



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Beachborough School

November 2018



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School's Details

School College	Beachborough School			
DfE number	825/6002			
Registered charity number	309910			
Address	Beachborough School Westbury Brackley Northamptonshire NN13 5LB			
Telephone number	01280 700071			
Email address	registrar@beachborough.com			
Headteacher	Mr Christian Pritchard			
Chair of governors	Mrs Sue Barrett			
Age range	2½ to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	372			
	Boys	206	Girls	166
	Day pupils	318	Boarders	54
	EYFS	68	Juniors	241
	Seniors	63		
Inspection dates	27 to 29 November 2018			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Beachborough School is an independent day and boarding school for boys and girls aged from two and a half to thirteen years. It was founded 1910, and moved to its present site in 1943. The school is a charitable trust, administered by a governing body.
- 1.2 The school comprises two sections: Pre-Prep and Juniors for pupils aged from two and a half to ten years; and Prep, for pupils aged from ten to thirteen years. There is one boarding house available for pupils from Year 3.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, a new headmaster, chair of governors and bursar have been appointed and a technology, engineering and design centre has been opened.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims for pupils to be happy and thrive intellectually, physically, culturally and emotionally and become fully prepared for senior school. It seeks to provide a respectful and caring culture that has a family feel.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Most pupils come from white British backgrounds, usually from professional and business families located close to the school. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of the pupils is above average. Thirty-eight pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive support in school. Four pupils have education, health and care plans. English is an additional language (EAL) for one pupil. Data used by the school have identified pupils as being the more able in its population, or as having specific talents, and the curriculum is modified for them.

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. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. 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](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

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

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. 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.
- 2.6 **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

- 2.7 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 **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

- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 **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

2.12 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.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 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.

2.15 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

2.16 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.

2.17 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

2.18 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.

2.19 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 excellent.
- Pupils' attainment and progress are excellent. A significant proportion of pupils succeed in obtaining scholarships to their first choice of senior school.
 - Pupils demonstrate excellent information and communication technology (ICT) knowledge and skills.
 - Pupils communication skills are outstanding. Pupils' speech is articulate, confident, and features an extensive vocabulary.
 - Pupils are highly collaborative and reflective in their learning.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils' show notably strong self-understanding and awareness which lead to them being confident and aspirational.
 - Pupils understanding of how to keep safe is and look after their mental health is excellent.
 - Pupils demonstrate very strong decision-making skills, notably in the boarding house.
 - Pupils' contribution to others is excellent, including through their charitable work.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to:
- Enable pupils to use the school's seven intellectual characteristics, notably curiosity and challenge, more consistently in all lessons.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests but available evidence from the observation of lessons, scrutiny of work and the school's own assessment data shows that attainment in reading, spelling and mathematics is above in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils' change in attainment over time is excellent. As a result of the analysis of the electronic tracking systems used in the school, pupils are given effort grades for each piece of work. The pupils then use these to set targets for their future work which inform their rapid progress. Pupils with SEND and EAL make the same rate of progress as others in their class because they are well supported and, are encouraged to be as independent as possible. More able pupils are challenged by being given more complex tasks in some classes, by the establishment of scholarship classes and through the independent projects they undertake as part of the school's 'Francis Drake Awards' (FDA). Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are challenged by their participation in science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics days, enrichment weeks, the FDA speaker programme and by participation in a wide range of competitions and visits. Pupils have an excellent record of gaining entry to their first choice of senior schools, with a significant proportion gaining a wide range of scholarships. This is in accordance with the school's aims that each child thrives intellectually, physically, culturally and emotionally. All pupils, and almost all parents, who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that teaching enables pupils to make progress.

- 3.6 Pupils' achievements in extra-curricular activities are excellent, with many gaining high awards in music, drama, sports and equestrian skills. Many pupils of all sporting abilities represent the school in sport and enjoy the kudos of being on a winning team or learn how to lose gracefully. Some pupils compete at national level including in the national netball super league. Many enjoy success in a range of national, county and local competitions and teams, such as the IAPS national triathlon, swimming and athletics championships. The rugby team have reached the national rugby finals to be held in March. Several pupils represent their counties in hockey, cricket and netball and rugby. Pupils' excellent achievements in and out of school are supported by the active encouragement they receive from the school. Many pupils achieve success in the FDA at bronze, silver and gold level. In order to do so they demonstrate personal endeavour, service, collaboration and skills and knowledge. Pupils take pride in their own and others' achievements and the school contributes by diligently celebrating every pupil's achievements. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, all pupils and almost all parents who responded said that there is a good range of suitable subjects and extra-curricular activities.
- 3.7 Pupils demonstrate excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in a diverse range of subject areas. The youngest children demonstrate an effective understanding of the attractive properties of magnets when linking parts to build a toy farm. Prep school pupils show a good understanding of the solids, liquids and gases, and of the water cycle. Older pupils demonstrate excellent language skills through their use of technical artistic vocabulary to describe the processes involved in the production of their work. They have a good understanding of constructive and destructive plate boundaries in geography. The oldest pupils showed a masterful recall of facts about Cromwell. Throughout the school pupils are able to maintain a high level of concentration to sustain focused work. On a few occasions, inspectors observed that learning activities lack challenge, or opportunities for independent learning triggered by pupils' curiosity are restricted, and their knowledge, skills and understanding develop less consistently as a result.
- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate excellent ICT knowledge and skills. For example, in a technology lesson, they used sophisticated computer design equipment to control a laser cutter to make toy characters. Pupils talk with confidence about the different tools and opportunities to advance their technological skills, which themselves are expertly modelled by staff. Pupils use ICT to extend their learning, stimulate their curiosity and deepen their understanding in other subjects, such as when comparing their own performance in gymnastics with that of others found on the internet, and when taking part in a race at a national motor racing circuit in an electric car that they have designed and built themselves. Younger pupils understand that an algorithm is a set of instructions for a computer or robot. Older pupils demonstrated outstanding skills in their use of computer aided design to design the deck of a catamaran. Leaders' and governors' investment in the technology, engineering and design centre has enabled pupils to strengthen and apply their ICT skills well.
- 3.9 Pupils' communication skills are outstanding, pupils are attentive listeners and highly articulate and effective communicators. They make excellent use of appropriate and intelligent vocabulary to justify and rationalise their choices and creative ideas. Inspectors witnessed many illustrations of their reading and writing ability being applied to other areas of learning, especially in work undertaken during on off-timetable days dedicated to a specific topic, for example: *Harry Potter*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and technology projects such as the use and recycling of plastic bottles. Older pupils explained their independent geography projects highly effectively when talking to inspectors. Pupils successfully used modal verbs to describe a popular singer in a French lesson. Pupils explain their work, including when describing the thought processes behind their art, using sophisticated vocabulary with clarity, enthusiasm and flair. They communicate eloquently, with confidence and passion, in small group and class discussions, as seen in a geography lesson about deforestation.

- 3.10 Pupils' attitudes towards learning and collaboration with each other are outstanding. Pupils are keen to collaborate when song-writing in music, this is enabled by excellent planning and well-structured learning activities with clear instructions and intended outcomes. Pupils are encouraged, through the reward system, to reflect on their work. Younger pupils identify their mistakes and correct them, older pupils think deeply about how to improve their work. They are willing to discuss these with adults and one another in a mature manner. Pupils have a high level of curiosity and enjoy working independently. They take high responsibility for the outcomes of their learning when there are opportunities for independent learning
- 3.11 The pupils' development of numeracy knowledge and skills is excellent. Pupils display an excellent understanding of mathematical terminology. For example, younger pupils talked about how symmetrical the teachers' construction models were. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about the interchange between multiplication, square numbers and square roots to identify that a problem needed a combination of algebraic and fraction skills. Pupils, particularly in the upper school, demonstrate high level numeracy skills across many contexts. For example, pupils effectively apply mathematical concepts when translating numerical measurements in French.
- 3.12 Pupils' knowledge, understanding and use of study skills is outstanding. Pupils, throughout the school, discuss their work and consistently seek to improve it. Excellent study skills are demonstrated by pupils in their extended projects for the FDA scheme, such as knowledgeable and extensive presentation on aviation. Pupils devise excellent hypotheses, drawing upon independent research and wider sources of information to create their own conclusions when given the opportunity, such as when they explore and analyse historical sources and evidence to determine the characteristics of Oliver Cromwell. They can synthesise research and their own ideas when engaged on different topics. Pupils demonstrate logic in many situations, such as when pre-prep pupils deduced that if there were five animals in a row the middle one remained the same when they were put in height order from lower to higher and from higher to lower.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils' self-understanding is outstanding. They value highly the opportunity to assess, review and reflect upon their effort grades for that week and set targets for the next. Pupils display excellent levels of self-confidence and self-esteem, characteristics which are prioritised across the school through marking and feedback, celebration of successes for all and ongoing reflection. They speak confidently about work which they are proud of. For example, younger pupils were delighted at how well they had been able to draw a bird. Pupils self-discipline is excellent with many pupils opting into voluntary challenges and tasks such as the FDA scheme and considering how they might achieve targets set in lessons. Pupils demonstrate a high degree of confidence and self-discipline, for example when making decisions in the boarding house which take account of the interests of others. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that the school helps them become more confident and independent and get on better with others. Pupils are given time in tutor group to develop excellent self-awareness by, for instance, talking about what they like about themselves. This is all made possible by the caring support of every member of staff, both teaching and non-teaching in accordance with the school's aims of maintaining a culture that has a family feel and steadfast care for each child.
- 3.15 Pupils demonstrate a notably strong understanding of how to stay safe and live a balanced lifestyle. Pupils know that being active is good for them and enjoy being so in the outdoor learning environment and when swimming. They know that too much sugar is bad for them, illustrated by their understanding of the traffic light coding on drinks. Pupils understand the need for carbohydrates before their hockey match. When using the engineering and science laboratories pupils take sensible precautions when using potentially high-risk equipment. Pupils understand the importance of maintaining positive mental health and make good use of the school's *wellbeing* room. They know and value the importance of talking to someone. Pupils are aware that if they are worried they can use the worry boxes or engage with the wellbeing co-ordinator. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that they know how to stay safe when online.
- 3.16 Pupils' decision-making abilities are excellent. Pupils know and value the importance of making good decisions, and can do so, often with complete autonomy. For example, older pupils make very sensible choices about their future education and how to prepare for it. Pupils make good use of free time to consider their options and discuss them with peers. Boarders gain and demonstrate confidence, independence and a feeling of self-worth as they have to make decisions about many aspects of boarding life. The youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make confident decisions such as which colour paint to dip their car in before racing it down a drain pipe.
- 3.17 Throughout the school pupils display strong social development, both in the classroom and in the boarding house. They work collaboratively towards common goals, such as supporting their charity in Malawi. Pupils gain recognition for services to others as part of their FDA scheme. Younger pupils take on class responsibilities and older pupils help younger pupils read, as part of this scheme. Pupils work with excellent levels of collaboration to solve problems through pairing and sharing, peer mentoring and mixed age co-curricular clubs. Leaders' and governors' successful inculcation of a policy of inclusivity in sports matches enables many pupils to demonstrate the social skills of courtesy and kindness. Pupils confidently represent the school at external events, such as performing carols for the local community in the village and in science events at other schools. Pupils collaborate extremely well when participating in club competitions.

- 3.18 Pupils' contribution to others, the school and the community is excellent. For example, the school council successfully campaigned for more drinking fountains to be installed around the school. They contribute actively and enthusiastically to the charity work of the school, by running a sweet tombola stall or personalising jumpers to sell. Pupils have strong links with a primary school in Malawi through an international charity for whom they are a major contributor. Pupils raise money for this in various inventive ways, such as collecting enough money to fill a 'porridge cup'. The pupils spoke enthusiastically about having a Malawian meal to raise money for a national children's charity.
- 3.19 Pupils' understanding of diversity and cultural understanding is excellent. They show tolerant and accepting attitudes toward others and are willing to share experiences with one another readily. Pupils are sensitive to the traditions and backgrounds of members of their school community, showing this, for example, by sharing a Thanksgiving celebration to make American pupils feel more at home. Children in Reception use the Diwali lamps in their play and talk about the story of Rama and Sita. In the pre-inspection questionnaire an overwhelming majority of parents and all pupils strongly agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of others.
- 3.20 Pupils' development of a spiritual understanding is outstanding. They discuss questions such as 'Can one always be good?', and 'Is religion a good thing?' in depth and with much thoughtfulness. Pupils strongly appreciate non-materialistic aspects of life, such as when prep pupils demonstrated a sense of wonder as they collected a range of natural items found in the grounds to illustrate the colours of the rainbow. Pupils' moral understanding and sense of moral responsibility is notably strong. For example, pupils were eager to suggest ways in which they could change their own lifestyle to make small but significant differences to the threat of deforestation, such as writing on both sides of the paper. Older pupils convey a very acute understanding of bullying and its consequences and show sensitivity when devising strategies to deal with it. They understand the reason for the school's code of conduct and naturally abide by it. They have an excellent understanding of acceptable behaviours and appreciate how behaviour can impact on others. They understand the importance of respect and take responsibility for their own actions.

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 and vice-chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended tutor meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with 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

Mrs Kia Jackson	Reporting inspector
Mrs Alexia Bolton	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Benjamin Purkiss	Boarding team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Karen Tuckwell	Compliance team inspector (Head of lower school, IAPS school)