



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Westholme School

May 2019



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Westholme School			
DfE number	889/6000			
Early Years registration number	EY321259			
Registered charity number	526615			
Address	Westholme School Wilmar Lodge Meins Road Blackburn BB2 6QU			
Telephone number	01254 506070			
Email address	secretary@westholmeschool.com			
Principal	Mrs Lynne Horner			
Chair of governors	Mr Brian Marsden			
Age range	0 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	763			
	Boys	323	Girls	440
	EYFS	91	Juniors	143
	Seniors	439	Sixth Form	90
Inspection dates	8 to 10 May 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Westholme School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged from 3 months to 18 years. It was founded in 1923 as a preparatory school, and became a charitable trust in 1968. The school has been fully co-educational since September 2018. The trustees form the governing body with proprietorial responsibility. Since the previous inspection in 2016, the school has extended the use of ICT, and increased opportunities for pupil enterprise.
- 1.2 The school operates on three sites. The infant school comprises the nursery and pupils up to seven years of age. Close by, the junior school educates pupils aged up to eleven years. The senior school, educating older pupils, is situated just over one mile away.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to help each child to realise to the full her or his own aptitudes, abilities and qualities; to create a caring community in which pupils are offered help and guidance, both academic and personal; and to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities to build pupils' self-confidence and enrich their talents and learning.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional and business backgrounds, reflecting the broad ethnic mix of the local area, and live within 40-minutes travel time from the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in the infant and junior school is broadly above average; in the senior school up to Year 11 it is above average and, in Years 12 and 13, the pupils' ability profile is average for pupils in sixth-form education. The school has identified 127 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, dyspraxia and a range of physical, communication and emotional difficulties; of these, 76 receive additional specialist help and support for their learning. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Forty-one pupils come from families where English is an additional language (EAL), but only three pupils require support for their English.

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 FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection 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. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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, the 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 uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national test framework.
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2015 to 2017, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools.
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2015 to 2017 have been above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.12 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

- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for their medical and therapy 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.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.15 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 any 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, 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.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.17 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.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.19 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.

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

The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

- 2.21 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision for children under two is outstanding.
- 2.22 Children make rapid progress relative to their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Children's needs are at the heart of the setting and excellent care and planning help every child to succeed. They are happy, safe and secure within the nurturing family environment where there is a real feeling of belonging to the whole school. Requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare have been fully met: staff work together as a strong and successful team to fulfil their responsibilities and protect the children in their care. Leadership and management are a strength of the setting. Practitioners rigorously evaluate and reflect on their practice, ensuring continuous improvement. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been fully implemented.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- 2.23 The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding.
- 2.24 Strong EYFS leaders share an ambitious vision and provide exemplary levels of care. They have high expectations of what children under two can achieve in their learning and development. The recommendation from the previous inspection to expand performance management has been implemented. Robust supervision procedures support key people and enable them to carry out their role with both parents and children very effectively. The many opportunities for staff to further their own professional development and to take leadership in areas of the curriculum that they enjoy, choosing their own courses, contribute positively to children's learning and development. Practitioners work as a highly effective team, continuously evaluating and improving the quality of their provision. Leaders take account of parents' views as well as the needs and interests of the children.
- 2.25 Learning programmes meet all the statutory requirements and staff rightly pride themselves on the broad, enriching and motivating curriculum. Children's individual achievements are very carefully tracked against the developmental goals. Staff are proficient at making observations which ensure progress and prepare children well for the next stage in their learning. Leaders have identified the need for more open-ended, child-initiated learning to encourage curiosity and exploration. Equality, diversity and British values of respect and tolerance are continuously promoted through policies and practice, displays in the setting, and through the school's ethos of golden rules, thus guarding against instances of discrimination. Staff are aware of the risks of radicalisation and extremism. They always encourage a positive approach to behaviour management, for example intervening kindly but firmly when children push one another to have a turn on the slide. Staff are well trained in current statutory and government requirements. They are able to identify and support children who may be at risk and understand the procedures to be followed in the event of a concern. They work effectively with partner agencies to safeguard children's welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- 2.26 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding.
- 2.27 Adults are highly knowledgeable about the EYFS and demonstrate a secure understanding of how learning is successfully communicated to children under two. They create many effective opportunities for children to reason and solve problems and they know when to interact, for example furthering language development with descriptive words such as 'squishy squashy' during messy activities, or introducing mathematical and positional words as toddlers successfully post shapes or go down the slide. Assessment information is gathered through regular, high-quality observations,

and twice-termly progress trackers which plan for individual future learning. This represents successful implementation of a recommendation from the previous inspection. Children's meticulously maintained learning records are shared with parents who also have the opportunity to share information and add their own comments. Key people support every child's individual needs and incorporate their interests in exciting and stimulating activities enabling children to make excellent progress and achieve well. Staff know the right moment to encourage children through questioning, modelling language and demonstrating activities to further their learning.

- 2.28 Parents are very happy with the setting, the excellent communication and open-door policy. They are well informed about the EYFS and have good opportunities to participate in their children's learning and contribute successes from home. The setting provides them with ample information. They have the opportunity to join in 'stay and play' sessions, can attend parent evenings twice a year, as well as sharing transition procedures with key people and their children. Children are very well prepared for the two-year progress check which is fully discussed with parents. There are weekly newsletters giving them ideas of how to help at home. Staff fill in a daily diary of their child's routines for parents to share.
- 2.29 Children are taught to respect and support one another. The setting has a wide range of resources and activities that reflect and value diversity, such as puppets from different cultures, dressing up clothes, and a variety of small dolls which help children understand that people have different needs. Under twos celebrate Diwali and Eid by dressing up and cooking. Key people carefully choose activities to help children acquire the skills that will help them to progress to the next stage in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- 2.30 The personal development, behaviour and welfare of the children are outstanding.
- 2.31 Staff set achievable goals for each child within the safe and stimulating environment, praising their successes with pride, for example when toddlers finish their food or manage the steps. Children listen and respond happily to adults. They demonstrate a secure confidence in their surroundings, using their increasing mobility and sense of curiosity to access their own activities. At lunch and snack times, children are encouraged to feed themselves and can choose their own drink at snack time. Staff have careful procedures to ensure smooth and gradual transition within the setting and to new nurseries. Babies mix with older toddlers on a regular basis and know all the staff well. Settling in sessions are built up gradually until the child feels secure with their new key person. Children build very strong and loving bonds with their key people and are secure and happy with all the staff within the setting. They are very sociable and friendly with adults. Key people know just when a reassuring cuddle and a calming stroke on the back is needed, for example when babies wake up from their sleep and need to be comforted.
- 2.32 Attendance is regularly and promptly checked and recorded. Behaviour is exemplary because adults are calm and positive role models. Key people know just when to intervene and encourage sharing and taking turns, for example when children were making a tower and handing each other blocks. Good manners and politeness are always promoted and children readily say 'thank you'. Very high staff ratios ensure that children are always safely cared for and every aspect of the environment and the activities planned are rigorously risk assessed. Staff demonstrate how to keep safe, for example as children practise climbing up the steps and going down the small indoor slide, so they can use the larger outdoor slide safely. Photographic observations are only recorded on school equipment and adults' phones are safely locked away.
- 2.33 Children enjoy nutritious and healthy meals and snacks. They are enthusiastic eaters, who enjoy the wide selection of snack time fruit and eagerly help themselves to more. There are many good opportunities for exploration and for developing their gross motor skills, for example when visiting the extensive grounds for walks and picnics and using wheeled toys, baby walkers and the slide. Staff are excellent role models who prepare children to respect and care for one another. Children play

happily alongside each other; older toddlers hand out coats to the other children. Those who are confident enough enjoy a visit from the fire brigade. Under twos are included in whole-school activities, such as the nativity play, world book day and the royal wedding when they all attended in wedding clothes with a bride and groom. They bake special biscuits for Valentine's Day.

Outcomes for children

2.34 Outcomes for children under two are outstanding.

2.35 All children make excellent progress in relation to their different starting points. Staff are adept at identifying areas where progress may be slower and work towards appropriate targets to rectify this. Children happily engage in their activities. Youngest babies develop focus and hand/eye coordination as they post shapes into a sorter. They successfully use toys with a cause and effect and react with a big smile when a cat or dog pops up. They attempt animal noises as they try to fit animal shapes into a puzzle. Staff are skilled in modelling language which children copy. Older toddlers are able to use phrases to communicate; they count as they put fir cones into a container. Children attempt to join in action songs and delight in having a go when participating in messy activities. With guidance from key people, they attempt to put their arms into their sleeves independently and wash their hands. Children successfully feed themselves with spoons with a little help from fingers where necessary.

Compliance with statutory requirements

2.36 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Recommendation for further improvement

The school is advised to make the following improvement to its provision for children in the early years.

- Provide more open-ended, child-initiated learning to encourage curiosity and exploration in both indoor and outdoor environments.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.

- Pupils display high levels of subject knowledge, understanding and skill, appropriate to their age and ability, and generally apply it well.
- They communicate very well, both orally and in writing.
- At all ages, pupils show great enthusiasm and enjoyment; they work hard and are keen to do well.
- Pupils respond positively to opportunities to work independently and collaborate on their learning in groups.
- Some senior school pupils make slower progress when insufficiently challenged or lacking opportunities to think for themselves.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils of all ages show excellent social development and make significant contributions to the lives of others.
- They have a clear sense of right and wrong and take responsibility for their own behaviour and actions.
- Pupils are confident individuals, both in and out of the classroom, and show strong self-reliance.
- They understand the consequences of the decisions they make about their personal lives and academic progress.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement:

- Ensure that all pupils are provided with sufficient challenge so that they always remain actively involved in lessons, develop their independent learning further, and make the progress they should.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.

3.5 Pupils show high levels of subject knowledge, understanding and skill, appropriate to their age and ability and generally apply it well. Their practical and investigative skills are particularly strong, and their artistic, creative, design and performance skills are at an especially high level. In the infant school, pupils display excellent knowledge, skills, and understanding, evident in their written work and in displays. Pupils in Year 2 engage in investigative work enthusiastically, for example, following up their question of the week by bringing in nettle and dock leaves and explaining the differences and dangers clearly and articulately to the class. In the junior school, younger pupils display increasingly strong knowledge, skills and understanding as they progress through the school. For example, they demonstrate highly secure knowledge of diverse space-related work, such as the formation of black holes and the exploration of planets by autonomous vehicles. Pupils also apply prior knowledge to solve higher-order problems and understand more complex concepts. In the senior school, pupils generally show high levels of subject knowledge, and they apply this to more demanding concepts and topics, as public examinations approach. In a sixth-form lesson, pupils showed an excellent recall of knowledge and an equally high level of application, making complex arguments and presenting a case for a wide range of philosophical and religious ideas. Pupils' achievement is enhanced by a culture of learning promoted by senior leadership and governors, and by sympathetic and effective teaching

which, at its best, stimulates interest and gives pupils many opportunities to ‘think on their feet’. The overwhelming majority of parents and pupils responding to the questionnaire agreed that the teaching helps them to learn and make progress.

- 3.6 In the junior school, results in standardised tests in mathematics, science and English have been above national averages. GCSE results for the three-year period 2015 to 2017 have been above the average for maintained schools. At A level, results have been above the maintained school average over the same period. In 2018, the proportion of the highest A* grade increased compared with the previous year. Considering these results, as well as evidence from lessons, in work seen and in interviews with pupils, together with evidence from progress data collected by the school, pupils across the school make good progress over the short- and long-term, and for many it is excellent. There is no significant difference in the progress and achievement of boys and girls. On a few occasions in the senior school, the learning and progress of the most able pupils in lessons is limited by a lack of suitably demanding tasks. Pupils with SEND make similar progress to their peers. Pupils’ success owes much to strong academic management and highly effective monitoring and tracking of their progress.
- 3.7 Pupils show strong communication skills. Their oral contributions are highly effective and they write very persuasively, recognising the need for different styles when writing for different purposes and audiences. Pupils learn very well through discussion and debate, especially when the lesson content allows. A few lack confidence when asking and answering questions. Pupils’ spoken communication benefits greatly from the many opportunities for public speaking in class and to larger groups. In the infant school, communication skills are of a very high level, and progression is evident in children’s writing in Reception, from supported writing earlier in the year, to writing independently in whole sentences, using basic punctuation. Junior pupils exhibit mastery in reading, with even the youngest pupils able to attempt complicated words. Some of the youngest pupils were also able to demonstrate growing fluency in reading a foreign language. Pupils’ work shows clear evidence of accomplished skills in spelling and handwriting. Senior pupils show increasingly sophisticated communication skills, being able to explain theoretical and abstract concepts when required, often using appropriate technical vocabulary. Some pupils have excellent writing skills producing well-drafted notes but others are reliant on pre-prepared worksheets. In a sixth-form ethics lesson, pupils showed a genuine appetite for high-level debate. The quality of argument was excellent, well informed and reasoned.
- 3.8 Pupils are strongly numerate and frequently apply their mathematical skills and understanding in a range of different subjects. Their good numeracy skills are consolidated from the earliest ages. Younger pupils display confidence in their understanding and application of numeracy skills because teachers consistently use exciting and creative methods which enthuse and engage them. Older pupils use mathematics well, especially in science, where they derive numerical data from experiments and manipulate and present it in various ways to generate conclusions and support hypotheses. Pupils show high levels of competence in information and communication technology (ICT) as appropriate to their age. Younger pupils make increasingly effective use of ICT across the curriculum, for research and to inform their learning. Older pupils apply their knowledge and use a wide range of software applications with confidence to enhance their learning in, for example, musical composition, computer-aided design, manipulating digital images and controlling a robot.
- 3.9 Pupils generally exhibit very effective study skills and, when given the opportunity to do so, are able to think for themselves and work independently, especially when provided with well-chosen and relevant lesson tasks and opportunities for independent research. Pupils, particularly the more able, show good skills of analysis and reasoning. They are able to question and challenge ideas from an early age. In the infant school, pupils develop the ability to solve problems and find things out for themselves. Junior pupils display growing proficiency in their ability to analyse and include information from an increasing range of sources in their work as they progress through the school. Senior pupils synthesise information well from a variety of different sources, and display proficiency in utilising the practical research cycle: brainstorming, refining variables and controlling testing sequences. In a few

lessons observed, opportunities for pupils to be actively involved and to demonstrate their independent thinking were limited and, as a result, their progress was slower.

- 3.10 Pupils enjoy significant success in the wide and challenging co-curricular programme which has a high rate of participation. Success in sport is notable at all ages, and standards of musical and dramatic ventures are also high. Pupils have achieved considerable success in a range of external competitions, awards and Olympiads. Success in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme has been gained at all three levels. Two pupils have won prestigious degree apprenticeships from an investment bank and an aerospace company. A very large majority of Year 13 leavers proceed to their first- or second-choice university, including those with highly competitive entry requirements. Pupils explain that they benefit from their participation in co-curricular activities, whatever their skill, gaining confidence and satisfaction from doing their best, and trying out new activities.
- 3.11 Pupils of all ages show great interest in their work. They are enthusiastic learners who show considerable success in their determination to grow towards independence of thought. They acknowledge their enjoyment of lessons and show a marked keenness to do their best. Pupils confirm that they form excellent relationships with teachers who are generous of their time to provide support and guidance, and encourage a strong effort. Pupils enjoy collaborative working in small groups and benefit from the opportunities to support and learn from each other. Senior pupils demonstrate their wide and eclectic academic interests by their choice of research topics for the Extended Project Qualification. Pupils' decidedly positive attitudes to learning are enhanced by a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum, and by teaching that enables pupils to learn effectively and make good progress, and utilises excellent resources. This was confirmed by a very large majority of pupils' questionnaire responses.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.12 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.13 Pupils generally show marked self-confidence in class and in their wider school lives, thus fulfilling a key school aim. As pupils move up through the school, they are increasingly willing to speak their own minds and are not afraid to express contrary views to others. They understand their strengths and weaknesses and learn to balance success and failure. Older pupils, in particular, are able to analyse and learn from their mistakes. They persevere with the challenges presented to them and develop strong self-reliance and independence. Infant school pupils show determination and effort in learning new skills, and senior pupils overcome initial fears, for example, in tackling rock climbing for the first time. Pupils of all ages demonstrate good resilience, especially in outdoor education, team matches and on stage. Pupils show increasing ability to evaluate their own progress and identify ways to improve their performance. They benefit particularly from the many opportunities to assess their own success and progress, and that of their peers as well. To this end, the comprehensive whole-school systems to monitor and track pupils' progress make a significant contribution to their understanding of the next steps in their learning. Pupils develop strong independence and self-fulfilment from the co-curricular programme and the opportunities it affords them to expand their experiences.
- 3.14 Pupils recognise the importance of making decisions based on relevant information. They grow to understand that the choices they encounter and decisions they make have consequences for them, such as the impact of procrastination in completing homework tasks. Pupils said that they recognise the challenge in deciding whether to take an easy course of action, or a more demanding, but ultimately more satisfying choice. School council representatives understand the difficult decisions inherent in representing the views of their peers appropriately. Prefects say they learn valuable lessons from mistakes made in having to manage groups of pupils. Pupils in Year 12 running *Westies*, the school shop, understand that the success of this commercial venture depends on clear and relevant decision making. Older pupils appreciate the school's guidance in choosing subject option and higher education

choices. Younger pupils learn valuable lessons through the ups and downs of their relationships with peers and the importance of making sound decisions.

- 3.15 Pupils develop a pronounced spiritual awareness from many opportunities to reflect on non-material aspects of life, such as the wonder experienced when seeing the structure of a cell under a microscope for the first time, watching and studying the complexity of insect communities or tadpoles swimming in their natural habitat, or reflecting on the vastness of unspoilt wilderness areas, especially when contrasted with man's impact on the natural environment. Pupils appreciate occasions for relaxation and quiet reflection in their busy school lives, such as in the senior school well-being centre, or leaning against a special tree in the junior school. Pupils of all ages value the opportunities to explore other faiths and beliefs. Older pupils take part sensitively in philosophical debates and discussions in class, such as a reflection on human motivation and death in *Macbeth*.
- 3.16 Pupils show a strong sense of right and wrong and instinctively understand the importance of taking responsibility for their own behaviour and its impact on others. This excellent moral awareness is enhanced by the positive role models displayed by both staff and older pupils. Younger pupils, in particular, understand the clear consequences of misbehaviour. Older pupils show interest and enthusiasm when discussing moral and ethical issues in class, such as the power of the financial interests of large corporations, or the benefits and problems of nuclear power. Pupils' moral development is reinforced by the excellent relationships with each other and with their teachers who know them well, and support them within the school's pastoral framework. A junior pupil recognised this when explaining that, as you grow older, the concept of right and wrong is no longer black and white, and felt that the school had helped them to look at morality more maturely. In an ethics lesson, pupils debated with maturity the implications of the law and personal responsibility, while infant school pupils recognised the importance of their golden rules.
- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate excellent social development. They show highly effective leadership and responsibility in the roles available to them, such as form captains and prefects and school council representatives. Infant school pupils collaborated strongly with each other when making and testing model rafts. Junior pupils experienced and enjoyed a taste of democracy in elections for form captain. Senior pupils organise and run activities and societies for their peers, and they acknowledge that good planning is important, although recognising that they cannot please everyone all the time. Digital leaders perform a valuable role in supporting other pupils and promoting the positive use of technology. The co-curricular programme develops pupils' teamwork, initiative and co-operation, and enhances a sense of belonging to the school community. Pupils of all ages support each other strongly and are aware of each other's needs. Pupils in a team recognise that everyone has to support each other, especially any who may be less talented, in order to gain maximum benefit. Major contributory factors to pupils' strong social awareness include the clear sense of purpose promoted by the school leadership and governors, and the well-planned personal, social and health education programme that helps pupils to live satisfying and useful lives. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire felt that their children are developing useful skills for the future.
- 3.18 Their strong social development enables pupils to make a significant and valuable contribution to the lives of others which, in turn, enables them to understand the circumstances and experiences of those different from themselves. Senior pupils fulfil their responsibilities well, to the benefit of others in school, and many organise clubs and sporting events for juniors. At all ages, pupils feel that their connection with a range of local, national and international charities and their community involvement are important. They raise significant sums and identify with the various charities' aims. Pupils say that, in this way, they derive many personal benefits such as humility, a better understanding of those less fortunate than themselves, and a quiet pride in helping improve the lives of others. Pupils in Year 8 not only collected a large sum for a homeless charity, but slept out under cardboard in the school grounds and gained an insight into those who face challenging circumstances.
- 3.19 Pupils exhibit high levels of tolerance and respect for others, especially those who come from different cultures and backgrounds. They are interested in each other's circumstances and relaxed about

discussing the religious practices of their peers; thus they recognise many of the similarities between cultural traditions and beliefs. From the youngest age, they have a good working knowledge of the world's major religions and showed sensitivity towards those observing Ramadan. Children in Nursery learn about tolerance through role play. Senior pupils appreciate the chance to learn more about minorities through their Amnesty group. Pupils have a pronounced sense of equality and appreciate diversity of beliefs and opinions. The vast majority of parents' questionnaire responses agreed that the school actively promotes values of respect and tolerance. Pupils appreciate their own rich cultural heritage through their art and music and study of literature.

- 3.20 Pupils of all ages have a clear understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, and recognise the benefits of good nutrition and exercise. The school motto *A Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body* underpins daily life. Pupils feel safe and value the school's commitment to enhance their well-being, within an ethos of trust and respect. They are aware of and appreciate the school's strong safeguarding culture and provision. Junior and senior pupils recognise the potential dangers to health from substance mis-use. Older pupils understand the importance of emotional stability when they encounter stress, and value the school's initiatives to promote their mental well-being.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 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 chairman and two other governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended house meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning resource areas and took lunch with pupils. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Timothy Holgate	Reporting inspector
Mr Kerry Lord	Additional Reporting inspector
Mrs Rebecca Hayes	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, GSA school)
Mrs Kathryn Crewe-Read	Team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Anthony Duffield	Team inspector (Head of department, HMC school)
Mrs Penny Forsyth	Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mr Paul Leeming	Team inspector (Director of sport, GSA school)
Mr David Tickner	Team inspector (Head, SoH school)
Mrs Bridget Forrest	Co-ordinating inspector for early years
Ms Gabriele Weber Basu	Team inspector for early years (EYFS coordinator, ISA school)