



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report**

**AKS Lytham School**

**October 2022**

## Contents

<b>School's Details</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Background Information</b>	<b>4</b>
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
<b>2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection</b>	<b>5</b>
Preface	5
Key findings	6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	7
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	7
PART 6 – Provision of information	7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	8
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	8
<b>3. Educational Quality Inspection</b>	<b>9</b>
Preface	9
Key findings	9
Recommendation	9
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements	10
The quality of the pupils' personal development	12
<b>4. Inspection Evidence</b>	<b>15</b>

## School's Details

<b>School</b>	AKS Lytham School			
<b>DfE number</b>	888/6014			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1016538			
<b>Address</b>	AKS Lytham School Clifton Drive South Lytham St Annes Lancashire FY8 1DT			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01253 784102			
<b>Email address</b>	info@akslytham.com			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr David Harrow			
<b>Proprietor</b>	United Church Schools Trust			
<b>Age range</b>	0 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	739			
	<b>EYFS</b>	151	<b>Prep school</b>	129
	<b>Senior school</b>	367	<b>Sixth form</b>	92
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11 to 13 October 2022			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 AKS Lytham is a co-educational day school situated on the Fylde Coast. The school is the result of the merger in 2012 of two schools, Arnold School in Blackpool and King Edward VII and Queen Mary School in Lytham. The EYFS and prep school occupy separate purpose-built accommodation on the senior school site. The school is part of United Learning, which includes the charitable trust, the United Church Schools Trust (UCST). The UCST Council, supported by a local board of governors, is the legal proprietor of the school.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has lowered its age of admission and now accepts children into the EYFS from birth. The newly registered EYFS setting is awaiting its first inspection by Ofsted. In September 2019, a new head was appointed and a new chair of the local board of governors took up post.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school's aim is to provide a broad, holistic education within a caring school community, guiding each individual to develop and grow into global citizens. The objective is that pupils pursue their passions, achieve their ambitions and develop the ability, disposition and inclination to make a difference to the world, for themselves and others.

### About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from predominantly professional family backgrounds within Lytham St Annes and the surrounding area. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils in the preparatory and senior schools is average, and in the sixth form above average. The school has identified 60 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, 32 of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHC). English is an additional language (EAL) for one pupil, whose needs are supported by classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified 99 pupils as being more able in the school's population and 102 pupils who have a particular talent, including in sport, music and art, for whom the curriculum is modified.

## 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. 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 does not meet all of the required 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 should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

### 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 In the senior school, the school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2020 to 2022 confirm 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 The school ensures that good behaviour is promoted and 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 Suitable arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to most of the current statutory guidance. However, not all required recruitment checks on adults who come into contact with children have been carried out in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022*, in particular those relating to employment references.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9-16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met, but that in paragraph 7 [safeguarding] is not met.**

### Action point 1

**The school must ensure that suitable references are received for all staff before the commencement of employment, to provide assurance they are suitable to undertake their role [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].**

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

- 2.12 The school does not make appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of supply staff. Appropriate checks are made on staff and proprietors. The central register of appointments is not kept as required.
- 2.13 A copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by an employment business before an agency worker is due to begin work at the school is not seen by the school. The school does not make clear to an employment business that it requires the employment business to provide a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate which the employment business obtains. The date on which such a certificate is seen is not recorded on the central register of appointments.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 17, 18, and 20 are met, but those in paragraphs 19 and 21 are not met.**

### **Action point 2**

**The school must ensure that it sees a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by an employment business before an agency worker is due to begin work at the school [paragraph 19(2)(a)(ii); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].**

### **Action point 3**

**The school, in the contract or other arrangements which the proprietor makes with any employment business, requires the employment business to provide a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by the employment business before an agency worker is due to begin work at the school [paragraph 19(2)(d)(ii); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].**

### **Action point 4**

**The school must ensure that it records on the register of appointments the date a copy of an enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by an employment business is seen by the school [paragraph 21(5)(c); EYFS 3.12].**

## **PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 2.15 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.
- 2.16 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

- 2.17 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 pupils 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.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.19 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.

**2.20 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.21 The proprietor has not ensured that the leadership and management, including governance, demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and that they have fulfilled their responsibilities effectively so that the other standards are consistently met. The standards relating to safeguarding and the suitability of staff have not been fully implemented. Leadership and management have not actively promoted the well-being of the pupils because they have not been thorough in ensuring that all appropriate recruitment checks are completed before staff commence employment at the school.

**2.22 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.**

### **Action point 5**

**The school must ensure that those with governance, leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and that they actively promote the well-being of pupils [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].**



### 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 display outstanding attitudes to learning when working both independently and with their peers.
- Pupils are excellent oral communicators; they discuss issues and debate topics with great confidence and maturity.
- Pupils' co-curricular achievements are extensive; pupils fully embrace everything the school has to offer.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent study skills; they develop over time into insightful and assured independent thinkers.
- Pupils' transferable skills, especially those relating to information and communications technology (ICT), are sometimes under-developed.

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

- Pupils possess high levels of self-understanding and show a strong awareness of how to improve their own learning.
- Pupils are shrewd, reflective thinkers, manifest in how they consider with care questions asked of them in conversation.
- Pupils demonstrate resilience in their learning and a tenacity to succeed when faced with challenges and difficult tasks.
- Pupils speak passionately about what matters most in the world and have a well-developed spiritual understanding.
- Pupils are fervent about making a difference; they make excellent contributions to charitable causes and when volunteering in the community.

#### Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Enable all pupils to develop their transferable skills, including those relating to ICT, by sharing best practice across both the school and the curriculum.

## 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' attitudes to learning are excellent, and often outstanding in the senior school. Pupils of all ages work exceptionally well with their peers, both in lessons and in co-curricular activities. Pupils work independently with focus and determination, and show great perseverance when faced with new and difficult challenges. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 12, pupils worked with persistence in developing their understanding of calculations using angles in radians. In a Year 3 English lesson, pupils worked with a high level of focus when adapting a passage of text from *The Secret of Black Rock*, independently using a word bank, thesaurus and dictionary to further improve their descriptive writing. In a numeracy lesson, children in Reception showed a high level of engagement when drawing a variety of shapes on a mini-whiteboard. Pupils are excited by and show a genuine love of learning and embrace all the school has to offer. Supported by the strong culture of achievement that is promoted by the school's leadership and endorsed across the school, pupils produce work of an excellent standard and often at a level beyond their years when given the opportunity to do so. This is evident, for example, in the many and varied individual inquiry projects on display across the school.
- 3.6 In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents agreed that teaching enables their child to make progress. In senior school, pupils make rapid progress in most subjects and attainment at both A level and GCSE is strong. Examination results from 2022 show that just under half of A-level results were graded A or A\*, and well over half of GCSE entries achieved top grades. This level of attainment is above national results and mirrors the centre-assessed and teacher-assessed results in 2020 and 2021. Data show that almost all pupils attain grades at GCSE and A level in line with those expected for their ability. In the prep school, data show that pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress compared to those taking the same tests nationally. Children in the EYFS make good progress, and data show that on completion of the EYFS profile in 2022, almost three-quarters of children reached their expected level of development.
- 3.7 Pupils, including those with SEND, display high levels of knowledge and understanding in most areas of the curriculum and exhibit strong subject skills. For example, in a Year 11 computer science lesson, pupils demonstrated impressive recall and application of coding and algorithm skills when studying error checking calculations. In an English lesson in Year 2, pupils were able to use expanded noun phrases with accuracy and to great effect to describe a desert island. More able pupils apply higher level understanding with ease, when given the chance to do so. For example, in a history lesson in Year 8, pupils analysed written sources with precision and evaluated the information gained to draw valid conclusions when investigating the character of Mary Tudor. Pupils of all ages show a high level of physical prowess, evident in the way pupils perform in physical education lessons and sports activities. Children in the EYFS show excellent levels of physical development through their strength and co-ordination skills. For example, in an EYFS dance lesson, all children actively clapped and moved in time to the music, adapting their clapping speed in response to the changing rhythm. Pupils demonstrate their unique creativity through the excellent work produced in drama, music and design technology. Artwork on display across the school is of an extremely high standard and reflects pupils' extensive artistic talent.
- 3.8 Pupils of all ages, including children in the EYFS, possess excellent communication skills. Pupils of all abilities are attentive listeners. They speak with confidence and maturity and use a wide range of vocabulary to express themselves succinctly. In senior school, pupils' written work, for example in English, is of a high standard and they write with great expression. In the prep school, written work is often of a similarly high quality. However, in some subjects pupils do not always show an age appropriate level of writing. This is due in part to the often prescriptive nature of teaching and the limited opportunity for open-ended responses, as evidenced in work scrutiny and lesson observations. Pupils, including those with SEND, read aloud with fluency and confidence. Pupils of all ages spoke of their love of reading, with prep pupils stating with wisdom that reading in lessons encourages them to read more outside of school, which in turn helps them to improve their vocabulary and use words

in different ways. Senior pupils reflected on how they communicate successfully through playing a musical instrument or by using body language, for example in drama when acting linear mime.

- 3.9 Pupils' mathematical skills are well-developed and more able pupils demonstrate high levels of mathematical understanding. In senior school, older pupils spoke of applying their numeracy skills with ease, for example, when analysing statistics in geography and business, and of how this often adds weight to their argument. Younger pupils reflected on how their numeracy skills have improved since the start of the academic year. They explained how they can now apply their numeracy skills more easily, for example in science, because teaching has provided effective explanations and enabled them to make progress. In the prep school, whilst pupils possess strong basic numeracy skills, inspectors found that pupils are less able to apply those skills in other contexts.
- 3.10 Pupils possess good ICT skills. They spoke with enthusiasm of how they confidently use the school's learning platform to effectively manage and complete their homework in a timely manner. Senior pupils explained how they use electronic teacher feedback to support their learning and help set individual targets. Whilst pupils of all ages spoke with knowledge about the software they use to enhance their learning, inspectors found that pupils' individual use and application of ICT is limited in lessons. This is due in part to ICT being used more as a means to enhance productivity rather than a mechanism to develop learning. When ICT is used in lessons inspectors sometimes found pupils' ICT skills to be under-developed.
- 3.11 Pupils possess excellent study skills and they relish academic challenge. More able pupils apply higher level thinking skills in context with ease. For example, in a Year 12 geography lesson, pupils creatively analysed information to draw inferences about the narrowing gap in development and wealth of countries when considering arguments as to why the Brandt line is outdated. Senior pupils spoke of how they effectively use the dedicated improvement and reflection time (DIRT) marking and feedback approach to aid their understanding and consolidate their knowledge. In a Year 10 English lesson, pupils used highly developed evaluative and reflective skills with confidence to improve each other's answers when creating a piece of writing based on *Of Mice and Men*. In a Year 9 music lesson, pupils successfully evaluated and critiqued a musical performance of their peers, by using previously learnt assessment and feedback techniques. In the best cases, pupils demonstrate divergent thinking when teaching provides challenge, enables collaborative working, and encourages questioning and debate. For example, in a Year 6 humanities lesson, pupils took on the role of being the chief of a village and worked together efficiently to construct well-considered arguments as to what should be included in their re-development of a ruined village. However, in some prep school lessons, pupils were sometimes limited in what they could achieve due to a lack of appropriate pace and challenge. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of pupils commented that lessons are not always interesting. In discussions, pupils said that although teachers know their subjects well, occasionally lessons do not always stimulate them, and lesson observations showed this to be true in a small number of cases.
- 3.12 Pupils' academic and other achievements are excellent. Pupils of all ages spoke with passion and excitement about their achievements, supported by an extensive programme that recognises and nurtures pupils' talents from an early age. Pupils achieve highly in science Olympiads, linguistic Olympiads and in the UK Maths challenge. Pupils have won national short story competitions and have had their artwork exhibited in local galleries and abroad as part of an international school arts festival in Japan. Pupils are successful in national competitions run by United Learning, showing the proprietor's commitment to supporting pupils to be the best they can be. School sports teams are successful at local and national level, and individual pupils have represented their country, for example in rugby, football, hockey and archery. Senior pupils spoke of how challenge within sport focuses their minds on performing at their very best level, due in part to the school's enhanced sports performance programme which is open to all pupils. Pupils gain places in national orchestras, national youth choirs, and prestigious music schools. Prep school pupils perform in senior school concerts and are successful in local choir competitions. Pupils achieve highly in LAMDA examinations, routinely gaining

distinctions. Senior pupils participate successfully in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and many achieve gold level. The school fulfils its aim of providing a broad, holistic education which enables pupils to pursue their passions and achieve their ambitions.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of self-understanding. Pupils of all ages display a level of maturity often beyond their years, due in part to the culture of reflective practice that is embedded throughout the school. For example, in weekly reflection time, senior pupils skilfully use their personal reflective journal to record and evaluate work done and to lay the pathway to improve their own learning. In a Year 7 learning to learn lesson, when asking with interest questions about Harvard referencing, pupils expressed an appreciation that such techniques will be useful for their future studies. Year 3 pupils were able to explain the importance of believing in yourself and that nothing is impossible, when asked how they cope with situations that are difficult. Pupils across the school possess high levels of self-confidence. They spoke of how sport helps them to develop their resilience as they learn to bounce back in the face of defeat. Pupils value personal success and are outwardly committed to driving forward their self-development. Leadership's focus on development of character and responsibility gives pupils the confidence to go forward and embrace the many opportunities for personal development that the school provides.
- 3.15 Pupils of all ages show an awareness that the decisions they make have consequences. Younger pupils are clear about what qualities to look for when choosing a friend, such as kindness and honesty, and older pupils feel well-equipped to make positive choices in personal relationships. Senior pupils spoke of being encouraged by teachers to make decisions about their learning and development, and this was evident through lesson observations. However, in the prep school observations showed that pupils' decision-making skills are at times under-developed because opportunities for pupils to make decisions in their learning are sometimes limited by more prescriptive teaching. Pupils of all ages make creative choices when voting for charities or choosing co-curricular activities. For example, prep school pupils spoke with excitement of how and why they had decided to support *HeroRATS* as their chosen charity. Year 13 pupils spoke knowledgeably of how to make informed choices as they apply for higher education courses. Prep school pupils explained how they influence what happens in school by being, for example, a pupil ambassador or a member of one of the six pupil committees.
- 3.16 Pupils' spiritual understanding is excellent. Senior pupils spoke with maturity of understanding the positive impact faith has on people who believe in God, even if they do not do so themselves. In a religious studies (RS) lesson in Year 13, pupils demonstrated an appreciation that different viewpoints matter when discussing whether belief in the continuation of personal existence after death is reasonable or not. In a Year 1 RS lesson, pupils thoughtfully and carefully considered and recorded things for which they are thankful, such as their families, animals and the environment. Pupils of all ages appreciate the beauty of their surroundings and pupils spoke of how being outdoors promotes positive well-being. Children in the EYFS showed a true love of nature when they reflected with pride on a collaborative piece of artwork that they had created using natural materials. Year 3 pupils spoke of how they enjoy sharing their feelings when speaking with their peers and of how this helps them to manage their emotions better. Senior pupils explained how the weekly dedicated period of self-reflection in form time and their use of the reflective journal are pivotal in helping to focus their mind on what matters most in life. Pupils reflected on how reading can create a sense of escapism and how music, sport and being creative can contribute to their personal development.
- 3.17 Pupils of all ages demonstrate a strong moral understanding. They show great awareness of how to be fair and considerate towards others and respectful of people who do not necessarily have the same viewpoints. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, and have high regard for the school rules. They appreciate that laws within wider society are there to protect and help people in

authority to maintain order in the community. Prep school pupils spoke of being willing to challenge inappropriate behaviour amongst their peers and explained how they resolve issues themselves in the playground by intervening when someone is upset. Older pupils spoke of how they act as positive role models for younger pupils, for example, by behaving well in and around school and acting as a mentor to younger pupils.

- 3.18 Pupils of all ages possess strong social skills. Pupils, including children in the EYFS, mix well together in lessons and work effectively with their peers, when given the chance to do so. Older pupils engage sensitively with younger pupils when working in activities across year groups. For example, when Year 8 pupils visited the prep school to deliver an assembly to launch the school's annual Christmas shoebox appeal, older pupils accompanied them to offer support. Pupils embrace every opportunity to socialise with others by participating in pastoral trips and activities. For example, pupils in Year 6 spoke of the benefits of going on adventure activity trips and of how they enable pupils to bond with their peers as they work together to overcome physical challenges. Pupils appreciate the school's strong sense of community and recognise that this binds them together. Older pupils reflect on the many benefits that being part of a small community brings and appreciate mixing with everyone in school and not just peers in their year group.
- 3.19 Pupils show great respect for their peers and value their diversity. They are accepting of one another's differences and show sensitivity and feeling in understanding others' needs. Older pupils recognise that diversity and inclusion are a strength of the school. This is supported by the international understanding that pupils gain from being part of a 'Round Square' school and the many benefits that brings. For example, senior pupils develop a deeper appreciation of cultural differences and the diversity of the traditions around the world by participating in 'Round Square' conferences, in places such as India and Canada, and expeditions to countries such as Vietnam and Tanzania. Pupils spoke of a sense of belonging that exists, and of how the school is a happy place to be. From a young age, pupils are able to understand that all people are equal no matter what their race, faith or gender is, and they discussed with pride how the school accepts and celebrates all faiths and cultures.
- 3.20 Pupils know how to stay safe, including when online. In questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of pupils agreed that they can speak to an adult in school if they are worried about something. Pupils spoke knowledgeably of the many avenues open to them, such as speaking with matron or their form teacher. Senior pupils value the 'VENT' referral system and the safe space to be heard and listened to that it offers them. Sixth-form VENT ambassadors spoke of how they support and mentor younger pupils. Year 6 pupils spoke with pride about being well-being ambassadors. Others explained how they had found the support offered by well-being ambassadors helpful when first joining the school, as it enabled them to establish new friendships quickly. Senior pupils spoke of keeping mentally healthy by building physical fitness and creative pastimes into their daily lives. They spoke too of the need to relax whenever possible to help ease the mental pressure of constant academic study. Pupils reflected on the need to choose healthy food options and to take a balanced approach to what they eat across each day, for example opting to eat fruit as a pudding to compensate for their choice of sugary snacks at break time.
- 3.21 Pupils across the school play an active role in contributing to the school community. Sixth-form prefects spoke of feeling empowered to watch out for and help younger pupils. Year 6 ambassadors carry out duties and responsibilities with purpose and pride. Pupils make an excellent contribution to wider society and seek to make a difference. Senior pupils spoke of how the school's extensive outreach work both locally and globally gives them a better appreciation of the needs of others and of how the 'Round Square' ideal of leadership and service is integral to that. Pupils of all ages, including children in the EYFS, make excellent contributions to charitable causes, for example, the Streetlife Trust harvest collection, Amnesty International, and through joint fundraising events with the local Rotary Club. Prep school pupils spoke of visiting a local nursing home to entertain residents. Older pupils spoke of giving their time to volunteer in the local community as part of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. As part of a project to help combat loneliness in the local community, senior pupils

regularly invite elderly people into school to attend various activities including coffee mornings and ICT lessons. The school fulfils its aim to enable pupils to grow into global citizens who are equipped to make a difference to the world.

## 4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited 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

Ms Adrienne Richmond	Reporting inspector
Mrs Lynne Renwick	Compliance team inspector (Former head, GSA school)
Mrs Tania Davidson	Team inspector (Deputy head, GSA school)
Mr Tom Keenan	Team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mr Karl Meier	Team inspector (Deputy head, GSA/HMC school)
Mr James Mundell	Team inspector (Head of junior school, HMC school)