



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

For Schools with Residential Provision

Bryanston School

February 2022

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School's Details

School	Bryanston School			
DfE number	838/6005			
Registered charity number	306210			
Address	Bryanston School Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 0PX			
Telephone number	01258 452411			
Email address	headspa@bryanston.co.uk			
Acting headmaster	Mr Richard Jones			
Chair of governors	Mr Julian Greenhill			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	793			
	Day pupils	207	Boarders	586
	EYFS	19	Prep	57
	Seniors	422	Sixth Form	295
Inspection dates	1 to 4 February 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Bryanston School is a co-educational boarding and day school. Founded in 1928, the school is a registered charity and is overseen by a governing body. The school comprises a pre-prep department including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); a prep school for pupils from Year 3 to Year 8; a senior school for pupils from Year 9 to Year 11; and a sixth form for pupils in Years 12 and 13. Boarders in the prep school are accommodated in one house. There are five houses accommodating senior and sixth-form female boarders. There are two houses for Year 9 male boarders and five houses for senior and sixth-form male boarders from Year 10.
- 1.2 An acting headmaster was appointed during the autumn term of 2021.
- 1.3 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school seeks to foster an open-minded, challenging and inspiring environment for pupils' personal growth, providing the space for pupils to find their passions. It aims to promote mutual respect, trust and pride between pupils, staff and parents. Its key objective is to enable pupils to take a lead in, and responsibility for, their own learning.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come predominantly from a range of business, professional and artistic backgrounds. Boarders come from across the United Kingdom but mostly from London and the south of England. Overseas boarders are drawn largely from China, Hong Kong and Germany. Nationally standardised tests indicate that the ability profile up to Year 11 is above average and that of pupils in the sixth form is broadly average for those taking the tests. There are 49 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) of whom 18 receive additional help in this regard. Of the 261 pupils identified as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), 79 require extra support. This is provided by the academic support department and within the classroom. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The curriculum is modified for those pupils identified as the most able and for those who have special talents in performing arts and sport.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report 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, inspections report 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. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. 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.

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 standards 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](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

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 In the prep school, the school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 At GCSE and A level in the years 2019 to 2021, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 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. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.8 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

- 2.9 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 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.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, 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

- 2.12 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 are met.**
- 2.13 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.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.14 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.15 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.16 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes 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. It also includes 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.
- 2.17 **The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.18 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.
- 2.19 **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

- 2.20 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.
- 2.21 **The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are met.**

Additional information on particular areas of focus

Quality of education provided – curriculum [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2; NMS 10] and relationships and sex education [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 2A]

2.22 The school has undertaken a thorough revision of its programme for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). The scheme of work for PSHE includes all of the requirements outlined in the DfE's statutory guidance for relationships and sex education (RSE). The recently revised policy for RSE is available to parents on the school's website. In drawing up the policy and the scheme of work, the PSHE co-ordinators have consulted parents, pupils and staff, and taken their views into consideration. The scheme is well constructed in order to enable pupils to gain knowledge and understanding, to acquire personal and social skills and to develop positive attitudes and values. It is effectively designed so that topics are revisited in subsequent years in order to build up deeper understanding.

Quality of education provided – teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraph 3]

2.23 Lessons in PSHE are taught as part of the regular timetable throughout the school, including in the sixth form, and key elements of the programme are reinforced through assemblies and tutorials. Each unit of work has specific learning objectives and opportunities for assessment related to these objectives. In order to support staff who teach PSHE, the subject co-ordinators have provided a bank of teaching material for all of the topics covered within the curriculum. These materials draw heavily and successfully on those provided by professional organisations whose work is devoted to the teaching of PSHE. The co-ordinators are responsive to feedback from pupils and staff as to the suitability of the materials. They have implemented changes during the course of the introduction of the programme to align materials more effectively to the needs and experience of the pupils.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]

2.24 The PSHE scheme of work takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils and does not undermine the fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It endeavours to prepare pupils effectively for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. The scheme reflects the school's aims and encourages respect for other people. It pays particular regard to the protected characteristics which are set out in the Equality Act 2010, including with regard to gender, sexual orientation, promoting understanding of issues of consent and of any potential for sexual harassment or sexual violence in relationships.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8]

2.25 The school works effectively with the local safeguarding partnership and is aware of the range of support available to children and young people who are victims or who perpetrate harmful sexual behaviour. Staff and governors have been trained to understand, identify and to know how to respond to sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online sexual abuse and child-on-child sexual abuse. Incidents of child-on-child abuse are dealt with appropriately. Pupils understand how to stay safe online. Pupils confirmed that they have adults to whom they can turn if concerned and that they receive a response when they do so. Suitable action is taken if any such concerns are reported, including effective liaison with external agencies.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9; NMS 12] and bullying [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 10; NMS 12]

2.26 The school keeps suitable records of serious behavioural incidents and analyses any which include sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online, to identify patterns. It intervenes early to prevent abuse. There is a behavioural approach, including sanctions, which reinforces a culture where

sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated. Recent changes to systems of rewards and sanctions to promote good behaviour are still being embedded. In discussions, some pupils were unsure of their effectiveness. Inspection evidence from additional interviews and scrutiny of records shows the school takes a positive approach to encouraging appropriate behaviour with any sanctions being appropriate to relevant incidents.

- 2.27 The school has an appropriate policy for bullying which sets out clearly the measures the school will take to prevent bullying in the first instance and to deal with it should it occur. Staff and pupils fully understand their responsibility for reporting any instances of bullying, and records show that this happens in practice. Resolution of bullying incidents involves discussion with both perpetrator and victim, and parents of all parties are kept informed. The school is fully aware that such incidents may become safeguarding issues and may necessitate the involvement of the police or the local authority's children's services.
- 2.28 Records indicate that bullying incidents are rare within the school but that they are taken seriously and are dealt with effectively. All bullying instances are recorded using dedicated software for that purpose. During discussions with many pupils, of all ages, inspectors were assured that bullying is not characteristic of school life, both in day and boarding provision.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34; NMS 13]

- 2.29 The governors and school's senior leaders have taken specific steps to address the issues highlighted in various media, where the school was named directly. They have overseen and ensured the effective implementation of the relationships and sex education curriculum in line with statutory guidance.

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.

The headline judgements apply 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 excellent.

- Pupils of all ages and abilities, make excellent progress and achieve highly in academic and non-academic areas.
- Pupils' communication skills are excellent, allowing them to express themselves extremely effectively across all areas of learning.
- Pupils display excellent study skills and develop the ability to think clearly and constructively.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent: they work well independently and collaboratively, and demonstrate leadership in their learning.

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

- Pupils' self-understanding is excellent; they know how to improve their own learning and performance in preparation for the next stage of their lives.
- Pupils take full responsibility for their own behaviour, including towards others.
- Pupils' social development is excellent; they interact successfully, taking appropriate account of others' views, feelings and needs.
- Pupils' contribution to others within the school, including in boarding, the local community and wider society is excellent.

Recommendation

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

- Enabling older pupils' social development still further by clarifying the intentions of the school's revised rewards and sanctions system and ensuring the views of all pupils are seen to have appropriate influence on school life.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 Pupils' attainment at A level remained consistently high relative to national trends during the years 2018–2019, with over 40% of examination results being at grades at A* to A. Similarly, pupils' attainment at GCSE during the same period was strong with around a half of examination results being at the highest grades. Centre-assessed grades in 2020 and teacher-assessed grades in 2021 provide a

similarly positive picture of academic performance. Pupils' attainment in the prep school is also of a high standard, enabling those seeking scholarships to acquire them. Children in the EYFS show development which is above that expected for their age, achieving extremely well across all areas of learning. Those pupils with SEND and EAL who require additional support achieve levels of attainment consistent with that of other pupils. Senior pupils' excellent outcomes allow them to access places at the universities and other placements of their preference, many at institutions with demanding entry requirements. Sixth formers taking the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) demonstrate high levels of academic competence with over three-quarters of those engaged in the programme achieving A* to A grades. These levels of attainment demonstrate excellent progress for pupils' ages and abilities. Parents and pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed their confidence in the school's capacity to enable pupils to achieve well academically. They referred positively to the suitability of the curriculum, the quality of teaching, and the advice and support, including careers guidance, which inspection evidence confirms help pupils in each step of their education. The school's stated commitment to travel beside pupils and guide them on their journey to better prepare them for their lives ahead is fully enacted to enable the pupils' excellent achievement.

- 3.6 Pupils' successes in non-academic pursuits are equally strong. This reflects the pupils' fully participative response to the school's aim to foster a challenging and inspiring environment that provides the space for pupils to find their passions. Pupils strike a healthy balance within school life because enriching co-curricular activities are encouraged and provided each day, so that they have a continual beneficial experience of this mix. As a result of this engagement pupils build on their strengths and excel in sports, and the creative and performance arts. For example, pupils have competed in regional and national finals in rugby, netball, hockey, football, triathlon, cross-country, long-distance running, equestrian events and swimming. Some have achieved international sporting honours. Performance in music, dance, drama, art and public-speaking examinations is excellent. Many pupils succeed at high standards within the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme. Pupils successfully gain places at music conservatoires, several with scholarships. Pupils and parents expressed their approval of the school's provision of co-curricular opportunities in the pre-inspection questionnaires. Pupils told inspectors how much they value this aspect of school life, which for a large majority of older pupils is combined with a purposeful boarding experience that proactively supports their enthusiastic participation in these activities. Inspectors judged that the school's co-curricular provision is a key factor in ensuring pupils' excellent holistic outcomes. Pupils have an enjoyable, all-round experience of learning and therefore give of their best.
- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive in all activities and result in strong study skills. They speak of their school with pride and display a commitment to gaining everything possible from the opportunities they experience. Prep school pupils consider their own learning dispositions, focusing on how they learn, not just on what they learn. As a result, they develop useful insight into their study habits and achieve purposefully. Pupils work well together, as demonstrated in a senior school art lesson when they sensitively and supportively suggested ways of improving each other's ceramic pieces. In German, Year 11 pupils took the lead in their learning to gain a deeper understanding of a grammar exercise. Independence in learning, both individually and within groups, is a strong characteristic of pupils' approach to their work. Pupils were often observed undertaking learning activities away from staff, using breakout spaces and library areas to complete set tasks. There is a great deal of trust, productive discussion and rapport between teachers and pupils which enables pupils to study flexibly, not always relying on step-by-step instruction or the classroom setting. Pupils develop an instinct to help themselves, both in class and when they seek out teaching staff for additional advice during free periods. Pupils also demonstrate strong commitment to completing regular individual assignments, supervised by tutors, applying research, self-evaluative and self-corrective skills with continually increasing effectiveness over time.
- 3.8 Pupils' communication skills are highly developed. In the nursery, children recreated the story of 'The three little pigs' in role play, using excellent descriptive language to evaluate the relative strengths of the pigs' houses. In Year 1, pupils collaborated to re-work an alternative version of this same story,

writing expressively and reading it aloud with confidence and clarity. Older prep school pupils reviewing source data from the Great Fire of London, articulated their ideas with precision. They built effectively on one another's contributions and identified key information supporting their hypothesis, demonstrating high level thinking skills. Senior school pupils knowledgeably applied specialist musical terminology to communicate their analysis of elements of James Bond film scores. Sixth-form pupils used coaching discussion techniques to excellent effect when revising Kantian philosophy, prompting and making suggestions to support one another. Across all age groups, pupils extend their linguistic ability well when learning modern foreign languages. Pupils produce articles of good quality independently for school magazines. They broadcast with professional aplomb on the school's radio station, designing their own playlists. In boarding, pupils prepare and present assemblies for their house, displaying confidence when communicating to larger audiences. In their discussions with inspectors, pupils of all ages consistently demonstrated excellent communication skills, articulating their ideas and views skilfully and assuredly, often with a maturity in excess of that expected for their age. The school's leaders and staff create a learning environment which encourages and enables pupils' confident self-expression. This is matched by an emphasis on personal responsibility to consider other's feelings and perceptions and sensitivity to different audiences.

- 3.9 Pupils learn and apply numeracy skills extremely well across the curriculum, often in association with their excellent use of information and communication technology (ICT). Prep school pupils make rapid progress in mathematics, including mental mathematics. They apply their mathematical skills highly effectively, for example taking due consideration of shape, space and angles when making wind chimes in a design and technology lesson. Senior pupils apply their knowledge of fractions and ratios skilfully to solve real challenges, such as designing a garden with specified areas of grass and gravel. They also displayed perseverance and great skill when pushing themselves in a mental mathematics 're-doubling challenge' to find how far they could go in their calculations. In many lessons numeracy is applied successfully, for instance in the use of graphs for analytical and presentation purposes in geography.
- 3.10 Pupils put their competencies in ICT to excellent use in a wide range of learning situations, such as producing videos to share personal experiences with others; to submit work and receive feedback from teachers; and to communicate with peers when working collaboratively on projects. Pupils, together with their teachers, advantageously use on-line video links for some lessons, capitalising on the additional mutual expertise that has been accrued during phases of necessary virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pupils use their laptops very effectively and responsibly at all times to support their learning, including independently during private study, in boarding and in extra-curricular clubs.
- 3.11 Pupils develop strong understanding, skills and knowledge in science. Prep school pupils quickly learned a great deal in a lesson about energy because they were able to experiment successfully, benefitting from a well-equipped laboratory. Pupils' written work in science is of high quality, including careful recording of findings and neatly produced diagrams. Pupils apply their scientific understanding extremely well. Sixth-form pupils competently applied scientific principles regarding dependent and independent variables within a psychology lesson when considering eye-witness testimonials, enabling them to draw conclusions in a systematic and balanced manner.
- 3.12 The youngest children in the nursery make excellent early progress in physical education, for example understanding how to use their bodies expressively and in a self-controlled way to make shapes in a game of statues and how to manage their energy during bouts of rapid activity. Prep school pupils displayed high levels of self-management together with strong team collaboration and effective playing skills during football. Senior pupils engage and succeed extremely well in a wide range of sports, enjoying competitiveness but also the participation and challenge of achieving personal bests.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils develop excellent self-understanding and self-confidence in all that they do. They respond with commitment to the 'Bryanston Method', which from Year 6 onwards includes a continuing relationship with a designated personal tutor. Pupils successfully use this relationship as a constant opportunity to reflect on what is going well, what might need improving and what to do next to make continued progress. Consequently, pupils make rapid and sustained advances in their personal development, demonstrating considerable maturity for their age. They benefit greatly too from the supportive house system which fosters in them a sense of security and the scope to develop positive relationships with peers and adults over time. Boarders thrive extremely well. Younger children in the EYFS and pupils in the prep school displayed high levels of confidence when talking with inspectors about their school. They said adults are always caring and ready to listen to them, including if they have a worry. Senior and sixth-form pupils also reported that staff are consistently interested in their well-being and that relationships between pupils and staff are excellent. This was observed to be the case throughout the inspection, there being a distinctive good-humoured and mutually respectful rapport. As a result, pupils are confident in their self-expression, knowing that they can share their views and feelings in an open manner. Some older pupils said that whilst they are listened to and understood well within their houses and boarding, they would like to have more direct influence on school life. This view is acknowledged by the school's senior leaders and new channels of communication are being opened up through the current implementation of a whole school pupil voice initiative.
- 3.15 Pupils' behaviour across the school was observed to be excellent at all times. During discussions with inspectors, pupils stated emphatically that their school, including boarding, is a happy and safe place to be, wherein everyone is committed to keeping it that way and behaving accordingly. Underpinning this commitment is the high value pupils place on being at the school. They consider that any serious misbehaviour, including between pupils such as sexual harassment, is very rare and always dealt with quickly by staff and school leaders. Inspection evidence confirms this. In lessons and around school, pupils were seen to be cheerful, considerate and polite to one another, to staff and to visitors. During discussion with inspectors, pupils of all ages were respectful, took turns when answering questions and valued each other's contributions. Their interpersonal skills, including sensitivity regarding differing viewpoints, meant that appropriate interactive behaviour was the norm. Some older pupils questioned whether the recently introduced rewards and sanctions system for promoting appropriate behaviour would be sufficiently effective. Inspectors judged that the system is a suitable one, but its intention has not yet been fully made clear to all pupils.
- 3.16 Pupils know right from wrong. The youngest pupils quickly acquire a robust sense of fairness and justice. Prep, senior and sixth-form pupils rigorously explore moral and ethical issues, such as gender inequality and the decriminalisation of drugs. Pupils display a keen interest in such matters. Prefects with responsibility for diversity, equality and inclusion provide a passionate and challenging lead for other pupils, enabling them to examine their own attitudes productively. The recently formed group of sixth-form ambassadors has made a good start on engaging their peers, positively influencing their behaviour and attitudes as appropriate in modern British society. Trained and supported to help pupils of all ages across the school to develop a stronger voice and increase focus on issues such as misogyny and homophobia, they are demonstrating strong leadership. Pupils gain an excellent understanding of the importance of the law, democratic processes and institutions of justice. The school's governors, leaders and staff provide due emphasis on these topics and have ensured that a suitable PSHE programme is in place to promote related teaching and learning.
- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate excellent ability to make decisions because they are continually encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, both on a daily basis and with regard for their longer-term choices about post-school destinations. Pupils take good advantage of the effective careers advice offered by the school. They explore their current and potential interests and passions avidly, drawing on the wide

range of co-curricular opportunities available to them. As a result, pupils develop a readiness and enthusiasm for self-discovery and fulfilment. The very large majority of pupils who are boarders recognise and value the scope this provides for them to make the most of the school's rich offer of activities. Boarders and day pupils become adept at determining their priorities, learning about the need to maintain a balance of academic and co-curricular commitments in their school lives and to handle competing demands and interests well.

- 3.18 Pupils develop a keen sense of how to look after their mental and physical health. Children in the EYFS quickly gain a helpful understanding of healthy eating by making choices from a suitably selected menu of snacks and meals. They also learn the importance of physical fitness through daily fun routines emphasizing movement. They come to understand that their feelings are respected by the adults around them and therefore learn to recognise and understand their own emotional responses to situations. This provides them with a good foundation for appreciating the importance of their future mental health. Pupils in the prep, senior school and sixth form continue to develop enhanced understandings regarding their personal health and how to keep safe. This is because the governors and school leaders have ensured that the PSHE programme, assemblies and focused events maintain a consistent emphasis on these aspects of pupils' well-being. Pupils demonstrated excellent understanding regarding online safety. They know to be duly careful about handling tools and machinery in design and technology lessons and were observed to act with responsibility when operating complex electronic equipment. Throughout the school, pupils continue to display awareness and commitment to eating healthily and keeping fit through sport. They reflect well on their emotional response to any pressures and monitor their need for rest and relaxation, supported always by their personal tutors, house staff and counsellors if required. Pupils respond positively to the encouragement they receive to manage their own well-being as independently as possible in preparation for life after school and demonstrate assured maturity in this respect. Older pupils act responsibly regarding the agreed freedoms they have to enjoy community facilities in the local town and are aware of the need to take care of themselves when out and about.
- 3.19 Pupils' spiritual understanding is excellent. Younger pupils taking part in prayer at assembly displayed a quiet and reverential attitude, absorbed in the moment. Pupils show a reflective response to music, literature, poetry, artwork and performing art, which are strong aspects of school life. Listening to a Beethoven piano sonata, pupils were deeply emotionally engaged in the experience. Studying the Holocaust, pupils spoken, and unspoken but visible, empathy for the victims was profound. The relationship between staff and pupils is full of trust. Their shared emotional intelligence allows and enables many observable moments of mutual insights and understandings. This creates a prevailing school ethos which encourages the valuing of non-material aspects of life. Pupils develop a comprehensive understanding and respect for the diversity of faiths, cultures and individuals and this means they are readily open to appreciating the spiritual dimension of others' life experiences.
- 3.20 Pupils show an excellent commitment to serving others within school and the wider community and know how to put this into action. Prefects take a strong lead in school projects such as environmental sustainability, and other pupils respond well, together learning they can make a positive difference to their immediate setting. A group of Year 12 pupils mentor Year 9 pupils, and in doing so find out about the importance of direct responsibility for others' personal development. Pupils' sense of care and responsibility for others extends into the local community, where for instance, the 'pioneering club' hosts a lunch for elderly people. In discussion, it was clear that as a result, pupils gain insight into other's needs at different points in their life, dispelling any stereotypical attitudes towards age and promoting respect for individuals' life experiences. Similarly, pupils acquire an understanding regarding those who experience more severe and challenging learning difficulties through their engagement with peers from a special school in drama activity. Pupils also seek to support others globally, for example raising large amounts of funding for a school in a developing country overseas. Pupils display a strong appreciation of the contrasts between affluence and poverty which exist as a result of their involvement in this project. They show a genuine humility regarding their relative privilege and how they should use it to benefit others as selflessly as possible. Pupils work hard on

these community projects, encouraged by the school's governors who form partnerships with prefects to keep in touch with these endeavours. Staff are also fully supportive of pupils' service to others, and the range of pupils' involvement in this regard is wide.

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, with the chair of governors and the safeguarding governor. They observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended 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, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Andrew Farren	Reporting inspector
Mrs Catherine Williamson	Accompanying reporting inspector
Mr William Brierly	Compliance inspector (Head, SofH school)
Mrs Ruth Coomber	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mrs Angela Drew	Team inspector for boarding (Head, HMC, GSA school)
Mr Christopher Sparrow	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr Stephen Yeo	Team inspector for boarding (Former head, SofH school)
Mr Christopher Emmott	Team inspector (Former head, ISA school)
Mr David Gajadharsingh	Team inspector (Head of SofH school)