significant

and varied range of professions. Pupils undertake high-quality work experience that is precisely aligned with their interests, ambitions and studies. Pupils can make well-informed choices because of the extensive guidance they receive. As a result, this is a significant strength of the school.

8. Safeguarding arrangements are effective in securing and promoting the wellbeing of pupils. Safeguarding leaders liaise effectively with external agencies. Recruitment procedures are thorough.

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:

- systematically evaluate the effectiveness of support for prep school pupils who have SEND to ensure that their needs are being well met and that they make the best progress possible over time
- ensure that teaching identifies when pupils are able to apply their learning in more complex ways, so that pupils' interest and learning is sustained more effectively.

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

9. The proprietary body, governors, trust executives and leaders collectively ensure that the school is meeting the requirements of the Standards effectively and consistently. They achieve this through a comprehensive and cohesive evaluation of all areas of school life. They gather evidence through various methods, including surveys, discussions with the pupil committees, staff, parents and direct observation. Their actions ensure that effective steps are taken to improve provision for pupils, for example in developing digital education and sport across the school.
10. Leaders at all levels have secure knowledge of their areas of responsibility and apply it effectively. They regularly evaluate the quality of teaching and monitor pupils' work. They use data to reassure themselves that good levels of progress are being maintained. However, the work of leaders to evaluate a range of information about the effectiveness of provision for pupils who have SEND is inconsistent for younger pupils. As a result, they do not consistently know how well the provision is supporting pupils' needs.
11. Leaders prioritise the wellbeing of pupils in the decisions that they make. For example, leaders actively promote and invest in the emotional welfare of pupils through powerful initiatives in mental health education and other curricular programmes. Leaders foster effective links with external agencies to promote the wellbeing of pupils and seek additional specialist expertise where needed. Leaders have highly positive and productive working relationships with external agencies, including local safeguarding partners and a range of other professionals. This ensures that the needs of pupils are met effectively.
12. Leaders are adept at identifying and managing potential risks to pupils' wellbeing, safety and care. They are well trained and, in turn, have trained staff effectively to implement risk management systems. There is a range of suitable risk assessments in place related to on-site and off-site activities. Leaders' work is regularly quality assured by the proprietor body and governors. They ensure that any action or resources that are needed are implemented quickly. For example, they have worked with leaders to implement procedures which can better identify the needs of each individual pupil.
13. The school uses its website to provide appropriate and accessible information for pupils, parents and relevant external agencies. This includes all the policies and documents required, including those relating to the early years. Parents receive annual reports and other frequent information about their individual child's progress. Leaders provide the local authority with all required information relating to any pupils who have an education, health and care plan (EHCP plan), including information related to finance and funding. Leaders also inform the local authority of any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition points.
14. The school's complaints procedure is appropriate and implemented effectively. It takes account of all statutory guidance related to the management of complaints. It encourages complainants to share concerns with academic, pastoral or senior leaders. All concerns, including at the informal stage, are recorded in detail, with an accurate chronology. The school follows its published procedures exactly if complaints move to the formal stages. Records are stored centrally, and leaders and trustees regularly review these to identify any themes or patterns.

15. Leaders make appropriate arrangements for those who have SEND through an accessibility plan. They implement reasonable adjustments, including to teaching methods, to enable any pupils who have SEND to take a full part in school life. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
16. Trust executives oversee the effective implementation of safeguarding arrangements through regular contact with safeguarding leaders, discussions with pupils, and reviews of documentation, including the rationale for any decisions. They ensure that all reasonable action is taken to keep pupils safe.

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

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

Section 2: Quality of education, training and recreation

18. Leaders provide a broad curriculum. Leaders have carefully planned the curriculum so that it meets the aptitudes and needs of pupils who have a wide range of interests. Specialist teachers in art, modern foreign languages and music ensure that pupils develop good skills in those areas from an early age. The curriculum enables pupils in the senior school and sixth form to select from a broad range of subjects. Pupils study a balanced collection of subjects to GCSE and A level. Leaders are responsive to the interests and aspirations of pupils, recently introducing additional qualifications in photography, sociology and computer science into the sixth form.
19. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan lessons to successfully develop pupils' knowledge. They use high-quality resources effectively in lessons. They manage behaviour effectively. Teachers effectively promote an atmosphere in which pupils act responsibly. As a result, pupils are, for the most part, attentive and respond positively to instructions. They respond clearly to teachers' questioning. In many lessons, teachers provoke pupils to think and reason for themselves. However, some teaching does not encourage pupils to move beyond factual learning and apply their learning in more complex ways when they are ready to do so. As a result, some pupils lose interest and do not learn as effectively as they could.
20. Most teachers encourage pupils to use accurate subject-specific vocabulary, provide a clear rationale for their arguments, and apply their learning independently. For instance, pupils present research projects at the end of Year 7 which combine a range of information. Older pupils who are the school's academic scholars prepare longer pieces of independent work alongside A-level studies to support their university applications.
21. Leaders oversee a suitable framework to evaluate the progress of individual pupils relative to their starting points. Teachers use this information to adjust their lesson planning and strategies to support pupils, such as modifying questioning techniques in whole-class discussions. Leaders use performance information effectively to evaluate the extent of pupils' academic progress and where they need to support some pupils more. Pupils by the end of Year 11 and Year 13 attain a broad range of appropriate qualifications, and progress to highly appropriate post-18 destinations.
22. Teachers support pupils who have SEND well and, where needed, implement adjustments so that pupils can access their learning more effectively. Consequently, most pupils access the curriculum alongside their peers, learn effectively and achieve well. Where needed, there is a range of interventions and additional support for pupils, such as additional external specialist support or the prep school's Beehive provision. However, leaders are not always reviewing the difference that they make for pupils in the prep school who have SEND. They do not have sufficient knowledge of whether provision for pupils is as effective as possible.
23. The very few pupils who are identified in the prep school as speaking English as an additional language (EAL) are given effective support in lessons to support the development of their linguistic skills. They also receive timely and appropriate interventions in small groups or individually, where needed.
24. Well-trained adults plan and deliver a curriculum taking into careful consideration the important knowledge and skills that children need. They prioritise children's development and understanding in language, communication, early reading, writing and number. Adults interact with children during

planned activities and while they play to encourage them to develop their vocabulary, listening and speaking skills. Teachers use a range of resources, including the outdoor area, to enhance children's learning. Children are well prepared to transition into Year 1.

25. Activities enable pupils to explore new interests outside the taught curriculum and to develop their own specialisms, for example in music, drama, sport, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (DofE), or the Combined Cadet Force (CCF). The high-quality outdoor environment coupled with an array of trips and visits enrich the curriculum that pupils experience.
26. Pupils also develop their learning through a significant number and variety of co-curricular opportunities. For example, in the 'MathsFeast' club, younger pupils work with network algorithms, and in the mock trial society pupils develop oracy skills. Leaders provide co-curricular activities that stimulate pupils to be intellectually inquisitive.

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

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

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

28. Leaders in the prep school plan in detail the development of pupils' respect for other people. For example, children in Reception create artwork linked to Diwali, Ramadan and Eid. Year 2 pupils learn about rituals and places of worship, and Year 4 pupils the significance of pilgrimage. Lessons challenge pupils to consider, for example, racism, or the difference between a multi-cultural and multi-faith society. Leaders use assemblies to educate pupils about a range of disabilities, for example teaching pupils simple sign language. As a result, the curriculum ensures pupils are sharply aware of the value of diversity.
29. Children in the early years gain self-confidence as a result of the curriculum which helps them to learn to understand each other's feelings and emotions, listen to each other and take turns. They learn about right and wrong, and taking responsibility when they make mistakes. They learn about the importance of kindness. Teachers support children's early understanding of healthy eating and looking after themselves, such as the importance of brushing their teeth. Children's fine and gross motor skills are well supported through well-planned activities and resources in the early years area. As a result, children develop physical and emotional skills appropriate for their age.
30. There is an effectively planned and well-taught PSHE programme, including coverage of RSE, at an age-appropriate level. The curriculum addresses statutory issues and content related to healthy relationships, consent, and emotional wellbeing. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their preconceptions and whether they need to reconsider their views.
31. Lessons provide pupils with strategies to sustain or improve their emotional and mental health. Leaders assign time in which pupils are encouraged to be reflective about their work and their own wellbeing. Senior pupils are encouraged to talk about adolescent issues such as anxiety and self-worth. The school's focus on oracy has developed pupils' public speaking skills and confidence in articulating their views and concerns. As a result, pupils are well supported and develop self-esteem and confidence.
32. There is an appropriate curriculum which provides for pupils' physical education (PE) and their wider understanding of health and fitness. Leaders have designed a programme of health education that effectively extends pupils' knowledge. This starts with the youngest children, who learn about important hygienic routines such as teeth-brushing. As they get older, pupils develop an awareness of nutrition, the importance of exercise and self-care. Pupils of all ages access high-quality resources for their physical fitness and understanding of sport. Teachers deliver the PE curriculum effectively. Lessons are enhanced by opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport. Many prep and senior pupils regularly take part in team and individual sports at school and in the local area.
33. Leaders ensure that there are appropriate behaviour and anti-bullying policies that are well understood and implemented consistently by staff and pupils of all ages. Leaders promote good behaviour and anti-bullying through assemblies and the PSHE curriculum. Incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are rare and dealt with effectively. Leaders routinely review this information to ensure that they are supporting pupils effectively.
34. Buildings and outdoor areas provide suitable accommodation in which pupils study and enjoy recreation. Those responsible maintain buildings and grounds to a high standard. The school meets

the requirements of health and safety and fire legislation and maintains appropriate records relating to this. Pupils are well supervised on the school site and during any off-site activities.

35. The medical centres meet the needs of pupils who are sick or need first aid and provide appropriate accommodation. They provide places where pupils can seek physical or emotional support. Qualified staff administer first aid and medicines appropriately. Staff have up-to-date training, including in paediatric first aid.
36. The school maintains appropriate and accurate admission and attendance registers. Leaders have updated their policies and procedures relating to attendance in line with the latest statutory guidance. They understand their responsibilities should pupils have a prolonged absence. Levels of attendance throughout the school are high. Leaders inform the appropriate local authority of any pupils who join or leave the school at non-standard transition points in the school year.

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

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

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

38. Leaders encourage respect for, and promote the understanding of, differences between people, including those related to race, religion, and different sexual orientation. Through assemblies and the PSHE curriculum, pupils are encouraged to discuss, for example, stereotyping or the difference between prejudice and discrimination. Leaders promote pupils' cultural awareness through the extensive opportunities in art, music and drama provided by the taught and co-curricular programmes. As a result, pupils are socially mature, tolerant and respect individuality.
39. Pupils learn about British values, including democracy, respect for others' opinions, adherence to the rule of law, and the exercise of freedom of choice. Pupils of all ages take part in UK Parliament Week, which provides an opportunity to understand the governance of the country. Visiting speakers address pupils about civil and criminal law and the role of national and international institutions. Pupils learn about important public services, such as the police. This starts with children in the early years who learn about the people who help them in society, such as nurses and firefighters.
40. The curriculum emphasises that pupils have a responsibility towards society. Pupils engage in a wide range of service to both the school and outside community. For instance, pupils in the prep school select charities and co-operate in the planning of fundraising events. Pupils in the senior school volunteer in care homes and foodbanks. Pupils in the sixth form undertake an annual project cleaning the Fylde sand dunes.
41. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles and responsibilities in the school community. For instance, the school's 'PEAKS' programme encourages pupils to identify everyday leadership in their school lives. It successfully promotes religious, racial and cultural inclusivity. School committees involve over 100 pupils. They consider all aspects of pupils' lives at school. Leaders routinely use the committees as a channel to keep informed about pupils' views, as they look to improve the experience for pupils. Trust executives regularly meet panels of pupils to discuss specific aspects of school life. Additionally, pupils in the sixth form organise and manage the Thursday lunchtime co-curricular programme for younger pupils.
42. Leaders provide a well-planned careers programme. This programme includes formal careers testing, interviews with a qualified careers advisor, and teaching about creating curriculum vitae and online professional profiles. Pupils take part in national careers and apprenticeships weeks, which include lectures, activities and workshops. Visitors speak to all year groups about the world of work, including promoting equality in professions where some people with protected characteristics are less well represented. When needed, pupils receive support for specialist examinations, for example in medicine or law. Leaders identify former pupils who mentor or give work experience to sixth-form pupils, for example in applications for biochemistry or photography courses. The planned careers guidance ensures that pupils are well-informed and supported for their next steps.
43. Leaders provide a coherent economic education programme that progresses as pupils get older. The youngest children learn about the use of money through role play. As they get older, pupils learn about gaming, gambling and scams. Year 9 and Year 10 pupils explore credit cards, identity theft and the management of personal finance. Banking professionals deliver detailed workshops to sixth-

form pupils about insurance, tax and mortgages. The school's 'skills for life day' prepares pupils in the sixth form for life away from home, including advice on basic first aid, cookery and DIY.

44. School leaders provide a curriculum that supports the growth of pupils' social understanding, including right and wrong. For example, children in the early years are supported to learn, explore and play together. They learn to listen to each other, take turns, and act kindly. They quickly learn to take responsibility when they have acted inappropriately and apologise.

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

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

Safeguarding

46. Trustees, the local governing body and leaders are well trained, appropriate to their role, and knowledgeable about their responsibilities. Collectively, they ensure that safeguarding arrangements are outlined appropriately in the school's safeguarding and associated policies. These include the additional expectations of adults in the early years setting. The arrangements are implemented effectively so that the wellbeing of pupils is promoted.
47. Trustees monitor the effectiveness of all aspects of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. They maintain regular contact with the school's safeguarding leaders. They check on the effectiveness of leaders' work by making regular on-site visits, talking to staff and pupils, analysing anonymised information from safeguarding records and reviewing other documentation. Leaders have created wellbeing rooms and maintain a partnership with the National Health Service (NHS) to provide professional counselling for pupils.
48. Staff working with pupils receive regular and up-to-date safeguarding training at an appropriate level, including approaches to working with the youngest children in the Nursery classes. Staff have an effective understanding of arrangements. They are highly alert to the potential risks faced by pupils. Staff report concerns quickly and reassure themselves that action has been taken. They report any concerns, including low-level concerns, about adult behaviour to safeguarding leaders.
49. Leaders with designated safeguarding responsibilities work closely together and share knowledge and expertise. They ensure that there is effective and timely communication and action to secure the safety and wellbeing of pupils of all ages. Leaders regularly review the effectiveness of the actions they have taken to see if there are ways in which they can improve their approaches.
50. Leaders ensure that records are detailed, identify the risks to pupils, and explain the rationale for decisions made. They work closely with relevant safeguarding partners, including children's services, 'Prevent' duty teams, the police and the local authority. Safeguarding leaders contribute to local advisory groups to provide feedback on ways in which the local area could improve safeguarding provision. Leaders act promptly to secure the right support at the right time for pupils.
51. The school provides a range of ways in which pupils can raise concerns or worries. Leaders advertise widely the importance of reporting concerns to staff. Leaders also provide drop-boxes and QR codes, which enable pupils of different ages to share their concerns anonymously. Leaders have invested in additional ways in which pupils can report their concerns, such as the sixth-form team, who are trained to support younger pupils. They have also provided staff in the senior school medical centre with additional training on emotional wellbeing.
52. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including online. Internet filtering and monitoring systems protect pupils online and identify any inappropriate use. Leaders act quickly to address any issues and regularly test the effectiveness of the software. The safeguarding team, school leaders and the nominated safeguarding executive analyse records of internet activity to see where they can further improve oversight and provision for pupils.
53. All appropriate pre-employment checks are made on adults before they encounter pupils. Staff maintain an accurate single central record of appointments and appropriate staff files relating to safer recruitment checks.

The extent to which the school meets Standards relating to safeguarding

54. All the relevant Standards are met.

The quality of the early years foundation stage in the registered early years provision

AKS Nursery – AKS Baby & Toddler Room

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

55. The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good.
56. Leaders and staff successfully help children to thrive. They offer an inclusive environment where children's individual needs are recognised and supported. Staff skilfully help babies settle quickly. Children and babies form strong bonds with adults who respond sensitively to their needs. Toddlers explore confidently, knowing that practitioners are close by to guide and encourage them. Pre-school children show independence and enthusiasm, making choices in their play, forming friendships, and developing resilience.
57. Children benefit from purposeful environments that capture their curiosity indoors and outdoors. Leaders and staff make effective use of the learning environments to deliver their curriculum to children, especially outdoors. This includes excursions across the school site and beyond into the local community. Staff provide children with a variety of exciting learning experiences that inspire them to play and learn. Staff make good use of the library space to provide small-group activities that give an additional layer of learning support. Children borrow books and take part in small-group activities that help to boost language and confidence.
58. Staff model positive behaviour consistently. They intervene sensitively to comfort children and guide them in understanding the impact of their actions. They help children to recognise the reason for the rules. For example, they remind younger children that standing on a chair is unsafe and help them to return to focus on the task they are completing. Children behave well.

Quality of education

59. The quality of education is good.
60. Leaders' curriculum is ambitious and tailored accurately to children's developmental stages. They place a strong focus on helping babies to build secure attachments and toddlers to learn to play cooperatively. Leaders identify what they want pre-school children to know to extend their vocabulary, concentration and independence in preparation for school. Children gain a secure foundation for their future learning.
61. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of each child and make effective use of their observations and ongoing assessment. Staff accurately identify what children already know and can do to support their planning for children's learning. Leaders and staff adapt the provision responsively, such as introducing large climbing equipment to meet the needs of children with a strong preference for physical challenge. However, leaders have not identified that some daily routines do not fully extend children's learning to the highest level. For example, this is evident during some mealtime routines and arrival times for older children.

62. Leaders and staff are proactive in ensuring early intervention is used effectively. They take targeted action to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and identify where they may need additional support. Leaders analyse children's language development and focus staff teaching specifically to help children develop strong foundations in their language skills. For example, they help toddlers to understand the meaning of new words and develop accuracy in their spoken sentences. Children become articulate communicators.

Behaviour and attitudes

63. Behaviour and attitudes are good.

64. Staff skilfully help children to understand boundaries and social expectations. For example, they remind toddlers that standing on a chair is unsafe and guide them back to safe play. Practitioners encourage children to develop empathy, learn each other's names and practise turn-taking. Toddlers transition from moments of high excitement to calm listening with sensitive adult support, while pre-school children begin to resolve minor conflicts with growing independence.

65. Children demonstrate curiosity, confidence, and determination in their play. Babies show resilience when settling and develop confidence in their interactions with adults and other children. Older children sustain concentration in group and independent activities. They take pride in their achievements, particularly when tackling physical challenges outdoors. For example, toddlers exclaim 'I did it' and then repeat the activity after challenging themselves to ride a balance bike down a ramp.

66. Staff support babies to gain resilience when encountering frustrations. Pre-school children sustain concentration in both group and independent activities. Staff successfully support children to gain positive attitudes to learning, which helps them develop confidence and try new things.

Personal development

67. The personal development of children is good.

68. Leaders and staff plan the curriculum effectively to support children's independence, confidence, and wider personal growth. They encourage babies to gain the confidence to explore freely and develop their curiosity. Toddlers take increasing responsibility for their self-care, such as managing handwashing routines for themselves. Staff help pre-school children develop practical life skills, including fastening buttons and managing dressing routines, preparing them for dressing in their school uniform.

69. Staff actively teach children about emotions and help them to regulate their emotions through daily practice. For example, staff use stories and resources to help children to name and talk about feelings. Staff guide children to express themselves, celebrate individuality, and respect others.

70. Leaders and staff enrich children's learning with experiences beyond the Nursery that support their understanding of the world around them. This includes local walks, visits to the library and local care home, and contributing to community art displays. Children develop resilience, a strong sense of identity, and awareness of the wider world. This helps prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

71. Leadership and management are good.
72. Leaders demonstrate strategic decision-making shaped by local priorities, such as a strong focus on communication and language. Leaders foster a culture where practitioners understand their responsibilities as role models for children's learning and behaviour, and this is evident throughout the setting.
73. Leaders invest in staff development and wellbeing. They provide apprentices and new staff with thorough induction and mentoring, while more experienced staff benefit from targeted professional development linked to meeting children's needs. This has recently focused on providing specific training in speech and language to support children in the early stages of their communication development. Leaders reduce unnecessary workload for staff and provide them with weekly planning time.
74. Leaders build strong partnerships with parents through regular communication and consultation groups. They listen carefully to parental feedback and respond thoughtfully. For example, they have reviewed and made changes to the menus, seeking parents' views as part of the process. Leaders adopt a collaborative approach, which strengthens trust and helps parents feel involved in their children's education and care.
75. Leaders work effectively in partnership with external professionals, including occupational health and speech and language therapists, to support children who have SEND. They ensure that staff are suitably trained and supported to implement agreed strategies, such as adapting resources. This joined-up approach enables children who have SEND to receive quality support and creates continuity in their experiences between home and nursery.

Safeguarding

76. Safeguarding is effective.
77. The premises are secure, with controlled entry and clear protocols for visitors, as well as for children's drop-off and collection arrangements. Staff complete room and outing risk assessments, and leaders maintain effective oversight of health and safety arrangements. Safer recruitment procedures are robust, and leaders carry out all required pre-employment checks.
78. All staff complete safeguarding training as part of their induction and update it regularly. Leaders maintain close links with local safeguarding partners. They use in-house refreshers to ensure staff knowledge remains current and check understanding through scenarios and quizzes at staff meetings. Leaders and staff are confident in recognising, recording, and escalating concerns. The safeguarding arrangements protect children's welfare effectively.

Recommended next steps

Leaders should:

- strengthen the monitoring of children's daily experiences to ensure that all daily routines support the highest quality of learning.

The extent to which the school meets the requirements of the early years foundation stage

79. The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

School details

School	AKS Lytham
Department for Education number	888/6014
Registered early years number	2624458
Registered charity number	1016538
Address	AKS Lytham Clifton Drive South Lytham St Annes Lancashire FY8 1DT
Phone number	01253 784100
Email address	info@akslytham.com
Website	www.akslytham.com
Proprietor	United Church Schools Trust
Chair	Dr Rosalind Given-Wilson
Headteacher	Mr David Harrow
Age range	Birth to 18
Number of pupils	771
Number of children in the early years registered setting	154
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2023

Information about the school

80. AKS Lytham is a co-educational day school on the Fylde Coast, Lancashire. 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 school is run by United Church Schools Trust. The proprietary board is supported by a local governing body and executives from the trust with specific expertise. There is a nursery, for children from birth to four years old, a prep school, for pupils in Reception and Years 1 to 6, and a senior school and sixth form, for pupils in Years 7 to 13. These are all housed across two buildings on the same site.
81. There are 34 children in the early years in two classes. There is also a separate early years setting which is registered with Ofsted and which provides for children from birth to four years old.
82. The school has identified 70 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Five pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
83. The school has identified 12 pupils as speaking English as an additional language.
84. The school states that its aim is for students to pursue their passions, achieve their ambitions and, ultimately, develop the capacity and desire to change their worlds for the better – for themselves and others – all within a happy, safe and exciting community.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

23 to 25 September 2025

85. A team of eight inspectors visited the school for two and a half days.

86. 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 trustees and local governing body
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- visits to the registered setting
- 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.

87. 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**.

Independent Schools Inspectorate

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For more information, please visit isi.net