

Bilton Grange

A co-educational Day and Boarding School Preparatory School



Bilton Grange Preparatory School Inspection Report

November 2017

Independent Schools Inspectorate



Pupils achieve high standards across the breadth of the curriculum as a result of the commitment, enthusiasm and support they receive from the staff.

I am delighted to introduce this report written by the Independent Schools Inspectorate following their visit to Bilton Grange in October 2017.

It was a visit we were expecting at some juncture, and a great deal of effort went into ensuring that we were ready; as much as we did so, and harnessing my own experience as an inspector, there will always be a level of nervousness of the unknown coupled with our desire to show the school in the best light.

The report is divided into two sections, one regulatory compliance (including boarding) and the other educational quality. For the former, the statements can simply note that we have 'met the regulations'. Indeed, we did meet the regulations in all areas with many examples of best practice evident. The regulatory and boarding inspection is assessed by reviewing our documentation, interviewing members of staff, children and governors, and observing practices around school.

The educational quality inspection is also dependent on meetings but also observations in the classroom and during activities, and a scrutiny of children's written work. We have been assessed as 'excellent' in both the academic

achievements and personal development of the children, which is the highest grade possible. We are delighted by this affirmation of the high quality of the holistic education we provide. Nevertheless we will never rest on our laurels.

I would like to thank all the Bilton Grange team for the work they put into showing what an excellent school this is, but I would extend particular thanks to Mr Greg Das Gupta, Assistant Head Academic, Mr Mark Tovey, Head of Boarding, Mrs Laura Howard, Bursar and my PA Julie Campbell, who is also the HR Manager, for their leadership of particular elements of the inspection which were crucial to our success. I would also like to thank all the parents who provided honest and helpful feedback via the questionnaire; indeed inspection is very much about the whole school community and I believe we have a wonderfully strong and vibrant community here at Bilton Grange.

Alex Osiatynski
Headmaster

Extracts from the Educational Quality Inspection Report

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

- Pupils' excellent achievements represent the successful fulfilment of the school's aim to enable pupils to develop their full potential.
- Pupils relish challenge and are confident to take risks in their learning.
- Pupils achieve high standards across the breadth of the curriculum as a result of the commitment, enthusiasm and support they receive from the staff.
- Pupils develop real strengths and individual talents as a result of the wide-ranging opportunities they are offered.
- Pupils with EAL make exceptionally rapid progress, benefitting from the well-structured programmes of study and excellent specialist support they receive.



Extracts from the Educational Quality Inspection Report

The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent

- All pupils, day and boarder, thrive at the school because of its established culture of listening, care and respect.
- Pupils have a highly developed sense of responsibility and contribute positively to an inclusive school community.
- Pupils develop strong relationships with staff who know them well and provide a safe place where pupils can express their thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- Pupils have a strong aesthetic and cultural awareness, and appreciate the world around them.





ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

FOCUSED COMPLIANCE AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION REPORTS

BILTON GRANGE SCHOOL

OCTOBER 2017



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Bilton Grange			
DfE number	937/6002			
Registered charity number	528771			
Address	Rugby Road Dunchurch Rugby Warwickshire CV22 6QU			
Telephone number	01788 810217			
Email address	headmaster@biltongrange.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Alex Osiatynski			
Chair of governors	Mr Charles Barwell			
Age range	4 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	285			
	Boys	166	Girls	119
	Day pupils	231	Boarders	54
	Pre-prep	98	Juniors	30
	Middle school	75	Upper school	82
Inspection dates	10 to 12 October 2017			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Bilton Grange is an independent day and boarding school for boys and girls aged between 4 and 13 years. It is a registered charity, governed by a board of trustees. Founded in 1873 the school has occupied its current site since 1887.
- 1.2 The pre-prep department includes children from the Reception year through to Year 3. It is situated in a separate building with its own play area, adjacent to the main school. The prep department of the school is divided into three parts, with pupils in Year 4 forming a transitional junior section. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 form the middle school and those in Years 7 and 8 form the upper school. In most cases, pupils may board from Year 4. There is a boys' boarding house and a girls' boarding house, each with their own house-mothers under the leadership of the assistant head boarding. Both are located within the main school building.
- 1.3 Since the previous full inspection in 2012 the school has extended provision for more able pupils in the prep school and developed outdoor learning in pre-prep. More frequent, in-depth reporting of pupils' progress has been introduced, accessed through a parent portal. The curriculum has been reviewed and a programme of options introduced that provides a wide range of opportunities, including scout, guide and brownie groups. The current headmaster was appointed in 2013.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school's aim is to be a learning community in which children can develop their full potential, discover their talents, grow as individuals and as members of society, and above all be inspired to aspire.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils, from a range of professional and business backgrounds, are predominantly of white British ethnicity with a diverse range of other cultures and backgrounds represented within the community.
- 1.6 Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability profile of the school is above average. The school has identified 63 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and difficulties with working memory and information processing. They all receive specialist help. One pupil in the school has a statement of special educational needs. English is an additional language (EAL) for 32 pupils, 21 of whom receive additional support.
- 1.7 Data used by the school have identified 42 pupils from the school's population as being more able, including those with special talents in sport, music drama and art, and the curriculum is modified for them.

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.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools ('boarding NMS'). It also comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

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, including the boarding NMS, 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, including the boarding NMS. 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, together with the NMS covering the same areas. 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](#), National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, [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 National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 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 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. The prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 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, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 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. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 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, 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and statement of boarding principles [NMS 1] are 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are 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. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are met.

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. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Juniors	Year 4
3 rd Form	Year 5
4 th Form	Year 6
5 th Form	Year 7
6 th Form	Year 8

Key Findings

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

- Pupils' excellent achievements represent the successful fulfilment of the school's aim to enable pupils to develop their full potential.
- Pupils relish challenge and are confident to take risks in their learning.
- Pupils achieve high standards across the breadth of the curriculum as a result of the commitment, enthusiasm and support that they receive from the staff.
- Pupils develop real strengths and individual talents as a result of the wide-ranging opportunities they are offered.
- Pupils with EAL make exceptionally rapid progress, benefitting from the well-structured programmes of study and excellent specialist support they receive.

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

- All pupils, both day and boarder, thrive at the school because of its established culture of listening, care and respect.
- Pupils have a highly developed sense of responsibility and contribute positively to an inclusive school community.
- Pupils develop strong relationships with staff who know them well and provide a safe place where pupils can express their thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- Pupils have a strong aesthetic and cultural awareness, and appreciate the world around them.

Recommendations

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- Providing focused feedback consistently to ensure pupils make rapid progress in all lessons.
- Extending the excellent practice in some departments across all phases so even the youngest pupils are appropriately challenged.

THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

3.5 Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. In the EYFS children apply their phonic knowledge in word recognition. They listen attentively to a story, responding with appropriate animal sounds as the story moves through the jungle. Their enjoyment of books, evident in the enthusiastic way they show parents their library books at home time, is promoted through visits to the well-resourced main school library. Pupils become fluent speakers who converse confidently with adults and contribute readily to class discussions. They develop excellent writing skills, and, when supported by marking that gives guidance and next steps, they make rapid progress. When prompted, junior pupils use more descriptive vocabulary in their writing including similes, with a roar being described like a V8 engine. Senior pupils analyse text carefully, for example identifying words and phrases that portray Beowulf's heroic character. Pupils' high levels of literacy are underpinned by secure language skills, from the steady practice of cursive handwriting through to the development of advanced vocabulary, with more able senior pupils confidently discussing the meanings of metaphorical and oxymoron. Pupils make rapid progress, particularly in the prep school where teaching goes at a brisk pace, expectations are high and pupils are challenged. Pupils with SEND

and or EAL grow in confidence and are highly motivated to progress, as teaching provides both support and challenge, leading to considerable success.

- 3.6 Pupils of all ability develop strong mathematical skills. In the pre-prep, pupils demonstrate growing confidence in number work, which they use in a variety of contexts. Pupils make particularly good progress in their numerical knowledge and understanding when teaching is carefully planned to meet their individual needs and where expectations are high. Older children in the pre-prep successfully identify the attributes of a range of 3D shapes including cones, spheres and pyramids, which they classify according to their properties using a Venn diagram. In the prep school, pupils make rapid progress benefitting from class setting. In a lower ability set pupils enthusiastically identify the properties of triangles. They enjoy taking a teaching role, where giving explanations to the class further consolidates their own learning. More able pupils make rapid progress in their knowledge and understanding of angle rules through exploring the interior and exterior angles of a star. They applied this knowledge confidently to problem solving challenges. Highly effective use of peer and self-assessment supports the evaluation of pupils' understanding and informs teachers' planning so that work is carefully matched to individual pupil's needs. In the upper school pupils achieve high standards, with more able pupils often excelling in national mathematical challenges and competitions. Pupils of all ages apply their mathematical skills with increasing accuracy across the curriculum. In learning about the world, pre-prep pupils use their mathematical skills to draw graphs comparing the average temperatures in Egypt with those in England. Junior pupils demonstrate good levels of precision when measuring capacity in science and senior pupils apply their knowledge and understanding of scale in the preparation of plans and model designs in Design Technology (DT).
- 3.7 Pupils are adept users of technology and become increasingly confident applying their ICT skills to other areas of learning. Pupils enjoy using ICT and often choose to do so, preparing presentations for their peers on topics as diverse as El Dorado and Silverstone. Children in the EYFS design autumn patterns as they develop their dexterity with a mouse and explore new programmes. Pupils develop excellent research skills, underpinned by a secure understanding of e-safety. They work effectively on group challenges linked with other areas of study, such as a class booklet on the properties of different elements, with individual contributions incorporating relevant graphics and data. Through a carefully structured programme of study, pupils are continually extending their ICT knowledge, as seen when older juniors quickly and confidently applied their previous learning to a new challenge, when manipulating data in a spreadsheet. Pupils explore the extensive school grounds recording images with digital cameras, considering different perspectives and exploring different themes. Middle school pupils combine photography, video recording, audio clips and digital maps to prepare a trail around the school grounds, designed for a target audience of their own choice.
- 3.8 Pupils talk confidently about their own learning, identifying a range of strategies and study skills that help them to make good progress. In the pre-prep, pupils learn how to plan ahead and to organise themselves. Pupils in the prep school use personal planners effectively to manage their work and other school activities. Pupils demonstrate a wide range of study skills, with senior pupils using a mind-mapping technique in English to create a pen portrait, which they developed and improved through discussion. Pupils correct spellings and follow up corrections in their mathematics books, benefitting from opportunities to learn from previous mistakes. Older pupils learn a range of study and revision techniques in preparation for formal examinations. They apply these enthusiastically, as seen in a religious education (RE) revision lesson where pupils devised mnemonics, actions and songs to aid the memorisation of key facts and to consolidate learning. Pupils with SEND make equally rapid progress as teachers use appropriate seating plans, offer visual support and use a multi-sensory approach, which is accompanied by much praise and encouragement. Pupils with EAL are equally confident in their knowledge and understanding of the creation story by the end of an RE lesson as a result of the excellent teaching methods used. They did not need to access the versions provided in their first language. Pupils learn to be analytical through the use of peer and self-assessment, with a focus on strengths and the identification of areas for development. This was evident in English books and in DT where pupils evaluated their own and each other's products. This constructive approach to giving

feedback is modelled highly effectively by some teachers, but this excellent practice was not used consistently across the whole school. Pupils excellent study skills are strongly supported by a structured, focused programme that includes external speakers, one of whom spoke about maximising potential, which has further inspired pupils to work hard and to aspire to success.

- 3.9 The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests, but the available evidence shows attainment to be above average in relation to age-related expectations. Pupils make good progress as a result of teaching that is informed by assessment data and well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils with EAL make excellent progress as a result of specialist teaching and clear, individualised plans. Pupils of all ability levels participate successfully in a wide range of sports and musical activities, with many achieving considerable success. Pupils' well-developed sporting skills are honed through regular games sessions when they benefit from specialist coaching. Recent team achievements have included the boys Under 11 hockey team becoming champions in regional and national inter-schools' hockey competitions. The girls Under 13 netball team is also highly successful, recently coming first in a regional tournament. Pupils with exceptional talents in sport have been nominated for county and regional squads in hockey, netball and cricket. Their progress and development is supported by the school, who collaborate with parents to ensure provision is made that will enable each one to pursue their sport to a higher level. Pupils participate in many musical and dramatic performances during their time at the school. Pupils in the pre-prep sing tunefully and with obvious enjoyment as they practice songs for assembly. Pupils with specific musical gifts or interests further refine their talents through participation in a variety of music groups, choirs and ensembles. Pupils in the senior chapel choir gave a highly professional performance in the Royal Festival Hall in London as finalists in a national choral competition. Many pupils develop musical skills through individual instrumental lessons, where their achievements in grade examinations confirm their good progress. Pupils are highly successful in gaining places to the secondary schools of their choice, and many gain scholarships and awards, including academic, sport, music, art, DT, drama and all-round scholarships. All pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 3.10 Pupils attitudes to learning are excellent. They talk confidently about their learning and work extremely effectively in pairs and small groups. During an experiential day learning about the Romans, pre-prep pupils co-operated enthusiastically as archaeologists discovering a range of artefacts, which they recorded systematically using grids and keys. Senior pupils work highly successfully in groups preparing arguments to support different claims to the throne. They present their claims, with a pupil chairing the process and managing the ensuing debate. Pupils value working collaboratively and having the opportunity to discuss together if they get stuck. Pupils of all ability levels are well motivated to learn; they appreciate the support that they receive from staff, who they say are always willing to help them. Boarders talk positively about the help and encouragement that they give to each other within the boarding community, as well as appreciating the excellent support that they receive in the boarding houses. In the prep school, many pupils respond positively to the additional, voluntary challenges and opportunities that are presented for them to extend their learning, such as the word of the week, open questions in class and the headmaster's half-termly holiday challenge. Pupils' responses range from careful calculations of a pupil's age in seconds, through to presentations using ICT and model-making. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and willingness to share and help each other are demonstrated even at break time, with one group of girls giving netball coaching to some boys whilst elsewhere another pupil was teaching others skills and tricks with a diabolo.

THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.11 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.12 Pupils of all ages show high levels of self-confidence. Boarders overcome their initial uncertainties with the support of the school community and quickly become resilient, self-reliant and well-motivated. Pupils know their strengths and weaknesses. In the prep school, pupils reflect on their character strengths, identifying attributes such as persistence, forgiveness, kindness, wisdom,

gratitude and honesty. Pupils show high levels of perseverance, demonstrated in the pre-prep where EYFS children persevered to overcome problems manipulating a mouse in ICT, and in a prep school ICT class where pupils kept on trying until a formula worked correctly. Pupils understand the value of effort, referring to motivational phrases such as 'we always climb the mountain'. They report a sense of achievement when they successfully carry out a task, which had initially seemed daunting. This persevering attitude is promoted by the teachers who offer positive encouragement. Pupils feel supported and not under pressure. In the pre-prep pupils' confidence grows as a result of the strong relationships established between the children and their teachers. In the prep school, pupils talk clearly about the progress they have made during their time at the school, identifying higher examination grades, greater interest in a subject and selection for school teams as evidence of that progress. Pupils value individual speech and drama lessons, which they report as a key contributory factor in the development of their personal confidence. As pupils move through the school, they become increasingly self-aware; their high levels of resilience prepare them well for the next stage of their learning and provide a strong foundation for their future success.

- 3.13 Pupils appreciate having opportunities to make decisions and talk confidently about the many situations where they have personal choice. With an extensive spread of activities and a wide-ranging evening Options programme, pupils choose whether to follow established interests, or explore new ones. They identify choosing the foods they eat, the friends they make and how much work they complete, all as examples of everyday choices. Many pupils choose to respond to the extra questions and challenges set by their teachers, such as finding the meaning of a word or completing a holiday challenge. In the pre-prep, children make simple choices such as selecting a book when they visit the school library, and choosing ingredients for their magic potions in their creative writing. Pupils in the prep school make decisions linked to specified criteria as they design products in DT. In history pupils make decisions about which information they will use, the roles they will each take and how they will present information when preparing for class presentations. Pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence grow as a result of both the opportunities they have to make choices and through the affirmation they receive from their teachers regarding those choices. Boarders make decisions about life in the boarding houses, from suggestions as to how their dormitories might be decorated through to ideas for weekend activities. Junior pupils discuss next steps in their form time, guided and encouraged by their form tutors. They recall how the transition from pre-prep to the prep school 'wasn't at all scary' because of the support, preparation and advice that they received prior to making the move. Senior pupils have a very clear understanding about how their choices impact on their future opportunities and success. Senior boarders consider they are very well prepared for the next stage in their education and are clearly excited about it.
- 3.14 Pupils develop a keen awareness of the world around them. Pupils of all ages enjoy exploring the extensive school grounds and appreciate having 'time to think' in the gardens. Pupils established a tree club, each adopting a tree within the grounds, and an after school 'wombling' activity encouraged pupils' exploration of the natural world. Pupils develop a strong sense of belonging and of being part of an extended family community, promoted through boarding life, assemblies, chapel services and other whole school events. Pupils know how to reflect and wonder; some identify listening to music as a time for reflection, and even the shower provides a thinking time for others as they prepare for the next day. Pre-prep pupils sing joyously together and reflect quietly during a time of prayer. Prep school pupils appreciated a quiet meditation in chapel as part of world mental health day. Junior pupils spoke about the experience as providing time to 'clear away the pressures of everyday life', and senior pupils valued a moment of calm before a busy day. Junior pupils spoke about exploring the theme of temptation through drama. Senior pupils debate philosophical issues in RE lessons such as presenting arguments for a debate on science versus religion. In art pupils contemplated the theme of remembrance as they studied one of the ceramic poppies from the national art project previously installed at the Tower of London.
- 3.15 Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and learn to accept responsibility for their own behaviour. They learn to become considerate of the needs and feelings of others through the

supportive pastoral care and guidance that they receive from teachers. Younger pupils believe the golden rules are fair and keep them safe. Older pupils understand the school rules and the sanctions that are used to promote good behaviour; they appreciate the rewards that recognise good behaviour and attitudes. Pupils refer to learning from their mistakes, evidence of a positive whole school approach to behaviour management. Pupils accept the need for rules, and understand that this applies at a national level as well as in school, making reference to the Prime Minister and the police as both having a role in establishing and enforcing the law of the land. Pupils of all ages were able to identify staff members to whom they could speak if they were unhappy, and most pupils reported feeling safe at school. Teachers respond promptly to any pupil concerns and a strong system of communication between senior leaders and staff ensures sensitive awareness of pupils' pastoral needs. All pupils with whom the inspectors spoke referred to the Helping Hands booklet prepared by the school, which gives guidance for pupils should they be unhappy or worried about anything, including details of how to contact an independent listener or the national Childline number.

- 3.16 Pupils are aware of the needs of others and seek ways to help those less fortunate than themselves, exemplified by a pupil-initiated request to support the local foodbank and the subsequent donation of harvest gifts to this cause. In the EYFS, children learn how to share and work together effectively to create natural art. In the prep school, pupils love working with others, they understand that it is all right to disagree, and know that you then have to 'work it out together'. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of good teamwork in a variety of contexts, whether playing in team sports, being part of a musical ensemble or carrying out a specific project. Pupils strong collaborative skills are developed through the many opportunities they have both in the classroom and beyond, to work and play together. Pupils in the popular girl guide and scout groups participate enthusiastically in team building and problem-solving exercises, such as getting everyone from one point to another without 'stepping in the marshes'. Pupils in the brownies worked together to prepare a Christmas play which they presented to residents of a sheltered housing complex. All pupils participate enthusiastically in their houses and enjoy working as a team, striving to gain the coveted Conduct Cup and Bilton Cup. Whether acting as a buddy for a pupil new to the school, or as a mentor for a younger child, pupils show care for each other. This extends to the boarding community where pupils say that they all look after each other. Junior pupils talk about being a good friend in Personal, Health, Social and Economic Education (PHSEE) lessons, preparing a video about friendship in collaboration with the film club. Many pupils take on positions of responsibility, often through a democratic class election process. They may represent their class on the school council, volunteer to help in chapel or take a lead on the school's charity fund raising programme. Senior pupils aspire to positions such as school prefects, heads of school and sports captains, where they learn to accept responsibility and to lead by example.
- 3.17 Pupils learn about different faith traditions and religions, so that they come to understand and respect the beliefs of others. They understand that for some pupils, chapel services bring special joy; they also understand that other pupils may not have a faith, and all are accepted equally. Pupils from different backgrounds are quickly incorporated into the school family, where an inclusive ethos pervades. This is exemplified with the use of different languages during school prayers and greetings during morning registration. A junior pupil's reflection sums up this inclusivity 'We are all different, but the same really'. Pupils from different backgrounds mix extremely well, clearly evident in the multi-cultural communities within the boarding houses. Boarders talk about taking time to help each other, being understanding if someone is feeling homesick or sad. Pupils with EAL converse happily with others in English and are well-integrated into the community, taking advantage of the inclusive approach that exists for all and which benefits their linguistic and personal development. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy diet and understand the importance of exercise to be healthy. They are very confident about how to stay safe. Pupils articulate clearly the behaviours they need to adopt to keep themselves safe online. As summed up by one boarder, 'we lead a balanced life'.

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 chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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

Dr Alison Primrose	Reporting inspector
Mr Andrew Greenway	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Jennifer Burrett	Team inspector for boarding (Former head, IAPS school)
Mrs Kathryn Stokes	Team inspector (Head of juniors, ISA school)



Pupils are highly successful in gaining places to the secondary schools of their choice, and many gain scholarships and awards, including academic, sport, music, art, DT, drama and all-round scholarships.

All pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.



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