

Material change inspection report

16 July 2026

Ryecroft School

Kent Street

Walsall

WS2 7AN

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'.

Inspection outcome

The school has submitted a material change request to increase capacity from 60 to 63 pupils.

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school Standards if the material change is implemented. It is recommended that the material change be approved.

Inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

ISSR paragraphs 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2)(a), 3(i)

1. Leaders plan and implement a suitable curriculum for pupils across the school's age range. They provide appropriate programmes and schemes of work to meet the needs, aptitudes and abilities of the pupils, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and an education, health and care plan (EHC plan).
2. Leaders implement effective personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), including appropriate relationships and sex education designed to take account of and meet the needs of the pupils. Together with other teaching across the curriculum, this programme enables pupils to acquire appropriate personal, interpersonal and social skills. Additional therapy provision supports pupils' physical, social and emotional development.
3. Leaders ensure that both the curriculum and teaching actively promote pupils' understanding of British values, including the rule of law, democracy, individual liberty and respect for people with faiths, beliefs and backgrounds different to their own. The curriculum is designed effectively to prepare pupils for life in multicultural British society.
4. Appropriate reference is made to each pupil's EHC plan in teachers' planning and leaders' review of pupils' progress and next steps over time. This ensures that teaching carefully takes into account individual pupils' needs and enables them to gain relevant experience in all required areas of learning within their personalised and appropriate learning programmes. Leaders put due emphasis on preparing pupils for adult life.
5. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

ISSR paragraph 5(a)

6. Leaders and staff actively strengthen pupils' understanding and acquisition of British values by promoting and modelling them within the day-to-day operation of the school, including through its ethos and behavioural expectations. The school's approach is designed to reflect the ages and abilities of pupils and to take account of their individual needs.
7. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

ISSR paragraphs 7 (a) and 7(b), 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16

8. Leaders ensure that the suitable safeguarding policy is implemented effectively and understood by staff. Suitable measures are taken to reduce the risk to pupils of potential safeguarding risks such as those of radicalisation and extremism. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ensure

that safeguarding concerns are reported, recorded and monitored effectively and that appropriate actions are taken to help and support pupils affected. Safeguarding records contain suitable content and are securely stored. The safeguarding team maintains effective relationships with local agencies and makes appropriate referrals without delay when appropriate. The safeguarding arrangements are reviewed annually, diligently and effectively by the proprietor.

9. Pupils are encouraged to share any concerns with staff, who take prompt and appropriate steps to support them should they do so. Staff understand the importance of early help provision and have a suitable awareness of child-on-child abuse and how to report any concerns about this. There is due regard for pupils' mental health. Pupils feel safe at school.
10. Leaders ensure that safeguarding training for staff, including all members of the safeguarding team and members of the governing board, is comprehensive and appropriate. Leaders emphasise the importance of the continuing and frequent provision of safeguarding training. The use of technology by pupils and staff is suitably controlled, including through an effective internet filtering and monitoring system. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online.
11. Leaders understand and fulfil their responsibility to respond appropriately and, when required, make prompt referrals to relevant external agencies, including the local authority, should allegations be made about the behaviour of staff or other adults working with pupils. Leaders also understand their responsibility to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) if necessary. Leaders ensure that staff are confident to report any concerns about the behaviour of adults, including low-level concerns, and to self-refer when appropriate.
12. There are sufficient leaders with responsibility for safeguarding to maintain the school's effective safeguarding arrangements and procedures should the proposed increase in pupil numbers be approved.
13. There is a suitable behaviour policy that takes into account the needs of pupils. It sets out appropriate sanctions but is focused effectively on a positive approach which supports pupils in developing strategies to help them regulate their own behaviour when they feel challenged in specific situations. Leaders and staff implement the policy effectively. Behavioural incidents are reported efficiently, scrupulously recorded and analysed to inform leaders about the effectiveness of their responses to any behavioural concerns and support for pupils affected so that practice can be continually strengthened. As a result, the number of serious behavioural incidents has been substantially reduced since the previous inspection. The school's behaviour management procedures are likely to remain suitable should the proposed increase in pupil numbers be approved.
14. The school meets health and safety requirements. The proprietor and senior leaders oversee and monitor the school's methodical health and safety arrangements effectively. Staff have a suitable understanding of the school's health and safety procedures and receive appropriate training in these. The school's health and safety arrangements are likely to remain suitable once the proposed material change takes place.
15. The school's fire risk policy is implemented effectively. Recommended actions from the most recent fire risk assessment have been appropriately prioritised and carried out in a timely manner. Staff receive appropriate fire safety training and demonstrate suitable awareness of the procedures to follow to prevent fire risks and in a fire emergency. Appropriate fire safety equipment is in place and maintenance of alarms and other equipment is carried out and recorded carefully and effectively. Regular fire drills take place so that pupils know the

evacuation procedures in the event of a fire. Those requiring reassurance or specific support during these procedures receive appropriate help. Leaders have ensured that fire safety procedures are suitable for the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

16. First aid is administered swiftly and appropriately when required through the effective implementation of a suitable first aid policy. There is a sufficient number of qualified first aiders, including those trained in paediatric practice. There are suitably rigorous procedures in place for administering medication and specific guidance for the care of pupils with particular medical conditions. Any accidents are recorded meticulously. Procedures for contacting emergency services are understood by staff. There is suitable provision of, and ready access to, EpiPens to enable quick response to any anaphylactic incidents. Appropriate first aid procedures are in place for school trips and visits. First aid arrangements are likely to continue to be effective if the material change is approved.
17. Suitable guidance and procedures are in place to ensure pupils are supervised effectively throughout the school day, including when pupils are off site or engaged in outdoor activities. Leaders have ensured that the proposed increase in pupil numbers is being matched by appropriate staffing levels, so that effective supervision is likely to be maintained once the proposed material change takes place.
18. Leaders and staff implement an appropriate risk assessment policy which provides for systematic risk assessment and pays attention to key areas of risk and pupils' welfare. These include pupils' activities on and off the school site. Staff receive relevant training in the management of risk and leaders check and monitor completed risk assessments and evaluate them to ensure their continued effectiveness. Leaders have carefully risk assessed the potential impact of the proposed increase in the maximum number of pupils and have put in place appropriate steps to mitigate any potential risks.
19. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

ISSR paragraphs 18, 19, 20, 21

20. Leaders ensure that all required pre-employment checks on staff and governors are carried out in line with current statutory guidance and are recorded accurately on the single central record of appointments (SCR). The school does not use supply staff.
21. Additional staff recruited to cater for the proposed increase in pupil numbers have been subject to the appropriate safer recruitment checks.
22. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

ISSR paragraphs 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29

23. The premises provide sufficient and suitable accommodation and facilities to meet the needs of the proposed maximum number of pupils across all age groups.
24. Toilet, washing and changing facilities are sufficient in number and suitable, particularly with regard to pupils' hygiene, personal privacy and dignity requirements.
25. Suitable accommodation is provided for the medical examination and treatment of pupils.
26. The premises are maintained to a suitable standard. Routine and emergency maintenance tasks

are carried out efficiently. There are effective means whereby staff can report any maintenance or health and safety concerns regarding the premises.

27. Leaders ensure that acoustics, internal and external lighting, drinking water, water supply and outdoor space are each of a suitable standard.
28. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 6. Provision of information

ISSR paragraph 32(1)(c)

29. The school meets the requirements for providing information about the school's safeguarding arrangements to parents. The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website.
30. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management of schools

ISSR paragraph 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

31. The proprietor ensures that the leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively. As a result, the Standards are met consistently, and leaders actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.
32. The proprietor, leaders and managers have prepared comprehensively for the proposed material change with a well-documented, carefully considered and clearly expressed plan to cater for the proposed increase in the maximum number of pupils.
33. The school is likely to continue to meet the Standards if the material change is implemented.

School details

School	Ryecroft School
Department for Education number	335/6014
Address	Ryecroft School Kent Street Walsall West Midlands WS2 7AN
Phone number	01922 687381
Email address	info@ryecroftschool.co.uk
Website	www.ryecroftschool.co.uk
Proprietor	P Bloom Limited
Chair	Mr Richard Power
Headteacher	Mr Martin Capewell
Age range	4 to 18
Number of pupils	58
Date of previous inspection	23 January 2026

Information about the school

34. Ryecroft School is an independent co-educational day school which provides education for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), particularly those with complex needs including autism, mental health conditions, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and impaired social or cognitive functioning due to early life trauma and attachment needs. The school is owned and governed by P Bloom Ltd. The current headteacher took up his post in January 2026.
35. At the time of the inspection, there was one child in the early years.
36. The school has identified all pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan.
37. The school has identified seven pupils as speaking English as an additional language.
38. The school states that its aims are to provide a calm, structured and highly nurturing environment in which pupils feel safe, understood and ready to learn. It seeks to prioritise communication, independence and emotional regulation by tailoring the curriculum, routines and support to meet individual needs. The school community strives to develop effective partnerships with families and specialists which support pupils in developing the knowledge, skills and confidence for their next steps in education and life.

Purpose of the material change inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection following an application made by the school to the Department for Education to make a material change to the school's provision. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about whether the school is likely to meet the Independent School Standards if the material change is implemented.

Inspection details

Inspection dates

16 July 2026

39. Two reporting inspectors visited the school for one day.

40. Inspection activities included:

- scrutiny of a range of policies, documentation and records provided by the school and information available on the school's website
- a tour of the school site to view premises and accommodation
- discussions with the chair of governors
- discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, managers and other members of staff
- discussions with pupils
- scrutiny of samples of pupils' work.

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**.

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