

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Hazlegrove Preparatory School

June 2023

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School's Details

School	Hazlegrove Pr	eparatory S	School		
DfE number	933/6182				
Registered charity number	1071997				
Address	Hazlegrove Pr	eparatory S	School		
	Sparkford				
	Yeovil				
	Somerset				
	BA22 7JA				
Telephone number 01963 440314					
Email address	office@hazleg	office@hazlegrove.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Edward Be	Mr Edward Benbow			
Chair of proprietors	Mr Stephen E	Mr Stephen Edlmann			
Proprietor	The Governor	The Governors of Kings School			
Age range	2 to 13	2 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	438				
	Day pupils	367	Boarders	71	
	EYFS	88	Juniors	233	
	Seniors	117			
nspection dates 13 to 15 June 2023					

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1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 Hazlegrove Preparatory School is a co-educational day and boarding school close to Sparkford in Somerset. The school was founded in 1947 and is part of the King's Bruton foundation. The governors of the foundation are responsible for oversight of the school and its central administrations. The three boarding houses, two for boys and one for girls, are all on the school's site.

1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has extended its provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with the addition of a Nursery at Sunny Hill. The headmaster was appointed in September 2022. Facilities for science laboratories and art and design technology (DT) have been renovated.

What the school seeks to do

1.3 The school aims to enable pupils to develop a sense of self and of well-being alongside lifelong intellectual curiosity and creativity. It intends that pupils develop strong relationships, respect, empathy and moral values within a safe, nurturing environment, so that pupils are well prepared for their future lives. Its core values are kindness, courage, integrity, respect, grace and generosity.

About the pupils

1.4 The majority of pupils come from families with professional, military or business backgrounds living within 20 miles of the school. There is a small number of international boarders. There are 16 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and these are supported within the classroom and by the learning support unit as required. Standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability range of pupils is wide, from below to well above average in comparison to pupils taking the same tests nationally. The school identifies 46 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND),including dyslexia, dyspraxia and autistic spectrum condition, supported by the learning support unit. Pupils who are identified as being particularly able or talented are provided with additional challenge to develop their specific abilities in classes and in a range of extra-curricular opportunities.

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. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. 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; 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: <u>The Education (Independent School Standards)</u> 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 2022, 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's own framework for assessment] confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 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. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, 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.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1-4] are met.

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

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.

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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 and 22 are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for 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.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4, 7 and 23 are met.

PART 6 - Provision of information

- 2.15 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.
- 2.16 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.19 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 2 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 of all abilities make excellent progress, supported and challenged to achieve their potential.
 - Pupils achieve high standards across the curriculum and in extra- curricular activities.
 - Pupils have well-developed study skills, thinking across curriculum areas and reaching mature conclusions.
 - Pupils have an excellent attitude to their learning and are keen to succeed.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
 - Pupils develop excellent levels of self-confidence and resilience, without any sign of brashness or arrogance.
 - Pupils' behaviour and their relationships with their teachers are excellent, ensuring a civilised, happy and supportive atmosphere in the school and in boarding houses.
 - Pupils are socially adept and work together extremely well in lessons and in extra-curricular activities.
 - Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of maintaining their physical and mental well-being, and are well supported in developing strategies to manage stress.

Recommendation

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
 - Ensure that pupils are confident in using information and communication technology (ICT) in their everyday education so that they are fully prepared for senior school life and ways of learning in the modern world.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 All children in the EYFS reach the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1, many moving beyond these. Data provided by the school indicate that pupils of all abilities fulfil their potential, thanks to the school leadership's close understanding of the pupils and its effective analysis of data to

track their progress. Any concerns about progress in learning are identified early and, when required, pupils are given highly effective support by the learning support unit and their classroom teachers. Pupils with SEND or EAL are provided with work at appropriate levels of challenge which ensures they can fulfil their potential. Those identified as the most able are stimulated by extended challenge in lessons and opportunities for research projects on personal interests. The school is highly successful in guiding pupils to the senior school which best fits their abilities and talents, and many pupils leaving at the end of Year 8 do so with scholarships or awards.

- 3.6 Pupils' development of knowledge and skills across all curriculum areas is rapid and strong. In questionnaire response, parents were unanimous in their satisfaction with their children's progress. A very large majority of pupils agree that they make progress in lessons and that their teachers know how to help them learn. Children in the EYFS grow in physical confidence in their gross motor skills. Fine motor skills likewise develop swiftly, as seen when they painted rain tubes and manipulated small objects to make wombat stew in their lessons about Australia. As they move through the school, pupils' knowledge and understanding continues to develop. They show excellent curiosity and an assured grasp of geographical, historical and scientific concepts. Pupils are highly creative, evident in the art work on display, the imaginative items produced in design technology (DT) and their involvement in the many musical opportunities available. They sing with great musicality and enthusiasm, combined with an understanding of dynamics. Pupils develop their physical abilities to an excellent level, achieving high levels of skill in many sports. They are supported in attaining so well across the curriculum by excellent teaching which draws on close knowledge of each pupil and by the governors' investment in excellent resources to support their learning.
- 3.7 The pupils' literacy and communication skills are excellent. Children's verbal communication skills and language acquisition develop with great rapidity in both nurseries, so that by the time they are approaching the end of their Reception Year they can explain their thinking and games clearly and with a mature vocabulary. Pupils attain excellent literacy levels, reading aloud with expression and clear enjoyment. Pupils' reading ability continues to develop rapidly as they mature, encouraged by the daily short reading periods for older pupils and by the challenge to win a 'Reading Millionaire' award by reading a million words a year. As a result, older pupils have a rich vocabulary on which to draw in their writing, which becomes imaginative and powerful. For example, Year 7 pupils' writing when constructing a letter to the Home Office asking that a refugee be allowed to stay in the UK was persuasive and effective. Pupils are confident orally, explaining their ideas lucidly and, in discussions, responding respectfully to others' suggestions. Although their eagerness to contribute to discussions with peers can mean that their listening skills suffer, they listen attentively to their teachers' instructions. This was apparent in their careful attention to instruction in a physical education (PE) lesson on javelin throwing, so that they were able to work safely in this potentially dangerous activity.
- 3.8 Pupils' mathematical skills develop to a high standard. Their understanding of mathematical concepts develops well in the EYFS. In imaginative play the children explored which spaces were the right size and shape to shelter animals from an impending hurricane; they took pride in solving number puzzles involving addition and subtraction. Year 4 pupils are confident in using the four mathematical operations, handling addition to two decimal points with success. Those in Year 7 showed excellent skill in identifying parabolas and non-parabolas. Pupils were able to apply their mathematical knowledge well in a PE lesson to identify the best angle to throw a javelin. In an English lesson, pupils in Year 6 understood the principle of creating a graph to demonstrate the emotional journey of a character in their book. Pupils of all abilities grow in confidence in mathematics thanks to skilful teaching which ensures that tasks present appropriate levels of challenge. For example, one group was set to spend £5 at a stationery shop and calculate change; another in the same class was given a £500,000 budget to spend on designing a Hazlegrove amusement park.
- 3.9 Pupils develop good skills in ICT because they have computer science lessons from an early age. The governors' investment in tablet devices for pupils in Years 6 and 7 further supports the development of these skills. Pupils were seen using internet search engines to research as well as using applications

to support mathematics and French. They can apply ICT creatively, as seen when Year 4 pupils used an animation application to create and share a story about their stick man in an outdoor education lesson. There was, however, limited evidence of the routine use of ICT in work and lessons observed. Pupils told inspectors that they do not feel confident in using the sort of everyday applications they will meet in senior school; some pupils were observed having difficulty with copying and pasting information into their work.

- 3.10 The pupils' ability to think critically and analytically is excellent. Children in the EYFS are constantly experimenting and take great delight in their discoveries. They explored whether a raft they had made from paper and tape could float and how many toy insects could be put on it before it sank. Reflecting on the story of Grace Darling, Year 2 pupils' comments showed their understanding of how the shape of the lighthouse affected its wind resistance. Pupils show a growing ability to analyse and reflect thoughtfully. Year 7 pupils were excellent at analysing original sources about the Factory Act of 1833. They drew insightful conclusions, for example saying that the legislation might not have been fully successful but it was responsible for creating the concept of childhood.
- 3.11 Pupils relish opportunities to challenge themselves beyond the classroom. There are numerous successes in speech and drama and music examinations. The pupils perform frequently in concerts and productions, reaching high standards as a result of the quality of teaching. Pupils have won music scholarships on entry to senior school. In sports, pupils take great pride in representing their school successfully in IAPS competitions such as hockey, cross country, swimming, netball and rugby. Pupils, especially the boarders, cite the numbers of clubs and opportunities to develop skills beyond formal lessons as factors in their overall achievement. Cricket teams, both male and female, have won at county level. Individual successes include being selected for Somerset elite training for cricket, netball and hockey, and selection for the U16 England women's hockey team. Over the last four years, 44 pupils have been awarded sports scholarships on entry to their senior school.
- 3.12 The pupils have excellent attitudes to learning; they say that the school has been highly successful in meeting its aim of encouraging them to be curious and to love learning. Boarders value the opportunity to seek extra support from staff in the evening and say that being able to talk over their work with other boarders helps them to make progress. From their early days in the school, the pupils learn to organise their possessions and to settle down quickly in class. They are good at focussing on a task, whether working in pairs or independently. Year 4 pupils' pleasure in learning was clear in a history lesson; they were fascinated by the task of identifying various Egyptian artefacts and considering their uses. Pupils work diligently in lessons and are well motivated; they want to succeed and to please their teachers. As a result, they show excellent levels of perseverance and determination to improve their outcomes, evident in work scrutinised as well as in lessons.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils show high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. In questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents agreed that their children grow in confidence and independence. The same view was expressed by pupils in discussion. Boarders spoke positively about the way in which boarding helps them to become more self-reliant and resilient. Children in Reception were eager to talk to inspectors, explaining what they were doing and inviting them to join in. Older pupils said they are good at coping with challenges, thanks to supportive teachers who encourage them not to give up and provide strategies to help them manage any feelings of frustration. They develop an understanding of their teachers' expectations that the work must be done and so will persevere. They speak appreciatively of their teachers' willingness to give them extra help so that they improve their understanding. Pupils value the school's rewards system which recognises effort and determination, not just attainment. They know that these qualities are important and this further supports their self-confidence.

- 3.15 Pupils are excellent at making decisions for themselves. Children in the EYFS show considerable autonomy in their learning and in choosing how to manage their emotions, asking for help or calming down by stroking one of the school's small pets. As they mature, pupils develop skill in making decisions about how best to approach a task, for example choosing the medium for an experiment. They are enthusiastic about choosing which clubs and activities to join and sensible in deciding how best to balance their commitments so that they can keep on top of their work. All pupils are encouraged to become actively engaged in activities in a way that best suits them. Some Year 8 pupils, for example, who did not wish to appear on stage in the production they were rehearsing during the inspection chose instead to be involved in backstage roles. Boarders spoke with great maturity about the importance of making wise decisions about their actions and words in the house, highly conscious of the impact of such things on others in the boarding community.
- 3.16 Pupils have an excellent awareness and appreciation of matters beyond the material. Younger pupils said that listening to Louis Armstrong singing *It's A Wonderful World* made them feel peaceful, thoughtful and calm. In an assembly, older pupils sang with gusto, clearly enjoying the effects created by harmonies and changes in dynamics. Pupils have a genuine appreciation of the beauty of their school building and grounds; boarders spoke of the awe inspired by seeing the sunrise from their dorm windows. Pupils understand that the Christian values of the school's foundation are universal values and linked them to concern for the world and social awareness. In a Year 3 class considering whether the ten commandments are relevant to today's world, some pupils pointed out that you don't have to believe in God to know that respect for others and for the environment is important. Pupils were heard talking with excitement and wonder about the range of insect life found in logs and about the patterns and probabilities of numbers created by throwing dice.
- 3.17 Pupils understand and appreciate the importance of taking responsibility for their behaviour and as a result have an excellent moral understanding. They respect the school's rules and their behaviour is invariably polite and respectful, so that the overall atmosphere is friendly and happy. They have a keen sense of what is morally unacceptable. Year 7 pupils were clearly disgusted to realise that in 1833 the lives of the child workers were less important to the factory owners than profit and linked this realisation with the employment of children in developing countries. In conversations with inspectors, the pupils' strong belief in the importance of honesty and of being trustworthy was strongly evident. Pupils know the importance of owning up when they have done something wrong and said they would feel horribly guilty should they hurt someone's feelings. Boarders say that they are conscious of behaving in way that ensures that, whatever their different personalities and tastes, all can feel that the house is a happy and safe space.
- 3.18 Pupils are excellent at collaborating with each other. Children in the EYFS happily shared resources to build a complex world of small objects and building blocks for their toy animals to hide from predators. Pupils are used to being asked to work in pairs or small groups, so settle to do so with minimal fuss. Year 3 pupils collaborated very successfully in a mathematical task to work out the most efficient shape for a pond to minimise the amount of perimeter fencing needed. They work together successfully in teams, in choirs, musical ensembles and productions. In rehearsals for their production, Year 8 pupils showed great maturity and self-discipline in their commitment to make a success of their play.
- 3.19 Pupils enjoy their opportunities to contribute to the school community. Some of the youngest children in nursery were keen to be helpers in preparing the day's snacks or in looking after the pet rabbit. Pupils in Year 3 were proud to share their stories with Year 2. In music ensembles, older pupils help to teach the younger ones. Pupils in Year 8 take pride in being chosen as prefects. In Years 5 and 6, pupils can be 'Transformers', serving breaktime snacks and supporting any who look sad. There is a food committee, an eco-committee and a number of different forums through which pupils can make suggestions. Boarders say that their views have a real impact; for example, they requested and were given a swing ball set and a larger television. Boarding monitors act responsibly to support their peers

- as well as the routine running of the house. Pupils raise considerable amounts of money for a range of charities and enjoy being involved in activities such as the Exmoor challenge.
- 3.20 Pupils are highly conscious of the school's stated values, rating kindness and respect for all as being key to the way they manage their relationships with others. In discussions, pupils stated firmly that differences of ethnicity, gender or ability do not matter because inside we are all the same. Their understanding of the importance of acceptance and tolerance is clear, well supported by personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the many displays on the unacceptability of outdated attitudes to different genders or sexual orientations. They have a good intellectual understanding of today's multi-cultural world and its attitudes to diversity; they know that being true to one's own nature is a core factor in living a happy life. Pupils have a more limited empathic understanding that life can be difficult for those with protected characteristics or whose experiences may be very different from their own. School leaders and governors have taken steps to counter this with a restructuring of the humanities curriculum. As a result, pupils study topics covering diversity, colonialism and the plight of refugees; in a geography class, Year 7 pupils were researching why most non-white people in Somerset choose to live in large towns. Pupils are learning to think about the world beyond the school grounds because the school encourages them to be aware and open-minded.
- 3.21 The pupils live very energetic school lives, with sport as a key part of each day, in lessons and in clubs. They know the importance of eating healthily and of sleep. They are aware of the importance of being attentive to their own mental and emotional health. Children in the EYFS alert staff to their feelings by changing the photograph of themselves on display to one which reflects their state of mind. Across the school, pupils are encouraged to talk about issues concerning them, either to each other or to staff. Governors and senior leaders are highly conscious of this aspect of the pupils' well-being and are committed to creating more curriculum time for PSHE. Pupils have access to extra help from the school counsellor and the dedicated 'Treasure Groups' with individualised support to manage any personal difficulties. Pupils speak warmly of the help from staff and are virtually unanimous in saying that the school is a safe place to be. The school is highly successful in creating a safe, nurturing environment in which the pupils can enjoy their childhood as well as their education.

Inspection Evidence 13

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions 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 assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Colette Culligan Reporting inspector

Miss Claire Bailey Compliance team inspector (Head, ISA school)

Mr Andrew Gough Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)

Mr Richard Evans Team inspector for boarding (Former head, IAPS school)