



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**FOCUSED COMPLIANCE AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION REPORTS
FOR SCHOOLS WITH RESIDENTIAL PROVISION**

VINEHALL SCHOOL

JANUARY 2018



CONTENTS

SCHOOL'S DETAILS		3
1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION		4
About the school		4
What the school seeks to do		4
About the pupils		4
2. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION		5
Preface		5
Key findings		7
PART 1 – Quality of education provided		7
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		7
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils		7
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors		7
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools		8
PART 6 – Provision of information		8
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled		8
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools		8
3. EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION		9
Preface		9
4. KEY FINDINGS		10
Recommendation		10
THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS		10
THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT		12
5. INSPECTION EVIDENCE		15

SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Vinehall School			
DfE number	845/604			
Registered charity number	307014			
Address	Vinehall School Robertsbridge East Sussex TN32 5JL			
Telephone number	01580 880413			
Email address	hm@vinehallschool.com			
Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Powis			
Chair of governors	Mr William Foster Kemp			
Age range	2 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	254			
	Boys	138	Girls	116
	Day pupils	223	Boarders	31
	EYFS	39	Juniors	146
	Seniors	69		
Inspection dates	22 January 2018 to 25 January 2018			

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Vinehall School is a day and boarding preparatory school for boys and girls aged from two to thirteen years and offers boarding facilities for pupils in the prep school. It is situated in forty-seven acres of Sussex countryside and housed in a Victorian stately home near the village of Robertsbridge. The school was established in 1938 for a small number of children from the local community. The boarding accommodation is situated on the upper floor of the main building and boys and girls are accommodated at opposite ends of the house. The pre-prep department, including the EYFS, is situated close to the main school in a self-contained building surrounded by areas for outdoor learning within the school grounds. It also shares facilities with the main school. Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a new headmaster. The school is a charitable trust, administered by a board of governors.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to provide an excellent all-round education academically and through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. It strives to provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve the highest levels of attainment. It aims to provide an environment of mutual respect in which every pupil can participate fully in life, learn about themselves and their place in the world and develop independence, commitment and enthusiasm.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a range of business and professional backgrounds. Most are from the local area and boarders include a large contingent from outside the UK. Most pupils are of white British ethnicity although a broad range of nationalities is represented. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils on entry is above average. The school has identified 38 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 26 of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Twenty pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), 17 of whom require support for their English. More able or talented pupils are catered for in lessons and through the system of grouping pupils by ability for most subjects from Year 5. The curriculum is adapted for potential scholars who are identified in Year 7.

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. 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 unmet 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. Any 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 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.
- 2.13 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, and its results in public examinations, 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.

4. KEY FINDINGS

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

- Pupils achieve high standards across curriculum subjects and in their extra-curricular activities, and apply skills from one subject to another effectively.
- From an early age, pupils' communication skills and collaborative work are excellent.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and relish all the school has to offer.
- Pupils confidently express their own opinions and put forward their ideas extremely well, leading to excellent progress.
- Pupils achieve particularly high standards in music and creative arts.

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

- Pupils take on responsibilities within the school with enthusiasm and maturity, and work together well.
- Pupils have a strong appreciation of diversity and show considerable sensitivity towards those less fortunate than themselves.
- Pupils are self-confident and motivated. This is particularly well-developed through boarding.
- Pupils have a deep sense of right and wrong. They show respect for each other and value each other's opinion.
- Pupils of all ages speak enthusiastically about all the school provides, its ethos and the support provided by staff.

Recommendation

4.3 In the context of excellent outcomes, the school may wish to consider the following:

- Link information and communication technology (ICT) and design technology (DT) more effectively in order to increase learning opportunities for pupils.

THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

4.5 The school fully meets its aim to provide an excellent all-round education both academically and through a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. From the EYFS onwards pupils achieve high standards across the broad curriculum and build knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. This is partly due to the exemplary attitudes of pupils and their overwhelming enthusiasm, as well as excellent teaching and well-planned lessons. A very large majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire thought that the school met their child's educational needs effectively.

4.6 Pupils have excellent attitudes towards learning, nurtured by high expectations and the mutually supportive, inclusive and enabling culture of the school. Pupils welcome opportunities to be active rather than passive learners as the whole school philosophy is based around the identified dispositions of an active thinker and learner. This is identified from the EYFS onwards through the 'School Pals' which are a range of puppets each signifying a different disposition. For example, when EYFS children were engaged in a particular challenge they identified that they needed to be Terry Tortoise who never gives up. Pupils are not afraid to take risks and get things wrong as they know

that this is part of the learning process. Their readiness to support each other's learning is a particular strength; their eagerness to collaborate with their peers is consistent throughout the school. EYFS children were observed working closely together in small groups when undertaking challenges such as building the highest tower within a given time and emptying as many small beads from a tray using tweezers. Pupils know how they should behave and appreciate that it is their responsibility to create a harmonious ethos. Pupils are proud of their many individual achievements and those of others. From an early age they begin to record them, in order to prepare for the shield that every pupil makes when leaving the school. These shields are proudly displayed throughout the school and represent many years of former pupils' successes.

- 4.7 The school does not take part in national curriculum tests, but the evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own assessment data, shows attainment to be above national age-related expectations. Less-able pupils and those with SEND or EAL make excellent progress because they are extremely well supported. Their progress is carefully monitored by the leadership and management through the new systems being introduced. Pupils greatly appreciate this support and know that there is always help available. The SEND department has an open-door policy, allowing pupils to go for a quiet time to study or to receive support when they need it. Boarders are frequently offered support by staff if they need it, and the efficient communication systems guarantee that all boarding staff are aware of individual pupils' needs and difficulties. More able pupils respond to challenge in lessons ensuring that many accelerate their progress. The grouping of pupils in most subjects from Year 5 upwards ensures that all pupils are challenged at an appropriate level. This helps to ensure that all pupils make excellent progress in preparation for challenging Year 8 entrance examinations to senior schools. All pupils are successful at gaining entry to senior schools of their choice and many regularly gain academic scholarships in music, performing arts and sports awards. Staff have a strong understanding of the requirements of entrance examinations and ensure that pupils are well prepared. Most parents and almost all pupils who responded to the questionnaire thought that the school enabled pupils to make good progress and develop skills for the future.
- 4.8 Pupils of all ages demonstrate outstanding communication skills. In the EYFS, communication skills are strong in reading, listening, writing and particularly speaking. Children enjoy debate and discussion, which is regularly encouraged during lessons; and time is given to allow all pupils to share their opinions, which they do with confidence and enthusiasm, often expressing themselves passionately and thoughtfully. In art, pupils were able to communicate using wide-ranging specialist terms when describing their own work and the art they were reviewing. They were able to describe the stage they had reached with their work, confidently asking questions to further understand the intended next steps. They are indeed articulate, self-confident and fluent speakers for whom discourse is a regular learning tool within the classroom.
- 4.9 Pupils write with enthusiasm and a high level of ability. In the EYFS, children soon become confident writers who use their well-developed phonic skills effectively. The youngest children who are not yet writing, can verbalise their stories with enthusiasm, secure in the fact that their teachers will record their words and then display them in books for all their peers to share. Pupils write skilfully for many purposes including poetry of a high standard. Their writing skills develop strongly as they move through the school; this was highlighted in history when pupils eloquently recorded their opinions in their essays discussing the claimants to the throne in 1066. However, at times, the content of writing is often of a higher quality than the presentation. Pupils' increasing language abilities allow them to hypothesise and analyse which they do readily and thoughtfully. Reading is of a high quality and thoroughly enjoyed from the EYFS onwards. The excellent library facility which is the hub of the preparatory department does much to encourage this.
- 4.10 Throughout the school, the pupils' achievement in mathematics is excellent due to the well planned and exciting opportunities provided for investigation and collaboration. Teaching gives clear explanations and demonstrations of mathematical processes. Supportive marking with constructive

annotations, includes pupil self-review as to the level of confidence in understanding of particular topics. In the EYFS, children use number in their play with confidence and enjoyment. They count in their songs and rhymes and quickly recognise numbers. Older pupils are extremely competent at handling number and apply their knowledge to calculations. Pupils were able to articulate their mathematical thinking efficiently in work on fractions because skilful staff created an interesting scenario for them using a pizza. Pupils relish the many challenges they are given and are adept at solving word problems with tenacity and persistence, intent on success. They use their knowledge appropriately in science, geography, in cookery where they apply their skills when measuring ingredients and in Latin when they discuss the principles of buying slaves. Scientific skills and knowledge are extremely well developed. Pupils were able to set up working circuits from circuit diagrams confidently applying scientific techniques. Younger pupils ably explained the necessary materials they had used to make their boats float, and younger pupils are able to explain and present their work with confidence to their peers accepting questions, comments and suggestions for improvement. Pupils talk with infectious enthusiasm about the many lively creative and musical activities in which they excel. This is partly because pupils are encouraged to take part fully in performing arts and their many performances play an important part in school life and pupils eagerly acknowledge each other's successes. Pupils, particularly the boarders, participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities with great enjoyment and enthusiasm. Boarders' creative and expressive skills develop through the wide range of activities after school and at weekends. They take part keenly and are given opportunities to put forward their suggestions regarding new activities.

- 4.11 Day pupils and boarders achieve success in a wide range of sports and activities on offer, and because of their enthusiasm and determination and the encouragement they receive from staff. Boarders delight in the opportunities that the school's grounds afford them and make full use of it. Although a strong focus is put on success in sports activities, leaders ensure that pupils' extra-curricular achievements span many other areas. Music across the school is of a particularly high standard and pupils delight in playing or singing together and the choirs and ensembles regularly have success in local festivals and many pupils achieve high standards in external music examinations. Pupils have many successes participating in regional and national competitions including a national mathematics challenge and local public speaking and history competitions. Sports successes are many and include swimming, athletics, football, netball and hockey, with individual success also in karate and gymnastics. The school recognises individual talents and offers every opportunity for pupils to pursue their interests.
- 4.12 Pupils' ICT skills are developing well and are used across the curriculum. However, they have not been used effectively in DT where pupils gain strong skills in designing and making within a range of projects, but as yet do not use their IT skills to extend their activities further.
- 4.13 Pupils show steadily developing study skills as they move through the school which they apply appropriately in their independent work. Staff encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning by their encouragement and sensitive support. They provide interesting topics and scenarios for discussion, debate and research, and encourage pupils to apply reference to prior learning to place their learning in context. Pupils' enjoyment of learning and working together is clear throughout the school.

THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.15 Pupils throughout the school, including the very youngest are highly self-confident, motivated and self-aware. They have a calm confidence because the school's leadership and all adults in the school promote its pastoral aims very well. These characteristics are further developed for many pupils through their boarding experience. Pupils know their strengths and their weaknesses and show a determination to improve. Through the schools use of a mental colour zone system, pupils are able

to identify how they are feeling and how it will affect their work. EYFS children readily identify each other's zones and know what they need to do to change their demeanours. They know that being in a green zone has optimum effect on their work and wellbeing. Self-reflection is an integral part of lessons and pupils regularly celebrate their own achievements and those of their peers. They frequently praise each other, but also suggest ways that they could improve. Collaboration and respect for each other is a key feature in boarding life, and younger pupils aspire to imitate their older peers and enjoy the opportunity to experience the opportunity to board.

- 4.16 Pupils' high self-esteem is fostered by the culture of affirmation and ethos of the school, underpinned by the variety of rewards in place including those for boarders. Pupils say that rewards are plentiful and sanctions few, and pupils are respectful of rules and expectations. Pupils value the recognition of their achievements because rewards are regularly celebrated during whole school assemblies where pupils are given the opportunity to shine. Pupils delight in these, knowing that they can add them to their shield as they prepare to move on to their senior school. A very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire said that school promotes an environment which successfully supports their child's personal development.
- 4.17 Pupils exhibit strong decision-making skills and are consistently encouraged to exercise and be confident in using them. In the EYFS, children are regularly encouraged to choose their own activities, and in collaboration with their peers, make decisions whilst choosing resources and deciding on roles. They are encouraged to make choices in the books they look at and they take full advantage of the plentiful resources and activities provided which ensure that all areas of learning are represented. In discussions, older pupils eloquently vocalise and justify decisions on the morality of issues such as bull fighting or capital punishment. The many efficient decisions pupils make lay the foundations for their future and provide vital experience for self-management. Pupils discuss together relevant matters and appreciate the impact of the decisions they make through regular house meetings, the school council and the food committee which are an important part of school life valued by both pupils and staff.
- 4.18 Pupils have a strong moral compass and leaders ensure that expectations are high in all areas including moral behaviour and work ethic. These expectations are reinforced in assemblies and in relevant personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons which are based on themes of the week such as democracy and overcoming disappointment. Pupils say these standards will stay with them for life. They have a deep sense of right and wrong, understand and respect systems of rules and laws, and accept responsibility for their own behaviour, including towards others, strongly supported by the coherent and consistent pastoral system which they appreciate. In boarding, the minimal number of punishments demonstrates the pupils' understanding of the sanction and reward system, the way they openly taking responsibility for their own behaviour and the respect which they have towards others and excellent relationships observed. The vast majority of parents and most pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promoted good behaviour and encouraged pupils to behave well.
- 4.19 Pupils' spiritual understanding is excellent and pervades all aspects of school life. Pupils value their experience in the assemblies and the sense of community it creates. Pupils spoke of the enjoyment of community singing and the opportunities to be recognised for their successes and their recognition of being guardians to new pupils. For boarders, the Sunday services further cement their unity and strong community. Pupils show a profound sense of awe in the joy of learning and the opportunities that are afforded to them across school life. Through the strong focus on creative arts pupils delight in the opportunities to perform music to a high standard, and pupils show confidence in performing and enjoy sharing their music with others, which forms an important element in their spiritual development. The high quality of art on display around the school reveals the pupil's appreciation of beauty and their capacity to think beyond day-to-day issues. They strongly value the opportunities provided to experience these aspects of school life.

- 4.20 Pupils are extremely socially aware and so are able to work effectively with others to solve problems and achieve common goals. The school motto, 'to do our best for the benefit of others', underpins pupils' determination which they do by talking and communicating, learning through mistakes, persevering and developing resilience and being clear what the common goals are. This helps to sustain the excellent culture of respect and care that pervades the school. Pupils take on responsibilities in school conscientiously. Pupils demonstrate a mature understanding of their personal freedom and decisions which they can take at each stage in their development through leadership opportunities, such as house captains, prefects and, playground buddies. They carry out these roles maturely because they receive proper guidance and training. Pupils collaborate naturally and without prompting to ensure that all are included and achieving happily together. EYFS children were seen helping a friend who had fallen over, and they kindly collected his bag for swimming. Pupils rely on one another to assist them when they are new. The valuable guardian and buddy systems help pupils to thrive in their new school. This support of one another is at the heart of the boarding community and new boarders quickly settle in and enjoy boarding life. The care of each other is further promoted during Lent when pupils are paired anonymously and must show acts of kindness without revealing their identity.
- 4.21 Pupils demonstrate a sensitive awareness to others less fortunate than themselves. They are involved with the local community through musical events and the support of local charities. The work of the charities committee is strongly encouraged by management, and pupils enjoy and rise to the opportunities to lead initiatives to support different charities, both local and national. Such charitable initiatives are pupil-led and pupils are encouraged to support individual charities when they are touched by a special case. Pupils are involved in ongoing fundraising for the community in Rwanda.
- 4.22 Pupils strongly value diversity within society and treat everyone equally. They show respect for and appreciation of their own and other cultures and demonstrate sensitivity and tolerance to those from different backgrounds and traditions. This is seen in the way that overseas pupils feel included and welcomed, in the friendships across cultures, through the constant group and pair work in class, through the charity work done, and through the way pupils speak about other cultures. Pupils' outstanding awareness and appreciation of diversity is promoted by focused and committed staff who act as excellent role models, leaders' and governors' strong support for the excellent pastoral care system, and the boarding house rules and expectations which are lived by all. An overwhelming majority of parents and most pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 4.23 From the EYFS onwards, including boarding, pupils know how to keep safe. The induction process for boarders ensures that safety procedures are given high priority. They are aware of how to keep safe when using computers and are confident that if they have any concerns, staff are available for support. The regular reminders and specialist speakers reinforce pupils' safety. Pupils understand that they should stay fit and healthy and recognise the need for healthy food. 'Vegetable monitors' encourage them to make sure they include these when choosing from the plentiful food on offer as part of their meals which are friendly social occasions. The pupils take exercise which is paramount in activities and the school ensures that it is regular and enjoyable.
- 4.24 Pupils feel that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Boarders say that the boarding experience increases their independence and personal skills in readiness for full time boarding in senior schools. Throughout the school there is a sense of enjoyment and togetherness which permeates all that pupils do. The boarding experience for older pupils is a strong factor in this and knits pupils together as a tight family body within the school. The positivity of the responses to both the parents' and pupils' questionnaires strongly confirms that the school meets pupils' pastoral and welfare needs effectively.

5. INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 5.1 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 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

Mrs Linda Donowho	Reporting inspector
Miss Carrie Wear	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr Peter Nicholson	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Whymark	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)