



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Regulatory Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports**  
**Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report**  
**For Schools with Residential Provision**

**Roedean School**

**November 2021**

## 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	7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	7
<b>3. Educational Quality Inspection</b>	<b>8</b>
Preface	8
Key findings	8
Recommendation	8
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements	8
The quality of the pupils' personal development	11
<b>4. Inspection Evidence</b>	<b>14</b>

### School's Details

<b>School</b>	Roedean School			
<b>DfE number</b>	846/6006			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	307063			
<b>Address</b>	Roedean School Roedean Way Brighton East Sussex BN2 5RQ			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 667500			
<b>Email address</b>	schooloffice@roedean.co.uk			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Oliver Blond			
<b>Interim Chair of Council</b>	Ms Vivien Smiley			
<b>Age range</b>	11 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	675			
	<b>Day pupils</b>	343	<b>Boarders</b>	332
	<b>Seniors</b>	522	<b>Sixth Form</b>	153
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2 to 5 November 2021			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Roedean is an independent day and boarding school registered for female pupils aged between 11 and 18. The school was founded in 1885 and constituted by Royal Charter in 1938. It is a charitable trust, overseen by a board of trustees known as the Council. The school is located in Brighton, on the edge of the Sussex Downs and comprises six boarding houses on the main school site, two of which are primarily for sixth formers. Since the previous inspection, Roedean has refurbished its boarding accommodation, theatre and other sporting provision, and built an all-purpose floodlit sports pitch.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers. No boarders remained on site. During this period of closure the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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, or with guardians in the case of overseas boarders.
- 1.6 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations in these two years, centre-assessed and teacher-assessed grades respectively were awarded.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.7 The school aims to inspire and challenge every student to develop her strengths and passions, to seek the highest academic and personal standards for herself, and to develop a strong foundation for her future. In particular, it seeks to develop happiness and an awareness of their own well-being; curiosity; engagement; independence; creativity; confidence and compassion.

### About the pupils

- 1.8 Pupils come from a wide range of professional and business backgrounds, mostly from East Sussex and overseas. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in the senior school and sixth form is above average for those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 55 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 28 of whom receive additional help. No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 170 pupils, 87 of whom receive specialist support. Data used by the school has identified 59 pupils as the most able in its population, and the curriculum is adjusted for them and for 134 other pupils because of their special talents in performing arts, sport and art.

## 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, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. 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 REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS.** 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.

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](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and associated requirements and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

### **PART 1 – Quality of education provided**

- 2.2 At GCSE in the years 2020 to 2021, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2020 to 2021 have 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 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. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are 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 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.11 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, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 and 20 are met.**

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

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 are met.**

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

- 2.14 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

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

- 2.16 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

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

- 2.18 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.**

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

- 2.20 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. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are 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 attain highly at A level, GCSE, and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), making rapid progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school.
- Pupils' communication skills are outstanding. They are excellent listeners and speak with confidence, clarity and occasionally passion, transcending age or national background.
- Pupils are highly engaged in lessons and thrive when working in groups. When challenged to take the initiative in lessons, they show independence of thought and approach.
- Pupils enjoy physical exercise and the outdoor pursuits provided by the co-curricular programme and have a strong sporting record, although their development in the GCSE years is affected by the extra focus on public examinations.

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

- Pupils of all ages have considerable self-knowledge and an astute perception of their changing responsibilities as they grow up in a community that draws from diverse national backgrounds.
- Pupils' moral understanding is a major strength, and they show a clear awareness of ethical principles when making decisions.
- Pupils contribute enthusiastically to the community and demonstrate high levels of respect for diversity and other cultures.
- Pupils have a mature awareness of current social issues around sexual relationships and race, and speak appreciatively of the support given by the school in these areas.

#### Recommendation

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

- Further promoting the physical and mental health of pupils studying GCSEs by introducing structural changes to provide a broader 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' attainment at A level has been consistently high during the years 2017–2019, with well over two-thirds of results achieved an A\* or A. The centre-assessed and teacher-assessed grades show



improvement on this already strong base, with four-fifths of results at one of the top grades, and nearly half at A\*. The very high level of attainment is a consequence of the pupils' exceptional attitudes to learning supported by structural changes in the curriculum and focused academic support during the uncertainty of the last two years. Pupils feel well prepared academically and socially for the next stage in their education, and almost all achieve offers of places at universities in the UK and worldwide, art and music colleges which have highly selective entry requirements. In discussions, pupils cited the influence of the careers programme including the support given by former pupils.

- 3.6 GCSE results provide equally persuasive evidence of the quality of learning and teaching. During the three-year period to 2019 the majority of results are at the highest two grades. Over half the results of the centre-assessed and teacher-assessed were graded at the very highest level. Data analysed show that at both GCSE and A level almost all pupils achieve significantly higher examination grades than expected for their ability, indicating rapid progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. SEND pupils make progress in line with their peers. In the pre-inspection questionnaires that were overwhelmingly positive about every aspect of the school, including the quality of governance and leadership, the vast majority of parents stated that their child's individual educational needs were met effectively. Pupils spoke of the value of the support they were given for any specific educational difficulty, for example dyslexia, but a very small minority stated that teaching was not always adjusted to their needs. The school's leadership has already identified this as a focus for professional development.
- 3.7 Pupils have roots in over 40 countries across the world; data show that pupils for whom English is an additional or alternative language make very rapid progress at both GCSE and A level, outperforming the already high overall benchmark, supported by teaching that shows an astute awareness of their needs. For example, sixth-form mathematicians quickly developed their understanding of three dimensional linear and rotational transformations because teaching allowed pupils time to process complex linguistically complex arguments. In almost all lessons pupils' learning is underpinned by a focus on technical language, such as when EAL pupils studying a one-year biology GCSE recalled without error scientific terms for parts of the digestive system and sixth formers in a politics lesson demonstrated an outstanding grasp of English as an alternative language, communicating confidently with grammar, understanding, correct idiom and terminology equivalent to the first language speakers.
- 3.8 Pupils develop excellent mathematical knowledge and high levels of skills. They are quick and accurate numerically, as reflected in the exceptional results in examinations and individual performances in mathematics Olympiads. Their progress is enhanced by teaching that adjusts to ability and need, such as in GCSE lessons when pupils in middle sets were allowed to use their own methods to factorise quadratic equations, whilst pupils of lower ability gained confidence through a more directed instruction in calculating the interior angle of a parallelogram. Pupils apply mathematics seamlessly to other subjects. For example, showing good cognizance of percentage errors when measuring angles in an optics experiment. In the questionnaires, a very large majority of pupils stated that their teachers know their subjects well and strongly support their learning; inspection evidence supports this view.
- 3.9 Pupils have excellent linguistic ability, showing good skills in French, Spanish and Latin. Sixth form pupils' written work demonstrated an advanced understanding of language in their Vigil's Aeneid, moving far beyond just translating Latin into English. GCSE pupils demonstrated good and developing linguistic skills when identifying the effects of language and wider connotations in a discussion on the presentation of witches in *Macbeth*. In their studies of the humanities pupils develop excellent understanding of their place in space and time. Sixth-form geographers showed strong appreciation of the aesthetic qualities of sand dune management systems in addition to the social and economic impact, demonstrating excellent ability to draw together knowledge and skills from a wide range of different areas of learning and make nuanced judgements. In technology, art and science they demonstrate confident dexterity with a variety of materials. Pupils produce artwork of exceptional quality, and portfolios show the development of sophisticated techniques, such as in gouache

portraits using a subtlety of skin tones and neutral expression. Pupils showed a strong critical appreciation for example uncovering an outstanding grasp of detail and nuance in their reflective descriptions of the varying aesthetic qualities of the exhibits observed on a visit to the Victoria and Albert museum. Younger pupils produced a creative response rooted in historical fact in the form of a letter written in 1557 following the death of Edward VI, showing imagination and empathy. GCSE pupils showed initiative and independence in their Gothic style creative writing tasks. Inspection observations and a survey of documentation confirms that pupils reach good and sometimes high levels in the performing arts, and routinely achieve distinctions at grade 8 in Associated Board and Trinity Music examinations or from LAMDA or the Royal Academy of Dance.

- 3.10 Pupils relish the opportunities for physical exercise, whether through the outstanding provision for sport or outdoor extra-curricular activity. A large number of pupils achieve The Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) at silver or gold level each year. The record of achievement in a range of sports is outstanding, and pupils say they enjoy the opportunity for participation in myriad school fixtures, whatever their level of competence. In 2020, Roedean was selected as one of the country's top schools for girls' cricket by *The Cricketer* magazine, reflecting the Council's considerable investment in the facilities. In discussion and in response to the questionnaires, pupils in Years 7 to 9 and the sixth form were happier with the balance of opportunity than those in the GCSE years. The school's leadership are already aware of the considerable pressures on these year groups, exacerbated and intensified by the educational and social constraints of the last two years, and that the curriculum has not adjusted to those influences. Although the vast majority of responses to the pupil questionnaires were positive and supportive of the school, any divergence was in these year groups.
- 3.11 Pupils' communication skills are outstanding. Foremost they are excellent listeners, whether in lessons, Chapel, assembly or smaller discussions. Pupils speak with confidence and clarity in public, where they are well prepared, adjusting style to the audience. They are skilled at answering questions following presentations and select appropriate language to discuss sensitive issues. In lessons they politely interrupt without reticence, and lucidly articulate their questions or areas of misunderstanding. The teaching-learning divide is seamless. Almost all pupils completed the questionnaires, and over a quarter of pupils held focused discussions with inspectors, showing mature perspective, and an openness to both agree with and challenge each other, often drawing on their own and others' experience. In discussions younger pupils were enthusiastic about reading, and all were able to speak informatively about fiction they were reading outside class, citing the library page in the school newsletter as a strong influence on their choice of book.
- 3.12 Pupils are very competent users of information and communication technology (ICT), showing informed judgement about when and where to use it as an aid to their learning. Younger pupils showed good skills and enthusiasm in the embryonic stages of a computational thinking course, and GCSE and sixth-form pupils use commercial software with confidence. In the questionnaires most pupils said they found lessons interesting, and teaching is well-equipped with ICT and other resources.
- 3.13 In line with the school's aim, pupils develop intellectual curiosity and a love of learning as they move through the school. An increasing number of pupils has completed the EPQ as an elective, and results match the high standards achieved in other public examinations. Pupils display excellent study skills. By the time they leave, they are able to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise, and make clear distinctions, generalisations and judgements as they formulate arguments and present complex ideas. They relish the opportunity to extend their thinking, especially when they are working in pairs and in groups in interactive lessons. GCSE dance pupils showed a mature approach in the drafting and redrafting of choreography pieces in response to self-reflection and feedback, and expertise when analysing accounts of the death of Charles the 2<sup>nd</sup> to draw out ideas of approaches to medicine in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. An essay on *The Night of the Long Knives* drew on a large number of varied sources and showed a sophisticated ability to distil evidence. Senior pupils achieve highly in science Olympiads, and sixth formers have won national essay, mathematics and poetry competitions.

3.14 Pupils show an outstanding attitude to learning. The GCSE design pupils demonstrated excellent independence and initiative in their development of their ideas, with high levels of concentration, confidence and purposeful direction. Sixth-form politics students were dynamic in collaborative discussion, listening and responding with enthusiasm and initiating questions from each other. In economics, overseas pupils accessing the lesson remotely worked independently and contributed complex ideas via a whiteboard whilst the pupils in the class engaged in group work. Boarders spoke positively of the responsibility given to pupils to organise their own academic studies, although others said they would appreciate more subject-specific support during boarding time. Pupils' attitudes, underpinned by adaptable teaching and the leadership's strong awareness of the changing needs of pupils are the major factors in ensuring that the school meets its founding aim to provide a distinctively academic high-quality, all-round education.

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

- 3.15 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.16 In line with the school's aspirations pupils develop a strong sense of belonging together with pride in themselves and the school. In an exploration of identity through the poetry of Wilfred Owen pupils wrote that they empathised with identity being a conflicting journey which changes throughout one's life. They are reflective and resilient in many aspects, including settling in as new boarders and managing the peaks and troughs of friendships. In discussions, boarders demonstrated strong self-awareness about their approach to relationships and mental health issues.
- 3.17 Pupils of all ages demonstrate a tangible maturity and depth in the quality of understanding about their own personal growth, having many opportunities to develop this, including being encouraged to set their own targets. There is an emphasis on metacognition, particularly for SEND pupils, so that they develop an understanding of their own learning. Older pupils are especially self-aware when reflecting on their learning and the support they need; evidence from work scrutiny demonstrates that pupils reflect on the feedback they receive to make the improvements needed to achieve their academic goals.
- 3.18 The high quality of pupils' discussions in class suggests they are well accustomed to thinking through the various elements required to make decisions in different situations. Pupils understand that decisions they make personally can be influential in changes being made both within the school and local community. They can explain and weigh the factors in their own personal decision-making process. Pupils show that they are aware of the importance of making decisions and are helped to develop the skills to make considered choices about their work and their lives. They are keen for their voices to be heard within the school but are accepting that there are often different views to their own, as demonstrated in discussion with inspectors, when pupils warned against universalising personal experience to the wider pupil body.
- 3.19 Pupils show a strong awareness of ethical principles when making decisions. They have a clear sense of right and wrong when discussing subjects such as bullying and racism and recognise the need for the community to be welcoming and inclusive. In discussion they emphasised the importance of kindness, fulfilling the school's aim that they should develop a generosity of spirit, tolerance and compassion. In responses to questionnaires, almost all pupils reported that the school expects pupils to behave well, and only a very small minority thought that poor behaviour was not managed. Both victims and perpetrators spoke positively about the support they had received when incidents have arisen. Pupils gradually develop the sophistication to apply moral argument to world affairs. GCSE pupils reflected that the lack of teaching in western history of the role of other nations in World War Two was morally disrespectful, and sixth-form historians made nuanced moral judgements between

primary sources contrasting the views of white Americans with the lived experience of African Americans.

- 3.20 Pupils show a good appreciation of non-material aspects of life which they would not naturally define as spiritual awareness. They found it difficult to identify times in the day when they might quietly reflect, other than in chapel where they respond strongly to the messages of Christianity and other major world faiths. Examples of their deeper feelings were apparent in lessons. Sixth formers in philosophy and ethics discussed the essence of the soul and how this might be similar or different to the mind. A GCSE pupil described how a museum visit inspired her to centre art projects on the theme of disappointment, and younger pupils enthusiastically attempted to identify the Holy Trinity in contemporary life. Many pupils articulated the uplift they felt when raising their eyes to the beautiful backcloth of the school's setting, some breaking their homeward journey to stop and watch the rays of the setting sun splicing into the sea. New pupils described the inspiration from the imposing buildings, sweeping grounds and gardens.
- 3.21 Pupils of all ages are socially aware, working effectively with others to solve problems and achieve common goals and showing perception in identifying where change is required. Boarders can clearly articulate the benefits which they feel the boarding experience brings to them. They show empathy towards each other and are inclusive of others in lessons and in their social relationships. Their strong self-awareness is matched by their awareness of the strengths of others. In a design lesson, pupils assigned management, creative and organisational roles in their small groups, and strategic conversations in sport focused on individual talents in the team, neither context being characterised by any pupil seeking to dominate the group. Pupils were able to clearly explain the impact that fast fashion has on the global climate to a very high standard and explain how they can work as a school community to help reduce this. Sixth-form economists demonstrated strong social awareness, working effectively with each other in a group revision exercise, teaching each other and ensuring each member of the group understood the theory in a competitive team exercise. Pupils are adept at recognising and showing sympathy towards others with particular needs and characteristics. Their willingness to cooperate does not prevent lively discussion, where pupils feel able to disagree and give alternative or opposing views, confident that outliers are given equal heed as mainstream views. In a personal development session, GCSE pupils worked effectively in groups to discuss scenarios around consent, including and listening thoughtfully to all before coming to a consensus. Although a very small minority of pupils were more negative about the social aspects of school in the questionnaires and discussion, documentary evidence and conversations with staff and pupils confirm that the leadership and pastoral team have used their detailed knowledge of individual pupils to already identify that for some the effects of Covid-19 and the move from Year 9 to Year 10 has checked their social development.
- 3.22 Pupils contribute enthusiastically to the community and gain significant confidence and self-esteem from opportunities to share their time. An older pupil commented how working at local schools and charities and with the Blind Veterans had given her a much deeper ability to communicate with people from different environments. Younger boarders spoke of the impact that older pupils have on their personal development and happiness. For example, in a personal development session, sixth-form pupils skilfully engaged and drew out discussion from younger pupils and about unwanted attention. Much of the school's charity work is longstanding, but some has been initiated by pupils themselves, for example in creating a sustainability charter. Pupils readily volunteer for leadership roles and those which require specific skills and expertise. For example, as sports leaders, peer listeners or farm prefects.
- 3.23 Respect for diversity and other cultures is excellent and a strength of the school. The multi-cultural nature of the boarding community is a distinctive feature of the school and boarders of all ages speak of their joy of being part of a society that is rooted in so many nationalities. Pupils grasp the many opportunities provided to discuss issues of diversity with enthusiasm, knowledge and interest both in informal discussion and in lessons, demonstrating excellent self-awareness and a respect for those

who are considering their gender identity. Boarders from different religious and ethnic backgrounds appreciate the interest that is shown in the very many celebrations of religious festivals and feel welcomed and included. A very few pupils talked about a few number of racist incidents, but reported that they were the result of misjudgement in language or attitude, and that they had been swiftly and effectively addressed by the school. The school has worked hard to ensure that equality of opportunity for those from all backgrounds is threaded through every aspect of school life. In a GCSE English lesson pupils explored a feminist reading of the first act of *Macbeth* and were able to identify and appreciate historic presentations of women to compare with current attitudes. In a parallel lesson pupils discussed thoughtfully the qualities and expectations of masculinity and the nature of manhood to understand the character of Macbeth. Pupils value the relationships, health and sex education (RHSE) programme, and show maturity when given opportunities to contribute personally.

- 3.24 Pupils have an exceptional knowledge of how to stay safe and understand how to be physically and mentally healthy, particularly in terms of diet, exercise and a balanced lifestyle. The proprietors have invested heavily in pastoral support, and pupils describe being supported to manage any mental health issues, praising an open culture which enables them to talk through issues without pressure in a safe and nurturing environment. Pupils enjoy the wide range of opportunities for physical exercise, and in questionnaires Year 10 pupils cited this as an aspect they have missed since September. A small minority of boarders were critical of food and snacks, but observation of availability, menus and conversations with boarders supported the views of the vast majority that the school supports healthy eating.

## 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 interim chair of governors and a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended chapel, assemblies and personal development sessions. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the learning support and educational resource areas. 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

Mr Stephen Cole	Reporting inspector
Mrs Elizabeth Thomas	Accompanying reporting inspector
Miss Sarah Arthur	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mrs Harriet Connor	Team inspector for boarding (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Martin Reader	Team inspector for boarding (Head, HMC school)
Mr Robert Lobatto	Team inspector (Head, ISA school)