



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Scarisbrick Hall School

November 2022

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School's Details

School	Scarisbrick Hall School			
DfE number	888/6006			
Early Years registration number	EY404867			
Address	Scarisbrick Hall Southport Road Ormskirk Lancashire L40 9RQ			
Telephone number	01704 841151			
Email address	enquiries@scarisbrickhallschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Jeff Shaw			
Chair of directors	Mrs Susan Aylmer			
Age range	0 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	862			
	EYFS	162	First School	169
	Middle School	266	College	203
	Sixth Form	62		
Inspection dates	1 to 3 November 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Scarisbrick Hall School is a co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of 0 and 18. Set in fifty acres of grounds, the school site was acquired in 2010 by the current proprietors who constitute the board of directors responsible for the governance of the school. The school is organised into five sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting for children aged from 0 to 5 years; the first school for pupils in Years 1 to 4; the middle school for those in Years 5 to 8; the college for those in Years 9 to 11; and a sixth form. Since the previous inspection, new science buildings, libraries and changing facilities for pupils have been built.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to create a vibrant community where motivated, independent learners celebrate and embrace diversity; foster confidence; value opinions and friendship; develop an awareness of their role and responsibility within a global society; and go on to achieve their potential.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds across West Lancashire. School data indicate that the ability of pupils entering the first school are in line with national averages. By Year 7, analysis of standardised test scores indicates that the ability profile of the pupils is just above the national average for those taking similar tests. The school has identified 125 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, ADHD and ASC, 21 of whom receive additional specialist help. Six pupils have an educational, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 6 pupils, one of whom receive additional help for their English. Pupils identified as the most able and those with particular talents have their curriculum modified or enhanced.

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. Inspections of schools with early years 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 FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the first 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 In the senior school, the school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2020 to 2022 confirm 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.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.15 A range of information is 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.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.17 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.19 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

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

3. The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

- 3.1 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 3.2 Leaders and managers have developed a stimulating and progressive curriculum which highly skilled staff implement through a broad range of exciting and creative activities. All children, including those with SEND, are carefully considered in the planning and delivery of the curriculum and consequently every child's needs are met.
- 3.3 Children make secure progress in relation to their starting points. Staff are aware of their next steps and plan stimulating activities to support and extend their learning. Staff have excellent knowledge of the skills children need for the next stage of their education and build these skills into the curriculum to ensure they are confident and ready to move on. Within the setting children are extremely well prepared for transitions and are supported by their key person to ensure they are ready emotionally. Staff recognise the need for flexibility and work to meet each child's needs rather than making provision based solely on chronological age, offering extra support to children when needed.
- 3.4 Children clearly feel safe and secure in the setting and have developed strong bonds with their key person and other room staff, who they trust. Staff are warm, friendly, and nurturing. Children respond extremely positively to them and feel happy. Relationships between staff and children are strong. They allow children to gain confidence and independence because staff guide and support them in their personal and emotional development.
- 3.5 Requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare have been fully met and staff have a shared understanding and responsibility for protecting children.
- 3.6 Leaders and managers are highly effective when evaluating practice. They recognise the need for continual development and ensure all staff are committed to providing the best possible education for the children in their care.

Quality of education

- 3.7 The quality of education is outstanding.
- 3.8 Leaders implement a bespoke, challenging and highly effective curriculum which is securely embedded across the setting. All staff share an understanding of the curriculum intent and how to implement this successfully to meet the needs of the children, statutory requirements, and school expectations. Careful consideration has been given to recognise key skills children need at each developmental stage. Staff are highly skilled at interacting with children to ensure that the impact of the curriculum on children's development is highly effective.
- 3.9 Staff build well on children's knowledge and learning. They provide a comprehensive range of experiences for children to ensure that they gain the skills and knowledge needed for future learning. Leaders work tirelessly and successfully to ensure the small steps needed to achieve these skills in the future are all met.
- 3.10 Staff look at what the children know and consider what they say they want to know. Staff then review what children have learnt and can remember and link all these elements to a six-weekly learning question. Learning questions provide focus and children consequently demonstrate high levels of engagement and concentration during related activities. Babies present a strong level of engagement when exploring play opportunities by themselves, with an adult or other children. They enjoyed exploring the inside of pumpkins with their hands as staff encouraged them to use new vocabulary modelled to them to describe the object. Staff are committed to ensuring all children, including those with SEND, achieve the best possible outcomes and make secure progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Where children need additional support, staff are quick to respond and they put effective plans

and targets in place. There are excellent links with outside agencies and staff utilise these when needed. Leaders and staff work in partnership with agencies and parents to ensure the child's needs are met.

- 3.11 Meticulous and thorough planning ensures adult-led activities are relevant and offer the right level of challenge to the children. Readily accessible and stimulating resources encourage children to also initiate their own learning. Staff are extremely effective in observing and evaluating activities which ensure children are continually making progress.
- 3.12 Focus on children's communication skills is a particular strength of the setting. Staff ensure that babies and toddlers are exposed to new vocabulary which is repeated to enable even the youngest children to gain knowledge and confidence. Leaders prioritise communication skills. Transition between rooms occurs once these skills are developed sufficiently and with regard to the needs of the individual child. Children communicated their needs confidently to staff in short phrases. Babies understood the importance of non-verbal communication as they watched staff intently and used gestures effectively. Children become increasingly confident and fluent in their communication as they transition to the next stage of their learning.

Behaviour and attitudes

- 3.13 Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
- 3.14 Children demonstrate excellent behaviour. Staff are extremely effective in supporting children to show high levels of respect for each other. They model this through their own interactions with each other and children. Staff have an excellent understanding of the needs and feelings of young children and show sensitivity towards individuals when modelling how to manage feelings and behaviour. They talk calmly and quietly to children and reinforce kind hands and sharing. Careful observation and recording allow staff to track any patterns and triggers for behaviours. Plans of support are then swiftly put into place. Children are quick to respond to staff when simple commands such as stop are given when out on a walk and show an understanding of the importance of such rules.
- 3.15 Children have extremely positive attitudes towards learning. They look towards staff for guidance and staff consistently motivate and guide them to share and co-operate. Consequently, children are highly motivated and quick to engage in play and activities with others. Praise is used effectively. Children respond positively when staff speak to them and follow instructions given in a confident and calm manner.
- 3.16 Throughout the setting children demonstrate high levels of self-control. They develop excellent problem solving and critical thinking skills. This is in response to the suitable opportunities to do so provided in the outdoor woodland areas, the school grounds, and in their indoor environment. Children persevered when trying to put their own wellies on, feed themselves and climb on low-level equipment. They show high levels of resilience and perseverance partly due to expert observation by staff. Staff only intervene when needed, allowing children time to work things out for themselves and feel successful.

Personal development

- 3.17 The personal development of children is outstanding.
- 3.18 The setting rightly prides itself on its nurturing family atmosphere. Staff prioritise children's emotional security and ensure that all children feel safe and happy while being encouraged to take risks when appropriate. Staff know the children extremely well, are attentive to their needs. All staff recognise safeguarding is a shared responsibility and take great care to ensure the children are kept safe. They ensure that the youngest babies are given the high levels of care and support necessary to enable them to settle in quickly.

- 3.19 Children form extremely strong and trusting relationships with their key person and a 'buddy' system ensures continuity in cases of absence. Staff are knowledgeable about the children in their care and significant events in their lives are supported. Children come happily into the setting and show high levels of confidence and security in their environment and with staff. They are encouraged to develop an appropriate awareness of the need to respect others and to make a positive contribution. Children happily engage in play and activities, enjoy mealtimes, and settle to sleep contentedly.
- 3.20 Children receive daily opportunities to be physically active in the school's substantial grounds. Young babies are taken in pushchairs and those who can walk are encouraged to do so. Children are dressed appropriately for the weather and enjoy these opportunities all year round. Outdoor learning is securely embedded in the curriculum and the routines of the children's days.
- 3.21 Meals and snacks form part of a healthy balanced diet and fresh drinking water is readily available. Leaders are mindful of the impact of screens in technological devices on young children and the setting chooses to not expose young children to digital technology. This is supported and modelled by all staff behaviour. Hygiene practices are appropriate.
- 3.22 Children sleep according to their needs and staff gently settle children on mats and stay close by while they fall asleep. As the children transition between rooms there are subtle differences to enable them an appropriate level of challenge and support towards the next stage in their development. Transition sheets are completed which ensure that key information is passed on and key people initially go with children to ease such moves. This allows transitions to be seamless and rapid progress is often made as a result. This was seen in the development of children's communication skills and their physical skills, for example when drinking from bigger cups and using cutlery. There is no formal peer observation between staff in different rooms which restricts full potential to share the best practice.

Leadership and management

- 3.23 Leadership and management are outstanding.
- 3.24 Leaders and managers have clearly defined roles in the setting and fulfil their responsibilities extremely successfully. They recognise the need for all staff to reflect on their practice continuously to ensure the best possible outcomes for all children. Leaders are heavily involved in the day-to-day running of the setting. They consequently recognise and act upon any areas for improvement identified as well as building on strengths.
- 3.25 Leaders have an extremely clear and ambitious vision, dedicated to ensuring an excellent standard of inclusive care and education. All staff have a high level of knowledge and understanding relating to the ages of the children and how to meet their needs, including where children have SEND.
- 3.26 Regular supervision meetings ensure staff have opportunities to discuss any concerns and identify any areas of need and future training. Staff wellbeing is given high priority and their workload is carefully managed. Leaders are continually looking at ways to further staff's knowledge through relevant courses and training. Outdoor learning is a particular characteristic of the setting, being fully embedded in the curriculum. All staff are involved in developing and reinforcing the children's learning and skills between sessions.
- 3.27 Robust procedures ensure that there is effective oversight of the setting. Directors liaise closely with managers to identify areas for development. They support the long-term vision and plans for the setting, including through the provision of suitable resources. Policies are regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure regulations are met. Staff are updated on any changes and training days ensure they are up to date with curriculum and learning requirements.
- 3.28 Effective and well managed drop off and pick up procedures allow time for parents to speak to their child's key person. In questionnaires and discussion, parents stated they are extremely happy with the care and education their child receives. The recommendation from the last inspection to develop the flow of information to and from parents has been met.

Compliance with statutory requirements

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

Recommendation for further improvement

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

- Improve further the sharing of best practice between rooms by the increased use of peer observations.

4. 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

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

- Pupil attitudes to learning are excellent; they demonstrate extremely high levels of initiative and independence, both individually and collaboratively.
- Pupils make rapid progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school.
- Pupils are confident and articulate communicators throughout the school.
- Pupils develop and apply excellent study skills across all areas of learning.
- Pupils demonstrate and apply advanced information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

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

- Pupils are mature, insightful and perceptive beyond their years.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of self-understanding, self-discipline and resilience.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of physical and mental wellbeing.
- Pupils show high levels of social awareness and work effectively with others, which underpins the way they behave in school.

Recommendation

4.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Enable pupils to further take the lead in their learning when decision-making opportunities arise, and explore different approaches.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

4.5 Pupils make rapid progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. Analysis of school data, lesson observations and work scrutiny shows that at both GCSE and A level, almost all pupils attain grades significantly higher than expected for those of their ability. This demonstrates successful fulfilment of the school's aim to enable their pupils to achieve their potential academically. Pupils' attainment at A level in 2022 was strong, with half of results achieved at A or A*. This high level of attainment mirrors the centre- and teacher-assessed results in 2020 and 2021. Results in GCSE are equally successful, indicative of the high quality of teaching and learning. In 2022, two-thirds of results were at grades 7 to 9, in line with the centre- and teacher-assessed grades in

2020 and 2021. Results show improvement beyond predictions for pupils in all subjects and substantial improvement in many. All leavers in 2022 gained a place at their first-choice university, many of which are universities with high entry requirements or equivalent institutions in specific fields. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make strong progress, in line with their peers. This is enabled by teaching which demonstrates detailed knowledge of individual pupils' needs and strong, mutually respectful relationships between staff and pupils.

- 4.6 Pupils are deeply engaged in the learning process. They achieve highly and show substantial pride in their school because of the excellent leadership of academic provision. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all parents commented that teaching enables their child to make progress and a very large majority of pupils commented that their teachers are supportive. This view is supported by inspection evidence. Pupils demonstrate an excellent attitude towards their learning and are very productive in lessons. Frequent collaboration with peers and staff combines with pupils' initiative and independence in many lessons, and their impeccable behaviour around the school, to support pupils' overall achievement. The use of a resilience-independence-values-exploration-reflection (RIVER) philosophy was seen to be successful in an overwhelming number of the lessons observed and throughout all age ranges. This allows the pupils to reflect, hypothesise and challenge themselves with 'super-stretch' tasks and activities. For example, Year 6 pupils showed great resilience in a modern foreign languages (MFL) lesson, staying on-task throughout when discussing pronunciation and spelling with their talk partner. In a Year 13 business studies (BS) lesson, pupils collaborated to great effect. They took the initiative rapidly, dividing up key tasks swiftly and then leading each other through the learning task, producing outstanding results. Year 1 pupils preparing for their tea party worked independently to construct crowns and flags using well developed motor skills without adult support. There was a real sense of teamwork and productivity in the classroom, with pupils eager to share what they have produced with each other.
- 4.7 Pupils develop an excellent range of knowledge, skills and understanding across an extensive range of areas. The pupils benefit from a rich and diverse curriculum and demonstrate high quality skills. They make insightful observations in history, recall detailed knowledge in science, speak fluently in MFL and write creatively and with excellent flair and accuracy. In a Year 5 lesson on rain forest survival, pupils created their own mythical creature that could survive this environment, for example, the 'slothflyroo', that 'hangs quietly and attracts prey with its bright wings before pouncing for the kill'. Older pupils in Spanish demonstrated strong linguistic competence when discussing the use of the internet in the target language. In GCSE art, pupils develop their creative skills to excellent effect' applying pre-learned and new techniques with ease and imagination. The youngest pupils are curious and confident learners who display clear progression in their skills as they move through the setting. A very large majority of pupils in the questionnaire agreed that their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons.
- 4.8 Communication skills are a significant strength of the pupils and feed into the school ethos, where they are seen as highly important. All pupils, including those with SEND, listen to each other with empathy and engagement. They write and speak with confidence, using intonation well, and mature vocabulary. In the Year 4 debating club, pupils articulated with great maturity and with precise language their opinions about whether males and females are treated equally in society. They listened carefully and respectfully to their peers and reflected with great sensitivity to what they had heard. In science, music and mathematics lessons, pupils of all age ranges made accurate and appropriate use of technical terminology. Their responses and explanations to complex questions were well thought out and delivered with clarity and fluidity. Children in the EYFS confidently and enthusiastically discuss their activities in the woodland area using correct tenses, listening carefully to others, and waiting for their turn to speak.
- 4.9 Pupils are highly successful in their use of study skills. Throughout the school, in line with the school's aims, pupils of all abilities, including those with SEND, display a wide range of sophisticated study habits and thinking skills. Across all subjects, pupils undertake detailed research and make insightful

evaluations. For example, middle school pupils in biology hypothesised intelligently on a range of suitable control measures to address risk assessment in practical lessons. In a classics lesson, pupils looked at the hierarchy of roman civilisation and compared it perceptively with today's structure of government and democracy. Older pupils in a religious studies (RS) lesson on the subject of evil, drew upon acquired knowledge, personal experiences and their research evidence to judiciously support their written thoughts on the topic. Discussions with older pupils highlighted the impact and importance of the RIVER philosophy in developing their study skills along with their work for the extended project qualification (EPQ). Younger pupils referred to their involvement in the school's passport, diploma and team project programmes as a way to extend their own learning.

- 4.10 Pupils' ICT skills are excellent. Pupils are extremely adept at using different platforms and adapt confidently to different uses of ICT for learning. This is because use of ICT is well embedded in teaching. Younger pupils in a computing lesson evaluated the key elements of a phishing email to demonstrate their strong insight into cybercrime. This understanding enables them to stay safe online. Pupils with SEND make independent and mature effective use of their ICT skills to further develop their own spelling, and literary and mathematical understanding. Older pupils in a geography lesson made excellent use of ICT to critique and analyse data. In discussion, pupils recognised and valued the school's flexibility which allows them to employ ICT in the way best suited to their learning needs. They feel that they are well prepared for a more digital life in a global society, in line with the school's aims.
- 4.11 Pupils demonstrate an excellent level of numeracy both within their mathematics lessons and when applying their knowledge in other subjects. For example, younger college pupils displayed high quality use of numerical equations to calculate energy transfer and efficiency in physics. Younger pupils used excellent mental arithmetic skills to solve complex volume problems using decimal fractions in mathematics. They use accurate and precise mathematical language to articulate their methodology, often suggesting varying solutions and approaches. Year 8 pupils performing binary calculations in ICT as part of their enterprise day, were able to use data to calculate the unit cost of their product that will yield a profit. Pupils in the first school have excellent numeracy skills for their age. They can independently count, measure, estimate and solve problems. The high priority given to outdoor learning allows them to apply these skills in a practical, real-life context.
- 4.12 A large majority of pupils throughout the school achieve excellent and notable success individually and in teams in sporting, musical, artistic and cultural arenas. Their achievements are facilitated by an extensive range of extra-curricular and extension activities, in particular the 'E3' programme, providing specialist coaching and expert guidance. Academic achievements outside of the curriculum include exceptional success in competitions at regional and national level in coding, mathematics challenges and Olympiads, science Olympiads, music and drama (LAMDA) examinations and dance and essay writing competitions. Pupils are highly successful regionally in swimming, football, cricket, rugby, netball, athletics, cross-country and biathlon. Nationally, pupils excel in swimming, football, rugby, netball, athletics, cross-country, gymnastics and cycling, and internationally in jujitsu, taekwondo and fencing. In discussions, pupils commented that the involvement of many of them in The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme (DofE) is a particular strength of the school. Records of pupils' high achievement in this area supports this view.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 4.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.14 Pupils of all ages demonstrate exceptional self-confidence and a strong awareness of their personal development over time. They are able to articulate their feelings about this extremely well. They engage in thoughtful self-reflection on their own identity and character, personal achievements, and what led to them. An overwhelming number of parents in the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child be confident and independent. Inspection evidence confirms that the school's aims

are successfully realised in these respects. Younger pupils displayed a clear lack of inhibition when using expression and frame to develop their characters in a drama lesson. They critiqued each other using concise phrases to highlight key characteristics, for example, 'a slouched posture with relaxed jaw line'. In GCSE art, pupils were particularly adept at developing their peers' self-confidence, commenting positively and constructively on their work and in doing so developing a wider understanding of different artistic techniques. Observations at lunchtime and in activity time demonstrated how at ease pupils are with each other in a variety of settings. Their interactions are warm, positive, polite and courteous. Younger pupils in the first school have an excellent understanding of how to improve their own learning, responding positively to teacher feedback. They are aware that they learn from making mistakes, are resilient when they get things wrong and keep going until they have mastered the skill. These excellent outcomes in pupils' personal development are due to the strong commitment of senior leaders, directors and staff to providing high levels of caring and nurturing pastoral support.

- 4.15 Pupils are particularly mindful of looking after themselves both physically and mentally. Pupils were able to articulate excellent understanding of how to stay safe when online. They feel safe and secure in school, a view supported by an overwhelming number of parents who responded to the questionnaire. Pupils value the opportunities in the wellbeing curriculum to reflect on and demonstrate their awareness of mental health issues. They feel positive that they know how to access support for themselves, their peers and all people in their school community. Pupils engaged in sports at a high level commented positively on how well supported they are by the school in their academic, sporting and wellbeing development. Within the 'E3' programme, pupils participate with energy and enthusiasm in a carousel of activities. They focus well on their core body strength and fitness, recognising the value it brings to their general wellbeing. The endless opportunities for the EYFS children to explore the outdoor woodland areas allows them to learn how to be physically healthy, to explore independently and how to make balanced choices in a safe environment.
- 4.16 Pupils of all ages display a good level of spiritual understanding and a strong sense of belonging. They are able to reflect deeply and thoughtfully on non-material aspects of life. Pupil discussion reinforced how strong an impact the 'TAP pause' school initiative has had on them. They welcome the frequent opportunities for self-reflection it provides, for example, through very popular yoga sessions where they take time to process, nurture and value self-care with great success. Year 10 pupils discussed the privileges and opportunities they have in their lives perceptively during a form lesson, realising that they have advantages not afforded to many. Older pupils spoke maturely and warmly of the spiritual understanding they developed through a global citizenship trip to Thailand when making a presentation about it to younger pupils. They considered how visiting sites affected by the tsunami, working in a turtle conservation sanctuary, and cleaning beaches helped them better understand the challenges other nations face.
- 4.17 Pupils' social skills are highly developed. They demonstrate excellent social awareness and their interaction with others is of high quality, being positive, honest and open. This is due to the strong culture of community and expectation of collaboration which exists throughout the school in response to the school's aims. In the questionnaire, a very large majority of parents agreed that the school helps pupils develop teamwork and social skills. Inspection evidence shows that pupils develop into considerate and empathetic young people. Pupils' participation in the school's digital 'global classroom' initiative enables them to instigate and lead conversations with world-leading policymakers, scientists, activists and cultural icons. Pupils work together extremely well in lessons. Making 'slime' in a science club activity, younger pupils were well organised and co-operative when working in pairs, moving around the laboratory in a safe and sensible way. Pupil outcomes in a business studies (BS) lesson concerning a high street commercial merger were significantly enhanced by their willingness to collaborate so well, their responses being thorough, well-developed and evidence based.

- 4.18 Pupils have a strong social conscience and an excellent awareness of their social responsibilities to others and the wider world. They contribute extremely positively and willingly to the school and local communities, and to society more broadly. Pupils of all ages within the school clearly gain great fulfilment from their effective participation on the school councils, the eco and conservation groups. They are successful as subject mentors, wellbeing mentors, peer buddies and reading buddies for the younger pupils. Pupils comment positively about their experiences in these roles. Pupil leaders take their responsibilities seriously and model responsible behaviour in the school. Pupils are highly aware of issues relating to inequality and express this most effectively through whole-school and house-based charity work. They raise funds for charities locally such as foodbanks, care homes, hospices and shelters for the homeless. More widely, pupils actively support a school in Cambodia. Pupils spoke enthusiastically of their self-motivated, community-based volunteer work and the difference they felt they are making.
- 4.19 Pupils throughout the school are fully aware of the need to make careful, thoughtful and informed choices. They appreciate that decisions they make about academic work, relationships and their own feelings will impact upon their success, development and wellbeing. The efficacy of the school councils' decisions is seen in the actions taken by the school in response. These include the introduction of more waste bins in the playground, changes to both the games kit and the school uniform and to the school's plastic cup provision. Pupils were engaged actively in the introduction of a QR code system in the pupil planner that affords an anonymous reporting option. During an 'E3' football feedback session after a match, younger pupils reflected maturely on the individual and group decisions and tactics employed during the game, seeking to improve their overall performance. At times, opportunities for pupils, including EYFS children, to make similar decisions in their academic learning are limited when lessons are over structured. In a mathematics lesson, Year 5 pupils quickly answered verbal questions using the four operations specified but were given few opportunities to explore their own methods in applying mental arithmetic skills.
- 4.20 Pupils respect and value diversity within society and show respect for and appreciation of their own and other cultures. They demonstrate an excellent degree of sensitivity and tolerance to those from different backgrounds and traditions. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance. Clear evidence to support this view exists in the pupil-led diversity society. This successfully raises all pupils' awareness of and celebration of diversity within and beyond the school. In an RS lesson, middle school pupils spoke of respect as being the foundation of Islamic faith and could relate this to how all communities should live in mutual respect. Pupils throughout the school visit a variety of places of worship as part of the interfaith day in order to gain greater understanding of how different faiths are practised. Older pupils were able to identify characteristics that people are self-conscious about during a wellbeing lesson. They then articulated most maturely and positively about how society should and could celebrate uniqueness.
- 4.21 Pupils' moral understanding is excellent, and they take full responsibility for their extremely positive, caring and supportive behaviour towards their peers. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and respect the views of others. They are able to empathise with other pupils' needs and situations and understand the importance of cohesion in their community. This awareness is deeply embedded into the ethos, values, policies and behavioural practices of and in the school. In a geography lesson on globalisation, pupils with SEND expressed knowledgeably and maturely their views on the United Nations as an example of how the world comes together to help each other. In a GCSE ICT lesson, pupils studying the moral and ethical considerations of sharing information online produced highly persuasive arguments both for and against in a very coherent presentation. Their extremely reflective presentations reinforced the success of both the RIVER and 'TAP pause' initiatives within the school.

5. Inspection Evidence

- 5.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Michael Evans	Reporting inspector
Mr Lloyd Beecham	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mr Toby Seth	Team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Christopher Emmott	Team inspector (Former head, ISA school)
Miss Victoria Plenderleith	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of pre-prep, IAPS school)
Mrs Amanda Jennings	Team inspector for early years (Head of EYFS, IAPS school)