



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Hereward House School

April 2023

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School's Details

School	Hereward House School			
DfE number	202/6179			
Address	Hereward House School 14 Strathray Gardens Hampstead London NW3 4NY			
Telephone number	020 7794 4820			
Email address	office@herewardhouse.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Pascal Evans			
Proprietor	Mrs Leonie Sampson			
Age range	4 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	170			
	Junior school	56	Middle school	69
	Senior school	45		
Inspection dates	25 to 27 April 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Hereward House School is an independent day school for male pupils. Founded in 1951, it moved to its present site within Hampstead in the late 1950s. The school was purchased by the current proprietor in 1980, who oversees the operation of the school, with support from an advisory board of governors.
- 1.2 The school comprises: junior school, for pupils in Reception to Year 2; middle school, for pupils in Years 3 to 5; and senior school, for pupils in Years 6 to 8.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school seeks to provide a warm, welcoming and safe atmosphere, in which every pupil can thrive and feel comfortable. It aims to embrace the highest academic aspirations for the pupils, within a stimulating, purposeful and happy community, where every child feels valued and secure. The school's objective is to encourage and assist pupils to develop academically, morally, emotionally and culturally.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of business and professional backgrounds, mostly from families living within a 10-mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment data indicate that the ability of pupils is above average compared to those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified 22 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD and autism, all of whom receive additional support. A small number of pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 24 pupils, of whom two receive additional support for their English. The school modifies the curriculum for pupils identified as the most able in the school's population.

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. 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, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. 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. 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: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, 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, 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.
- 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.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 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 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.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] 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.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 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.

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

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is 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 wellbeing of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is 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. 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>
Transition	Reception

Key findings

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

- Pupils are highly articulate and confident speakers.
- Pupils exhibit outstanding achievements in languages.
- Pupils achieve very high levels of success in their senior school entrance examinations.
- Pupils display excellent attitudes towards their lessons, showing notable levels of engagement.
- Pupils' ability to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills in the wider curriculum to enhance their learning is limited.

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

- Pupils make excellent contributions to their school community.
- Pupils exhibit very high levels of social development and respect for others.
- Pupils exude a notably strong self-confidence.
- Pupils demonstrate an excellent capacity to respond to non-material stimuli, such as music, art and religious matters.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Strengthen pupils' ability to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills in the wider curriculum to enhance their learning.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 Pupils exhibit excellent levels of skills and knowledge across their broad curriculum. They learn well from the strong subject knowledge of their teachers, including specialists. Pupils excel in their use of languages studying a range including Latin, Mandarin and French. During the inspection, pupils and

staff were regularly heard speaking French in conversation and this is facilitated by the provision of a number of native speakers on the staff from various parts of the globe. Year 8 pupils showed outstanding knowledge of Latin and the grammatical construction of sentences, effortlessly using the correct terminology. Pupils use high levels of technical vocabulary in their lessons. For example, in a music lesson, Year 2 pupils exhibited excellent technical knowledge, being able to define acapella, pentatonic, and understood well that minor chords can create a sad effect. Middle school pupils showed a very strong understanding of physical geography when defining terms such as peninsula, estuary, arch and stack.

- 3.6 The range and quality of pupil achievements across the whole school are consistently high and fulfil wholly the school's aim to embrace the highest academic aspirations for the pupils. All groups of pupils, including those in the EYFS, make excellent progress as they move through the school, achieving results in examinations higher than those predicted on their arrival at the school. This is as a result of effective support by dedicated staff. Pupils with SEND make strong progress due to teaching effectively planned to meet their needs, which results from careful tracking of progress by senior leaders. Data provided by the school from externally standardised tests and examinations show that pupils' attainment is above that of the national average compared to those taking similar tests nationally. Pupils are very successful in gaining scholarships, not only for academic work, but also for art, sport and music for entry to academically selective senior schools.
- 3.7 Pupils display excellent attitudes to their learning. Pupils of all ages engage fully in their tasks, showing notable focus and application. They work very well independently and also in groups or pairs. For example, Year 5 pupils worked with sustained concentration whilst creating landscape artworks in the style of David Hockney. They exhibited a mature independence in their choices of colour and the features of their work. Other pupils confidently used effective peer talk when answering questions during an English lesson. Pupils display high levels of initiative. For example, if they perceive an issue in school, they can begin a discussion with their school councillors. They devise their own clubs or groups such as 'eco-club' or musical ensembles.
- 3.8 Pupils show excellent study skills. Critical thinking skills are extremely well developed and pupils frequently make connections in their learning. They can readily hypothesize to help them solve problems. For example, Year 7 pupils show an excellent capacity to make connections in their language study. Given new vocabulary, they hypothesized successfully about how the words may be worked into a Mandarin sentence. Whilst learning about Sumerian numbers in history, Year 3 pupils were able to apply their basic understanding very well to hypothesize how the ancient civilisation may have written more complex numbers. Older pupils show particularly high levels of personal organisation as they effectively balance the competing demands on their time. In the questionnaire, the vast majority of parents agreed that the school equips their child with the team-working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life.
- 3.9 Pupils exhibit outstanding communication skills and are able to express their ideas confidently and clearly. They are proficient writers from a young age. In the senior school, literacy levels are excellent with pupils using figurative language, adventurous adjectives and demonstrating a clear understanding of comprehension skills. They are highly articulate as a result of the many opportunities for speaking in public on offer, such as taking part in and leading assemblies, house events and year group plays. This was seen in a pupil led assembly where the 'eco-club' persuasively regaled their peers about the dangers of global warming. Excellent listening skills are in evidence in lessons, assemblies and social times. These begin in Reception. For instance, during a personal, social, and emotional development (PSED) lesson, children listened to their peers attentively and politely whilst they spoke. Pupils respond well to teaching which sets high expectations and challenges pupils to debate and further develop their answers in discussions on a wide range of topics.
- 3.10 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of numeracy. They show a strong capacity for logical thinking and highly developed problem-solving skills. These are enhanced by the opportunity to play chess in the younger years as a curricular subject. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils demonstrated

excellent understanding as they were very confidently able to break down more complex fraction questions and explain their reasoning. Mental arithmetic skills are strong and pupils routinely use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In the most effective lessons, skilful questioning by teachers was a feature in promoting pupil progress. Pupils make effective use of their numeracy skills across the curriculum. Older pupils use formulae in physics to calculate pressure or speed and younger pupils use geography data to graph the height of the significant UK mountain peaks.

- 3.11 Pupils display a range of appropriate skills in ICT. In their dedicated lessons they show good knowledge of a range of productivity software such as word processing and presentation slides. They have a strong grasp of coding principles. In the wider curriculum, pupils appropriately interrogate search engines via tablets for research and pupils make effective use of apps to reinforce skills such as reading or times tables. However, this is not yet fully embedded across all classes, with the result that pupils' ability to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills in the wider curriculum to enhance their learning is limited. During interviews, pupils expressed the view that their ICT knowledge was being under-utilised in some areas. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- 3.12 Pupils' academic and wider achievements are excellent. Leavers regularly earn scholarships in highly competitive entrance examinations to senior schools. Pupils have enjoyed significant success in academic pursuits, including gold medals at recent primary and junior Maths Challenge competitions. The school team came fifth in the 2022 national chess finals and second in a recent national prep schools general knowledge competition. Individual pupils have been highly ranked in this year's national IAPS history essay competition and the school team were winners of a regional geography quiz. Pupils perform well in music with many succeeding in graded instrumental exams and others performing as choristers at a local cathedral. A number of pupils take external drama and speaking examinations with most achieving distinctions. Recently, several pupils were successful in the Royal College of Arts 'Young Artists' competition and had their artwork displayed there. School sports teams also compete successfully. Pupils acknowledge that the school is keen to give them opportunities to participate in wider events and the role of staff in facilitating such opportunities.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils' social development and their ability to work collaboratively beyond the classroom is excellent. Those in the senior school effectively mentor their younger peers in how to successfully navigate the examination process, offering advice about senior school applications and how to maintain a balanced lifestyle during revision. House leaders work together highly successfully to produce assemblies for their peers. Pupils have achieved performance successes after initiating their own bands in a shared musical interest. Older pupils informed inspectors that the school is, 'based around community and we all take pride in our shared success'. Such collaboration goes beyond the school gates as the boys have successfully worked alongside pupils in other local schools in activities such as debating and chess. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills.
- 3.15 Pupils make a significant contribution to their community through service in a variety of roles. In the junior school there are class leaders who take responsibility for aspects of classroom equipment. In middle school, pupils show responsibility through taking on a range of monitor roles. For example, during lunch, pupils were adept at clearing tables at the end of the main course and ensuring that the water on the table was refilled for their peers. At the end of lunch, each vice house captain gave an articulate verbal assessment for the lunch service, behaviour, wastage and the state the table was left in. In the senior school, pupils show notable commitment and service by applying for whole school responsibilities covering a wide range of charity, pastoral and academic positions. Pupils make a highly effective contribution to the work of the school council and say that they have faith that their discussions and suggestions will bring about positive change if needed. Pupils display a keen sense of

community through their enthusiasm about being 'RAKtivators' (those who are tasked with promoting random acts of kindness) and actively look for activities to promote kindness in interactions with their peers.

- 3.16 Pupils demonstrate excellent self-understanding. They can identify their own strengths and areas for development in conjunction with the targets set by their teachers to help them to progress. Older pupils who spoke to the inspectors displayed a mature self-knowledge when describing their choice of senior school and how it played to their strengths, for example, academically, in sport or in music. When discussing different aspects of their family, Children in Reception exhibited strong understanding of who they are, where they are from and what makes them the same and different. In interview and around school, pupils exhibited high levels of self-confidence. This is promoted through a system of rewards and an atmosphere where pupils are happy to discuss their personal strengths and areas for development without fear of judgement. The school fully meets its aim to provide a stimulating, purposeful and happy community, where every child feels valued and secure.
- 3.17 Pupils show a very highly developed understanding of diversity and a notable respect for other cultures. Children in Reception showed a very highly developed understanding that all families are different, yet there are many similarities, whilst discussing a photo of their classmate's family who live in China. In interview, pupils conveyed a mature recognition that other people may be different to them and unanimously agree that 'it is ok to be different at our school'. In their questionnaire responses, all parents said that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. Pupils exhibit a well-developed understanding about diverse cultures and faiths in their religious studies and from their peers and parents who visit the school to help to celebrate key faith festivals. They demonstrate a strong understanding of British culture, as seen in a Year 6 history lesson where pupils researched effectively the constitutional and spiritual significance of various monarchs' coronations.
- 3.18 Pupils take their opportunities for decision-making seriously and demonstrate an excellent capacity for doing so. Many pupils spoke passionately about their chance to influence the work of the school council and reflected with pride about the changes they had brought about. These include changes to the surface of the playground and to lunch menus. Older pupils understand the implications of their decisions relating their choices of future schools. They had carefully matched their own strengths and preferences to those of their preferred destination. Pupils show an excellent understanding of how to spend their time in order to balance their many commitments.
- 3.19 Pupils exhibit an excellent level of spiritual understanding. They show high levels of knowledge for their age about the various faiths they have studied and respond well to non-material stimuli. For example, in a music lesson, Year 2 pupils showed much enjoyment of their song: actively singing, smiling and moving to it. Year 5 pupils reflected maturely on the natural effects created by artists' use of colour and framing in a range of landscapes. They worked against a backdrop of calming music which pupils said they found relaxing, setting their mind ready to focus. Older pupils demonstrate a sophisticated interest in environmental issues and describe passionately scenes in their literature work, visibly relishing the onomatopoeic effects of certain clauses.
- 3.20 Pupils exhibit notably high standards of behaviour overall and show a highly developed moral understanding. In the questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of pupils agreed that the school expects pupils to behave well and most that pupils are kind and respect each other. Staff report that on the few occasions when pupils might make the wrong behaviour choice, they exhibit a highly developed capacity to accept responsibility and reflect on the implications of their choice. This is built upon a well-known system of rewards and sanctions. For example, Year 3 pupils understood well the significance of their bronze merit badges and articulated highly effectively how proud they were to achieve them. Pupils demonstrate excellent manners, as seen in the dining hall where they worked together to ensure that the behaviour of their lunch tables is as good as possible. This was enhanced by effective support from pupil lunchtime monitors. Pupils articulate reasoned arguments for the

values in which they believe. This is evidenced through their thoughtful responses in class and their animated contribution to debate, in areas such as history or religious studies.

- 3.21 Pupils have a very secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. In a Year 4 ICT lesson, pupils demonstrated a good knowledge of the appropriate safety rules for using the ICT equipment. Pupils make good progress in their understanding due to their wide ranging personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme, which includes topics such as healthy diet, personal hygiene and 'stranger danger'. In discussion, pupils demonstrated an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe online. This included not sharing information with strangers and being aware of age limitations on social media apps. Many show a strong commitment to a regular exercise regime including partaking in school sports. Pupils say that they feel comfortable about who they can turn to if they are feeling unsafe and the warm relationships that they have with staff ensure that they feel well supported in their day to day lives. Pupils' deep knowledge was encapsulated in a Year 3 lesson when working on a care guide for their fictional minotaur. Pupils exhibited an excellent understanding of the need to address the minotaur's physical and mental needs to ensure that it would be happy.

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 form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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

Mr Robert Lilley	Reporting inspector
Mr Paul Lane	Compliance team inspector (Director of finance and operations, IAPS school)
Dr Emma Margrett	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)