



PENNTHORPE

# ISI INSPECTION REPORT

October 2018



Following the whole school inspection by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) during the week commencing Monday 2nd October 2018, I have great pleasure in sharing with you, the report from the ISI inspection.

**In short, parents will be delighted to be informed that Pennthorpe achieved the highest grade possible in both categories inspected and received a full clean bill of health for the first time in a good number of years.**

This is an exceptional achievement for the school and one we are thrilled to be sharing with parents and children.



# PENNTHORPE SCHOOL ISI INSPECTION REPORT: OCTOBER 2018

## INSPECTION FRAMEWORK: HOW THE SCHOOL WAS INSPECTED

The school endured an Educational Quality Inspection (EQI) which also incorporates a Focused Compliance Inspection (FCI).

### 1. Educational Quality Inspection (EQI):

The Educational Quality Inspection requires the inspection team to consider two key aspects: the pupils' academic and other achievements and the pupils' personal development.

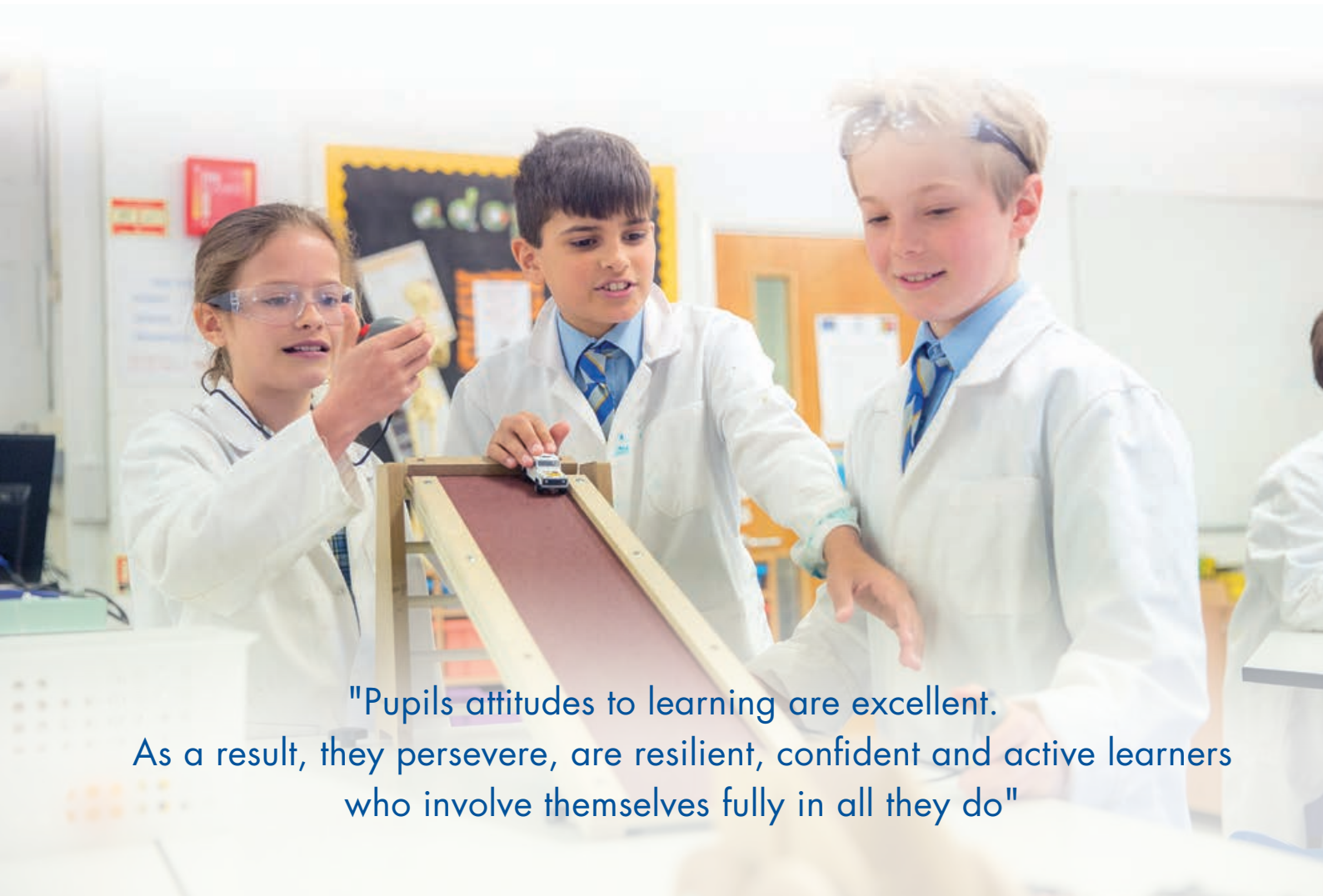
The school is graded on a scale of 1 to 4 in both aspects as follows:

- 1 **Excellent**
- 2 **Good**
- 3 **Satisfactory**
- 4 **Unsatisfactory.**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is now included within the whole school inspection and is not graded separately.

When considering each of the two aspects, the inspection team conduct a thorough scrutiny of the school through the following vehicles;

- Pupil Questionnaire: children from Year 1 to Year 8 completed an online survey in school;
- Parental Questionnaire. Thank you to all of those parents who sacrificed their valuable time to provide feedback;
- Staff Questionnaire;
- A significant number of lesson observations across the entire school;
- Interviews with a selection of pupils chosen at random by the inspection team and a further selection chosen by the school. The children made us exceptionally proud and spoke highly of their school: the inspection team were hugely complimentary about our children.
- Interviews with a number of staff members covering a broad range of roles within the school;
- Work scrutinies of a broad range of pupil work across the school;
- Consideration of school documentation including policies, risk assessments, staff personnel files and other elements to test the effectiveness of school compliance.



"Pupils attitudes to learning are excellent.

As a result, they persevere, are resilient, confident and active learners who involve themselves fully in all they do"

## a) Pupils Academic and Other Achievements:

PUPILS ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS WAS GRADED AS **EXCELLENT**, THE HIGHEST GRADE ACHIEVABLE

*Excellent*

### KEY FINDINGS WERE:

- Pupils attitudes to learning are excellent. As a result, they persevere, are resilient, confident and active learners who involve themselves fully in all they do.
- Pupils develop a wide range of skills knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent communication skills as a result of the excellent teaching and the vast number of opportunities for them to express themselves.
- Pupils develop higher order thinking skills and show that they have the ability to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise thus ensuring progress.

The inspection scrutinises the following areas when considering the pupils academic and other achievements:

A1	<b>Exam results and change in attainment over time</b> the change in their attainment levels over time, including evidence from externally standardised tests and examination results
A2	<b>Knowledge, skills and understanding (KSU)</b> the development of their knowledge, understanding and skills across the areas of learning (linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education)
A3	<b>Communication</b> the development of their competence in communication (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and its application to other areas of learning
A4	<b>Numeracy</b> the development of their competence in numeracy and the application of their knowledge and skills in mathematics to other areas of learning
A5	<b>ICT</b> the development of their competence in information and communication technology and its application to other areas of learning
A6	<b>Study Skills</b> the development of their study skills, including the ability to draw upon a suitably wide range of sources and to develop higher-order skills, including the ability to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise
A7	<b>Academic and other achievements</b> their achievements in scholarships and competitions, other academic distinctions, and success in sports, the performing and other arts
A8	<b>Attitudes</b> their attitudes towards learning, including their ability to demonstrate initiative and independence, their willingness to work collaboratively and the extent to which they take leadership in their learning



"Pupils attitudes to learning are excellent. As a result, they persevere, are resilient, confident and active learners who involve themselves fully in all they do."

## b) Pupils Personal Development:

PUPILS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT WAS GRADED AS **EXCELLENT**, THE HIGHEST GRADE ACHIEVABLE

*Excellent*

### KEY FINDINGS WERE:

- Pupils display an excellent understanding of behavioral expectations and right and wrong
- Decision making amongst all pupils is of the highest quality
- Pupils show extremely high levels of self-awareness and a continuous commitment to their own personal development
- The social development of pupils is excellent proving they are the living embodiment of the school's motto of "Born not for ourselves alone".

The inspection scrutinises the following areas when considering the pupils personal development:

P1	<b>Self-understanding</b> develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-discipline and resilience, including an understanding of how to improve their own learning and performance, so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their lives
P2	<b>Decision-making</b> understand that the decisions they make are important determinants of their own success and well-being
P3	<b>Spiritual understanding</b> develop spiritual understanding and an appreciation of non-material aspects of life, whether religious, philosophical or other
P4	<b>Moral understanding and responsibility for own behaviour</b> distinguish right from wrong, understand and respect systems of rules and laws, and accept responsibility for their own behaviour, including towards others
P5	<b>Social development and collaboration</b> are socially aware and so are able to work effectively with others, including to solve problems and achieve common goals
P6	<b>Contribution to others, the school and the community</b> fulfil responsibilities and contribute positively to the lives of others within the school, including in boarding, the local community and wider society
P7	<b>Respecting diversity and cultural understanding</b> respect and value diversity within society, show respect for and appreciation of their own and other cultures, and demonstrate sensitivity and tolerance to those from different backgrounds and traditions
P8	<b>Staying safe and keeping healthy</b> know how to stay safe and understand how to be physically and mentally healthy, particularly in terms of diet, exercise and a balanced lifestyle



"Pupils display an excellent understanding of behavioral expectations and right and wrong"





"Pupils develop a wide range of skills knowledge and understanding across the curriculum"

## 2. Focused Compliance Inspection (FCI):

Regulatory compliance inspections report on the school's compliance with the Independent School Standards Regulations, and the Early Years Foundation Stage regulations (EYFS). Compliance is divided into the following sections and the school is thoroughly investigated in all eight areas:

PENNTHORPE WAS FULLY COMPLIANT WITH ALL OF THE REGULATIONS ABOVE AND RECEIVED A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH.

*Fully compliant*

- Part 1: Quality of Education Provided
- Part 2: Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils
- Part 3: Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils
- Part 4: Suitability of Staff, Supply Staff and Proprietors
- Part 5: Premises and Accommodation of Schools
- Part 6: Provision of Information
- Part 7: Manner in which Complaints are handled
- Part 8: Quality of Leadership and Management

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is inevitable that schools are assigned at least one recommendation and therefore Pennthorpe has received only one recommendation related to ensuring more rapid progress across the school in mathematics which can be seen in the report.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

While we are delighted with the results of the inspection, we are in no way intending to now rest on our laurels! The report offers the perfect platform from which to project ourselves and continue to strive for the most exceptional education we can provide our children: excellence after all, is the gradual result of always striving to do better!

The Senior Management Team have spent a good period of time analysing the feedback from the inspection team provided immediately following the process along with the results of the three questionnaires and the final report to the school. We have isolated both the strengths and any weaknesses highlighted within these media and fed them into our annual Implementation Plan.

Given the excellent results of this inspection, it is unlikely that the school will be inspected again for a further five years; however, we will continue to survey parents for their opinions on the school and will continue to work with both parents and pupils to ensure Pennthorpe fulfils the educational and welfare needs of our children.

## FEEDBACK TO PARENTS:

I am certain that parents will be delighted with the findings of the inspection and that this report very much encapsulates the dedication, commitment and sheer hard work of both the pupils and the staff. In addition to sharing this report on paper, we would like to invite parents to a feedback session with the Senior Management Team at either of the following times:

**Tuesday 13th November at 8.30am in the Library**

**Thursday 15th November at 7.00pm in the Lower School Hall**

This will provide parents with an opportunity to hear further feedback received from the inspection team, to ask any questions in relation to the inspection or to hear how the school intends to act upon the findings.

I do hope parents will be as thrilled as I am with the results and will join me in congratulating our staff and children for being fabulous ambassadors for our school. The staff worked exceptionally hard before and during the inspection process which can be an incredibly stressful event. They are an exceptional team and our outstanding results are mainly due to their dedication, diligence and passion for our school.

I look forward to sharing the results with parents in person.

Yours sincerely,

Alexia Bolton MEd MA  
Headmistress



**"Pupils show extremely high levels of self-awareness and a continuous commitment to their own personal development"**



# EXCELLENT

IN PUPIL ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS  
IN PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENTS

FULLY COMPLIANT WITH ALL ISI REGULATIONS







**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

## **Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports**

**Pennthorpe School**

**October 2018**



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### School's Details

<b>School</b>	Pennthorpe School			
<b>DfE number</b>	938/6026			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	307043			
<b>Address</b>	Pennthorpe School Church Road Rudgwick Horsham West Sussex RH12 3HJ			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01403 822391			
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@pennthorpe.com			
<b>Headmistress</b>	Mrs Alexia Bolton			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Mark Lucas			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 13			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	246			
	<b>Boys</b>	149	<b>Girls</b>	97
	<b>EYFS</b>	50	<b>Lower School</b>	150
	<b>Upper School</b>	46		
<b>Inspection dates</b>	02 to 04 October 2018			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Pennthorpe School is an independent, co-educational day school for pupils aged between two and thirteen years. It functions as three sections: the early years, which includes the Nursery and Reception for children aged two to four years; the Lower School, for pupils aged six to nine years; and the Upper School for pupils aged ten to thirteen years. The school operates as a charitable trust, which is overseen by a board of governors.
- 1.2 The school was founded in the 1930s, initially as a boys' prep school in Chislehurst, Kent before moving to its current location in 1948 when it became co-educational.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection the school has appointed a new headmistress and senior management team, and developed a clear development strategy for buildings and facilities. New governors have been appointed to increase the educational and business representation.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to inspire every pupil with the ambition to discover and achieve academic excellence whilst stimulating and nurturing them on a personal journey of self-development. It strives to cultivate and enrich an engaged, happy and collaborative community.

### About the pupils

- 1.5 Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 70 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia and speech and language difficulties, 50 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 5 pupils, of whom 3 receive additional help. Data used by the school identify 50 pupils as being the more able in its population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 30 other pupils with special talents in the arts and in sport.

## 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.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

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

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

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

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

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 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.
- 2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 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**

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 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**

- 2.11 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for their medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

2.13 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

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

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.15 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.

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

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.17 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.

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

### 3 Educational Quality Inspection

#### Preface

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

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

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

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

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

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Honey Pot	Nursery aged two to three years
Beehive	Nursery aged three to four years



## Key findings

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

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. As a result they persevere, and are resilient, confident, and active learners who involve themselves fully in all they do.
- Pupils develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent communication skills as a result of the staff being expert role models, who encourage pupils' communication skills.
- Pupils develop excellent skills, knowledge and understanding, and show that they have the ability to successfully analyse, hypothesise and synthesise.

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

- Pupils display an excellent understanding of behavioural expectations, and right and wrong.
- Decision-making amongst all pupils is of the highest quality.
- Pupils show extremely high levels of self-awareness and a continuous commitment to their own personal development.
- The social development of pupils is excellent, proving they are the living embodiment of the school's motto of 'Born not for ourselves alone'.

## Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school is recommended to:

- Ensure rapid progress in mathematics for all pupils through consistent, high-quality teaching across the school.

## The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Throughout the school, pupils show an excellent attitude to learning. They approach their lessons with great enthusiasm and a willingness to work. Pupils thrive where there is challenge and high expectations. They are attentive to their teachers and to one another. Pupils are responsive and readily offer answers and opinions, and engage in all the activities offered to them. They work conscientiously, displaying determination, perseverance and resilience. At all ages, pupils were observed enjoy tackling challenging tasks. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children displayed great curiosity and high levels of achievement when given a variety of tasks to explore shape using geo boards and elastic bands, printing with a variety of shapes and exploring the property of shapes using flash cards and 'feely bags'. In English, pupils drew on a wide range of sources to produce high-quality individual written and spoken work when exploring Juliet's feelings in act three of *Romeo and Juliet* and when writing about the weather showing secure phonetic knowledge. Pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and comment that this is part of the learning process. They co-operate extremely well, conscious of the value of working together to achieve common goals, as observed in science lessons where pupils in the Upper School worked in pairs to discuss variation and to share data to produce graphs, and in the Lower School where they worked in pairs to test and improve their cup-and-string telephones.
- 3.6 Pupils attain high levels of knowledge, skills, and understanding across the curriculum through excellent teaching and strong subject knowledge. They display mature analytical and prediction skills in class. Open-ended and skilful questioning by staff results in higher-order thinking skills and reflective attitudes being developed. Where teacher questioning does not allow for the exploration of a topic and the expression of pupils' thoughts and ideas, the opportunity to develop these skills is not as rapid. Pupils can hypothesise effectively at all levels and are then able to test their hypothesis and synthesise the information with great accuracy. Pupils display high levels of subject understanding. In the Upper School, pupils worked enthusiastically in pairs, testing each other on the use of figurative language, showing a firm grasp of the vocabulary and its use in literature. They use a wide range of techniques expertly for writing poems using similes, metaphor, onomatopoeia, and personification. Upper School pupils constructed accurate scale orthographic drawings through careful measurement, showing they could apply skills learnt in mathematics to other subjects. Pupil achievements are reflected in positive and highly informative school reports to parents. Parents of children in the EYFS are more closely involved with their children's learning and development. and written reports in this area provide greater clarity about the Early Learning Goals and assessment criteria. Next step targets for children in the EYFS are clear and are discussed regularly between staff and parents, all of which ensures that a recommendation from the previous inspection is met.
- 3.7 Pupils display excellent communication skills. They are articulate, assured, and confident speakers who do so with clarity. They are active listeners, and are attentive to teachers and their peers. Pupils read with confidence and expression, and convey meaning when reading aloud. In pupil interviews they expressed themselves succinctly and knowledgeably. Pupils' written work is of a very high quality and they clearly display the ability to write for a range of audiences and in a wide variety of styles. At all ages, pupils take pride in their work and generally present it neatly with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. In an excellent English lesson, pupils involved themselves fully in learning how adjectives improve character descriptions and so improved their understanding of engaging the reader. Across the school, pupils achieve good levels of numeracy, which they can apply successfully to investigative and statistical work in other subjects such as science and design technology (DT). Progress throughout the school is not consistent. Data supplied by the school indicate that pupils' attainment and progress over time is less strong in mathematics than in the other core subjects of English and science. Across the school, pupils achieve good standards in information and communication technology (ICT). They apply ICT effectively across the curriculum, and pupils can add text and pictures and manipulate size and position to produce high-quality presentations independently. In the Lower School, pupils use ICT

appropriately and can manipulate the mouse accurately and use a range of tools expertly to create digital pictures of animal models.

- 3.8 Pupils' make excellent academic progress, and use their time profitably and productively. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all pupils agreed that they are encouraged to think and learn for themselves, and that the teachers help them to learn and make progress. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that teaching enables their children to make progress and to develop skills for the future. The tracking and monitoring systems that are in place at the school support the pupils' progress, giving appropriate guidance as to the next stages of learning. Well-focused and timely actions support pupils requiring additional support. There is an excellent range of high-quality academic resources in all parts of the school, which allow pupils to develop a range of manipulative, experimental, and discovery skills. Individual and small groups of pupils benefit enormously and make excellent progress due to the support and attention provided by teaching assistants, who are adaptable, supportive and always available to help with a range of activities in an expert and professional manner. Inspection evidence supports the view expressed in the staff questionnaire responses that the school meets the needs of all pupils.
- 3.9 The excellent progress that pupils make is in accordance with the school's stated aim to inspire every pupil with the ambition to discover and achieve academic excellence. Pupils benefit from the specialist subject teaching and the grouping of classes by prior attainment as they relish challenge from well-informed staff and respond positively to high expectations. They take advantage of all opportunities to improve with great enthusiasm, as shown in the development of authentic French accents from early on in Lower School. Pupils work positively together across a broad curriculum which provides excellent opportunities to produce high-quality end results in their academic studies and notable performances in sport, art, DT, music and drama. The information from academic assessments is used well to inform teaching strategies and so improve pupil performance, thus meeting a recommendation from the previous inspection report. The programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) is wide-ranging and is suitably graduated for pupils as they move up through the school, providing appropriate topics and the acquisition of relevant life skills for each age group.
- 3.10 The school does not enter pupils for National Curriculum tests. Consequently the school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be above average in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence from observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, and discussions with pupils supports this judgement. The pupils leaving the school at Year 6 and Year 8 gain places at their chosen senior schools, with a good number being awarded scholarships. Pupils make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and in comparison with pupils of similar ability. The scrutiny of pupils work shows evidence of excellent progress over time. Less able pupils and those with SEND or EAL make very good progress and are well supported in class and by high-quality specialist help. More able pupils are challenged through enrichment programmes and the talent pool, and are given challenging extension work in the majority of lessons, so enabling them to make progress and achieve in line with their potential.

3.11 Pupils benefit from the extra-curricular programme provided by the school as they develop team spirit, co-operation skills, and an appreciation of their own and other pupils' strengths and talents. A few parents, in their responses to the questionnaire, felt that there is not a suitable range of activities. The inspection evidence shows there is a good range available including 'tots tennis', Brownies, musical theatre, dance, 'fun French', multi-sports, girls' football and fencing. The performing arts and music flourishes at the school. All pupils have the opportunity to perform at least once a year, and in so doing they develop their musicality, acting skills and ability to work as part of an ensemble. They participate in local music festivals, thus involving themselves in the community and are the current UK brass band champions, an achievement that gives them a sense of pride in their school. Pupils enjoy success by entering mathematics competitions and winning awards in art, drama, and sport, both in national and international festivals and sporting arenas. Through this provision of opportunities and the staff's enthusiastic and committed support, pupils achieve highly and participate in a spirited and enthusiastic manner, displaying a positive approach to all they do.

## The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.12 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.13 Pupils develop high levels of self-knowledge, self-esteem, and resilience as they move through the school supported by the caring and nurturing manner of the staff in form time, in lessons, and during personal tutorials. All pupils have an excellent understanding of how to improve their own learning, especially when the marking is constructive and gives targets for their next steps, and so contributes to their excellent self-awareness. In response to the questionnaire, the vast majority of pupils acknowledged that the school helps them to be confident and independent. Pupils commented that they appreciate the programme in the Upper School that allows them to identify their personal development needs. This impact on their personal development helps to assure that pupils develop the characteristics and skills that make them positive and contributory members of their school community. Findings from the school's happiness survey ensures that pupils and staff have an effective evidence base for the informative and useful individual tutorials for pupils.
- 3.14 Pupils make sensible and thoughtful decisions throughout the school, and appreciate how these decisions can affect them and other people. The excellent choices they make throughout the school reflect their ability to be discerning and considerate. For example in the early years, where very young children shared toys and equipment willingly and co-operatively and collected herbs to use on their homemade pizzas. Day-to-day, older pupils ask themselves if they will regret the decision they make as they are fully aware of the effect on others; showing them to be reflective and highly self-aware. They involve themselves extremely actively in the democratic processes in the school. Lower School pupils who were observed presenting their views and opinions were confident and animated in explaining why they should be elected to the school council, and they voted for their preferred candidate in a mature and thoughtful manner. In interview, pupils said that their voice is heard and valued and that they can make change happen. This is supported by the staff who in their responses to the questionnaire all stated that the school listens to children and takes any requisite action. Pupils are encouraged to express their views and develop their ability to do so thoughtfully and wisely. They embrace mistakes if they make them and are not afraid to do so. This gives pupils greater confidence and self-belief as they learn to self-correct and accept errors as part of their individual development. In interview, younger pupils expressed their thoughts clearly and stated that they choose who to play with, where to play, when to play and how to play.
- 3.15 Pupils have high levels of moral conscience, and a strong sense of right and wrong from an early age, as they are made aware of how to behave properly. In their questionnaire responses, the vast majority of parents, an overwhelming majority of pupils and all staff agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour. Inspection evidence wholly supports this view. Pupils conduct themselves sensibly and courteously around the school and their classroom behaviour is exemplary, giving them every opportunity for productive study. Pupils are personable young people who consistently think of others before themselves. They understand how their behaviour affects other people, and they respect the rewards and sanctions which they feel are clear, fair and consistently imposed by staff. Pupils show respect for the class rules, to which they contribute annually, and know that rules carry consequences. They spoke eloquently about right and wrong, and how the school systems make it clear what level of expectation is required. Pupils' moral standpoint is exemplified by the citizenship award, and the fact that they can nominate other pupils is seen as a positive opportunity. This process develops their ability to identify other pupils' suitability for receiving recognition. Pupils apologise naturally and other pupils accept with good grace. In interview, younger pupils eloquently stated that it is right to play calmly and that it is wrong to play roughly and leave people out, and if you behave nicely you won't hurt people. All the pupils interviewed spoke of a caring, supportive and happy community in which they show real, genuine concern for each other. Pupils' social awareness is excellent and this helps to create a harmonious and engaging community. They talked freely about how they work together on projects to achieve common goals. Outstanding social development was evident in the Upper School pupils who present as young adults through the vocabulary they use, their attitudes and their sense of

achievement in all areas. There is a deep sense of mutual co-operation among pupils and staff. They work and play well together and show an awareness of the needs of others. Pupils discuss behaviour and how they treat their peers and younger pupils with a great sense of feeling and appreciation for them as human beings. This is developed through a clear and comprehensive programme conducted in PSHEE lessons and assemblies when the school's core values are made very clear.

- 3.16 Pupils make a significant contribution to the life of the school, and benefit from the many opportunities for leadership and service. They express themselves clearly about the value of the various roles of responsibility available to them and understand the process of election for positions such as head girl and boy, sports' captains and house captains. Pupils think carefully about the choices they make and appreciate and acknowledge the personal attributes and strengths of their peers, yet again showing excellent personal development in their ability to apply selection criteria wisely and without bias. They know that their school community is as it is because of the core values of honesty, trust, perseverance, kindness, respect and tolerance, around which the school is run and which pupils understand and can explain with passion. The school successfully meets its aim to cultivate and enrich an engaged, happy and collaborative community. All pupils actively involve themselves in supporting local and global charities. These ventures give pupils a clear idea of the issues in their own community and the wider world, and develop their understanding and compassion for people less fortunate than themselves. From a young age, pupils are made ecologically aware and they appreciate the need to protect the environment, both at school and further afield.
- 3.17 Pupils have good spiritual awareness and they appreciate the non-material aspects of life from an early age. This was portrayed beautifully by pupils who had spent a day in the woods appreciating the beauty around them. Pupils know about Christianity and why one would choose to be a Christian. They appreciate that you make a choice and this is respected by other pupils. Younger pupils show a true awareness of historic cultures, such as the Mayan way of life. The pupils provided excellent examples of how they show sensitivity to their friends and spoke with empathy and feeling. They have the opportunity to express themselves through art, drama, and music, which deepens their spiritual understanding and their appreciation of the less tangible aspects of life. Pupils discuss how others from different backgrounds should be treated fairly and in a kindly manner. They embrace cultural diversity and differences. When children from overseas join the school, everyone does their best to ensure they are fully integrated. The vast majority of pupils and parents who responded to the questionnaire acknowledged that the school encourages them to respect other people and that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. All staff who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school promotes tolerance and treats all pupils fairly.
- 3.18 Pupils show an excellent understanding of the need to stay safe and keep healthy. They develop a keen awareness of how to stay safe in certain areas of the school such as the science laboratories, the playground and in the wooded areas. The vast majority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire and all the pupils interviewed during the inspection stated that they understand how to keep safe online. In interview, pupils confirmed that they have been given regular advice about online safety and the dangers of social media. All of this has developed their understanding and their appreciation of keeping safe. All pupils explain clearly what they would do if they need help or guidance or if a friend was in difficulty or danger. The pupils appreciate the importance of healthy eating and understand the effects this has on their daily lives and their energy levels. They benefit from taking regular exercise in physical education and games lessons as well as during their recreation time. Lunches were found to be sufficient in quantity and of a high quality, with dietary needs catered for and salad and fresh fruit available. The food provision helps to ensure that pupils have a high level of understanding about healthy eating and its positive impact on them.

## 4 INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited 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

Mr Paul Easterbrook

Reporting inspector

Mr Kit Perona-Wright

Compliance team inspector and team inspector (head of co-curricular studies, IAPS school)

Mr Mark Turner

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