



# ILKLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

A MOORLANDS LEARNING TRUST ACADEMY

PERSONAL  
BEST



# HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

Ilkley Grammar School is an outstanding comprehensive school and we pride ourselves on the quality of education, pastoral care and extensive enrichment opportunities provided to our students so that they succeed, thrive and achieve their Personal Best.

As the founding school of Moorlands Learning Trust, our reputation for excellence is widely recognised, with our academic results placing us comfortably amongst the top 20% of schools in the country and Ofsted judging the school to be 'Outstanding' in all areas of provision. In 2018 we were named as the "Top Comprehensive in the North of England" by The Sunday Times and we were the highest-ranking comprehensive school in the North for GCSE results at grades 7-9 in The Sunday Times Schools Guide 2023.

Whilst there is a strong focus on challenging and supporting students to achieve their academic potential, we are equally committed to developing young adults who have the skills and qualities to make a positive difference through the lives they lead and the choices they make. Learners flourish when they feel happy, safe, respected, cared for and valued and we work hard to create a warm, tolerant and inclusive environment where values such as kindness and respect are championed, well-being and personal development are prioritised, and individual needs are met. Indeed, whilst we are really proud of the results our students achieve and the progress they make regardless of their starting points, we are also proud of the huge range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, leadership opportunities, trips and visits on offer which help to shape character, build confidence, create memories and support personal growth.

On a personal level, I feel very privileged to lead such a wonderful school and warmly invite you to visit to see the excellent provision we have to offer. I look forward to meeting you.



Carly Purnell  
Headteacher



‘There is a tangible culture of high expectations for both pupils and staff. Leaders are passionate to improve what is already excellent. This leads to pupils not only making exceptional progress from their starting points but also providing them with a broad range of memorable experiences, developing them as rounded individuals.’

Ofsted



# PERSONAL BEST

Our vision at Ilkley Grammar School is to provide a world-class, inclusive education and exceptional opportunities which will enrich us both individually and collectively as a community. We will inspire, support and challenge each other to achieve our Personal Best so that we all grow in wisdom and stature. By modelling our Personal Best values and championing equality and diversity, we will make a positive difference to our own lives and the lives of others and will be empowered to lead and influence positive change on a local, regional, national and global scale.

If students are to be fully prepared to live and thrive, work and lead in tomorrow's world then their academic success is of equal importance to their personal development and the shaping of their character so they can be the very best versions of themselves and achieve and demonstrate their Personal Best. Therefore, alongside the development of knowledge, skills and understanding, we also place great emphasis on our six Personal Best values: pride, respect, courage, responsibility, kindness, and resilience. These values permeate everything we do, support students to achieve their Personal Best and empower them to make a positive difference through the lives they lead.

Our curriculum dedicates time to supporting students to achieve their Personal Best with a bespoke Personal Best Time (PBT) programme. This aims to instil our values, as well as develop important characteristics and attributes which enable students to be successful learners, excellent friends and exceptional citizens and to "grow in wisdom and stature" in line with our Latin motto.



We take every opportunity to celebrate students' success in a variety of ways in school in order to positively encourage Personal Best at all times.



‘The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is outstanding.’

‘Leaders have successfully created a culture of high academic performance alongside developing well-rounded, thoughtful and caring young individuals.’

### Ofsted

‘I am extremely grateful to all the staff who have supported my daughter throughout her seven years at IGS. They have always gone that extra mile over the years, stretching her, and giving her the opportunity to shine and reach her full potential. The staff who have taught her have made it a joy and a privilege.’

Parent of a former  
year 13 student



# EXCEPTIONAL TEACHING THAT SUPPORTS AND CHALLENGES ALL

At Ilkley Grammar School, we believe in fostering scholarship, encouraging curiosity and developing a lifelong love of learning.

We recognise that each and every student is unique and therefore our approach to teaching and learning is personalised and inclusive but also challenging to ensure learning is both deep and durable for all. We pride ourselves on knowing our students' strengths and areas for development, utilising the most up to date pedagogical evidence and research to maximise progress and ensure that all students have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Our highly qualified staff are experts in their field and impart their knowledge skilfully to deepen understanding, stimulate interest and develop expertise. Student and teacher relationships are strong, creating an exceptionally positive learning climate.

Our staff deliver a stimulating curriculum using modern technology alongside established teaching methods to develop core skills including resilience, independence and self-regulation. Our commitment to digital technology means all students have an iPad as part of their school equipment allowing for innovative and responsive teaching. This ensures that students achieve high levels of academic success and are also fully prepared for life beyond Ilkley Grammar School.





‘Teachers’ high expectations are at the heart of teaching in the school. Pupils’ progress has been extremely strong, including for the most able and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.’

**Ofsted**

# A WORLD CLASS CURRICULUM

It is our mission to provide a world class curriculum for all, giving our students access to “powerful knowledge” which promotes academic excellence, deepens understanding and enables them to have the luxury of choice for their futures.

Learning is carefully sequenced to allow students to know more and do more, and our approaches are underpinned by the principles of cognitive science in order to support retention and recall and ‘make learning stick’.

All students have a balanced and challenging curriculum, which provides strong academic foundations with the flexibility to tailor provision to meet students’ needs. There is a genuine commitment to personalisation which can be seen through the range of options and pathways at all levels. This includes our bespoke year 9 curriculum which allows the opportunity to study new courses in computer science, business, philosophy and law, alongside specialist technology, creative arts, PE and additional language options. This broadens students’ learning experiences and helps them to make informed decisions for GCSE and beyond.

We have the highest expectations of all and provide an outstanding education, which is enhanced by extensive extra-curricular opportunities, to support all students to achieve their Personal Best. We develop students through our ‘Personal Development’ programme where our students learn about community, leadership and tolerance. Our curriculum leads to exceptional levels of achievement, growth and positive, memorable experiences which last a lifetime.



**‘My two children have flourished at IGS both academically and personally. The quality of provision is exceptional and we can’t recommend the school highly enough.’**

**Parents of children in year 11 and Post-16**

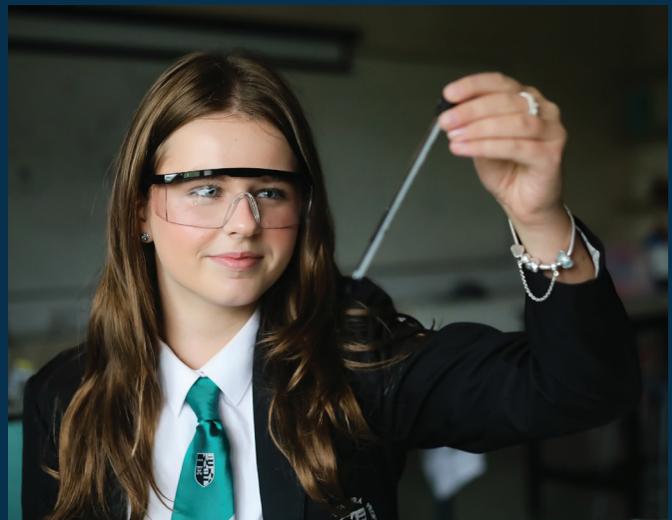
# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND OUTSTANDING PROGRESS

Many Ilkley Grammar School students reach outstanding academic standards and this is reflected in exceptional examination results at GCSE and A-level and strong rates of progression to competitive courses at top universities across the country. Despite a return to pre-pandemic grading standards, our students continue to excel at GCSE with highlights in 2023 including:

- Almost 20% of all GCSE grades awarded at grades 9-8; this is the new standard of exceptional attainment
- One-third of GCSE grades awarded at 7-9 (equivalent to the old A/A\*)
- 20 students who secured all 9 or 10 of their qualifications at the higher grades 7-9
- An overall pass rate across all qualifications of 99%.

Whilst we are very proud of this continued level of success, what is most important to us is the strong progress that students make, regardless of their ability. All students are encouraged and challenged to fulfil their potential and achieve the very best grades of which they are capable.

Our commitment to achievement and aspiration for all can be seen in our significantly positive progress scores which consistently place IGS amongst the leading comprehensive schools in the country. Indeed, in 2022 (the last year where verified national progress scores are currently available) based on the progress of all students, including students with Special Educational Needs, our Progress 8 score was +.64. This placed IGS in the highest “well above average” category in line with the top 14% of all state schools nationally, including selective schools. Once finalised, we expect our progress score for 2023 to again be significantly above average. As a result, we have an excellent reputation, not only within our local community but also across the wider Leeds and Bradford regions.



‘As a result of teachers’ high expectations and excellent subject knowledge, the most able pupils are challenged and stretched and achieve highly. This group of pupils have consistently achieved well above average A\* to A grades across a large range of subjects over time.’

**Ofsted**

# A SUPPORTIVE, SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT

Underpinning the academic excellence and culture of high expectations is an outstanding pastoral care system. We are committed to maintaining a school climate where every child has their well-being and mental health needs supported by a designated pastoral leader and a wide-ranging support team which includes the form tutor. 100 members of Ilkley Grammar

School staff are Mental Health First Aid trained and we also have specialist counselling on site through our in-school counsellors. High standards of behaviour and safety are in evidence across the school and students are supportive of each other and the wider community.

At Ilkley Grammar School, we offer a range of interventions and personalised learning strategies to ensure that students enjoy exceptional, inclusive experiences. Interventions range from individual pupil passports informing teachers of students' specific needs to support quality first teaching strategies, to in-class support and targeted interventions. Where a student's needs have an impact on their learning, we work in collaboration to identify and respond through time-bound interventions such as literacy, numeracy and dyslexia support. Our inclusive learning hub and nurture centre provide holistic support for students who, at times, require a smaller and more nurturing environment and they offer a safe space and retreat as required for students with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

In September 2019, we opened our 12 place School-Led Resource Provision (SRP) for students with an EHCP for an Autistic Spectrum Disorder and associated needs. Our resource provision is used to support students to develop a range of personal skills in preparation for adulthood and to receive targeted interventions that are detailed within their EHCPs.



'Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is exemplary. They conduct themselves well, are smartly dressed and ready to learn.'

**Ofsted**

'IGS is a large school, but it is friendly and welcoming. I feel like I matter as an individual and staff care for me. My Head of Year and my teachers are always supportive and help me to achieve my Personal Best.'

**Year 10 student**

# OUTSTANDING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The range of Personal Development opportunities on offer at IGS is vast, making school life more meaningful, substantial and rewarding, whilst also preparing students for the future.

Ilkley Grammar School students have access to a wealth of enrichment opportunities. This includes an extensive and popular extra-curricular sports programme which encompasses rugby, football, hockey, cross-country, netball, dance, gymnastics, cricket and tennis, as well as opportunities to compete at regional and national level. We also have extensive opportunities in the creative arts. The music department run junior and senior choirs and orchestras, a soul band, a samba band, guitar and ukulele clubs, a composing club, and pop and rock bands for students of all ages and abilities. These groups also have the opportunity for live performances in concerts such as the Christmas Concert, Spring Concert, Creative Arts Festival and the Battle of the Bands. A team of peripatetic teachers also deliver instrumental and vocal tuition on an individual or paired basis.

In addition, the drama department run two key stage 3 drama clubs, the Backstagers group, a musical theatre and devising club and there is an annual school production which in 2024 is 'Grease'. The art and photography department also run themed lunchtime groups, such as origami and print making, as well as seasonal groups like pumpkin carving and Christmas card making. There are also opportunities to get involved in stage set painting, alongside prop and costume making for the school production.

Whether it is developing public speaking skills through participation in external competitions such as Youth Speaks or by harnessing in-house expertise through clubs designed to develop more specialist interests such as coding, strategy games or creative writing, there is a huge amount on offer to cater for all students. All students have the opportunity to develop their individual talents and staff are on hand to share their enthusiasm and to develop potential.

Every year, students of all ages enjoy participation and success in national competitions such as Debating Matters, the National Foreign Language Spelling Bee, the UKMT maths challenges, Cyberfirst, technology competitions run by the Rotary Club and many more.

Personal Development opportunities are organised into 8 interconnecting categories which include 'Active Citizenship and Community', 'Next Steps and Careers', 'Leadership and Influence', 'Health and Wellbeing' and 'Respect, Equality and Diversity'; these are shared with students and parents via the learning platform Showbie. Opportunities are also promoted at the highly popular Student Leadership and Enrichment Fayre early in the autumn term.

The clubs, activities and competitions on offer enable students to widen their horizons, build friendships and share experiences with each other in a more informal setting.



'The school provides a rich tapestry of opportunities including some fantastic leadership roles, charity-fund raising events and extra-curricular clubs. I feel my children are very lucky to be at IGS as they have the freedom to grow and develop as young people, to give back, make a positive difference and to shine.'

Parents of children in years 9, 11 and Post-16

# DISCOVERY AND ADVENTURE

Our students' academic life is enriched by a wide range of opportunities in which they explore and enjoy the world around them.

## MEMORIES TO LAST A LIFETIME

Educational trips enhance studies beyond the classroom, making learning enjoyable and relevant. We run popular excursions to Iceland, Munich and the Belgium Battlefields, as well as foreign exchanges with schools in Coutances (Normandy) and Madrid. Sporting experiences range from visiting Wimbledon, netball and rugby tours and skiing in Europe or America. Equally, there is the opportunity to take advantage of numerous theatre, art and fieldwork trips, both locally and further afield.

In addition, we offer transformative experiences through the Duke of Edinburgh awards which help to develop communication skills, confidence, leadership and teamwork. For older students, we also work in partnership with World Challenge to provide opportunities which are simply extraordinary. In 2023, students completed a two-week expedition to Vietnam and in 2024 students will travel to the island of Borneo to contribute to wildlife conservation. These opportunities, financed by student fundraising, provide powerful life-changing experiences.

## CHALLENGE AND CELEBRATION WEEK: A UNIQUE END OF YEAR REWARD

To reward students for a hard year's work, IGS is unique in offering a week-long programme of activities which specifically cater for each year group. Year 7 enjoy a varied programme from sailing adventures to visits to the Forbidden Corner and a theme park. Year 8 visit the sights and shows of London, whilst Year 9 step outside their comfort zone, embracing outdoor challenges at a residential activity centre in an area of outstanding natural beauty. There is also a carousel of local day trips as an alternative for students in Key Stage 3. Students in year 10 enjoy a day of celebration before a one-week work experience placement to better understand the world of work, build resilience and self-confidence. This opportunity is also repeated in year 12, although there are also trips to Switzerland, Poland, Paris, Rome and Ireland, as well as opportunities to assist the key stage 3 trips as iLeaders.



'I loved Challenge and Celebration Week in year 7, spending time with friends and learning lots of new skills. We are lucky that IGS offers so many opportunities which help us to develop as individuals.'

**Year 8 student**

'IGS does not just add value in terms of results and qualifications. It does so much more than that! My time at school was enriched by a wealth of activities, clubs, trips and opportunities, developing my confidence, leadership skills and friendships. I really value what the school has done for me – it has given me a great foundation for the future.'

**Former year 13 student**

# LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

The importance of developing students as leaders is fully embedded across the school through our unique iLeader programme which promotes over 30 leadership roles annually. Students have many opportunities for their voices to be heard through student questionnaires, tutor group representation and the Student Council. We see leadership potential in all of our students and the wealth of opportunities that we provide ensure students develop into confident and well-rounded individuals.

At Ilkley Grammar School we aim to develop leaders of today and of the future, actively encouraging students to take up positions of responsibility from their first year of secondary school. There is a huge range of student leadership experiences available across all key stages with groups such as the anti-bullying ambassadors who in 2020 published 'Respect' an anthology of creative writing and essays with contributions from students and celebrities including Simon Armitage, Alastair Campbell and Michael Rosen. The influential post-16 Student Leadership Team (SLT) is led by three Head Students and seven deputies, each of whom are attached to a year group. Once appointed, our post-16 Student Leadership Team receives 'Leadership in Action' training and attends a bi-annual conference as part of the Red Kite Alliance to share best practice in student leadership.

We develop academic leaders through the debating society, iReaders and subject iLeaders who provide intervention and support to small groups of younger students. There is also a range of arts iLeaders including Backstagers who take responsibility for the technical and operational side of productions and concerts. In line with our commitment to supporting students' mental health, we also have student Mental Health iLeaders who receive accredited Mental Health First Aid training to equip them to provide appropriate peer-to-peer support.

Sports Leaders coach in-school teams and also link with primary schools to encourage participation and future sporting excellence. The long-established Student Council, incorporating representatives from each year group, ensures that our students have lots of opportunities to share their opinions and experiences of their education, as well as propose suggestions for improvement and genuinely have their voices heard. Their feedback, ideas and solutions help to make Ilkley Grammar School not only outstanding, but a special place to learn and achieve.



'The school offers endless opportunities and experiences to unlock students' full potential. It genuinely places importance on wider personal development and happiness, and my children have thrived as a result.'

**Parents of students in year 8 and year 12**

'I really have grown in confidence since joining IGS. I am passionate about sustainability and protecting our environment and I take my role as an eco-iLeader seriously. I also love how we get the chance to raise a lot of money for different charities so we can make a positive difference to other people's lives.'

**Year 10 student**

# PREPARATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

Post-16 is the culmination of the whole school experience and we pride ourselves on the rich and personalised support that we offer our students during this exciting and challenging stage of their lives.

Students and staff have a proven track record of working together to achieve great success. Post-16 was officially graded as Outstanding as part of our Ofsted Inspection in 2017 and since then outcomes have continued to improve alongside a significant year-on-year growth in numbers, attracting students from across the region including those transferring from private and selective schools, as well as The Skipton Academy, one of our partner schools within Moorlands Learning Trust.

The grades our students achieve are consistently significantly higher than national figures and, on average, over the last two years in 2023 and 2022 over 40% of grades have been at A/A\*, almost 70% at grades A\*-B and over 85% at A\*-C. These outcomes create exceptional opportunities for our students, many of whom progress to varied and exciting destinations. These include Oxbridge (a record 10 students successfully achieved their offers in 2023, following 8 students in both 2022 and 2021) and Russell Group universities, studying on competitive courses such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, law and engineering, as well as securing higher level apprenticeships at some of the country's most reputable companies (including, for example, Rolls Royce, PwC, Deloitte and Morrisons).

We offer outstanding teaching delivered by expert and inspirational staff, specialist pastoral care and an extremely wide range of over 30 academic and vocational courses which enable all students to flourish. This is also complemented by an exciting range of personal development and enrichment opportunities including sports leadership qualifications, work experience, a plethora of leadership opportunities, the highly personalised Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), a Post-16 discussion group and access to an impressive range of visiting speakers through the *iTalks* and *Cutting Edge* programmes.

Such provision helps students develop into well-balanced young adults who are not only academically successful, but have the skills and confidence to make a positive difference to their own lives and the lives of others whilst, at all times, growing in both wisdom and stature in line with our Latin motto: *sapientia et statura proficiamus*.



“The post-16 student body at IGS is a hard-working and resilient community that prides itself on core principles of kindness, responsibility, and courage. The vast range of extra-curricular clubs spanning sports, leadership and academics allows all students to take their own personal journey of discovery, whether that be related to school subjects or wider interests.

Our large post-16 body enjoys playing an active role in both the IGS and the wider Ilkley community. Students are given fantastic leadership opportunities and enjoy developing indispensable skills through interacting with and guiding the lower school students. Our excellent pastoral and academic support team ensure all students achieve their Personal Best, while looking after their personal well-being. IGS's outstanding teaching, extra-curricular opportunities and support ensure all students leave as well-rounded individuals, well-prepared for whatever journey lays ahead, and proud to have been an IGS student.”

**Maisie O'Connor, Noah Markham, Ben Ballard – Head Students 2023-24**





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