



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Lochinver House School

February 2022

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School's Details

School College	Lochinver House School			
DfE number	919/6201			
Registered charity number	1091045			
Address	Lochinver House School Heath Road Potters Bar Hertfordshire EN6 1LW			
Telephone number	01707 653064			
Email address	schooloffice@lochinverhouse.com			
Headmaster	Mr Ben Walker			
Chair of governors	Mr William Moores			
Age range	4 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	347			
	EYFS	40	Juniors	236
	Seniors	71		
Inspection dates	22 to 25 February 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Lochinver House School is a preparatory day school for male pupils aged 4 to 13. It was founded in 1947 and is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, overseen by a board of governors. The school comprises two sections: the pre-preparatory (pre-prep) department, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for pupils from Reception to Year 2, and the senior department, for pupils from Year 3 to Year 8.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open for children of key workers. In line with government guidelines, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils returned in June and other year groups attended for a week in rotation prior to the end of the summer term.
- 1.3 During this period of closure, the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.4 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.5 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.6 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.7 The school aims to provide pupils with the tools to succeed and the encouragement to persevere within an effective relationship with parents. It seeks to provide high quality teaching and learning, with a particular emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

About the pupils

- 1.8 Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. Pupils come from a culturally diverse range of backgrounds, reflecting the suburban and North London locality from which they are drawn. Pupils come from predominantly business and professional families. The school has identified 57 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 54 of whom receive additional support. No pupils have an Education, Health and Care plan or statement of special educational needs. There are 40 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. The curriculum is modified for pupils who show special talents in sport, music, art and drama.

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 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 up to Year 6 and relationships and sex education in Years 7 and 8, 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 well-being 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 have excellent communication skills, are extremely articulate and listen well to their teachers and each other.
- All pupils develop high levels of knowledge and skills in all areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils effectively use their advanced information and communications technology (ICT) skills in all areas of their learning.
- Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning and have developed a high level of study skills for their age.

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

- Pupils show excellent self-understanding, resilience and self-confidence.
- Pupils have a spiritual understanding that is mature for their age.
- Pupils' moral understanding is well-developed, and they readily take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Pupils have extremely strong social awareness and show respect for, and appreciation of, their own and other cultures.

Recommendation

In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to:

- ensure that older pupils improve the presentation and organisation of their work to better prepare them for the increased demands in the next stages of their education.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.4 Pupils of all abilities achieve high academic standards. They make fast progress over time from their individual starting points, reflecting the school's successful aim to challenge each one to try his best and to persevere. The vast majority of pupils in the EYFS achieve the expected learning outcomes by the end of Reception. Most pupils attain results in standardised assessments for English, mathematics, verbal and non-verbal reasoning that are well above the average for pupils taking these tests. The youngest pupils make rapid progress, encouraged by sensitive teaching in a nurturing and well-

resourced environment. The strengths and weaknesses of pupils are recognised in detailed analysis of assessments by senior leaders, enabling those who are having academic difficulties to be effectively supported and those who are more able to be challenged further. The vast majority of pupils are successful in entrance examinations and are offered a place at the senior school of their choice, and a good proportion are awarded academic, music, sport or art scholarships. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching, including any online provision, enables pupils to make progress and that the school meets their individual needs effectively.

- 3.5 The development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is excellent. The school is successful in its aim to inspire pupils through high-quality teaching and learning. The leaders' and proprietors' commitment to offering an education of breadth and depth means pupils develop high levels of skill in academic, aesthetic, creative and physical subjects. In the EYFS, pupils establish firm foundations to their learning through a range of engaging and purposeful activities and progress quickly in acquiring early literacy and numeracy skills. In later years, pupils use technical language with accuracy and perception in science, technology and humanities. For example, in a science lesson, Year 5 pupils spontaneously described the moon as a non-luminous body and demonstrated sophisticated knowledge when discussing satellites. Many pupils show outstanding levels of musicianship, as seen in a confident performance by the woodwind band in assembly. In a music lesson, Year 6 pupils skilfully performed their excellent compositions of 12-bar blues, using syncopated rhythms, chord sequences, some with an improvised melody. Pupils become skilful artists. For example, pupils in Year 7 confidently analysed Constable's *Hay Wain* while studying landscape composition and used a range of techniques for different effects in their own work.
- 3.6 Pupils show excellent communication skills, which they confidently apply in their learning. They are extremely articulate and express themselves clearly. The youngest pupils listen carefully to each other, taking turns to speak and listen, and progress quickly in using phonics and writing simple sentences. They rapidly become confident readers and recognise that traditional stories make effective use of story structure and vocabulary. Pupils' writing skills develop at a fast pace, supported by praise and constructive feedback from teachers. They successfully write in a range of styles for different purposes using a clear, cursive script. Pupils draw on a wide range of descriptive vocabulary in their work. For example, Year 1 pupils effectively chose words such as nervous and chaotic to describe feelings and atmosphere in poems. Pupils apply an increasing range of literary devices to their writing, independently producing imaginative and interesting pieces of extended work. They demonstrate high levels of speaking skills to deliver captivating and eloquent presentations in lessons and assemblies. Pupils contribute confidently in lessons when challenged to express their thinking. In a history lesson, Year 6 pupils eloquently discussed key questions relating to the World War II invasion of Russia.
- 3.7 Pupils are extremely competent in using ICT in their learning, supported by the comprehensive computing curriculum, specialist teaching and benefitting from the governors' investment in resources. From an early age, pupils use technology to discover new information and independently create presentations and films. Reception pupils develop excellent mouse control and design attractive e-houses. Pupils become adept at using ICT, employing portable electronic devices with ease. They use a range of programs to enhance and extend their learning in other curriculum areas and to support their creativity. For example, Year 6 pupils use digital technology in the design of 3-D models and make films in other curriculum areas to present their work in an innovative manner. They become confident in the importance of respectful online communication and the oldest pupils are knowledgeable and confident in structuring static web pages using HTML.
- 3.8 Pupils' numeracy skills are strong and are successfully applied to problem solving activities in other areas of learning. From the earliest years, pupils develop confident arithmetical fluency and a secure depth of knowledge and skills, supported by clear and thorough teaching. They confidently rise to the challenges of problem solving and mathematical reasoning tasks, without having to memorise procedures. Pupils are confident when answering questions, as well as being self-assured when explaining their mathematical thinking to their peers. In a mathematics lesson, Year 6 pupils

confidently manipulated numbers as they multiplied fractions and instinctively simplified them into an integer to help the process. By the top year, pupils confidently draw upon and apply an array of methods and reasoning skills to solve advanced mathematical problems. For example, Year 8 pupils showed excellent understanding of approaches to tackling simultaneous equations, justifying their answers and thinking.

- 3.9 The school successfully meets its aims to empower pupils to become independent thinkers and to encourage them to be curious, ambitious and not to fear failure. Pupils develop effective study skills as they progress through the school, and apply them instinctively to their learning. They are quick to process, analyse and question and frequently hypothesise and synthesise information in science experiments and the many opportunities to problem solve. In a science investigation, Year 3 pupils instinctively predicted whether materials were magnetic or non-magnetic. Pupils focus well in their lessons, showing initiative as they enthusiastically approach challenging questions. In a mathematics lesson using fractions, Year 4 pupils estimated answers using prior knowledge combined with information in the problems they were solving. In history work, Year 5 pupils capably recorded their hypothesis on the impacts of the East India Company on the British Empire, synthesising information to conclude how it became a turning point in the history of economics. Pupils show resilience when they find things tricky, originality and reflectiveness in their thinking and appreciate that collaboration with others can enrich knowledge and understanding. Their positive approach distinctly reflects the Lochinver *Seven Powers of Learning* (LSPL) which is consistently encouraged by senior leaders.
- 3.10 Pupils show extremely positive attitudes towards their studies and high levels of motivation, spurred on by the school motto: *To persevere. To succeed.* They quickly settle down to tasks, relish challenges and successfully work both independently and in groups. Pupils are conscientious and attentive in all areas of school life, responding willingly to the high expectations of their teachers and school leaders. They take leadership in their learning by posing questions and persevering, understanding at an early age that errors provide opportunities to improve, learn and grow. The large majority of pupils said that lessons are interesting and their teachers' marking helps them to improve. Most pupils take great care in the organisation and presentation of their work, encouraged by detailed feedback from teachers. In a few subjects at the top of the school less care is taken where the feedback is not as constructive. Pupils in the EYFS show early independence in their learning by selecting activities and resources from the many available. Older pupils use a range of resources to inform and enhance their achievement and employ their mature communication skills to discuss and explain their thinking and reasoning.
- 3.11 The level of pupils' success in a wide range of activities is excellent. They respond positively to the commitment of their teachers and ambitious expectations set by the school leaders. Teams are highly successful in inter-school fixtures in a variety of sports, benefitting from the specialist coaching and excellent facilities available to them. Some pupils represent the county in their sport. In recent years, the senior football and basketball teams were finalists in a national competition. The majority of pupils learn a musical instrument, many achieve high levels of proficiency with some playing in national orchestras. Pupils are especially successful in local competitive music festivals. Those who work towards graded music and LAMDA examinations achieve excellent results. Pupils are highly successful in national competitions and challenges, notably in mathematics, technology, science and literacy. The overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.12 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.13 Pupils of all ages show high levels of self-knowledge, self-confidence, determination and resilience within an environment that aims to develop individuals who are at ease with themselves and confident with others. They persevere, encouraged by the firmly understood powers of learning and recognise

that failure and errors are to be learned from. Pupils in the pre-prep show mature levels of self-confidence in show-and-tell sessions, expressing their individual interests clearly. Pupils understand how to improve their work through effective self-reflection. For example, in art Year 3 pupils considered how they created their piece, what they liked about it, ways they could improve it and how well they had fulfilled the learning objectives. In discussions, pupils expressed confidence in their own abilities and talents and are happy to be themselves. They readily accept increasing responsibility for their learning, recognising that as they get older more is expected. Pupils at the top of the school successfully employ revision techniques in preparation for senior school entrance exams. In their questionnaire responses, a minority of pupils indicated that they have not received helpful careers advice. The inspectors found that the school provides a well-established programme of careers-related activities, including work shadowing, but some have been affected by the pandemic. Almost all pupils feel they are prepared well for life in senior school and most parents agree.

- 3.14 Pupils develop excellent levels of spiritual understanding, supported by the school's emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They show immense appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, describing them as things that make you feel good inside and don't have to be paid for. Pupils appreciate the beauty of the natural world and described the pleasure of going outside for the first time after the pandemic lockdowns. The youngest pupils delight in being outside and excitedly expressed their wonderment at finding minibeasts. In discussions, pupils demonstrated their ability to express a range of feelings and emotions in response to poetry, music and art. They talked of the specialness of events such as the annual candlelit carol service and how uplifting the school band's performance was in assembly. In a theology, philosophy and religious studies lesson Year 8 pupils thoughtfully explored nihilism and resurrection, whilst prayers said during assembly and consideration of the meaning of Bible stories showed pupils' strong understanding of spirituality in the context of religion.
- 3.15 Pupils show great respect for everyone in the school, regardless of their background or role. They are fully accepting of each other and enjoy learning about different cultures, beliefs and traditions through many subject areas, such as religious education (RE), relationship education (RSE) and the comprehensive PSHE curriculum. The friendly ethos of the school and positive relationships between everyone supports this. Pupils appreciate their own and other cultures and show great interest in the beliefs and traditions celebrated by others. In discussions, they show a clear understanding of the meaning of the term diversity and gave examples of different religious and cultural backgrounds. They place an emphasis on respect, which is one of the school's core values and enjoy being part of their culturally diverse school, finding talks about cultural and religious festivals of great interest. Pupils showed their understanding of cultural differences over the past 75 years with the design of new school crests to incorporate diversity. In their responses, the vast majority of parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people.
- 3.16 Pupils show a mature level of moral understanding, confidence in the difference between right and wrong and accept responsibility for their own behaviour. In their responses, most agreed that other pupils are kind and respectful. Their excellent behaviour reflects the school values of kindness, honesty and respect and the effectively delivered PSHE and RSE programmes, creating an environment where pupils feel happy and comfortable to be themselves. All pupils are confident and polite when meeting new people, and show excellent manners. Discussions with staff and pupils and scrutiny of records show that when issues arise, they are fairly and sensitively managed, helping pupils to learn from the consequences of their actions. Pupils understand and respect that the clear range of rewards and sanctions are there to encourage them and believe that they are awarded fairly. Acts of thoughtfulness are celebrated with awards in the same way as academic and other achievements. All pupils said that the school expects good behaviour and most agreed that it sorts out any poor behaviour and takes bullying seriously. The pro-active approach to anti-bullying throughout the school is enhanced by the efforts of the pupils' anti-bullying council (ABC).

- 3.17 Pupils' social skills are highly developed, actively encouraged by the school's emphasis on social development. They work extremely well together in groups, teams and ensembles towards common goals. From their first days in the school, pupils form mutually supportive and respectful friendships with both their peers and pupils in different year groups. Older musicians mentor less experienced instrumentalists in the school orchestra with great empathy. Pupils confidently and effectively work together in their vertical house teams in a range of competitions and events and in extra-curricular clubs. They evaluate each other's performances, taking care to provide positive feedback, and debate robustly and confidently in the philosophy and debating clubs, whilst respecting different points of view. Pupils demonstrate mature levels of emotional literacy for their age. A very large majority of parents and pupils said in their questionnaire responses that the leadership listens and responds to pupils' views about the school.
- 3.18 From the earliest years, pupils are very aware of how to keep healthy and safe both physically and mentally, including when on line, supported by lessons in science, physical education and the well planned PSHE programme. In discussions, pupils showed that they are very aware of the benefits and enjoyment to be gained from the range of sports available to them and young pupils spoke of how they benefit from their *welly-time* sessions outside. During a workshop on keeping healthy, Reception pupils confirmed their secure knowledge of how to have a healthy body by the clarity of their response and energetic demonstrations. In a PSHE lesson Year 6 pupils showed the ability to reflect and respond to different scenarios relating to physical and mental health. They realise the benefits of talking if they have concerns or anxieties and expressed appreciation of the various pastoral staff available to them. In discussions, pupils recognised the value of a balanced lifestyle in order to feel happy. They know how to stay safe online, citing information gained from their computing lessons, the e-safety week and specialist guest speakers. Almost all parents and pupils agreed that the school encourages the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.
- 3.19 Pupils' decision-making is well developed. They make informed and well-considered decisions from an early age and can present reasoned arguments for different courses of action. In Reception, pupils assuredly decide which resources to use in solving problems and which activities to choose outdoors, sensitively guided by teachers. Year 1 pupils confidently decide how to set out their work and Year 2 pupils make quick decisions about where to put things when efficiently unpacking their book bags. Pupils consider carefully who to elect for school committees such as the school council, realising that this will affect how they are represented. Older pupils make choices of challenges, project work and which of the many extra-curricular activities to pursue. Pupils understand that by deciding to persevere they will achieve their best and by behaving well they will enjoy school. Those at the top of the school recognise the importance of decisions relating to the next phase of their education, understanding how this may affect their happiness as well as achievements. They discuss the options thoughtfully with their teachers.
- 3.20 The way in which pupils contribute to others, the school and community is excellent. They are socially aware and contribute positively to the lives of their immediate and wider community. Senior pupils become supportive reading buddies with those in the pre-prep and voluntarily support them at break times by being football referees. Pupils aspire to leadership roles, showing commitment and responsibility as they support their community as captains, ambassadors, librarians and heads of school. As members of the school council, the pre-prep's Lochinver environmental organisation and the ABC work together to have a positive impact on the whole school. Pupils demonstrate a mature sense of responsibility and initiative and act as positive role models for others. As a whole-school community they work together to select and support a range of local and national charities, led by the oldest pupils.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support area. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Penelope Austin	Reporting inspector
Miss Kaye Lovejoy	Compliance team inspector (Former head, ISA school)
Mr Robert Francis	Team inspector (Head, ISA school)