

# **Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report**

**Holme Grange School** 

November 2022

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# **School's Details**

School	Holme Grange School	
DfE number	872/6004	
Registered charity number	309105	
Address	Holme Grange School Heathlands Road Wokingham Berkshire RG40 3AL	
Telephone number	0118 978 1566	
Email address	office@holmegrange.org	
Head	Mrs Claire Robinson	
Chair of governors	Mrs Sue Northend	
Age range	3 to 16	
Number of pupils on roll	670	
	EYFS 50 Prep School 274	
	Eaton Grange 346	
Inspection dates	29 November to 1 December 2022	

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# 1. Background Information

### About the school

1.1 Holme Grange School is an independent co-educational day school. It was founded as a boys' preparatory school in 1945 and became co-educational in 1975. The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors.

1.2 The school comprises the pre-prep, which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the prep school and Eaton Grange, for senior pupils. Since the previous inspection, the school has opened a new senior school building and created new classrooms for Reception and outdoor learning.

#### What the school seeks to do

1.3 The school aims to provide a challenging education that stimulates pupils' intellectual curiosity and discovers their talents to promote their high achievement in a wide range of activities. The school intends to nurture pupils' personal development, their confidence and leadership skills in a caring and supportive family environment. It seeks to guide pupils to develop the values and attitudes needed to be flexible global citizens.

## About the pupils

1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds, representing forty different nationalities. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is broadly average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 134 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), the majority of whom have difficulties associated with dyslexia, all of whom receive additional support. Seven pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 18 pupils, of whom seven receive additional support for their English. Data used by the school identify 162 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, 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 <u>met</u> or as <u>not met</u>. 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> <u>Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.</u>

# **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 In the prep school, 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 At GCSE in the years 2019 to 2022, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the prep 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.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

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

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

### PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.10 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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.12 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

- 2.13 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.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] 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.
- 2.16 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is 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.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is 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 well-being of the pupils.
- 2.20 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 abilities achieve excellent examination results, enabling them to progress to educational establishments of their choice.
  - Pupils are excellent communicators and attentive listeners, both inside and outside the classroom.
  - Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) competently to promote their learning.
  - Pupils achieve highly in a range of academic and other areas, such as sport, music and drama.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
  - Pupils display a well-developed spiritual appreciation of the non-materialistic aspects of life.
  - Pupils have a clear moral sense of right and wrong and uphold the values of the school.
  - Pupils exhibit excellent understanding of and respect for cultural diversity.
  - Pupils have excellent knowledge of staying safe and keeping healthy.

#### Recommendation

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
  - Strengthen lower senior school pupils' understanding regarding future life pathways.

### The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The achievement of pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, is excellent. Pupils' attainment at GCSE in 2022 was strong, with nearly two-thirds of results graded 9 to 7. This level of achievement is an improvement on the centre and teacher-assessed results in 2020 and 2021. As a consequence, the vast majority of pupils gain places at educational settings of their first choice. Data show that pupils attain higher examination grades than expected for their ability. Children in the EYFS make excellent progress, reaching or exceeding age-related expectations by the end of Reception. Prep pupils make rapid progress and are prepared well for the next stage of their education. Pupils with SEND or EAL perform in line with their peers because of leaders' establishment of a comprehensive attainment and progress tracking system, together with the strong support of teachers and their informed awareness

- of each pupil's individual needs. A very large majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching enables their child to make progress and that their needs are met effectively.
- 3.6 Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum are outstanding, strongly supported by well-structured and carefully planned teaching. This ensures that pupils' needs are met and that they are constantly challenged and confident to ask questions to enrich their understanding. In a Year 10 animal care lesson, pupils rapidly developed their knowledge, using information gained over time to accurately describe the characteristics, structures and effects of parasites on animals. In line with the school's aims, pupils are keen to learn new skills, as described enthusiastically by pupils taking up significant roles in dramatic productions never having acted before. In Year 11 BTEC physical education (PE) pupils skilfully created their own 3D representation of the gaseous exchange process in the lungs, carefully researching with their partners before devising a final design. Pupils take pride in their work, as reflected in the quality of their workbooks and projects, and feel a strong sense of responsibility and inquiry in their learning. This was clearly demonstrated by pupils in a Year 4 lesson focusing on the meaning of philosophy.
- 3.7 Pupils are highly accomplished communicators. They are attentive listeners both formally and informally. They are articulate and write with feeling and fluency. This is a notable characteristic of workbooks and lessons across all age groups, as in Year 10 English, where pupils wrote about an author's use of language and structure, employing their own rigorous analysis and excellent range of vocabulary. Pupils eagerly assimilate new vocabulary which they successfully apply across the curriculum with precision and confidence. This was seen in prep French, and Year 7 English pupils' explanation of a poet's use of anthropomorphism to highlight his point. Pupils say they are confident because of their regular participation in debates and public speaking competitions, music and drama performances. Through careful teacher modelling of language, pupils in Year 2 ICT enthusiastically demonstrated excellent spelling and punctuation skills. Pupils are keen readers from an early age and say they enjoy reading for both research and pleasure. They play an active role as library monitors, in the organisation of displays and the selection of new titles. Pupils throughout the school rapidly develop communication skills as a result of the encouragement and guidance they receive from their teachers.
- 3.8 Pupils display strong numeracy skills and competently apply these to different subjects. They develop their skills from an early age. For example, EYFS children were highly engaged when using electronic scales to accurately understand how numbers are used to measure how much different things weighed. Similarly, Year 1 pupils displayed excellent understanding of mathematical terms, such as edges, faces and vertices, in a 3D shape modelling challenge. In a Year 9 mathematics lesson, pupils worked at a high level to solve a range of problems using advanced calculator functions with much focus and skill. Pupils are able to reflect on the purpose of mathematics, as well as strategies they can use to solve problems. In a Year 10 food technology lesson focused on making Swiss rolls, pupils measured quantities of ingredients with precision to ensure a high-quality product. Pupils' success in UK Maths Challenge and Science Olympiads reflects their excellent mathematical skills and knowledge.
- 3.9 Pupils are highly competent users of ICT and apply their skills very well across a range of subjects, including coding club and through the work of pupil digital leaders. Pupils see digital technology as a natural part of the learning process, utilising a range of apps and software to take notes, share work in real time with peers and teachers, research and create presentations. Children in Reception showed great proficiency in the use of their devices as timers to time partners in a one-minute challenge with bead threading, cube stacking and name writing. In a Year 9 character and wellbeing lesson, pupils demonstrated marked adeptness in ICT to build an excellent multi-media presentation on a topic of personal interest, using a variety of transitions, embedded documents, videos and sound files. Senior pupils have adapted quickly to incorporate their personal devices in lessons to meet their individual needs and learning styles, and highly value their teachers' immediate feedback. This enables them to

- increase their rate of progress in their learning. Senior leaders' and governors' careful investment in digital technology has been central to this success.
- 3.10 Pupils demonstrate excellent study skills, as endorsed by the high number of positive parental responses in the questionnaire. Pupils are genuinely motivated to succeed and have high aspirations. They are curious, analytical learners, willing to take intellectual risks as they are encouraged by teachers and a school ethos where mistakes are viewed as positive opportunities to learn. Reception children in a forest school lesson displayed excellent curiosity about what would happen if they climbed higher in the tree. They hypothesised sensibly that the branches would bend and eventually they would fall. Through teaching that encourages dialogue and collaboration, Year 4 science pupils enthusiastically engaged in high calibre discussions in pairs focused on appropriate food choices and shared sources. Senior pupils who spoke to the inspectors expressed the merits of studying alone with the freedom it affords, and equally the advantages of working with others, where "people can change your opinion and open your eyes". In Year 10 history extended writing on the challenges faced by the Weimar Republic, pupils successfully incorporated incisive analytical detail and a strong conclusion under controlled conditions. Both prep and senior pupils' effective use of the library as a centre for independent and collaborative learning is a key factor in the rapid development of their study skills. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire said that the school equips their child with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life.
- 3.11 Pupils successfully participate in the school's co-curricular programmes, developing resilience and confidence as they gain new skills. They achieve highly both as individuals and with their peers in a wide range of pursuits. Pupils achieve notable success at local, regional and national level especially in hockey, rugby, football, gymnastics and dance where pupils have recently been world championship winners and National Ballet representatives. Pupils gain success in different areas such as reaching the finals of the national future leaders of the year competition, and being placed first in regional art competitions. There are many grade 8 achievements in music and LAMDA examinations. Senior pupils have come third in the 'Top of the Bench' chemistry challenge at Oxford University. Pupils' involvement and achievements in sustainability are outstanding, gaining the eduCCate Global bronze, silver and gold awards. Pupils are able to explore and develop a wide range of experiences that will serve to enrich their lives and complement their academic studies. This is in line with the aims of the school.
- 3.12 Pupils display outstanding attitudes towards their learning. They approach their studies with energy and commitment, working effectively and at ease, both independently and collaboratively. Pupils understand the importance of taking charge of their work and are diligent, resourceful learners. Pupils have an appetite to improve their learning, giving generous time and support to their peers, as exemplified by the excellent work of the ambassadors and peer mentoring programme from an early age. They learn with purpose, encouraged by the guidance and high expectations from their teachers. In Year 11 art, pupils showed an excellent attitude to independent research, enabling them to successfully incorporate different skills over time, from inception to completion to produce excellent, thought-provoking projects. In Year 1 form time, outstanding initiative was taken by pupils in their explanation to others about the success criteria for an early work challenge. Pupils of all ages are proud of their work and take ownership of their learning from an early age.

## The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-confidence in their academic work and activities. This quality is promoted by the school's strong focus on developing personal values such as curiosity, responsibility and discipline. Pupils know themselves well, are courteous and care about others. Pupils say they value highly the feedback from teachers and their peer mentors, which enables them to set themselves targets to further improve their learning. In a Year 11 character and wellbeing lesson, pupils showed

- excellent self-knowledge, especially with regard to resilience and self-discipline in planning mock examination revision schedules and techniques. However, in discussions and the questionnaire, some pupils in the younger years of the senior school expressed a desire for greater understanding of future pathways.
- 3.15 Pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of making decisions and taking responsibility. Those in leadership roles talked sensibly about their decisions to adopt such responsibilities. Pupils show high levels of organisation as they balance academic and other demands. They develop a keen awareness of the impact of their decisions on others. For example, pupils in Year 5 and 6 demonstrated excellent decision making skills when determining how to beat opponents through teamwork in rugby and netball drills. Pupils of all ages are fully committed to sustainability and have a deeply embedded understanding that the decisions they make have an impact on the environment and climate change. Pupils gain confidence and ability to make sensible choices in budgeting, relationships, consent, diversity and respect through the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE) programmes.
- 3.16 Pupils show deep appreciation of non-materialistic aspects of life and how these strengthen their self-awareness. They have a natural sense of being, as displayed in the outstanding artwork, reflecting pupils' individuality and different beliefs. Pupils confidently express themselves through music, art and drama. Pupils demonstrate strong awareness of how faith can affect people's lives. This was clearly illustrated in illuminating Year 7 religious studies (RS) written work on why religion is important in the context of people's culture, giving structure and meaning to their lives. Senior pupils reflected thoughtfully on the importance of belief, noting that this does not just extend to belief in God. Pupils say that they benefit greatly from the interaction with nature which surrounds them, the therapy dog, and the farm, all of which generate opportunities for quiet reflection. At lunchtime pupils are respectful as they pause for grace to think about the things they have and others do not.
- 3.17 Pupils from the youngest age have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and demonstrate strong moral sensibilities. For instance, in a Year 11 religious studies (RS) lesson, pupils demonstrated deep awareness and sensitivity when talking about ethical issues such as FGM and breast ironing, researching facts and differentiating well between religious and cultural influences. They know that certain school rules are fundamental to achieving the school's aims and upholding its values. Pupils say they appreciate rules are there for the benefit of themselves and others in the school community. They understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions. Behaviour amongst pupils of all ages is excellent, with minimal intervention needed from teachers. Much kindness is evident, with older pupils stopping their basketball game without adult intervention to allow EYFS children to walk across. In a Year 2 English lesson involving making a jam sandwich, pupils demonstrated excellent levels of behaviour, waiting quietly and patiently, despite the palpable excitement of the task, until the whole class had washed their hands. There is a strong thread of mutual respect amongst pupils and their teachers.
- 3.18 Pupils have an excellent awareness of the importance of helping others and caring for those younger, as demonstrated through the mentoring and ambassador programmes. They take their responsibilities and roles seriously, thus reflecting 'The Holme Grange Way'. Through the house system, pupils of different ages successfully interact and work together to reach common goals. Pupils work naturally and effectively with their teachers and each other, offering much mutual support. A high quality version of a Christmas song was the result of excellent collaboration between Year 8 members of a nine piece rock band. Year 7 pupils in English worked together to much effect to fine tune their final performance piece for a poetry competition. Pupils speak positively about the value of the different school councils, parliament, enterprise and COP27. These enable them to work together to develop social skills and support school improvement.
- 3.19 Pupils demonstrate excellent contribution to others. This is because they are committed, proactive, outward looking and keen to act on opportunities. Pupils devote time and effort towards charity work and fundraising. Through the houses and other avenues, they work hard to raise awareness of, and

funds for, many charities, including local food banks. Pupils' awareness of others' needs is highly developed because of their active involvement in community initiatives, such as visiting other schools to talk about sustainability, going to nursing homes, helping the disabled and having representation on the Wokingham Youth and Mental Health Councils. Year 8 pupils say they are proud of their role as farm ambassadors, raising awareness, and being able to make a difference to the care of animals and the environment. Pupils' commitment to others who have little is amplified by their support for their sister school in Kenya, including to help ensure the availability of basic necessities, such as menstruation products. Targeted charity weeks successfully develop pupils' understanding of service, and the context and purpose of their work.

- 3.20 Pupils demonstrate high levels of respect and deep understanding of others, benefitting from a diverse, nurturing school environment. Pupils display a natural empathy and engagement that is inherent in the school values. Pupils say they can express their true personalities without fear, fully supporting the school's aims to develop values and attitudes needed to be flexible global citizens. Debates focused on protected characteristics enable pupils to develop and fine tune their understanding of diversity. This is reflected in the high standards of behaviour towards each other, different friendships, whole school initiatives such as the library diverse book challenge, and through the work of pupil clubs as in equality, diversity and inclusion. New pupils from outside the UK say they feel settled because of the openness and warmth of others. Staff work pro-actively with pupils, adapting the curriculum to enable pupils to develop their understanding and appreciation of key issues: as part of a cross-curricular project, through English, art and ICT, pupils in Years 6 to 9 made a film Windrush in Wokingham. This was made available to the local youth council, resulting in a grant award to make further clips. Almost all parents in their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes the values of democracy, respect and tolerance of others. Inspection evidence supports this view. Leaders ensure that the school is a community which embraces and nurtures all groups of pupils and promotes understanding of, and respect for, the diversity of individuals.
- 3.21 Pupils have clear understanding of what good mental health looks like, as in a Year 7 wellbeing lesson where pupils gave insightful presentations. With little need for reminders, Year 8 pupils in design technology maturely followed health and safety rules to ensure safe use of sewing machines to complete excellent pencil case products. Wellbeing is a clear focus and pupils speak confidently about how, through different mechanisms, they themselves are central to discussion and developments as in the setting up of buddy benches. Pupils of different ages have a mature and thorough understanding of measures to take to stay safe online, as confirmed in meetings and by their extremely high positive questionnaire responses. Pupils understand the importance of sharing concerns and maintaining a good work-life balance, with ample focus on healthy eating and good habits provided by the school. In Year 4 science pupils demonstrated excellent understanding of the need for and the long term health implications of a balanced diet. Pupils highly value the variety of co-curricular offerings, including those resulting from suggestions made by pupils, such as basketball, which ensures that there is something for everyone to keep fit and balance academic and other demands.

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# 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 the chair of governors and the safeguarding governor, 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 John Aguilar Reporting inspector

Mr Chris Manville Compliance team inspector

Mrs Louise Belrhiti Team inspector (Former assistant head, HMC school)

Mr Ralph Dalton Team inspector (Head, ISA school)

Mr Thomas Mylne Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)