REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION REPORT

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ARGYLE HOUSE SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 2018

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SCHOOL'S DETAIL

School	Argyle House School			
DfE number	394/6003			
Address	19-20 Thornhill Park Sunderland Tyne and Wear SR2 7LA			
Telephone number	01915 100726			
Email address	info@argylehouseschool.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Chris Johnson			
Proprietor	Mr Chris Johnson			
Age range	3 to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	240			
	Boys	122	**Girls**	118
	EYFS	30	**Juniors**	95
	Seniors	115		
Inspection dates	21 to 22 February 2018			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school.

1.1 Argyle House is a day school for boys and girls aged between 3 and 16 years. The school comprises a senior school, with a junior section which includes a nursery and reception class. The headmaster, in post since 2008, is the proprietor, and is assisted by an advisory governor.

1.2 Founded in 1884, the school has remained in family ownership. It moved to the present premises in 1969, when sold to the current family owners.

1.3 Since the previous inspection there has been a programme of redecoration, and a new dining room and resource area for information and communication technology (ICT) have been added.

What the school seeks to do

1.4 The school seeks to create a family atmosphere and to foster responsibility, reflective reasoning, resourcefulness, resilience and respect. The school aims to provide facilities such as those found in larger schools, but to keep class sizes small. It emphasises that education should be fun, but that children should work hard to achieve their best.

About the pupils

1.5 Pupils come mainly from white British backgrounds and live within a 15-mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of the pupils is average. The school has identified 44 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include dyslexia and difficulties with literacy and numeracy. Some of these pupils receive additional specialist help. Three pupils have an education health and care (EHC) plan. No pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). The school and parents together identify those pupils whom they consider to be the most able or talented in the school's population, and the number of these pupils varies over time. The curriculum is modified for these pupils to provide them with additional levels of challenge.

2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports 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. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was 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 in the relevant section of the report 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 full regulations and requirements can be found here: The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

Key findings

2.1 The school meets the 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 no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 In the junior school, the school measures attainment using national curriculum tests. In the years 2015 to 2016, the results were above the national average for maintained schools.

2.3 At GCSE in the years 2015 to 2016, performance has been in line with the national average for maintained schools. The school's data for 2017, together with scrutiny of pupils' work, indicate that attainment has risen since to above average.

2.4 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.

2.5 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 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; 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 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.

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

2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required.

2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.12 Suitable toilet, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their medical 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.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include 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 those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, and its results in public examinations, 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.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 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.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

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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 and the advisory governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Honoree Gordon	Reporting inspector
Mr William Sawyer	Compliance team inspector (Headmaster, Yarm Preparatory School, HMC)