



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report
For Schools with Residential Provision**

Wisbech Grammar School

May 2022

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School's Details

School	Wisbech Grammar School			
DfE number	873/6013			
Address	Wisbech Grammar School Chapel Road Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 1RH			
Telephone number	01945 583631			
Email address	office@wisbechgrammar.com			
Headmaster	Mr Chris Staley			
Proprietor	Mr Jay Liu			
Age range	3 to 19			
Number of pupils on roll	541			
	Day pupils	521	Boarders	20
	EYFS	28	Prep	140
	Seniors	296	Sixth Form	77
Inspection dates	10 to 13 and 25 to 26 May 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Wisbech Grammar School is an independent day and boarding school located in the centre of the town. It was founded in 1379 and the preparatory school was established in 1997. The school consists of the EYFS for children aged 3 to 5, a prep school for pupils aged 5 to 11, a senior school for pupils aged 11 to 16 and a sixth form for those aged 16 to 19.
- 1.2 The school is owned by a single proprietor, who took over the school in February 2020. It is governed by a group of directors and supported by the expertise of an advisory committee. Since the previous inspection, the school has opened two boarding houses for pupils from overseas. A programme of refurbishment has extended EYFS facilities, created a new humanities hub and expanded the sixth-form centre.
- 1.3 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to provide a broad educational experience which enables its pupils to identify their own academic, creative, sporting and personal strengths. It seeks to create a community in which staff, pupils and families collaborate to ensure every child achieves their personal goals, through support, encouragement, expert teaching and opportunities to develop skills outside the classroom.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Most pupils live within a 20-mile radius of the school and come from a range of professional, entrepreneurial and farming backgrounds; boarding pupils are currently all from mainland China. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in the school is average overall when compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 131 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, of whom 79 receive additional specialist help. Two pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 21 pupils, whose needs are supported by specialist teaching. The needs of pupils identified as being the more able in the school's population are met through scholarship and enrichment activities.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

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

This is a 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, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key 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](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the prep school, the school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 In the senior school, the school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2018 to 2021 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 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils through the drawing up and effective implementation of an appropriate safeguarding policy. However, the school has not paid due regard to current statutory guidance because it has not always obtained suitable references in advance of a person starting work at the school. The staff involved had no contact with boarders.
- 2.9 Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.10 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 8–16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 are met, but that in paragraph 7 [safeguarding] is not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that suitable references are obtained before a person commences work at the school [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.9].

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

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.14 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.16 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.17 The standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.18 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.20 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that most other standards are consistently met, and they

actively promote the well-being of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

2.21 However, the proprietor has not maintained effective oversight of procedures relating to the recruitment of staff, including the suitability of references obtained in advance of a person starting work at the school.

2.22 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 2

The proprietor must ensure that leaders and managers demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently and the well-being of the pupils is actively promoted through the effective oversight of procedures concerning the suitability of staff who work at the school [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

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

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

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

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school. 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>
Kindergarten	Nursery
Years 7 to 11	Forms 1 to 5
Year 12	Lower sixth
Year 13	Upper sixth

Key findings

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

- Pupils of all ages are excellent communicators, particularly in speaking and listening.
- Pupils are highly numerate and transfer their skills across the curriculum with ease.
- Pupils are highly successful in their achievements in academic and other aspects of school life.
- Older pupils demonstrate sophisticated study skills, but those of younger pupils are less well developed because of a lack of opportunity provided in some subjects and lessons.
- Pupils' computing skills are not as well developed as those in other aspects of information and communication technology (ICT).

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

- Pupils demonstrate a deep respect for the diversity within their school community.
- Pupils make valuable contributions to the school community through their fulfilment of meaningful responsibilities in a multitude of roles.
- Pupils of all ages work with high levels of collaboration to achieve common goals.
- Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of the importance and means of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Recommendations

3.3 The school should make the following improvements:

- Ensure pupils of all ages have the opportunity to develop their study skills to the full in all subjects.
- Enable pupils to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding of computing.

- Enable pupils to gain a greater knowledge and understanding of the range of options open to them at the end of their careers in school.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 Pupils of all ages achieve at levels which are good and sometimes excellent in relation to their abilities. In the EYFS, most children reach expected levels, with some working at levels in advance of age-related expectations. Examination results at GCSE and A level in 2018 and 2019 were in line with the national average for maintained schools. Teacher- and centre-assessed grades in 2020 and 2021 show an improvement on these levels of attainment. Pupils with EAL perform at levels in line with their peers and those with SEND achieve good results due to the support they receive from specialist teachers. The most able pupils excel, often gaining places at higher education institutions with demanding entrance requirements. Data provided by the school and evidence from scrutiny of pupils' work show that attainment is above average and good in relation to pupils' abilities in the prep school, where additional staffing aids pupils' progress in small groups or individual sessions. Pupils are highly motivated to succeed and to fulfil their potential. However, prep school pupils' progress is sometimes limited by lessons which do not plan for the different individual needs of the pupils or keep learners engaged throughout.
- 3.6 Pupils achieve at an excellent level in a wide range of activities due to the strong promotion of a wide co-curricular programme in school and numerous opportunities to perform and participate in team events. Pupils value and embrace these opportunities to explore new interests, extend their achievements in curricular areas and discover their personal strengths, which often lead to their future paths in life. Boarders told inspectors how much they have enjoyed engaging and succeeding in new sports, such as cricket, since joining the school. Pupils enjoy high levels of success at regional, county and national level in a range of sports, benefiting from the school's partnerships with external sporting organisations. Those who participate at an individual level outside the school in sports such as golf, football and sailing are supported by the school's sports enrichment programme. A substantial number of pupils obtain awards at all levels in the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, music and drama examinations and academic competitions. Timetabled sessions during the week enable pupils to pursue their chosen activities to the highest level possible, resulting in pupils attaining high levels of expertise in areas as diverse as scenery construction and engineering. Pupils regularly gain direct entry to top institutions for art and drama, their high levels of skills precluding the need to undertake study at foundation level. Prep school pupils have been increasingly successful in obtaining scholarships to the senior school.
- 3.7 Pupils display excellent attitudes towards their learning. They relish opportunities to participate in house competitions and to work alongside others in and outside lessons. Year 2 pupils demonstrated well-developed collaborative skills during a PE lesson, focusing on throwing and catching in pairs. Pupils in a Year 7 food and nutrition lesson showed good leadership skills when nominated to demonstrate their skills to others. Pupils readily take leadership in their learning in terms of what to learn about and how to present their findings, resulting in highly effective project work in their final years at the school. Boarders demonstrate a mature attitude towards their work in response to the freedom given to them to manage their time and work independently in boarding hours. Pupils make good decisions in their learning, such as when choosing relevant quotations from *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* that are applicable in multiple contexts in order to develop coherent responses to exam-style questions. Pupils are highly attentive and engaged in lessons and display a keen desire to learn. However, some lessons and activities observed during the inspection were characterised by a lack of pace or challenge, resulting in a few pupils becoming disengaged and exhibiting low-level disruptive behaviour. This supports responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, where a small minority of pupils disagreed that most lessons were interesting.
- 3.8 Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are good overall, including boarders. Attainment and progress across the curriculum when working in an additional language benefit greatly from the English language programme delivered by the school. In some subjects, pupils work at a high level, when teaching provides challenging tasks and opportunities for pupils to work together. Whilst

attainment in some subjects is high, in response to well-paced, engaging teaching and effective planning for pupils of all abilities, this is not consistent across the school. In some subjects, the small class sizes and positive relationships between staff and pupils enable pupils to excel. Examples of this were seen in the excellent art and textiles work on display around the school. Children in the Nursery demonstrated an advanced understanding of how magnets work and the properties of ice. Pupils in Year 6 could confidently name the countries of Europe, and those in a Year 10 French lesson showed a good understanding of different tenses, using their knowledge to construct effective sentences.

- 3.9 Pupils' communication skills are excellent. Confident and articulate, they express themselves with ease when communicating to others orally, expressing views in class and over lunch and collaborating together in lessons. They are highly attentive listeners in lessons and interview, from the youngest age, as seen when children in Reception listened attentively to their teacher and peers when discussing a trip to the farm. Excellent spoken communications skills contributed to high level gymnastics displays as students practised routines and offered constructive guidance to each other. Pupils develop their reading skills rapidly in the prep school; as they move through the senior school they develop their skills further through being encouraged to read widely and present their findings to their peers. An example of this was seen when a pupil undertook research on the importance of haemoglobin in reducing the effects of aging. Pupils write at a high level for a variety of purposes in both English and other subjects, their progress often being well supported by constructive marking. Year 5 pupils applied their writing skills effectively when writing about how portraits during the reign of Henry VIII could be biased and misleading. Excellent written skills were evident in sixth-form textiles work, demonstrating exceptional insight and perception and illustrating the learning journey in great detail.
- 3.10 Pupils of all ages demonstrate a mature ability to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise. Older pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, undertake research and present highly informative talks to others in their Year 12 presentations and EPQs, readily and regularly working well beyond the scope of the curriculum on subjects as diverse as animal testing, coastal erosion and gene therapy. Pupils in Year 7 used their knowledge of the Middle Ages to explain why they would rather live in the modern world. Enrichment activities enable pupils to develop their abilities further when debating matters such as potential triggers for nuclear war and the meaning of cultural diversity. Pupils in the prep school confidently predict the outcome of science experiments and compare different landscapes in geography. They readily and competently engage in activities which challenge them to use their higher-order skills, although these are not developed to the fullest extent because teaching does not give them sufficient opportunities to investigate or explore new topics for themselves.
- 3.11 Pupils are highly numerate and achieve excellent levels in their lessons and work. Year 1 pupils demonstrated highly confident numeracy skills when calculating the correct coins for buying sticks and pine cones. Those in Year 10 demonstrated good understanding by explaining that not all sets of data can be used to represent the different averages. Pupils' progress and achievement in numeracy are accelerated through the provision of additional activities to support or challenge them, including participation in the UK Mathematics Challenge, in which they achieve a high measure of success. The enjoyment and success of older pupils is evident in the high numbers who choose to study the subject in sixth form, several having been inspired by the opportunity to undertake additional qualifications in the subject in Year 11. Pupils use their mathematical skills and knowledge to good effect in other subjects such as science and economics, and on a regular basis throughout the day by the youngest pupils in their self-selected activities and in the woodland learning environment.
- 3.12 Pupils develop good levels of competency in ICT, and they apply their skills with ease across the curriculum. Children in the EYFS begin to develop good skills through their use of interactive whiteboards and computers. Pupils in the prep school use ICT to present their work effectively in geography and history in formats including newspaper reports and biographies. Older pupils are adept at using online learning platforms to complete work, receive feedback and collaborate with others. Pupils make good use of their ICT skills in other subjects, when undertaking research and to present

their work to others. This was particularly evident in sixth form presentations and in Year 7, where pupils' progress has benefited from the proprietor's provision of iPads for all pupils. However, the application and use of ICT software to enhance learning is not yet widespread throughout the school and pupils' skills in coding and programming are not as well developed as in other areas.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils display a mature sense of self and understanding of their strengths, without any sense of arrogance. Naturally resilient when overcoming difficulties in their work and activities, they gain confidence from individual pastoral support and guidance from their tutors. Pupils demonstrate an active desire to improve their work. Those in the prep school explained to inspectors how the use of self-assessment and discussion with their teachers helps them to improve. Older pupils said that regular tests in class and associated feedback enables them to produce work of a higher standard. However, the school's response to the recommendation of the previous inspection that it ensure that all teachers consistently apply the school's requirements for the marking of work has not yet been implemented across all subjects and age groups. Pupils are very well prepared for moves between different stages of the school, those in Years 11 and above stating that they are well informed about the choices of higher education. A small minority of parents and pupils disagreed that the school provides suitable advice about subject choices and careers. Inspectors agreed with this view, finding that the information provided to pupils about possible career choices and other educational options is limited in scope.
- 3.15 From the earliest age, pupils demonstrate a mature understanding and acceptance of the differences between people. The overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people in fulfilment of its aim to provide a supportive community. Pupils told inspectors that the school's promotion of respect for others permeates all school life, reflecting the impact of leaders' implementation of an improved personal, social, health, and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme and consistent promotion of the importance of respect. Prep school pupils show an instinctive understanding of the importance of learning about other cultures, talking knowledgeably about water supplies in Africa. Senior pupils in the societal issues group discussed with sensitive awareness what cultural diversity means to them. Those in the equality and diversity group and others feel able to express their identities freely, confident that they will be respected, and are proud of the school's achievement in being awarded the Rainbow flag award. Boarders take great pride and pleasure in sharing their culture with others and in the positive responses of their peers when they do so.
- 3.16 Pupils of different ages work together with great success to achieve common goals in a wide array of activities, whether designing a board game or building an electric buggy. Senior school pupils organise numerous events and activities including language clubs and activities to mark Stephen Lawrence day. Prep school pupils talked with great enthusiasm about their work with younger ones to find out and write about space during a 'theme' day. Sports captains and deputies lead team warm-up sessions, and older pupils mentor younger ones in sound and lighting for school productions. Pupils expressed a particular pride in their achievements in house events, their sense of community being fostered by ongoing promotion of the house system within the school. Boarders form strong and supportive relationships with each other and have worked together with great success to create assembly presentations for the whole school about their own cultural festivals. Pupils work together to effect significant change within the school, and demonstrate a notable sense of pride in their achievements. They are confident that their views are sought, heard and acted upon as a result of their teamwork and discussions in groups such as the form representatives group, uniform committee, charity club and academic forum.

- 3.17 Pupils have a highly positive and influential impact on the lives of others in the school community and beyond. Children in the EYFS are keen to help others, such as when showing younger ones how to hold a fire hose. Prep school pupils embrace opportunities to help younger ones in the playground or house activities, and to work as monitors in the library or assembly. Pupils show a conscientious desire to help others through their DT projects, including an automated dog feeder to combat pet obesity. Senior school pupils are often to be found working in the prep school as part of the language leaders scheme or volunteering to work with small groups in EYFS sessions. They play an important role in the mentoring of younger pupils, and act as excellent role models within the many mixed age group activities, theatrical productions and sports teams. The sixth form charity committee seeks the views of pupils throughout the school in selecting local, national and international charities to support. Pupils display high levels of commitment to helping others, and their efforts have included donations to a local food bank and the sponsoring of a garden for a local cancer charity. Pupils have supported the needs of the wider world through activities such as fundraising events for Ukrainian refugees, events for *Children in Need* and the shoe box appeal.
- 3.18 Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. This includes boarders, whose well-being is effectively promoted by the proprietor's provision of a 'home from home' environment in the boarding houses. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about the importance of online safety and how to maintain this both in school and at home, due to effective teaching about online safety from an early age. Year 1 pupils showed excellent awareness of risky situations and objects including strangers, scissors and cars, and fires. Older pupils appreciate the healthy food available at lunchtime, the choices offered to them by the school in sport, and opportunities to participate in activities which foster their mental well-being. Pupils cited lessons such as food and nutrition and physical well-being as having contributed to their ability to maintain a balanced lifestyle. Boarders maintain healthy eating habits in their own time, benefiting from advice provided by the school. Pupils are highly aware of the importance of mental health, saying they are well informed on such matters through the PSHCE curriculum and dedicated events in school. Although a small minority of pupils indicated in the questionnaires that the school does not encourage them to be healthy, those interviewed were highly appreciative of the opportunities provided by the school to make choices that benefit their well-being. These include options to engage in non-competitive sports and the provision of quieter activities during a whole school 'flash mob' event during mental health week.
- 3.19 Pupils have an excellent moral understanding, subscribing wholeheartedly to the school's high expectations of their behaviour. They are quick to challenge poor behaviour in others and to take responsibility for personal misdemeanours. The overwhelming majority of pupils and parents agreed that the school expects pupils to behave well. Inspectors agreed with this view, confirming the success of school leaders' promotion and implementation of policies regarding behaviour. Younger pupils are proud of the school rules which they have helped to devise and speak eloquently about the need to have them. Children in Reception readily take turns and share, motivated by their eagerness to please their teachers and contribute positively to the community. The oldest pupils spoke with insight about the increasing responsibility they are given to self-regulate their behaviour, saying they have reached a level of moral understanding which means the rules have largely done their work. Pupils have an equally well-developed understanding of laws within the wider world, having learnt about these in their PSHCE lessons. A small minority of pupils stated in the questionnaires that some pupils are unkind towards each other, but most agreed that the school addressed such instances quickly and effectively.
- 3.20 Pupils of all ages demonstrate a mature appreciation of the non-material aspects of life such as friends, family, health and education. Both prep and senior pupils expressed a strong understanding of the importance of having goals and challenges in their lives. Older pupils' appreciation of the beauty of nature was evident in discussion and in the quality and content of their art work, and their enjoyment of the musical performances in an assembly focused on mental health. Younger pupils showed high levels of emotional awareness when presenting an assembly on loneliness and its causes. Pupils' reflective and philosophical thinking is encouraged in lessons and activities, the excellent outcomes of

these being exemplified in a pupil discussion about the philosophy of time. Older pupils appreciate opportunities for reflection offered during the day, particularly in clubs such as meditation, although opportunities to be quiet and reflect are less frequent for younger pupils.

- 3.21 Pupils have an excellent understanding of the impact of the decisions they make on their well-being and success, including in their future lives. Pupils throughout the school respond with maturity to the numerous opportunities for them to take responsibility for decisions in their learning, including topics for project work. Pupils in Year 6 discussed the importance of talking to others when making difficult decisions. Senior school pupils spoke knowledgeably to inspectors about the importance of selecting the right options at GCSE and A level. Boarders make sensible choices about how to manage their time outside school hours and welcome opportunities to be involved in decisions regarding day-to-day events in the boarding houses. Pupils regularly make decisions about which activities to engage in during the school day based on their own assessment of what is important to them. Whether they choose to seek support or challenge in their academic subjects, spend time in contemplation, enjoy a sporting activity with others or lead a club for younger pupils, pupils demonstrate the capacity to make thoughtful and informed decisions about their lives.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 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 assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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

Mrs Karen Williams	Reporting inspector
Mr Thomas Hales	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr Oliver Bullock	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr Henry Rickman	Team inspector (Deputy head, GDST school)
Mrs Wendy Martin	Team inspector for boarding (Former head, SofH school)