



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Rochester Independent College

November 2018



Contents

Contents	2
School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection	5
Preface	5
Key findings	7
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	7
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	7
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	7
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	8
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	8
PART 6 – Provision of information	8
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	8
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	9
3. Educational Quality Inspection	10
Preface	10
Key findings	11
Recommendations	11
The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements	11
The quality of the pupils' personal development	14
4. Inspection Evidence	16

School's Details

College	Rochester Independent College		
DfE number	887/6004		
Address	Star Hill Rochester Kent ME1 1XF		
Telephone number	01634 828115		
Email address	admissions@rochester-college.org		
Principal	Mr Alistair Brownlow		
Proprietor	Dukes Education Ltd		
Age range	11 to 19		
Number of pupils on roll	309		
	Boys	188	Girls 121
	Day pupils	223	Boarders 86
	Seniors	96	Sixth form 213
Inspection dates	20 to 22 November 2018		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Rochester Independent College is an independent, co-educational day school for pupils aged 11 to 19, situated in the centre of Rochester in Kent. Boarding is available for those aged 15 and over. Founded in 1984, the school has grown from one terraced house to a site of two acres with 14 buildings. In 2016 the school joined Dukes Education Limited, which acts as proprietor with oversight provided by governors associated with the group.
- 1.2 The school is divided into the lower school in Years 7 to 11 and the sixth form. An extra cohort retakes A-level examinations. Pupils enter the school at different points in their educational career for particular purposes.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to give pupils an enjoyable and successful experience of education in a diverse environment with small classes, in preparation for university. It seeks to encourage pupils to search for their own answers; to voice their opinions; to think critically within a supportive framework; and to develop an imaginative and informed attitude.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Most pupils live within Kent and South East London, and come from professional or business backgrounds; a small number of boarders come from overseas. A broad range of nationalities is represented. The school's own assessment indicates that overall the ability profile of the pupils is slightly above the national average. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs; six have an education, health and care plan. The number of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is 73. Of these 12 receive support for needs such as dyslexia. Also, 46 pupils have English as an additional language, with 34 having support. The needs of pupils who have been identified as more able are provided for through a range of opportunities within the curriculum and the enrichment programme of activities.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools ('boarding NMS'). It also comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards, including the boarding NMS, may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any 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, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as met or as not met. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management, together with the NMS covering the same areas. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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

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

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.](#)

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 At GCSE in the year 2016 performance was in line with the national average for maintained schools and in the year 2017 was above the national average for maintained schools.
- 2.3 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2016 to 2017 have been in line with the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.
- 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 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.
- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 are met.**

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

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 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

- 2.13 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.15 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.16 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and statement of boarding principles [NMS 1] are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.18 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

- 2.19 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. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are met.**

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

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

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

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

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

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

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

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

- Sixth form pupils achieve well in public examinations.
- Pupils' achievements in the visual and creative arts are excellent.
- Pupils have a positive attitude towards learning, especially in the sixth form.
- Pupils are confident in discussions on a range of academic topics.
- The progress of pupils in the lower school is hindered when a lack of challenge in teaching inhibits independent learning.
- Achievement in extra-curricular activities is not consistent for all pupils, although there are notable individual successes.

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

- Pupils adapt readily to new situations and are flexible in their approach to their education.
- Pupils understand how the decisions that they make can and do have a major impact upon their own future.
- Pupils have a well-developed aesthetic and cultural awareness.
- Relationships between pupils are totally inclusive, creating a harmonious community of day and boarding pupils.
- Pupils understand what they need to do to become successful and show strong resilience in achieving their goals.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Increase the level of challenge in the lower school teaching to enable pupils to develop their independent learning skills further.
- Enable all pupils to develop their individual skills and talents beyond the classroom.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 The achievement of the pupils, including those with EAL and SEND, is good overall. This is confirmed by lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, an analysis of the school's assessment data, and success in public examinations. The school fulfils its aim to enable pupils who have not necessarily had a successful experience in their education previously to reach the further education course of their choice. Most pupils gain entry to university, including to some with high entry requirements. Lesson observations show that pupils develop secure knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum. In the sixth form there are sometimes very high levels of achievement, for example in A-level English when pupils were developing a deep understanding of Marxist ideology in a discussion about state as opposed to private education. Their responses were particularly effective because of challenging questions posed for them. Pupils develop high levels of skills quickly in art, graphics and all aspects of the creative arts. Senior leaders and governors have decided to make the creative arts curriculum central to the school's ethos and have allocated a good proportion of lesson time and teaching resources to this area throughout the school. Pupils consequently produce extremely successful outcomes in these subjects at all stages. The relaxed atmosphere in the school gives pupils confidence overall and helps the sixth formers in particular. It causes some uncertainty for the younger pupils, whose progress is impeded when lessons lack structure and routine.

- 3.6 Results in GCSE examinations were in-line with the national average for all pupils in maintained schools in 2016 and above the national average for pupils in 2017. In IGCSE examinations, results were lower than worldwide norms in 2016 and 2017. Results in A-level examinations have been in line with the national average in 2016 and 2017. Pupils maintained these levels of attainment in 2018; 62% of the results at A-level reached A* to B grades. In Year 11 and the sixth form, carefully planned teaching offers the pupils almost individual programmes of learning to help them to progress successfully at their own pace. Less rigour was seen in some lower school teaching, limiting pupils' achievement. From the evidence of attainment, lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and interviews with pupils they make good progress over time. In the questionnaires, most pupils responded that the teaching helps them to make good progress. In work books the best practice supplied helpful marking and feedback to enable pupils to make further progress, and often the pupils took the advice further and improved their work.
- 3.7 Pupils with SEND achieve in line with their peers, as shown by the school's own data and by their success in public examinations. They are supported well by specialist teaching and benefit from an adapted curriculum with individualised support whenever it is needed. These pupils report that the small groups increase their confidence and encourage them to make more effective progress. Pupils with EAL are supported in a similar way by teaching in small groups and by a curriculum that has been adapted to their particular need. They make good progress in their learning; in an English lesson they responded with sensitivity to the imagery within a poem. They also confirm that the boarding environment gives them frequent opportunities to practise their spoken English.
- 3.8 Nearly all pupils develop excellent communication skills appropriate for their age. They listen attentively and participate effectively in group discussions on topics such as the aftermath of World War One. This is because teaching challenges them to develop their definitions and explanations. Communication skills are enhanced by the positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils have the confidence to express their views and take risks in their learning, as guided and encouraged by their teachers. Pupils in an English lesson planned and started to write a persuasive essay on *Animal Farm*, including rhetorical techniques and developing writing skills appropriate to the task. Although pupils with EAL are sometimes less willing to engage in discussion, they benefit from the helpful support that they are given to improve their skills.
- 3.9 In mathematics pupils acquire a range of basic numeracy skills and apply them successfully across the curriculum. Younger pupils in a mathematics lesson evaluated between metric and imperial units accurately. Links were made to running and how far one mile is, and how distances are measured differently in other countries. Spreadsheets used in information and communication technology (ICT) were linked to mathematics and plotting graphs was undertaken accurately in geography. A-level pupils were covering successfully challenging work on transformations and had a good understanding of quadratic and reciprocal graphs. Pupils in a GCSE physics lesson had a very good understanding of mathematical elements to enable them to answer examination questions successfully.
- 3.10 Many pupils develop confident ICT skills and use them in other areas of learning. In a number of subjects, pupils make effective use of online homework, and members of the sixth form use their own devices successfully to research topics. Pupils with EAL show initiative in communicating with teachers and accessing the curriculum using translation software on their mobile phones. Excellent use of ICT is evident in sketchbooks in photography, as pupils respond well to teaching which demonstrates how to make the best use of the professional software to develop their own work and portfolio. Opportunities to develop ICT competency are fewer in some areas. Inspection evidence supports the view of some pupils who feel less confident that their ICT skills are being fully developed, as they are not required to use them consistently and independently across the curriculum.

- 3.11 Pupils are engaged in lessons and have excellent rapport with their teachers and peers. They show positive attitudes to learning, particularly in the sixth form. They are equally content to work individually or to collaborate with others. The organisation in small class sizes enables pupils often to work independently with support when required. Pupils readily complete self-directed work and take responsibility for their studies. Pupils in the sixth form demonstrate higher order thinking skills to hypothesise and to synthesise when discussing and writing about the work of other artists and photographers. Essential study skills are taught through personal, health and social education (PSHE) and within individual subjects. Pupils discover for themselves the methods that work best for them individually and are encouraged then to embed them in their routines. Pupils use a variety of resources to help with their learning, including technology whenever it is promoted. Pupils discover that their learning is often planned in teaching that enables them to work at their own pace and are expected to strive to find the answers, as they will not simply be given them. Pupils are very positive about their development of learning styles in creative subjects and regard the opportunities in this area as a significant strength of the school. The relaxed atmosphere in teaching benefits the pupils in terms of confidence and independent learning. However, this approach does not suit all younger pupils some of whom are late to lessons, work with limited focus or behave less appropriately on occasion. The lack of structure also creates more of a challenge for them to develop their independent study skills quickly. A very large majority of boarders agreed in the questionnaire that boarding has helped them to become more confident and independent. This was confirmed during the interviews when native speakers of a language were seen to be helping non-native speakers of that language to improve their performance.
- 3.12 A few pupils provide notable examples of achievement beyond the classroom that the school supports, such as success in the chemistry Olympiad and representative sportsmen and women at county level or beyond in a range of disciplines from netball to BMX biking. Examples of graphics work are sufficiently advanced to be entered for external competitions. Whenever pupils show an interest or aptitude in a particular activity of any type, the school supports them by making all reasonable adjustments. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of pupils and parents said that there are few opportunities to pursue their interests through competing in external competitions and in sports fixtures. This point was reinforced by pupils in discussion at the time of the inspection. The inspection evidence supports these observations. The school has opted to direct maximum time towards academic success rather than competitive sport or other pursuits and the characteristics of the campus mean that any physical activity has to be undertaken off-site.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils show high levels of self-understanding. They flourish as they become more confident because staff encourage them at all stages and provide very high levels of pastoral care. In the pre-inspection questionnaire most pupils claim that they have adults to talk to and are confident that they will be heard fairly. Pupils also know when academic support is available to them, and subject support clinics are open to all regularly. Many have been successful in showing notable resilience in changing the way in which they approach their learning. They have assessed the risks and made an easy transition to the new teaching environment that helps them to thrive. This is because the school makes sure that the group sizes are small so that the teachers can get to know their pupils extremely well and provide the necessary support. Pupils feel that they are not being judged, but are allowed to be the person who they want to be. This gives them the self-confidence and belief to succeed and grow as an individual. Pupils in the sixth form show self-confidence and discipline to improve their own learning. Pupils in the lower school are very self-assured and happy with the ethos of the school, even if their levels of resilience are yet not so advanced. In their questionnaire responses almost all parents agreed that the school helps their children to be confident and independent. Inspection evidence supports this view overall.
- 3.15 Pupils demonstrate strong decision-making skills, as they design their own academic pathways and prepare for life beyond school. Pupils spoke warmly about the freedom that they have to make their own decisions within a supportive environment. This has a positive impact on them. They become fully determined to take advantage of the educational opportunities that they have been offered in a way that they may not have done previously. Pupils are well equipped to make informed decisions rather than relying on just being told what to do. They commented favourably upon the excellent discussions within the tutorial system that operates on a one-to-one basis to enable them make decisions about the university courses that would be most suitable for them.
- 3.16 Pupils demonstrate an excellent aesthetic appreciation of the visual arts and their natural surroundings. They appreciate the peace, greenery and wildlife of the surroundings within an urban setting and enjoy the gardens for relaxation and personal reflection. Pupils have built an outdoor classroom on the site and can participate in the gardening club. During the inspection some were using the dining hall as a place to sketch for pleasure. The school is non-denominational and develops sustained spiritual awareness by philosophical and reflective means. Those boarders who wish to seek spiritual fulfilment through a religion are able to follow their own faith within the local area. Some consider activities such as yoga to be a sustaining way of coming to terms with the pressures of life. Others achieve spiritual understanding and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life through the high quality programme of creative arts. Pupils said in interview that they are very much at ease with each other spiritually as a result of the inclusive nature of the school.
- 3.17 Behaviour is generally of a very high standard. In the pre-inspection questionnaire responses almost all of the pupils agreed that the school expects them to behave well. Inspection evidence supports this view. The rules are regularly shared and understood by all in the school community. As a result, pupils have an excellent understanding of what is wrong or right and are aware of the impact of their behaviour on others. The rules are explained to pupils fully at the start of the year, and staff anticipate that they will respect those rules. This is achieved with a light touch approach from staff. Bullying is not tolerated, and pupils stated in interview that they have a responsibility to eradicate it when it occasionally happens. Boarders understand the rules that govern boarding life and abide by them readily. They develop an understanding of what the rules and boundaries are because they sign an agreement to be part of the boarding environment and the community. In many subjects, pupils develop expertly their understanding of moral and ethical issues, such as the concepts of prejudice, atonement and sin in an A-level English lesson on *The Kite Runner*.

- 3.18 Pupils readily help and support one another's learning in class to solve problems effectively. Their excellent social skills are facilitated by small class sizes. Pupils work collaboratively to achieve common goals, for example through the school council, which was instrumental in the development of the gender-neutral toilets. Pupils are engaged in environmental issues, and this resulted in them taking the initiative through the school council to introduce more conspicuous recycling bins. The enterprise week is a good example of pupils working collaboratively across the year groups to develop a business idea that is then presented to staff. A number of pupils rehearsed with gusto for a future school production of *Bugsy Malone*. The boarders are expected to communicate in English to help to get to know each other and to work collaboratively on the induction activities. They support each other with their studies purposefully in the common room during the evenings. Pupils appreciate the warmth of the school community and the support offered by all of its members. Older pupils set a positive example to younger ones through a peer mentoring relationship between the sixth form and the lower school. For example, sixth form pupils sometimes help out in classrooms as assistants or give talks at events such as the European Day of Languages.
- 3.19 Pupils undertake to help those in a less fortunate position than themselves both nationally and internationally. Charity fundraising for the homeless and for Yemen has been undertaken successfully through such initiatives as quiz events and frequent cake sales. As the school does not have a uniform, pupils held a day when they wore a school uniform to boost the funds. Almost all of this activity is initiated without adult intervention. Pupils engage with and contribute to the local community through projects such as the attractive mural at Rochester railway station. Pupils' artwork is displayed at numerous venues around the town, and at the Summer Festival pupils perform music and drama pieces to parents and guests from the wider community. Pupils value the work of the school council greatly as a means of developing the school community and giving them a huge sense of pride in their school.
- 3.20 Pupils both respect and value the diversity in the school community and benefit from opportunities to learn about and celebrate other cultures in response to the school's aim to foster respect, challenge prejudice and develop an imaginative and informed attitude. There is a clear respect throughout the school community for other cultures. Any rare prejudice that occurs is challenged respectfully with sensitivity, and tolerance of those from different backgrounds is a real strength of the school. The boarders spoke of the strength of the positive relationships that are forged with others from different backgrounds and cultures. On the boarders' food nights with Italian, Peruvian or Chinese themes pupils say that they really enjoy sampling the cuisine of another culture and broadening their taste palate; they appreciate the effort that other boarders have made to cook for them. Those cooking feel pride in presenting their culture to a wider audience and learn to feel comfortable in a diverse population as good preparation for living in the wider world. The overwhelming majority of parents in the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. Pupils have a thoughtful awareness of British society and the roles of the democratic process, public institutions and services and can relate them to the value systems of others. They discussed in a healthy debate a recent visit to Westminster and showed a reinforced awareness of the political arena. Pupils recognise the range of talents that can be found within the school and show warm admiration for those who have achieved high academic success or success in other fields such as receiving a national childhood champion award for voluntary work.
- 3.21 Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy, physically and mentally, in terms of diet, exercise and a healthy life-style. They develop a full understanding about online safety in PSHE lessons, and form-time is used to focus on topics such as drug abuse. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a minority of pupils stated that there is not a suitable choice and quality of food at mealtimes. The inspection evidence does not support this view, as there was a range of hot and cold options and healthy alternatives. The gymnasium is available for those who wish to take part in physical activity beyond compulsory sport in the curriculum in the lower school. It is evident that pupils are well equipped to make positive informed decisions that will impact on their life-style choices. Pupils feel very secure within the school and boarding environment and know how to stay safe online.

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 a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and form meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Stephen Pugh	Reporting inspector
Mr David Young	Compliance team inspector (Headteacher, ISA school)
Dr Sarah Lockyer	Team inspector (Principal, ISA school)
Mr Alexander Tate	Team inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr Richard Honey	Team inspector for boarding (Head of Department and Housemaster, HMC school)