



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Cottesmore School

February 2019



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School's Details

School	Cottesmore School			
DfE number	938/6008			
Address	Cottesmore School Buchan Hill Pease Pottage West Sussex RH11 9AU			
Telephone number	01293 520648			
Email address	office@cottesmore.com			
Headmaster	Mr Thomas Rogerson			
Proprietor	Mrs Cathryn Rogerson			
Age range	4 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	164			
	Boys	100	Girls	64
	Day pupils	96	Boarders	68
	EYFS	7	Juniors	97
	Seniors	60		
Inspection dates	12 to 14 February 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Cottesmore School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged between four and thirteen years. The school is located in Pease Pottage, West Sussex. The school was founded in 1894, in Hove, and moved to its current location in 1946, when it was bought by the family that still owns it today. The school occupies a Victorian mansion, which is set within 30 acres of grounds. The sole proprietor is responsible for the school's governance, supported by an advisory body consisting of four members. The current headmaster has been in post since 2008. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and classes up to Year 3 together make up pre-prep; Years 4 to 8 form the prep. Boarders live in dormitories, which are based within the main house.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims for excellence in the provision of an all-round education, both academically and through a range of extra-curricular activities, to enhance pupils' intellectual curiosity, academic achievement, physical development, imagination, creativity and spirituality. The school seeks to provide a family atmosphere, where each child is cared for, valued and nurtured.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Day pupils come mainly from business and professional families in the local area; boarders come from further afield in the UK and overseas. Nationally standardised tests indicate the ability profile of the school is broadly average. The school has identified 27 pupils as having and/or disabilities (SEND), most with dyslexia, all of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan (EHC). English is an additional language (EAL) for 31 pupils and they all receive extra support. More able pupils are identified as scholars. These pupils are provided with extension work, as well as enrichment activities that are based upon identified interests and talents.

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, the recording of admissions and attendance registers and 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. [The school makes appropriate arrangements to provide long-term lodgings for some boarders].
- 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 pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.

2.13 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 EHCs or EAL. 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.

Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

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

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

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

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

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

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

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Reception	Reception
Pre-prep 1	Year 1
Pre-prep 2	Year 2
Pre-prep 3	Year 3
Form 1	Year 4
Form 2	Year 5
Form 3	Year 6
Form 4	Year 7
Form 5	Year 8
Form 6 (higher stream)	Year 8

Key findings

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

- Pupils of all ages have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in most subjects. Those with SEND and EAL make excellent progress.
- Pupils achieve high levels of success in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities; their physical skills are particularly well developed.
- The progress of pupils in the prep is less well marked when teaching does not follow the school assessment policy, implements it inconsistently, or focuses unduly on senior school entry examinations.
- Pupils' competence in information and communication technology (ICT) and its application to other areas of learning is underdeveloped, since its use as a learning aid during lessons is limited.

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

- Happy and self-confident pupils, with a high sense of self-esteem, result from a culture of praise and encouragement.
- Pupils' excellent personal development is influenced especially by the high standards of pastoral care and boarding.
- Pupils feel safe; they understand the importance of being kind and supportive to each other. These developments are a result of the family atmosphere promoted by the school.
- Pupils' understanding of their place in the world is enhanced by being part of a culturally diverse school community.
- Pupils' social skills are excellent. From the youngest age, they relish responsibility, as well as the opportunity to contribute to school life.

Recommendations

2.22 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Enhance pupil progress by ensuring that the school assessment and tracking policy is implemented consistently, to inform them of how they may improve.
- Ensure that pupils in Years 7 and 8 broaden their learning beyond preparation for the next stage of their education, through the provision of more challenging and diverse work.
- Enable pupils to acquire and use higher levels of ICT skills, by increasing and developing the use of ICT as an aid to learning.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 2.23 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 2.24 Pupils achieve to a high standard, both academically and through a wide range of extra-curricular activities, fulfilling the school's aims to a considerable degree. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, pupils and parents agreed that the school enables pupils to make good progress. Boarder and day pupil achievements benefit from the extended day programme, which is available to all of them.
- 2.25 Children in the Reception class of EYFS make excellent progress from their starting points. Thus, most of them meet, and some exceed, the expected level of development for their age. In the pre-prep, pupils' attainment is high, especially in reading, writing and numeracy, supported by assessment that shows good knowledge of the pupils, enabling planning to maintain and enhance progress. Pupils develop extremely well as they engage in an active and creative curriculum; they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 2.26 In the prep, the pupils do not take part in National Curriculum tests. However, they undertake externally moderated standardised tests, which assess the change in their attainment levels over time. These show that most pupils are making good progress for their age and ability. This is shown by available evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and teacher assessment information. For some, progress is excellent. Pupils who are identified as SEND or EAL make excellent progress from their starting points. Their progress is consistent as they move through the school, due to the excellent specialised help that they receive, as well as the support shown by teachers in the classroom. Assessment data highlights those pupils who require extra support for SEND, so that specialist help is introduced appropriately. Pupils who are identified as being more able, or particularly talented, become scholars and receive some additional challenge, principally through bespoke preparation for scholarship examinations to their senior schools. By their final year in school, scholars are working to a high level of attainment in a number of curriculum subjects, including creative subjects, such as art. Pupils are highly successful in gaining entry to their senior school of choice, some of which are highly selective. This success is enabled by teaching that shows an excellent knowledge of the requirements for entry to senior schools. Preparation is well managed. A few pupils gain scholarships each year, whether for academic attainment, being a good all-rounder, or demonstrating talent in fields including sport, art and music.
- 2.27 Throughout the pre-prep, pupils build their knowledge and use it confidently, especially in writing and number work. Reading levels are at a particularly high standard. Understanding of how to apply their knowledge is emerging gradually. Pupils quickly understand the tasks and challenges presented to them and, through early powers of deduction, solve problems through investigative techniques encouraged by open-ended questioning and the promotion of independent work. Pupils use their imagination to develop their practical skills, from early cutting and pasting, through to more advanced art and craft techniques. They develop ideas that are expressed with clarity and use advanced vocabulary for their age. For example, Reception children, who were engaged in an experiment to make a boat that floats, described their findings with words including 'floatable' and 'stabilise'. The rapid progress in pre-prep pupils' understanding is facilitated by teaching that fully engages them in exciting tasks, using imaginative resources, both indoors and in the creative outside play area. The school has successfully met the recommendation of its previous inspection report to improve the provision of resources for play. Children in EYFS are closely monitored each day for improvement with appropriate assessment. Older pre-prep pupils are helped to understand the improvement needed in their work through teacher assessments and marking.

- 2.28 Throughout the prep, the pupils demonstrate a good and sometimes excellent knowledge base, which they apply with understanding across their curriculum subjects. The most able pupils excel in knowledge, skills and understanding in a number of subjects. For example, in English, they write long and fluent essays, with perceptive observations, confidently using a high standard of vocabulary. Year 7 English work demonstrated the correct use of words including 'irreconcilable,' 'iridescent' and 'irascible.' Pupils competently analyse information, and they express their ideas and opinions with confidence when given the opportunity. Pupils' knowledge base is secure as a result of focused teaching in small classes, along with examination practice for entry to their next school. The leadership and management has not yet fully developed the use of standardised assessment information to help subject teachers assess pupils' levels of progress and provide work of suitable challenge to enhance these. In some teaching, an over-reliance on test papers to secure knowledge results in a lack of breadth in pupils' learning outcomes, especially in Years 7 and 8. Older pupils reported in interviews that the extent of their work in mathematics lessons is mostly limited to the requirements of their test papers. Inspection evidence supports this view. Progress in learning is sometimes limited by the low expectations of teaching, poor planning relative to pupils' ability, or just a lack of appropriate challenge. Prep pupils report that they understand their academic progress through looking at their marks in their books, as well as in their test papers. Assessment in the prep school follows the school policy in some subjects. However, this is not consistent. Marking of pupils' work does not always reflect its true quality, for it can be overgenerous in praise and lacking in sufficiently clear guidance regarding how pupils could improve further.
- 2.29 Pupils' ability to communicate is excellent throughout the school, promoted by the school's aim to develop speaking, listening and communication skills for every pupil. They are articulate and confident when talking to each other and their teachers. The confidence of the pupils to converse comfortably with adults is a real strength, as seen when they were entertaining visiting parents during sports teas. They listen attentively in class and can debate ideas with each other, clearly expressing their opinions. Reading skills are well developed from a young age and pupils enjoy writing, which is well presented and often creative. In recent years individual pupils have been successful in national story and poetry competitions, as well as in a national history essay competition.
- 2.30 Pupils' numeracy skills are good throughout the school. Reception children are confident in tackling a range of arithmetical problems that require addition, using numbers up to ten. Pre-prep children quickly progress to successfully use various methods of subtraction and mental arithmetic. Those requiring support benefit from individual help and then quickly show confidence in manipulating numbers to solve problems. Prep pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons and respond well to the challenges presented. Older pupils showed confidence in the use of the theory to calculate areas of circles. Pupils can apply their skills in other areas in the curriculum successfully. They gain high levels of success in national challenges, such as the UK Mathematics Challenge, where gold and silver awards were achieved by several pupils in 2018.
- 2.31 Pupils demonstrate satisfactory ICT skills. Evidence from lesson observations, work scrutiny, as well as interviews with pupils and staff, confirm that the application of ICT across all areas of learning is still being developed. The use of ICT by pupils to enhance their learning was not evident in many subject areas within the prep school. Pupils interviewed were doubtful about their ability to use ICT as a tool across a range of subjects. They feel comfortable about using the technology to devise PowerPoint presentations, write up stories or follow programmes to help in spelling. They enjoy learning about coding. Where it is used well in a few subjects, such as language studies, pupils are stimulated by the use of the resource, enhancing their subject-specific skills as a result. The school has invested in new hardware and recently made a new appointment to lead the development of the technology. It has partly met the recommendation of the previous inspection report to develop ICT across the curriculum. However, it remains underdeveloped as a learning tool.

- 2.32 Pupils are able to work independently; they enjoy working together in groups and teams. They think for themselves from a young age and their concentration levels are excellent. In Reception, children persevere with a problem until they are satisfied that they have resolved it. Problems encountered include building a bridge to cross water. Pre-prep pupils are curious and use the outdoor environment imaginatively to aid their learning, whether to discover the changing colours of autumn leaves, or to develop their physical skills in games. Older pupils in the prep school use analytical and hypothesising skills in many subjects, which are particularly well developed in relation to the demands of their examination and scholarship papers. Pupils give logical and reasoned explanations when hypothesising in science when, for example, responding to open-ended questioning about magnetic fields. The more able pupils demonstrate higher order thinking skills when, for instance, in religious studies, where they were able to discuss the philosophy behind the gaining of wisdom. In some subjects, pupils access a limited range of resources to find out information for themselves.
- 2.33 Pupils appreciate the excellent range of extra-curricular activities promoted by the senior leadership and achieve well in these areas, supported by willing teachers, who are generous with their time. In the questionnaire, parents and pupils were highly satisfied with the range of extra-curricular opportunities provided. Pupils particularly flourish through participation in a wide range of sports. The school's inclusive ethos, that every pupil will be a member of a team, ensures that pupils build up excellent levels of physical skills for their age. The pupils achieve varying levels of success in teams playing other schools, and always recognise that it is the fun of participation that is important. In some years, the teams are very successful in rugby, hockey, netball and cricket at local level. The swimming relay team, members of the athletics team and chess team have gained national success in prep school competitions. Pupils demonstrate excellent creative skills in a range of artistic, musical and drama activities. Artistic skills are particularly well developed, as demonstrated by paintings in the style of Hockney, Turner and Lowry, which were completed by prep school pupils.
- 2.34 Pupils talk enthusiastically about their school and they have excellent attitudes to learning. The school promotes a culture of hard work and pupils respond well. They are motivated to do their best for themselves and their teachers and they react positively to the high praise culture in the school promoted by the leadership and management. They believe they can be successful in whatever they seek to achieve.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.35 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 2.36 Pupils thrive in this caring and kind community, where each child is valued, nurtured and encouraged to do their best, in accordance with the school aim. The excellence of the pupils' personal development is particularly enhanced by the ethos created by the leadership and management, as well as the high quality of pastoral care provided and the boarding experience. In their questionnaire responses, all parents agreed that the school helps their child to be confident and independent.
- 2.37 From the youngest age, every child is encouraged to participate fully in school life, and to learn about themselves. Throughout the pre-prep, including Reception, pupils are happy, love school and feel safe. Through imaginative topic work in the pre-prep, they gradually build self-awareness and learn all about themselves, participating through an inspiring set of activities. Pupils begin to understand the significance of others by exploring the impact of people who help in their lives, such as hospital workers. Most pupils in the pre-prep have an excellent understanding of their own ability, and are able to talk about what they are good at, or what they need to do to produce better work. They gradually develop skills for life, such as how to follow instructions, as well as the self-discipline and resilience required to persevere when they have a problem to solve. Prep pupils have an excellent self-understanding of how to fulfil their role in school and the expectations placed on them academically. They are confident as they move around the school and in their interactions with their peers, staff and visitors. The wide range of opportunities for extra-curricular activities enables pupils to explore and develop their interests and talents. Self-understanding and resilience grow as a result of the strong pastoral mentoring system. Self-esteem is high, since it is promoted by a culture of constant praise and encouragement, as pupils develop into well-rounded individuals. The independence gained through boarding further builds self-confidence. Pupils are sure that they will achieve their academic goals and move successfully to the next stage of their education, fully supported by staff.
- 2.38 Pupils throughout the school think carefully about the decisions that they make. In Reception and pre-prep, pupils happily make decisions affecting their learning, such as in the activities they choose and the resources they use to solve problems. They understand that decisions can have consequences, and that their behaviour will have an impact on their well-being. Prep school pupils eagerly take up opportunities to be involved in decision-making in school, whether in their lessons, regarding their work, or through their contributions to school committees and teamwork. They are acutely aware of the effects of their chosen actions and words on others, and how these will impinge on them individually, and as a community. Pupils confirm that they are given plenty of opportunities, both inside and out of the classroom, to help them to make informed choices, which will help them in later years. Boarders take advantage of the extra responsibility placed on them to make the right choices, as part of living together in a community to develop effective judgement.
- 2.39 A Christian ethos permeates the school, promoted successfully by senior leaders. Pupils respond well to the Christian values that are promoted through all aspects of school life, especially respect for others, honesty, truthfulness and kindness. Pupils say they appreciate time spent in chapel, where spiritual understanding is developed through the regular dissemination of religious values. They follow the guidance given on how these can be put into action in daily life. Pupils say they learn that many different things can contribute to happiness, not just material possessions. Pupils indicated that they have begun to recognise the importance of mental health to well-being and contentment. They appreciate the mindfulness techniques that have been practised during a number of lessons in, for example, personal social and health education (PSHCE), as well as during form and pastoral meetings. They enjoy the opportunity provided to live in a beautiful historic building with extensive grounds, which enables them to develop an affinity with nature and a sense of history.

- 2.40 Pupils demonstrate exemplary moral understanding and behaviour; all pupils are courteous and well mannered. This is aided by the calm atmosphere promoted in the school, where expectations of good behaviour are part of school life, and pupils are trusted to conduct themselves correctly. They understand right from wrong, the importance of self-discipline and why sanctions are needed. However, they comment that sanctions are rarely used, since talking through issues is the usual procedure. All are aware of the part they play in the school community in promoting honesty, acceptance, respect for and fair treatment of all. Pupils say that form time and weekly personal meetings with pastoral tutors assist greatly in this, with staff helping each child to think through any areas of concern or difficulty. In the questionnaire responses, almost all parents agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour.
- 2.41 Pupils' social skills are excellent. The boarding routines that are shared with day pupils contribute significantly to the social development of the prep school pupils. The family atmosphere throughout the school ensures that pupils from all ages mix happily and support each other. Many day pupils enjoy boarding for the occasional night, settling in easily to dorms and social common areas. Termly and weekly boarders, from around the UK and overseas, are happily integrated. Pupils eat and undertake prep together in a communal spirit. Activity times are scheduled so that all pupils benefit from participating. Games afternoons demonstrate excellent collaborative team work in sports and in entertaining visiting teams. In the pre-prep, the pupils relish working together and do so very successfully, as is evident both in the classroom, as well as during break times and lunch. Pupils are very socially aware amongst adults, shaking hands, introducing themselves and engaging them in informative conversation. Pupils report that this comfortable social awareness in every-day encounters is most actively promoted by the senior leadership.
- 2.42 Pupils fully understand the need to contribute to school life. They show an excellent sense of responsibility to each other, to their class and to their school. They take responsibility seriously and especially enjoy representing the school when asked. Children in the EYFS willingly undertake tasks such as clearing up the classroom and collecting toys and while older pre-prep pupils undertake the roles of play-ground buddies and lunch hall monitors happily, helping to look out for the youngest. Pupils hold numerous posts of responsibility in the prep school, which aids their maturity. Senior pupils with responsibility, together with head monitors and team captains, lead the school in showing others how to behave and how to support younger children, as well as holding meetings and greeting visitors. In boarding, pupils improve their self-reliance through taking responsibility for collecting laundry whilst dormitory monitors actively encourage all boarders to keep their rooms tidy and behave well in the house. All pupils have a voice in contributing to school life, whether through the school council, food committees or introducing their own ideas such as the random act of kindness week set up by a pupil. Through activities such as charity work and singing in the local church, pupils learn to understand that they also have a role to play in the local community and further afield. Boarders feel that they take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own behaviour and that learning to live and get on with others is an important life skill to be learnt.
- 2.43 Pupils actively celebrate the contribution that others bring to school life, especially those pupils from overseas. The school's diverse pupil body integrates well, demonstrating an excellent level of respect for diversity and acceptance of differences. Pupils celebrate their individuality happily, whilst recognising that they have much in common. The inclusive ethos promoted by the school ensures that pupils settle in quickly and make strong friendships across all nationalities. 'The Cottesmore Way' is a common refrain, as pupils remember the importance of looking out for each other, especially in boarding. Pupils' participation in 'World Awareness Week' raises their understanding of what it is like to live in another country. Issues around the world, such as climate change, are evident in their thinking, as seen in samples of written work. In their questionnaire responses, the pupils and parents agreed that the school encourages respect and tolerance for others. Inspection evidence supports this view.

2.44 Pupils of all ages understand the importance of being safe and healthy. The younger pupils in the pre-prep are keen to play outside, love to put on their coats and boots, and enjoy their outdoor play areas, even when it is cold. Encouraged by watchful staff, they understand healthy eating choices and the importance of fruit, which is always available. Prep pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They are aware of how to stay safe online and what to do if they have a concern. Pupils try to make the right choices in terms of diet, especially the boarders, from the plentiful and varied menu, which consists of fresh and wholesome foods. Supportive relationships with pastoral tutors, class teachers and boarding staff ensures that pupils are comfortable with discussing issues and problems. They feel confident because they know that their concerns are listened to, contributing to their strong mental health. They build up their resilience through participation in the mental health and well-being programme. They have respect for the school's 'happiness charter' displayed in every classroom, which reminds them of the importance of kindness, respect and support. The school's spacious grounds and sports facilities encourage pupils to enjoy plenty of daily exercise, which they respond to well, enhanced by extra-curricular activities that prepare them well for healthy lifestyles in the future.

3. Inspection Evidence

3.1 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 proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and chapel. Inspectors visited the boarding house 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 Maureen Bradley	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Rhiannon Williams	Compliance team inspector (Former director of studies, IAPS school)
Mr Adrian Hathaway	Team inspector for boarding (Senior teacher, IAPS school)
Mrs Penelope Woodcock	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)