



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

d'Overbroeck's

October 2021

Contents

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

School's Details

School	d'Overbroeck's			
DfE number	931/6104			
Address	d'Overbroeck's 333 Banbury Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX2 7PL			
Telephone number	01865 688600			
Email address	mail@doverbroecks.com			
Principal	Mr Jonathan Cuff			
Chair of governors	Mr George Ghantous			
Age range	11 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	703			
	Day pupils	416	Boarders	287
	Seniors	312	Sixth Form	391
Inspection dates	12 to 15 October 2021			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 d'Overbroeck's is a co-educational independent day and boarding school for pupils aged between 11 and 18, situated in north Oxford. Founded in 1977 as a sixth form college, the school has accepted pupils from 13 years of age since 1998 and an international section was opened in 2001. In 2005, it opened a senior section for day pupils aged between 11 and 16. The current principal took up his post in September 2019. The school, which has a governing body, became part of Nord Anglia Education in 2021.
- 1.2 The school is in three sections on separate sites and, since the previous inspection, it has opened a new boarding house, a purpose-built sixth-form centre, and an arts centre for sixth-form and international pupils. Pupils in the Years 7 to 11 main section of the school are all day pupils, approximately half the pupils in Years 12 and 13 are boarders. Pupils in the international section are in Years 9 to 11, almost all of whom are boarders. The school has six boarding houses and a number of pupils stay with host families.
- 1.3 During the period March to August 2020, the school remained open only for children of key workers; no boarders remained on site. During this period of closure the school continued its full teaching timetable through remote learning for all pupils.
- 1.4 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.5 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.6 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils received remote learning provision at home, or with guardians in the case of overseas boarders. A small proportion of pupils remained in boarding accommodation.
- 1.7 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed grades were awarded in 2020 and teacher-assessed grades were awarded in 2021.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.8 The school aims to provide an environment which gives pupils the confidence to be themselves as well as the encouragement and stimulus to grow, to learn, to achieve their goals and to manage the complexity and change in the world around them.

About the pupils

- 1.9 The pupils are a mix of nationalities, with the majority being British nationals from the local area. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability profile of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 176 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism spectrum condition. In Years 7 to 11 these pupils receive additional specialist help, whilst those in the sixth form have access to independent learning skills classes. Three pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 291 pupils, of whom 225 receive

additional support from the EAL department. The school provides a flexible approach to the curriculum for those pupils with particular talents or abilities.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

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

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; relationships and sex education; behaviour; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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

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

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

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

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

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 At GCSE in the years 2018 to 2019, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2018 to 2019 have confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 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

- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed. The school makes appropriate arrangements to provide long-term lodgings for some boarders.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 and 20 are met.**

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

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

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.20 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that 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.
- 2.21 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.

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

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

Key findings

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

- Pupils are highly motivated, have extremely positive attitudes to learning and are determined to make the most of the opportunities available to them at the school.
- Pupils are successful collaborative learners who over time develop excellent study skills.
- Pupils become articulate communicators who listen well and express themselves clearly, both orally and in writing.

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

- Pupils are naturally inclusive and demonstrate particularly strong acceptance of those who have different backgrounds or beliefs to their own.
- Pupils have a remarkably strong sense of self-understanding and an excellent awareness of how to improve and achieve their goals.
- The pupils' excellent moral awareness and social development is reflected in a community which is built on kindness, good humour and mutual respect.

Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- Strengthening the quality of pupils' service to the wider community by developing the opportunities available to them.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 During their time at the school pupils develop communication skills of the highest quality. They become extremely articulate as a result of the many opportunities for discussion and debate available for them in the classroom and beyond. For example, younger pupils displayed strong communication skills when giving balanced arguments on whether or not to accept more refugees and older pupils expressed complex ideas with fluency when giving their Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) presentations. In discussions, pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, said that they are confident communicators because there is an atmosphere of mutual respect. Pupils listen to the views of others, discuss ideas with confidence and ask challenging questions to refine their thinking. In a sixth-form politics lesson pupils demonstrated excellent verbal communication skills as they engaged in a

discussion on the socio-political antecedents of current political parties. Pupils develop decidedly strong written skills and are able to express their ideas with fluency. This was exemplified in EPQs seen in the work scrutiny on topics ranging from *A Mindful House* to *Issues surrounding the liquidity crisis in Turkey*. In all of these areas a strong contributory factor is the commitment of the school's leadership team and the staff as a whole to give pupils every opportunity to read widely, engage in discussions, have the time and space to listen to one another and form their own ideas, write creatively and speak in public.

- 3.6 The overall academic achievement of pupils is excellent. Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make rapid progress over time, as evidenced by comprehensive assessment data. Their progress in lessons is facilitated by focused and well-resourced teaching alongside a culture where pupils are determined to make the best use of their time. Pupils' attainment at A level has been consistently above the national average during the years 2018 to 2019, with over half of pupils achieving grades A* or A. During the years 2020 to 2021 pupils continued to achieve excellent grades in their centre-assessed and teacher-assessed grades. As a result, most pupils are extremely successful in gaining places against strong competition for the next stage of their education, training or employment, with a very large majority going on to university in the UK. A significant number of pupils gain places at highly competitive art colleges. This amply fulfils the school's aim to enable pupils to achieve to the best of their academic potential. In discussion, pupils were keen to point to the quality of teaching and the individualised support they receive from both teachers and boarding staff as key contributory factors to their academic success. Pupils' attainment at GCSE has been equally strong during the years 2018 to 2019, with three-fifths of pupils achieving grades 7 to 9. Centre-assessed and teacher-assessed grades in the years 2020 and 2021 show results consistent with this attainment.
- 3.7 The pupils' well-developed numeracy skills are reflected in the extremely high standards achieved in GCSE and A-level examinations, and in the high-quality work observed in lessons, and in extra-curricular activities. Pupils are notably strong at applying their numerical and mathematical skills to a range of problems. For example, sixth-form pupils applied their high-level mathematical skills when calculating the strength of a magnetic field, and in a GCSE music lesson pupils displayed excellent numerical understanding as they analysed changes of rhythm.
- 3.8 Pupils are highly competent users of information and communication technology (ICT) and apply their ICT skills well to support their learning. For example, pupils of all ages engage constructively with teachers' feedback using an online platform, as was seen in the scrutiny of pupils' work. As they progress through the school, pupils use digital technology naturally to support and extend their learning. Younger pupils used a range of technologies with great confidence when developing a website, and in a sixth-form geography lesson pupils were adept in creating diagrams digitally whilst analysing patterns of coastal erosion. In lessons, and during periods of remote learning, pupils use online video learning platforms extremely effectively to access resources and to collaborate with their peers. This has been driven by the initiative of school leadership to develop the use of digital technology for learning and teaching. For example, in a sixth-form history lesson, pupils collaborated well online as they contributed to a presentation on race relations in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s.
- 3.9 Pupils make rapid progress in developing knowledge, skills and understanding as a result of the supportive and collaborative learning environment and the determination of the pupils. They explore ideas in depth and make excellent use of concepts acquired in previous lessons. For example, A-level pupils enhanced their very secure understanding of characterisation in *A Streetcar named Desire* as they reflected on provocative critical quotations and in a Year 9 Latin lesson pupils made excellent use of their knowledge of the language when translating a story. In responses to pre-inspection questionnaires a very small minority of pupils did not agree that most lessons are interesting. In lessons observed during the inspection, pupils demonstrated high levels of engagement and were keen to learn and benefit from the opportunities available to them. Pupils with EAL responded with enthusiasm to a quiz to consolidate their knowledge of vocabulary related to travel and, in a science

lesson, younger pupils displayed strong interest in the relationship between fat content and energy released, as they experimented by burning a variety of foods.

- 3.10 Throughout the school pupils achieve excellent standards in academic and co-curricular activities. Pupils excel in the UK Maths Challenge, the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge, the Physics Olympiad and the Biology Challenge. Pupils have also had successes in the Alan Turing Cryptology competition and a national Economics competition. This is because school leaders, governors and staff encourage them to study beyond the confines of the examination specification to extend their subject knowledge and to deepen their understanding. Some pupils gain success in ABRSM music examinations and there are also a small number of pupils who compete at regional and national level in individual sports.
- 3.11 During their time at the school pupils develop notably strong study skills. In a Year 9 English lesson pupils were adept at analysing extracts from *Of Mice and Men* and international pupils displayed a strong ability to synthesise information from a wide range of sources when researching for their Higher Project Qualification (HPQ). By the time they reach the sixth form, pupils demonstrate outstanding thinking skills and relish the opportunity to form their own hypotheses. Written work scrutinised showed pupils' highly developed skills when structuring arguments and reaching well-supported judgements. This ability to research is supported by leaders' promotion of an environment of academic curiosity which encourages pupils to explore their interests and ideas. Pupils show sophisticated study skills by using understanding from one subject to develop arguments in another subject, such as using Cornell note-taking methods from psychology to create distillations of character attributes in *Dr Faustus*. The sixth-form pupils' particularly strong ability to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise is evident through tasks such as reflecting on the styles and cultural influences of French and American cinema in a film studies lesson and discussing why ethnic minorities are represented as unimportant in a sociology lesson.
- 3.12 Pupils display excellent attitudes towards their learning, demonstrating an intrinsic motivation and determination to do well. For example, in a GCSE physics lesson, pupils showed strong perseverance as they grappled to understand all aspects of x-rays and ultrasound images. They are keen and active learners who engage readily in collaborative work. In a GCSE biology lesson, international pupils worked together extremely effectively as they followed scientific instructions during an agar diffusion experiment. In an A-level mathematics lesson, pupils displayed exceptional collaborative skills when using a hypothesis test to investigate whether there is sufficient evidence to suggest that there is negative correlation between cloud cover and sunshine. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school equips their child with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life. Pupils demonstrate remarkably strong leadership in their learning and relish engaging in independent research, as was seen in an EPQ which considered whether imprisonment for public protection can ever be a legitimate form of sentencing. In an A-level English lesson, discussion about romantic sensibility was free-flowing and there was a real sense that pupils had taken intellectual ownership of demanding material. This is because an academic culture permeates throughout the school which is underpinned by the egalitarian relationship between teachers and pupils.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils have a very strong sense of community and a well-developed appreciation of the international flavour of the school with all of its cultural influences. Pupils of all nationalities integrate extremely well and display an excellent level of respect for one another, regardless of any perceived difference. Older students regularly support younger students from different international backgrounds to help them to develop confidence and improve their language skills. In discussions, boarders spoke of how they relish the opportunity to challenge perceptions and gain a better understanding of each other's backgrounds and cultures. This is encouraged within the non-judgemental atmosphere in the boarding

houses, where pupils are mindful of the right of others to hold different opinions to their own. In discussions, pupils spoke of how they enjoyed sharing food from different cultures and learning the basics of each other's languages. Pupils are naturally respectful and show innate sensitivity in recognising and understanding the value of the diversity that surrounds them. For example, pupils choose to attend pupil-led societies which actively explore identity and equality. In response to the Black Lives Matter movement, pupils have inaugurated Black History month sessions.

- 3.15 Pupils show a considerable appreciation of the non-material aspects of life through the obvious pleasure they get from their learning and the care they show for the environment in which they live. Sixth-form pupils displayed a tangible sense of amazement as they learnt how electrons behave in hydrocarbon bonding from the perspective of quantum mechanics. Pupils in Year 7 showed a deep appreciation of nature and the aesthetic qualities seen in Port Meadow as they took time to reflect, and then produced words and drawings to embody their ideas. Pupils have an acute awareness of the fragility of the natural world. They are encouraged to stop and notice their natural environment and this offers a sense of awe and wonder in the simplest things, as seen when international pupils talked about seeing snow for the first time. There is a remarkably strong sense of calmness throughout the school. In a sixth-form art lesson pupils showed a profound appreciation of the aesthetics of nature as they worked quietly, almost in meditation, on the pieces they were developing.
- 3.16 Pupils have a very clear understanding of how the decisions they make now will influence their own future success and well-being. Younger pupils think very carefully when selecting the subjects they will study and older pupils recognise the importance of their decisions when selecting pathways to their future careers. Pupils are extremely good at organising their time effectively. They are encouraged to take personal responsibility for managing their time, whilst benefiting from the support and encouragement of teachers and tutors. Sixth-form boarders articulated how the choices they have made whilst preparing food in the evenings and doing their own laundry have been an excellent preparation for independent living. Pupils were firm in their acknowledgement that the boarding experience and culture of the school create an environment where they are able to develop the skills they need to manage their time and to balance their activities and studies very effectively.
- 3.17 Pupils show an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and are aware of the need to establish a balance in all they do to maintain a positive outlook and to stay mentally healthy. Pupils recognise the importance of staying physically healthy and a large majority embrace opportunities to participate in curricular and co-curricular activities. Older pupils generally choose activities wisely to include physical options, which include training at a local gym. Pupils have a clear awareness of mental and emotional well-being as a result of opportunities for open discussions about mental health, both in personal development lessons and in conversations in school or in the boarding house. Pupils stated that they felt particularly supported during periods of remote learning, asserting that the school made a concerted effort to check their mental health and well-being. In discussions, pupils spoke of how they are appreciative of the staffed room where they can go to talk about any concerns that they may have and the opportunity to walk the school dog when they need space and time for well-being.
- 3.18 Pupils are extremely good at supporting others in the school community and collaborating with their peers. In discussions with inspectors, pupils spoke warmly of a culture of mutual support where pupils and staff will go out of their way to help each other. Pupils in Year 13 display excellent personal skills when mentoring those in Year 12 in sixth-form study support sessions, and boarders are exceptionally supportive of international pupils as they settle into a new environment. Pupils are keen to contribute positively to the lives of others. For example, younger pupils delivered handmade Christmas cards, which included thoughtful messages, to residents of a local care home and some boarders lead drama classes at a local charity for disabled children. Pupils have a decidedly strong social conscience and members of the social action group, which is run by the pupils, spoke of their commitment to supporting causes such as homelessness. However, currently only a significant minority of pupils initiate and engage with opportunities for service beyond the school gates.

- 3.19 Pupils display a notably strong moral compass which is inherent in the culture of the school. Pupils show that they have a very clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong. For example, older pupils displayed considerable insight when discussing racism and how it is presented in the press, and younger pupils demonstrated a clear sense of moral purpose when discussing the plight of refugees. Pupils have excellent social development and collaboration skills and there is a powerful sense of common purpose, mutual respect and generous-spirited support of one another's endeavours as they work together to attain their goals, reflecting the care and commitment of the staff. Pupils' excellent social awareness is evident in the ease with which they talk to and interact with adults and in their positive engagement with each other both in and outside lessons. The school's leaders place a great deal of trust in the pupils, and this is rarely abused. A walk through the school at any time reveals small groups of pupils all engaged in purposeful activity or social interaction, enjoying and respecting the freedom they have been given.
- 3.20 From the moment they join the school, pupils make rapid progress in developing their self-confidence, resilience, self-discipline, and other personal skills. This is facilitated by a warm, welcoming environment supported by excellent teaching which offers clear direction with authority and humour. Pupils show a willingness to embrace new challenges with confidence and respond to setbacks with determination. For example, in a sixth-form Russian lesson pupils showed strong resilience when developing the language to analyse the grammatical structures in idiomatic expressions. Pupils have robust self-esteem and are able to self-reflect and offer each other constructive feedback in lessons. For example, in a Year 12 drama lesson pupils showed a decidedly strong ability to self-reflect as they explored together how to represent ideas about sexual identity. Pupils were firm in their acknowledgement of their teachers' roles in raising their self-belief, recognising that personalised critical feedback and support is at the heart of their success as learners. Pupils display excellent levels of self-confidence, readily sharing ideas and opinions. This was seen in all lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils of all ages relish contributing to discussions and conferring with their peers to enhance their learning. For example, Year 9 pupils displayed excellent levels of self-assurance as they produced paragraphs in French and sixth-form pupils, when discussing scenarios about sexual harassment, showed remarkable self-confidence and a willingness to share their thoughts. In questionnaire responses, an overwhelming majority of parents said that the school helps their child to be confident and independent.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses 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 Sue Clarke	Reporting inspector
Mr Gareth Price	Deputy reporting inspector
Mr Darren Morton	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mrs Christine Graham	Team inspector (Former HMI)
Mr Francie Healy	Team inspector (Headmaster, SofH school)
Mr Alistair McConville	Team inspector (Director of teaching and learning, HMC school)
Mr Henry Rickman	Team inspector (Academic deputy head, GDST school)
Mr Stephen Yeo	Team inspector for boarding (Former headmaster, ISA school)
Mr Andrew Williams	Team inspector for boarding (Head of senior school, HMC school)