



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

The Ladies' College

March 2022

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School's Details

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|---------------------------------|---|-----|-------------------|-----|
| School | The Ladies' College | | | |
| Address | The Ladies' College Les Gravées St Peter Port Guernsey GY1 1RW Channel Islands | | | |
| Telephone number | 01481 721602 | | | |
| Email address | principalspa@ladiescollege.ac.gg | | | |
| Principal | Mrs Ashley Clancy | | | |
| Chair of governors | Advocate Caroline Chan | | | |
| Age range | 2 to 18 | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 561 | | | |
| | Pre-prep | 32 | Prep | 128 |
| | Seniors | 298 | Sixth Form | 103 |
| Inspection dates | 8 to 11 March 2022 | | | |

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Ladies' College is an independent single-sex non-denominational Christian day school. It is overseen by a board of governors, all of whom are appointed by the States of Guernsey (the island's parliament). It is a requirement that one of the governors is a sitting member of the States. The school was founded in 1872 to provide an academic education for female pupils. It comprises a pre-preparatory department, Melrose (for pupils in years 1 to 6) and a senior school which incorporates a sixth form. The school shares lessons in the sixth form with a nearby co-educational school. Since the previous inspection, the school has added teaching spaces to accommodate photography and food technology, and the sixth-form centre has been reconfigured and refurbished.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to encourage pupils to grow in confidence, enjoy their talents to the full and value the qualities of others; to provide an environment in which pupils can be happy, love learning and make lifelong friends; and to inspire pupils to be the best they can be.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils are mainly from skilled and professional families. About two-thirds were born on Guernsey and, apart from a small number from overseas, the remainder are of UK origin. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the overall ability of pupils in the prep and senior schools is above the British national average for those taking similar tests. The school has identified 109 pupils as having special needs and/or disabilities (SEND), half of whom receive additional specialist help. There are four pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) and their needs are supported by classroom teachers, with access to specialist support. The curriculum is modified for the 57 pupils whom the school has identified as being the more able in the school's population.

2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas (BSO). It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements. Schools may opt for an inspection of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

This is a 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 for British Schools Overseas. The standards represent minimum requirements, and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. In order to gain BSO accreditation, a school is 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. If a school does not meet all of the standards, it may elect to be re-inspected once it has taken the required actions in order to gain BSO accreditation.

Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. The school's previous inspection was in October 2016.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets all the Standards for British Schools Overseas and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

- 2.3 The curriculum takes account of and provides for the aptitudes and needs of pupils of all ages, including those with SEND and/or EAL. It provides pupils with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education and enables them to acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is well planned and supported by suitable schemes of work. An extensive programme of co-curricular activities provides opportunities for pupils to gain additional skills. The curriculum enables pupils to learn and make progress, and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society and for the next stage of their lives. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) encourages respect for other people and suitable careers education is provided.
- 2.4 Children in the pre-prep and lower prep follow a programme which covers effectively the seven areas of learning of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. The curriculum for pupils in Melrose is based on the English National Curriculum, whilst senior pupils are prepared for GCSE, IGCSE, A-level and EPQ examinations.
- 2.5 Teaching shows an understanding of the pupils' needs and abilities and demonstrates good subject knowledge and effective use of resources. It enables pupils to make excellent progress and utilises a range of approaches to foster application and interest. Strategies for managing behaviour in class are effective. Teaching does not discriminate against pupils because of their protected characteristics. The school has a suitable framework to assess pupils' performance and uses assessment information effectively to ensure that pupils make progress.
- 2.6 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' learning and achievements and the contribution that the curriculum and teaching make to these outcomes.

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

2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

- 2.8 The school promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It pays particular regard to promoting respect for protected characteristics such as those relating to age, gender, identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and marriage. The school enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, to distinguish right from wrong and to accept responsibility for their behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the lives of others through charity work and opportunities for leadership. They gain knowledge and respect for public institutions in England and for the responsibilities of citizenship through the PSHE programme. This enables them to understand the importance of laws and justice and teaches them to have respect for the democratic process. The school encourages a balanced presentation of political issues and precludes partisan political views.
- 2.9 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' personal development and the factors which contribute to their development.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16] are met.

- 2.11 Suitable safeguarding arrangements are made to promote the welfare of pupils. These take account of UK requirements and practices. Effective implementation of the safeguarding policy ensures the protection of pupils from all types of abuse and harm, including the dangers of extremism. Staff are appropriately trained when they join the school and subsequently through training sessions and updates when required. They appreciate the high profile that safeguarding is afforded by the school. Staff understand the staff code of conduct and whistleblowing policies. Structures exist to ensure that pupils are listened to and receive early help when in need or at risk, and pupils receive suitable guidance relating to issues that might affect their welfare, health and safety through the PSHE programme, assemblies and form time. In discussions, pupils were clear that they could speak to a member of staff about any concerns. Governors provide effective support for the designated safeguarding staff, and the school's safeguarding policy and practice are reviewed annually by the governing body.
- 2.12 Procedures to promote good behaviour are known and understood by pupils and staff and are implemented effectively. A suitable system of rewards celebrates pupils' success, efforts and achievements, and appropriate sanctions are applied if the need arises, though pupils, staff and behaviour records confirm that this is rare. In the senior school, in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt that the school does not do all it can to prevent bullying. Scrutiny of relevant records and interviews with pupils and staff confirmed that bullying, including cyber-bullying, is prevented as far as is reasonably practical. When it does occur it is dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- 2.13 The school complies with relevant health and safety laws and fire safety standards, including those in force locally. Record-keeping is thorough and shows that there is an effective overview of health and safety procedures. Fire drills are carried out regularly and suitably recorded, there is a suitable system for the provision and maintenance of clear emergency routes and exits and an effective maintenance programme for fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers. The premises are maintained to a suitable level of safety and hygiene. The school has appropriate policies for first aid and their effective implementation enables pupils who are ill or injured to be treated in a timely manner. Pupils are appropriately supervised throughout the school day and on school trips. Admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained. Suitable risk assessments have been drawn up for all areas of the school and its activities.

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

2.14 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.

- 2.15 The school carries out the required checks on staff, proprietors and any other adults working at the school to ensure suitability to work with children, in line with both local requirements and guidance issued to schools in the UK. A suitable single central register of appointments is maintained which details the recruitment checks undertaken.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- 2.17 Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for pupils of all ages. There is appropriate changing accommodation for all pupils and a medical room caters effectively for the needs of pupils who are ill or injured. Premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety

requirements. Acoustic conditions and both internal and external lighting are suitable. The provision of drinking water is adequate. Sufficient outdoor space is available for physical education and play.

Part 6 – Provision of information

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

2.19 All the information required by the Standards is provided or made available to current parents and parents of prospective pupils. The contact details for the school, the principal, the chair of governors and a statement of the school's aims and ethos are published on the school's website. Policies and particulars of arrangements for admissions; misbehaviour and exclusions; provision for pupils with SEND and EAL; the procedure for complaints; the curriculum; arrangements to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying; health and safety; and the school's provision for first aid are also made available on the school's website. The school's policy on safeguarding pupils and a copy of the previous inspection report are published on the school's website. The school provides an annual written report on each pupil's progress and attainment.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

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

2.21 The school's complaints procedure is published on the school's website. It provides for a three-stage process with clear timescales, including an initial informal stage. If concerns are not resolved informally, parents are able to proceed to a formal stage by submitting a complaint in writing. If the concerns still remain unresolved, the school makes provision for a hearing before a panel which includes at least one person independent of the management and running of the school, which parents may attend, accompanied if they wish. The panel may then make findings and recommendations. A confidential record is kept of all complaints and findings, including action taken by the school whether or not the complaint is upheld. The school's records indicate prompt responses to any concerns or complaints received, almost all of which are resolved informally.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

2.23 Senior leaders and members of the board of governors demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities so that the Standards for British Schools Overseas are met consistently and the well-being of the pupils is actively promoted.

2.24 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the impact of leadership and management on the pupils' learning, achievement and personal development.

3. Inspection of Educational Quality

Preface

In addition to evaluating whether or not the school met all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, this inspection evaluated the **quality** of the school's work, focusing on the two key outcomes for pupils:

- the quality of the pupils' learning and achievement;
- the quality of the pupils' personal development;

Headline judgements of educational quality include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'. In addition, the text identifies clearly the impact of the curriculum, teaching, pastoral care, leadership and management on outcomes for pupils.

As ISI inspections of British schools overseas are for the benefit of the pupils, inspections aim to:

- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain;
- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education.

The report refers to year groups in accordance with the system most commonly used in England. Where the school's own names differ from those used in England, the details are given in the table below:

| <i>School name</i> | <i>National Curriculum name</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Pre-prep Peas and Beans | Nursery |
| Lower Prep | Reception |
| Middle Prep | Year 1 |
| Upper Prep | Year 2 |
| Junior Remove | Year 3 |
| Form 1 | Year 4 |
| Form 2 | Year 5 |
| Form 3 | Year 6 |
| Remove | Year 7 |
| Lower 4 | Year 8 |
| Upper 4 | Year 9 |
| Lower 5 | Year 10 |
| Upper 5 | Year 11 |
| Lower Sixth | Year 12 |
| Upper Sixth | Year 13 |

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is excellent.

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

Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school may want to consider:

- Improving further pupils' investigative and problem-solving skills by ensuring that opportunities to use these are consistently provided across all age ranges and subject areas.

The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement

3.4 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is excellent.

3.5 Pupils' attitudes to learning are a significant strength and a testament to the school's successful achievement of its aim to enable pupils to appreciate scholarship. Whatever their ability, pupils are determined to give of their best. Children in the pre-preparatory department are happy, conscientious and purposeful, enjoying learning through a wide variety of stimulating and creative tasks. In Reception, pupils showed tremendous initiative and strong organisational skills when planning how to build a house and stick the bricks together, using a mixture of sand and water for cement. Senior pupils have an outstanding attitude to learning, regardless of ability. They are intellectually curious and ambitious to achieve successful outcomes. They show a great thirst for knowledge and a desire to acquire a deeper understanding of difficult concepts. They approach their work with great diligence and enthusiasm, eager to please their teachers because of the excellent rapport they enjoy.

3.6 Pupils' achievement shows that their ambitions to reach successful outcomes are fully realised, fulfilling the school's aim for them to be the best they can be. Throughout the school, the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills across all areas of learning is excellent. Younger pupils think independently and display mature analytical skills. Their creative and aesthetic skills are highly developed through the provision and use of a wide range of resources and imaginative projects. In many subjects, pupils are allowed to exercise choice in the work they undertake. This enables them to study topics that capture their interest, thereby extending their skills and producing excellent outcomes. The scientific understanding and skills of older pupils in Melrose are particularly well developed. They benefit from being taught by subject specialists from the senior school. Senior school pupils displayed excellent analytical and evaluative skills in a history lesson where they thoughtfully explored attitudes to the LGBTQ+ community in Nazi Germany from a philosophical and contextual perspective with a maturity beyond their years. Academic support from dedicated and skilful teachers is almost always on hand for individuals who need it. On occasions it was apparent that some pupils needed more guidance. Some would make faster progress if they received greater challenge.

3.7 As they move through the pre-preparatory department, children maintain a high rate of progress in all areas of learning, whatever their ability. By the end of Reception, with very few exceptions children have met the Early Learning Goals. Data provided by the school show that this rate of progress is sustained throughout the prep department. The attainment of younger pupils is high across all age ranges and ability levels. This is corroborated by pupils' achievement in lessons and performance in their written work. Pupils' attainment at A level was strong during the years 2017 to 2019, with about two-thirds of entries being graded A* to B. Results in centre-assessed grades in 2020 and teacher-assessed grades in 2021 showed a significant improvement. A large majority of pupils have been able to gain places of their choice for the next stage of their education, training or employment. Over the same period, pupils have shown high levels of attainment at GCSE, with just under three-quarters of examinations being graded A* or A, or at levels 9 to 7. Centre-assessed grades in 2020 and teacher-assessed grades in 2021 indicate a slight improvement. Since the introduction of the Extended Project

Qualification (EPQ) to the school in 2019, around half of the entries have been awarded A* or A. Data indicate that pupils make strong progress in relation to their starting points. Pupils with SEND and EAL or those identified as more able are enabled to make progress which is in line with the whole cohort in response to a well-designed and challenging curriculum that is focused on academic success and adapted successfully to individual pupils' needs and aspirations.

- 3.8 Younger pupils are eloquent and competent communicators. From a very early age, they express themselves clearly and listen respectfully and thoughtfully to each other and to adults. Their level of attainment in reading is high, enhanced by a wealth of available reading material which they access voraciously. Pupils reach equally high standards in writing, demonstrating accurate use of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Children in the pre-prep and lower prep make imaginative use of vocabulary in the knowledge that descriptive language makes for more interesting work. Older pupils' communication skills are exceptional across all year groups. These pupils are highly articulate and speak with confidence and maturity in a wide range of situations, whether in whole class discussions, in small groups, in presenting to the whole school or a year group in assembly, or in hustings for the election of a head girl. Thanks to a supportive atmosphere, pupils do not feel self-conscious or fearful of speaking in public; quite the opposite is true. They embrace the many opportunities with which they are presented. Most older pupils produce high-quality written work which is clear, expressive and nuanced. In modern foreign languages, because pupils are immersed in the target language, they speak without inhibition or fear of making mistakes, and consequently their oral work is of a high standard.
- 3.9 Younger pupils are competent mathematicians who demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of topics covered. Children in the pre-preparatory department develop their counting skills well through a range of activities and apply their skills confidently to other areas of learning. In Reception, pupils used their excellent knowledge of 3D shapes to construct a model of a building of choice from local photographs. Strong mathematical competence can be seen across the curriculum at all ages, such as in tables of results from experiments in science, spreadsheets and graphs in information and communication technology (ICT) and charts in geography. Senior pupils display strong numeracy skills which are well utilised to support their learning in a range of other curriculum areas. Their graphical skills are well developed, precise and accurate and they are able to analyse data effectively, for example in psychology and geography, transferring their knowledge and skills fluently. Not all pupils find mathematics easy, but they approach their work diligently and with enthusiasm, regardless of their level of attainment. This is supported by ability setting and small numbers in the lowest sets. As a result, these pupils develop confidence and skill. At the highest level, pupils were seen to enjoy grappling with challenging concepts, for example differentiation in an IGCSE maths lesson, which they thoroughly enjoyed for its intellectual challenge.
- 3.10 Younger pupils are extremely effective in their use of ICT and can apply their skills in many areas of the curriculum. In the pre-preparatory department, children confidently use various devices to enhance their literacy skills. By Year 2, pupils demonstrate a high level of competence. Pupils handled a programme to excellent effect to create a template to transfer a previously drafted piece of work, successfully demonstrating skills such as word processing, importing images, and changing fonts. All were able to save their work successfully. In some teaching in the senior school, ICT is used effectively for research tasks or for presentational purposes. Pupils, including those in Melrose, appreciate the school's online learning platform and the effective communication it affords when pupils or staff are self-isolating; examples of which were evidenced during the inspection. Older pupils respond positively to its use for submitting work and receiving helpful and sometimes extensive written feedback from teachers, as well as the capacity it offers to store resources for revision purposes. Whilst pupils' physical exercise books and folders are extremely well organised, this is not always the case with their digital work.
- 3.11 Younger pupils, including children in the pre-preparatory department, have highly developed and sophisticated study skills for their age. They are confident in retrieving information from a range of

sources and show initiative and independence in doing so. They respond well to challenge and draw successfully on their prior knowledge for use in discussions. Pupils are curious and capable of thinking critically and solving problems. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils disagreed that lessons are interesting and challenging. Inspectors found that occasionally progress is limited when teachers fail to choose appropriate tasks which promote the further development of pupils' problem-solving and investigative skills. Senior pupils show a wide range of well-developed study skills. When they are encouraged to experiment with ideas more freely, although they can be tentative at first, they respond well and successfully display an ability to assimilate and then apply knowledge to new situations. For example, in an A-level chemistry lesson pupils drew on their knowledge of protein structure and enzyme action from biology to aid their learning. In a GCSE English lesson a pupil's work on Syrian refugees was firmly rooted in a range of critically evaluated online resources.

- 3.12 Pupils' achievements beyond the classroom are excellent. They are justifiably proud of notable performances across a wide range of activities, including in sport, the performing arts, visual arts, public speaking, general knowledge and writing competitions and mathematics challenges. Pupils consistently achieve success in the island's annual Eisteddfod. Sporting achievements have extended to pupils successfully representing Guernsey in the Island Games, the Commonwealth Games and UK championships in a range of disciplines, for example athletics, swimming, fencing and sailing. Pupils spoke with gratitude of the support the school leadership gives them in their pursuit of excellence in activities outside school. Inspection evidence shows that the support received from school leaders and governors in extra-curricular activities contributes significantly to pupils' success.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

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

- 3.14 Pupils' social awareness is a significant strength of the school. Younger pupils enjoy and benefit from the many opportunities they are given for collaborative work. They make sensible decisions together and work with others to solve problems, for example Year 5 pupils worked successfully in pairs to achieve a successful outcome when mixing and baking scones. Relationships between older pupils are exceptionally strong and supportive, founded on kindness and respect. They listen to each other's ideas and views when working towards a common goal and happily negotiate roles and responsibilities to get the job done. In practical work in science, in sport and in the performing arts, pupils display outstanding teamwork, resolving issues and completing tasks effectively. The use of an online digital platform for collaboration has been embraced by the pupils and they value working together on shared projects in this way.
- 3.15 The strong spiritual understanding shown by the youngest pupils is sustained as they progress through the school. Pupils' enjoyment of opportunities for calm reflection was clearly seen in an outdoor poetry lesson, where Year 6 pupils sensitively used their surroundings and the emotions they inspired as a stimulus for their writing. The resulting work was evocative and expressive. Children in the pre-preparatory department thrive in their lessons in the woodland learning environment or at the beach. They show significant appreciation of the richness of their local environment. Younger pupils understand the importance of religion in people's lives and reflect on this more deeply as they learn more about other cultures. Senior pupils show a deep gratitude for the non-material aspects of life. They spoke passionately about the spiritual experience that the arts provide for them and of the joy they feel when sharing special moments with friends at events such as carol or remembrance services. Their sensitivity manifests itself in the genuine care, concern and consideration they show for each other and for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' spiritual awareness is enhanced by the school assembly programme which supports them with opportunities to think about major issues. In discussions, pupils spoke eloquently and emotionally about, for example, the Syrian refugee crisis and gender equality.

- 3.16 Younger pupils relish opportunities to make decisions and choices at each stage of their learning and do so with success. They embrace a positive philosophy and a 'can do' attitude, emboldened by the motivational messages on display in their classrooms. The school's motto 'Do what is right, come what may' resonates deeply with older pupils. Pupils quote it and, more importantly, put it into practice. They are empowered by the school's culture and the strong relationships they have with the staff to make the right choices. They do so whether in practical situations, such as how best to organise their time, or when discussing a philosophical or moral issue, for example the right thing to do if someone is being bullied. Pupils make their own decisions confidently, supported by the knowledge that staff are there to help if they need them. They appreciate the importance of taking advice, keeping an open mind and not being afraid to make a decision which may turn out to be wrong.
- 3.17 Pupils develop self-confidence and resilience, as well as the self-awareness needed to reflect and improve upon their own learning and successfully meet their academic and other challenges. This is evident as they progress through the school from their earliest days in the pre-preparatory department. Pupils realise that making mistakes is an important part of their learning. They are adept at critiquing their own work and setting targets for themselves, as well as responding positively to the advice and feedback of their teachers, which is supportive and constructive. Pupils are keen to achieve as highly as they can, though not at the expense of their happiness and well-being. A notable trait of pupils is that they do not take themselves too seriously. For example, in preparing an assembly, one form group decided that including a whole-school dance routine would provide not only a sense of fun but also boost the morale of their peers. Across all age ranges, pupils are self-assured, yet modest and polite. They happily step out of their comfort zone and are prepared to 'have a go', for example in house activities where perseverance, teamwork and camaraderie take precedence over the end result.
- 3.18 Younger pupils are aware of how to stay safe and healthy from a very early age. For example, children in the pre-preparatory department know they should wash their hands regularly and use a tissue. Across all age groups, pupils make sensible choices from a nutritious and varied lunch menu. Senior pupils are well educated about food and nutrition and are enthusiastic about its introduction to the curriculum as a discrete topic. All pupils are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe online and are fully conversant with the school's safeguarding practices. They appreciate the importance of exercise and the support and encouragement they are given to remain physically and mentally healthy. Pupils are highly active and thoroughly enjoy sport and opportunities for physical exertion. They make informed and mature choices about matters that affect their work-life balance. Pupils are strongly supported by a pastoral team that is available when needed and a curriculum which addresses mental and physical health issues well. In science and PE lessons, care for health and safety is a strong feature, with pupils well practised in the skills and routines needed to make sure that accidents are rare.
- 3.19 Mutual respect is at the heart of a school community that effectively regulates itself and where poor behaviour is rare. Younger pupils have a strong moral understanding and discuss right and wrong thoughtfully. Pupils are polite and well-mannered to each other and their teachers. They accept responsibility for their own behaviour and are tolerant and forgiving. Class charters are developed at Melrose through discussion with pupils. Pupils successfully find ways of managing emotions and dealing with conflict. They understand the characteristics of a good friend and find bullying unacceptable. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and not only appreciate the value of kindness but practise it in their everyday lives. When they fail to live up to their own high standards, they respond positively to counsel and support. Older pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and encourage each other to act in accordance with the clear moral code set by the school. They understand the importance of rules, even when they disagree with the intricacies of their application. Pupils show a strong moral understanding as they consider their role in the wider world. They demonstrate clear ideas of what is right and wrong, for example in a discussion about Covid-19 vaccinations.
- 3.20 From an early age, pupils genuinely value their own and other cultures and respect diversity, which they keenly embrace and celebrate. This goes beyond tolerance to a more profound understanding of

the way in which diversity enriches a community. Pupils are highly accepting of and sensitive to anyone who is in any way different. Extreme views are not tolerated and pupils are very clear that individuals have a right to be who they want to be. This is true in particular of pupils' understanding of and interest in the LGBTQ+ community. Pupils are proud of who and what they are, including with regard to their sexuality, without fear of judgement or prejudice. This concurs with the response in the pre-inspection questionnaire of most pupils and parents who agreed that the school promotes respect and tolerance for other people. The opportunity for pupils to wear trousers was adopted by the school as a result of pupil suggestions and has been widely appreciated. The house system and school productions are particularly key in fostering a sense of inclusivity and pride among different age groups.

- 3.21 Pupils throughout the school enjoy their positions of responsibility and are proud both of the trust placed in them and the difference they can make to their school community. They successfully undertake roles that include house captains, prefects, librarians and members of the school council. Older pupils confidently lead clubs for younger pupils and act as outstanding ambassadors for the school. Younger pupils are keen to fund-raise and organise events, supporting many charities that are chosen by the school council, including for example those that care for the elderly and the disabled. They are aware of their beautiful surroundings and show a keen responsibility for the environment, both their own and further afield. Senior pupils have an acute awareness of the world around them. They recognise that they are privileged and understand the importance of helping those less fortunate than themselves, for example through their work supporting girls in Tanzania. Members of the art club are driven by a belief that their art work can help bring some pleasure to teenagers with mental health problems, whilst others sing for the elderly in local care homes or donate to local food banks. The pupils reflect positively on the benefits of being part of an island community with a strong identity that has worked hard together despite the challenges of pandemic life. They commit strongly to their roles in maintaining community life.

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 the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended year group and form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick and injured pupils, together with 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 regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Mr Stephen Fox | Reporting inspector |
| Mrs Angela Alsop | Team inspector (Former deputy head, IAPS school, UK) |
| Ms Louise Simpson | Team inspector (Head, HMC school, UK) |
| Ms Philipa Smithson | Team inspector (Head, SoH school, UK) |