



Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Hoe Bridge School

February to March 2023

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School's Details

School	Hoe Bridge School			
DfE number	936/6395			
Registered charity number	1099823			
Address	Hoe Bridge School Hoe Place Old Woking Road Woking Surrey GU22 8JE			
Telephone number	01483 760018			
Email address	info@hoebridgeschool.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Christopher Webster			
Chair of governors	Mr Ian Katté			
Proprietor	Hoe Bridge School Ltd			
Age range	2 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	474			
	EYFS	111	Pre-Prep	209
	Prep	265		
Inspection dates	28 February to 2 March 2023			

1. Background Information.

About the school

- 1.1 Hoe Bridge School is a co-educational independent day school. It was founded in 1986 from the merger of two proprietorial schools for male pupils. In 1987 it became a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. The school began to include female pupils in 1999. The school comprises two sections: pre-prep for pupils aged 2 to 7 years and prep for pupils aged 7 to 13 years.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection a new headmaster has been appointed and the school has completed building developments, which include the dining room extension, performing arts centre, Twigs Pavilion and expansion of the EYFS educational area.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to work closely with parents to provide a broadly Christian environment in which happy children can develop as self-reliant, confident individuals, fulfilling their potential in academic, sporting, and creative activities. It seeks to emphasise respect for others, courtesy and kindness, and to give pupils the skills and experience to prepare them for life beyond school.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The majority of pupils come from professional and business families living within a 6-mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment data indicate that the ability of pupils is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 54 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and hearing impairment, 10 of whom receive additional specialist help. There are six pupils in the school with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language for five pupils, two of whom receive additional in-class support. Data used by the school has identified 65 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, in academic subjects, art, design technology, music and sport and the curriculum is modified for them.

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 pre-prep and relationships and sex education in the prep 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.

Key findings

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

- Pupils of all ages progress well and achieve strongly both academically and in the broader curriculum.
- Pupils across the school demonstrate an excellent attitude to their learning.
- Pupils are highly effective communicators in both the written and spoken word.
- Pupils demonstrate outstanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in their learning.

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

- Pupils have an extremely well-developed sense of self-belief and self-confidence.
- Pupils are enormously considerate, caring, courteous and respectful of each other and all members of the school community.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent.
- Pupils show well-developed social skills, including the ability to collaborate effectively with their peers.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Enable pupils to more fully influence further improvements in school life.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 Attainment across the school is high. A large majority of the youngest children achieve a good level of development by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting. The attainment of pupils in the pre-prep and prep school maintains this excellent start, with standardised scores in English and mathematics above national age-related norms. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or with English as an additional language (EAL) also make good progress with almost all achieving at least as expected. This can be attributed to the school leaders' regular monitoring of attainment using a rigorous tracking process which highlights areas of strength and weakness and identifies next steps in learning for all pupils. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching enables their child to make progress.

- 3.6 Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are excellent. Children in the EYFS are curious, creative learners, who apply their skills effectively whether role playing as an adventurous astronaut or using understanding to support their art and design. Year 2 pupils exhibit advanced skills in mathematics, explaining clearly how multiplication and division are inverse operations and discussing place value up to hundreds of thousands. Year 6 pupils, having studied six figure grid references in geography, confidently located areas on maps, further embedding this skill when completing an orienteering course in a games lesson. In a Year 5 science lesson on air resistance, pupils explained their understanding of variables, analysing previous hypothesis by plotting graphs and writing conclusions. Year 8 pupils demonstrated excellent aptitude when analysing historical sources whilst researching the murder of the princes in the Tower during the reign of Richard III. Pupils' creative and aesthetic abilities are well developed, as seen in Year 3 music where pupils created an evolving piece with solo contributions, whilst successfully changing volume, pitch and note values. A wide variety of styles and techniques was observed in pupils' creative artistic displays around the school. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small number of pupils felt lessons were not interesting. However, during discussions with pupils, they said that helpful and thorough teaching as well as specific target setting supports them to improve. Inspectors judged that the school fulfils its aim to develop pupils' intellectual, academic, and creative skills in order that they excel both within Hoe Bridge and beyond.
- 3.7 Pupils' competence in communication is a real strength. From an early age, children talk in a thoughtful and reflective manner and they listen sympathetically to the point of view of others. In a Year 2 science lesson, pupils articulated their understanding of chemical changes, using accurate subject specific terminology, such as 'irreversible changes'. In Year 4 English, pupils displayed excellent language and reading skills when analysing text, recognising the importance of intonation to aid the listener. Early literacy skills develop quickly due to the well-structured phonics programme, enabling children to develop secure pre-reading and writing skills. Reception children build on this strong foundation, relishing opportunities to write using full sentences with accurate, basic punctuation and more able pupils include exclamation marks and capitals for effect. Older pupils are open, honest and brave in the manner in which they express themselves, clearly at ease talking to adults about issues which are significant to them. Their writing demonstrates excellent progression, ranging from historical recounts of the Battle of Hastings in newspaper format, to descriptive narrative concerning the Inuit culture, tradition and mythology.
- 3.8 From an early age, pupils have extremely well-developed numeracy skills and a secure knowledge of using numbers to count. They are motivated and engaged in lessons, discussing ideas openly, collaborating and supporting each other. Pupils embrace the possibility of making mistakes, seeing this as a learning opportunity and in lessons observed, pupils were encouraged to use contextual language appropriate to the topic and, in many cases, language at an advanced level. In investigative work, pupils made independent choices as seen in a Year 4 maths lesson on interpreting data. Pupils respond well in numeracy lessons and demonstrate their application of number skills and understanding across other subjects too. Pupils develop the mathematical skills required to confidently calculate forces and density in physics and use their geometry accurately to draw refraction and circuitry diagrams. In design technology (DT) older pupils used their mathematical skills to produce scale drawings for their designs prior to creating their water bottle rockets.
- 3.9 Pupils have a competent grasp of ICT skills which are used across many areas of the curriculum. In art and DT, pupils in Year 6 used the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to research the Plague Doctor for their drawing project. Year 4 pupils in an ICT lesson, used PowerPoint to create an animated scene of traffic lights, sequenced for cars to stop at the red light and move when they turn green. The use of ICT is an integral and embedded element of the teaching within all subjects at the school. Pupils display confidence, capability and resilience when applying their digital skills. EYFS children are encouraged to develop their creativity by using the interactive boards. In Year 2 English, pupils used an interactive peer review programme to add positive comments and suggestions for improvement of their work. In discussions, pupils explained that they really appreciated this opportunity to support each other. In the prep school, pupils were proud to show their work on their

mobile devices in a range of subjects. Work scrutiny and observations confirmed that pupils are confident users of ICT, conscious of e-safety and able to make appropriate decisions as to when and where to select appropriate programmes and software. The development of pupils' competency in ICT is supported by leaders' and governors' investment in high-quality digital resources to develop pupils' digital expertise.

- 3.10 Pupils of all ages concentrate, focus and behave well in lessons, creating an excellent learning environment where pupils can practise and develop their study skills in a positive manner within a nurturing atmosphere. Younger pupils are able to infer, analyse and hypothesise as seen during a Year 1 maths lesson on fractions. Year 3 pupils were observed working diligently, with great commitment and concentration, to finish their wooden model of The Mary Rose. When they work collaboratively, pupils demonstrate excellent support for each other, valuing ideas and making suggestions for improvement. In discussions, older pupils identified research as a positive thing, explaining it teaches them how to be independent. Work scrutiny and lesson observations showed that older pupils use mind-maps effectively to collect and pull together evidence for use in future essay planning and extended investigation of a topic. Creative planning regularly provides opportunities for pupils to work both collaboratively and independently. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school equips their children with the team-working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life.
- 3.11 Pupils are highly successful within the formal curriculum and beyond. Pupils' sporting and creative accomplishments include success both individually and collaboratively. Pupils' sporting achievements are represented in a range of national competitions, in cricket, athletics, netball and hockey, producing several finalists and champions along the way. In the performing arts, senior pupils performed with aplomb, when they sang the Faure Requiem at a prestigious venue. Pupils of all ages take part in many drama productions and regularly perform to a high standard in informal concerts and assemblies. Music is strong across the school with a very large majority of pupils in Year 2 playing a musical instrument. Older pupils regularly achieve exam success in a range of musical instruments as well as public speaking exams, with a majority gaining distinction. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities.
- 3.12 Pupils' attitudes to learning are extremely positive. Pupils are confident learners who are happy to take the initiative as well as support the development of each other's progress. In Year 5, pupils displayed an excellent ability to debate, sharing ideas whilst at all times respectfully listening to the views of their peers. Children in pre-prep engage in learning with great enthusiasm, make well considered choices and participate with joy and delight as was seen on World Book Day and in a Year 1 French assembly. All pupils develop an assured 'have a go' attitude towards their learning. Leaders and staff have high expectations of behaviour and learning, which when combined with pupils' own wish to do well, results in pupils establishing excellent habits for learning. The school's leaders and staff exhibit a clear desire for pupils to give of their best, to succeed and maximize their ability. This is reflected in *the Hoe Bridge Way* which actively promotes hard work.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils have an extremely well-developed sense of self-belief and self-confidence which is developed in a school which consistently embodies and instills the values it seeks to promote. Pupils develop confidence in their own abilities and appreciate that, whilst their teachers will support, encourage and challenge them positively as they develop and grow, so too will their peers. Pupils persevere and are intent on finishing tasks, demonstrating a high level of resilience. From an early age, pupils are willing to 'have a go' and learn from their endeavours. Year 2 pupils spoke knowledgeably about The Fire of London, conveying a sense of confidence and unbridled joy about their learning. Older pupils say they know when their learning is progressing because their teachers give them informative feedback both

orally and in written advice in their books setting out helpful next steps. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their children to be confident and independent.

- 3.15 Across all ages, pupils display assurance and confidence in their decision-making ability. Children in the EYFS exhibit strong levels of independence, where decision-making opportunities are included from a very young age. Older pupils give due consideration to the next stage of their education at senior school and its implications for their personal lives. For example, in a Year 5 Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) lesson, pupils responsibly discussed different types of drugs and the risks they presented to their wellbeing. Year 6 pupils carefully selected which media to use for their art project and which characters to portray. Pupils are able to consider options evaluatively, often through collaboration and discussion, not only for their personal benefit, but also for the good of the school community. Older pupils said they would relish the opportunity to more fully influence further improvements in school life, for example through the school council. Inspectors agreed that they have the capacity to contribute more in this way.
- 3.16 Pupils have a deep spiritual understanding of the school's values; encouraging them to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves. This reflects the fundamental meaning of the Hoe Bridge Way. Pupils appreciate their beautiful surroundings and the opportunities they have to wander in the school grounds or to sit quietly in the library, valuing the opportunity to just think. Pupils are sensitively aware of the needs of others and how they can play their part, such as donating their hair to a local hospice to support patients who need a hairpiece as a result of their treatment. Pupils engrossed in a theology, philosophy and religion (TPR) lesson discussed in depth why an old teddy bear might have more value than a Rolex watch. Younger pupils can be heard responding empathically *sharing is caring* when they hear of good deeds. Leadership has been very successful in embedding core values such as kindness and empathy throughout all aspects of school life.
- 3.17 Throughout their daily lives at school, pupils display an excellent understanding of what is appropriate behaviour, as well as knowing how they should respond and relate to each other. The constant theme of mutual respect is present. The environment at the school embodies the school's core values of happiness, confidence, achievement. Consistent reference to the 'Hoe Bridge Way' helps guide pupils on the right path. The relationships between staff and pupils display respect at their core, and as a result, older pupils become positive role models to those around them. Pupils have a strong understanding that all actions have consequences and they develop an established sense of responsibility for their own behaviour, appreciating that it can directly affect others. In pupils' questionnaires, some older pupils felt the school did not teach them how to build positive relationships and friendships and some parents felt that bullying was prevalent in some year groups. However, discussions with both pupils and staff, checking of records and observations at various times of the day during the inspection, did not reflect or support this. Pupils value, appreciate and respect the rules and ethos of the school, understanding that sanctions will be given, albeit discreetly, should a pupil fall below the expectations of behaviour. Pupils' interactions are based upon a dignified sense of respect for each and every member of their school community.
- 3.18 From the earliest age, pupils display excellent social awareness and compassion. They support and encourage each other and celebrate everyone's successes. The youngest pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and learn how to resolve conflict successfully by being fair and taking turns. Expectations for behaviour are high and pupils are keen to maintain stringent personal standards in how they behave. Pupils of all ages develop a high level of social awareness and establish strong relationships with their peers, enhanced by the consistent use of group and collaborative learning. Many examples were seen of pupils working effectively together. The school's sports for all approach gives equal opportunities and status to pupils of all abilities, thereby encouraging excellent values of sportsmanship and a strong team ethos amongst pupils. There is a secure sense of mutual respect as affirmed when Year 8 pupils described how they read to the younger pupils or have lunch

with them, which they feel benefits not just the younger pupils but themselves too. Almost all staff who responded to the questionnaire agreed that pupils readily help and support others.

- 3.19 Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the lives of others within the school. They look out for each other, providing support and encouragement in abundance. The pupils take their positions of responsibility seriously and the older pupils provide excellent role models for the younger ones, relishing the opportunity to support them across a range of activities. Positive interaction between age groups at the school fosters a unified approach to challenges where they raise money for local or national charities each year. In mixed age activities, such as the eco group, pupils demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the environment, understanding climate change and the effects on the coral in the ocean. They are passionate about what is happening, wanting to make a difference. School council has some success, but pupils have much to offer with their mature attitude and vision and currently have relatively limited opportunities for their voice to be heard so as to benefit themselves and the school.
- 3.20 Throughout the school, pupils of all backgrounds and cultures enjoy constructive and inclusive relationships in a diverse and well-integrated community. Cultural cohesion, respect and tolerance are key elements of the school where pupils are socially and culturally aware. Pupils instinctively show appreciation for each other's differences, and this underpins the positive relationships between pupils of all ages. Pupils recognise, and are tolerant of, the many ways people can be different from each other within society. In the parental questionnaires, most parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people.
- 3.21 Pupils recognise what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and demonstrate a strong awareness of staying safe online. Excellent opportunities are available for pupils to develop an understanding of how to live a healthy life for both their physical and mental wellbeing. In an open and affirming environment, pupils readily share their thoughts and feelings and are willing to show vulnerability and seek support. Regular physical activity contributes towards pupils' high levels of fitness. In discussions, older pupils' spoke confidently of the nutritional value of the food, the healthy plate, with many seen munching on apples at breaktime. Pupils' wellbeing is supported effectively by the positive school culture of kindness and understanding, and advice and support regarding how to maintain personal wellbeing. Pupils across the age range embrace a growth mindset, leading to a robust sense of wellbeing and a 'can do' positive attitude to life.

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 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

Mrs Julie Lowe	Reporting inspector
Mr Patrick Wenham	Compliance team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mrs Jane Margaret Huntington	Team inspector (Former deputy head, ISA school)
Miss Penelope Kirk	Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mr Grant Whitaker	Team inspector (Former director of studies, IAPS school)