



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

The Abbey School Reading

February 2023

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School's Details

School	The Abbey School			
DfE number	870/6008			
Registered charity number	309115			
Address	The Abbey School 17 Kendrick Road Reading Berkshire RG1 5DZ			
Telephone number	0118 987 2256			
Email address	schooloffice@theabbey.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Will le Fleming			
Chair of Governors	Mrs Elizabeth Harrison			
Age range	3 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	1004			
	EYFS	35	Juniors	234
	Seniors	549	Sixth Form	186
Inspection dates	7 to 9 February 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Abbey School is an independent day school for female pupils. It is a registered charity administered by a governing council. The school was founded in 1887 and moved to its current location in 1905. The junior school subsequently moved to its own site less than a mile away. The school has a Church of England foundation and welcomes pupils of other faiths and none. Since the previous inspection, a new headmaster took up appointment in September 2020.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to provide an outstanding, challenging and fulfilling education that equips pupils to live with confidence, purpose and joy. Working in partnership with families, the school seeks to support each individual student to expand their horizons, discover their passions and fulfil their potential by encouraging academic and extra-curricular excellence within an environment prioritising kindness and fellowship.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds in Reading and the surrounding area and represent a mixture of cultural backgrounds. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in the junior school is above average and in the senior school is well above average for those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified 16 pupils in the junior school and 31 in the senior school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include hearing impairment, speech and language difficulties, dyslexia and dyspraxia, of whom 16 in the junior school and 23 in the senior school receive additional specialist help. English is an additional language for 129 pupils in the junior school and 210 pupils in the senior school, of whom 19 in the junior school and 8 in the senior school receive additional help. In the senior school, pupils talented in sport, music, drama and art have access to a specialist scholarship programme.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school 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 junior 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, A-level and IB 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 junior 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 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 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils do not pay due regard to current statutory guidance. The school has not ensured that all required checks on staff have been completed prior to them starting work. It has failed to carry out prohibition from teaching and barred list checks for all required staff prior to commencement of employment. The school has not always obtained and checked suitable references for members of staff in advance of their appointment.
- 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 those in paragraphs 7(a) and (b) [safeguarding] are not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that suitable references are received for all staff before they begin work [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that checks against the list of those prohibited from teaching are undertaken for all required staff before they begin work [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

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

- 2.12 The school makes many of the appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept.
- 2.13 However, the school has not obtained medical fitness or enhanced criminal record checks for all staff before or as soon as practicable after appointment.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 19, 20 and 21 are met but those in paragraph 18 are not met.**

Action point 3

The school must ensure that it undertakes all the required checks on staff and that these checks are carried out before any member of staff begins work [paragraphs 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(d) and 18(3); EYFS 3.9 and 3.11].

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 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 have the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and that they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.
- 2.22 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 4

The school must ensure that all those responsible for the leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and 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. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Lower Prep	Year 1
Upper Prep	Year 2
Lower I	Year 3
Upper I	Year 4
Upper II	Year 5
Lower III	Year 6
Upper III	Year 7
Lower IV	Year 8
Upper IV	Year 9
Lower V	Year 10
Upper V	Year 11
Lower VI	Year 12
Upper VI	Year 13

Key findings

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

- Pupils' pursuit of knowledge and understanding is demonstrated consistently at a very high level across the curriculum and through exceptional results in public examinations.
- Pupils are extremely articulate communicators who express themselves eloquently, both orally and in writing, and who apply their skills effectively to a wide range of subjects and interests.
- Pupils are highly successful collaborative and independent learners; they display high levels of intellectual curiosity and develop strong critical thinking skills.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards their learning; they show initiative and independence and are determined to make the most of the opportunities the school provides.

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

- Pupils' levels of self-awareness and resilience are highly developed, so that they are confident and inspired to take on the challenges of the next stage of their education.
- Pupils are perceptive decision-makers.
- Pupils display excellent social awareness for their age; they understand the value of service to others and make a positive contribution to the school and wider community.
- Pupils demonstrate a strong appreciation of diversity and a pronounced respect for other cultures.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Ensure that pupils better understand how to improve their appreciation of global diversity by further engaging with pupil voice across all ages.

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, including those with SEND or EAL, demonstrate an extremely high level of achievement in their academic studies. This reflects the realisation of the school's ambitious aims to provide pupils with an outstanding, challenging education in which individuals can fulfil their potential. Across the school, pupils make rapid progress in all subjects, and attainment at A level, IB and GCSE is very strong. In the EYFS the majority of children meet the expected norms for their age, and in the junior school pupils make excellent progress; results in standardised assessments indicate that a significant number gain results above the national average for those taking similar tests. Examination results from 2022 show that over two thirds of A levels were graded at A* or A. Results in the IB diploma were much higher than worldwide norms, with over two thirds of candidates scoring forty points or above. Results at GCSE are equally indicative of the extremely high quality of learning and teaching; in 2022 four-fifths of GCSE entries achieved top grades. There is no significant difference in attainment between groups of pupils, including those with EAL and SEND. Data indicate similar attainment in 2020 and 2021 for centre and teacher-assessed assessments. This very high level of attainment is a consequence of the pupils' exceptional attitudes to learning, supported by teaching which shows a high level of subject knowledge.

3.6 Pupils achieve outstanding academic, musical, sporting, linguistic and dramatic distinctions, actively encouraged by a strong culture of expanding horizons and discovering passions in accordance with the aims of the school. Pupils are highly successful in mathematics and science Olympiads and achieve at the highest national levels. A high proportion of pupils are accomplished performers and excel in music and drama external examinations, achieving the highest possible grades. Older pupils performed to a high level in a collaborative piece, *The Changing Room*, with a local school. Many access high-level specialist performing activities in school through the numerous choirs, ensemble groups and orchestras. Choirs have had notable success in both regional and national festivals, including a recent success for the youngest performers at The Royal Albert Hall. Pupils are proud of their remarkably successful outcomes in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE). The majority of Year 11 pupils are working towards the silver award and participation levels in the gold award are high in the sixth form. Sport plays an important part in the life of pupils, both for enjoyment and at a competitive level. Many excel, representing the school at county and national level, including in the British Schools modern biathlon competition and a national hockey final. The very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities.

- 3.7 The level of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is outstanding and develops quickly across the range of their endeavours. This is as a result of the school's multi-disciplinary approach to the curriculum and high expectations set by teachers. In a junior school inquiry lesson pupils confidently applied their prior understanding of numeracy, design and the relative strength of different materials in order to create a bridge which could successfully carry the most weight. In a textiles lesson pupils demonstrated an excellent accrual of skills when researching fabric design to produce an outstanding piece using a range of different sewing techniques such as silk painting, machine and hand embroidery and bubble painting. The Abbey Learner Profile prioritises curiosity and the love of learning. Year 4 pupils demonstrated exceptional scientific understanding and enjoyment as they trialled materials that were opaque, and accurately described these in terms of the amount of light passing through them. Older pupils relished their rapid understanding of electrostatics by conducting an experiment to generate static on a ruler and exhibit the charge using an electroscope. Pupils in the junior school demonstrated excellent linguistic skills as they enthusiastically conducted a fluent telephone conversation in German. The high value senior leaders place on sustaining a broad curriculum which prioritises curiosity was seen in Year 7 when pupils were able to refer accurately to prior knowledge and synthesise information to create detailed food webs. In music, pupils competently played the bass line on a keyboard and then developed this with appropriate chord progressions. Pupils in Year 8 displayed excellent skills in historical analysis and were able to make and support judgements on whether Queen Matilda or Queen Eleanor had the best life. In an IB politics lessons pupils demonstrated their robust understanding of the concept of sovereignty to explain the notion of statelessness and the 'global village'.
- 3.8 Pupils are highly eloquent and effective communicators, a skill which they apply to all areas of learning consistently well. They are exceptionally articulate and highly confident in discussion and debate and listen perceptively and sensitively to the views of others. This is a consequence of teachers who provide challenge which enables pupils to lead their own learning. In the EYFS, children demonstrate outstanding acquisition of vocabulary for their age, for example when comparing how a vet resembles a doctor because of the stethoscope they use. Year 6 pupils demonstrated effective note-taking skills when planning a biography. Pupils in Year 7 wrote fluently and persuasively, expressing themselves subtly and sensitively on the topic of sexism in football and gender inequality in politics. In Year 8 pupils wrote at length, using mature language and sophisticated philosophical thinking, on why God might allow suffering. Older pupils successfully analysed the text *Tyrannosaurus Rex*, demonstrating strong understanding of juxtaposition, simile, adjectives and tripartite statements. Others were able to reflect thoughtfully on whether pacifism is always the best response by comparing the relative strength of their arguments.
- 3.9 Pupils are highly confident mathematicians. They relish opportunities to apply their outstanding numeracy skills across different subjects. Their sophisticated understanding of mathematical concepts is encouraged and supported by challenging teaching that is informed by the needs and aptitudes of each pupil and which ensures that pupils solve problems in a variety of contexts. In the EYFS children confidently used their 'toolkit' to calculate the number of cookies eaten by creating a sequence to count backwards. In physics, Year 8 pupils employed excellent numeracy skills to interpret distance-time graphs, accurately explaining how the gradient of the graph relates to the speed of the motion. Pupils tackled complex GCSE mathematics questions using advanced algebraic and calculus techniques and in Year 12 chemistry high levels of competence were demonstrated in calculations to determine the concentration of hydrochloric acid, including percentage uncertainty in the final result.
- 3.10 Pupils are highly competent in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). They use ICT routinely in their lessons as a tool to enhance the efficacy of their learning, such as preparing for forthcoming lessons by accessing resources, to aid their music composition, to create a 'green screen' whilst producing a short advertisement film and by developing strong skills in coding in order to perform linear searches. Pupils use applications assuredly to enhance their work, such as when researching and presenting their ideas on the ethical issues surrounding the switching off of life support machines for some terminally ill patients and creating a solar powered phone with a case

made from biodegradable bubble-gum. In many lessons ICT was seen to support well-paced lessons with seamless transitions as resources were easily accessed, though in some lessons this was not the case and led to some inefficient use of time.

- 3.11 Pupils establish extremely advanced study skills, reflecting senior leaders' focus on enabling pupils to learn to think critically and creatively, to take intellectual risks and to distrust easy answers. From the very start pupils are enabled to lead their own inquiry, ask their own questions and find their own answers. Pupils use critical and creative thinking skills highly effectively to accelerate their own learning. For example, in the EYFS children thoughtfully inquired about how to fulfil their responsibilities towards the planet. Year 1 pupils used their previous knowledge of light and heavy to predict and compare the mass of different objects. Year 6 pupils show a mature awareness of how the Abbey Learner Profile supports their learning, referring to a drama lesson in which they created a mime sequence which required them to engage in risk taking and creativity. Year 10 pupils confidently researched, analysed and created individual sculptural hats in their sketchbooks. They were able to explain securely the development of the process and technical skill required.
- 3.12 Pupils throughout the school exhibit excellent attitudes to learning. They work with high levels of interest, enthusiasm and engagement. Pupils are intellectually curious and willing to persevere when challenged in the knowledge that they are well supported by their teachers. This was seen in a Year 8 biology lesson in which pupils' questions revealed their deepening curiosity for the functions of the human digestive system. In discussion Year 12 pupils recognised the need to develop skills, reflecting an enjoyment of the challenge of scholarship when harnessing their own curiosity to guide research projects and essays. The vast majority of parents in their questionnaire responses agreed that the school equips their child with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils show excellent self-knowledge and self-reliance. They have an objective awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. From the earliest years pupils display high levels of confidence in lessons and beyond the classroom, whether directing the bandaging of a giraffe, discussing the impact of mental health struggles on an artist's work, or expressing their own interpretation of the characters in *Othello*. Their ability to take the lead in their learning is notable and they are not afraid to make mistakes, seeing them as opportunities to learn, for example, using the 'steps to success' formula to develop their own writing through peer support to develop their French vocabulary. This is promoted by the commitment of the school's leadership and management to the Abbey Learner Profile, which puts a strong emphasis on helping students to become thinkers, enquirers, communicators and risk-takers. Pupils are extremely motivated and well prepared for the next stages of their lives.
- 3.15 Pupils feel confident in their ability to make decisions. They willingly contribute to a range of decisions that will influence both their academic and personal progress. They understand that decisions they make, whether person, work or group related, can be important for their well-being or for future success for themselves and the whole school community. For example, in PSHE pupils reflected sensitively on different moral scenarios and explored the actions they might take. In drama pupils showed empathy when linking the play they were studying to their own feelings and the impact of their actions on others. Year 11 pupils say they feel supported by peer mentors, enabling them to make informed decisions about their sixth form studies. Staff actively support and encourage open discussion and critical thinking, such as exploring ethical theories such as utilitarianism, situation ethics and natural law. Pupils speak highly of teacher support, stating that they are enabled to contribute to impactful leadership opportunities including mentoring younger pupils and designing games and activities for the refugee club hosted at the school.

- 3.16 The way in which pupils engage in contributing to the lives of others in the school, the local community and wider society is outstanding. Community is embodied in the values of the school and leaders are committed to promoting service and the deepening of pupils' understanding of their community and themselves. Pupils support one another by raising concerns about their peers and participating in pupil-led mentoring through coaching and teaching younger pupils across many activities. Pupils respond positively to the many volunteering opportunities, including for DofE, for example being a buddy for local children with additional needs as part of the 'Me2 Club', being involved in Young Enterprise partnership projects to support community projects and volunteering at local charity fairs. Charity prefects organise events in aid of local and international charities such as Wokingham food bank or writing regularly to residents of a local care home. Pupils speak of their appreciation of their place in the world, of the need to support others and of their enjoyment and pride in participating in the numerous voluntary activities and outreach partnerships on offer.
- 3.17 Pupils have a deep sense and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Their understanding extends to an acceptance of the impact they can make to preserve their global environment. In the EYFS children thoughtfully reflect on the importance of their actions in preserving the diversity of life on their planet. Nursery children demonstrated mesmerising appreciation of nature during an outside discovery walk. Older pupils reflected maturely on the importance of creating and choosing sustainable design solutions to maintain biodiversity. The school offers an excellent range of opportunities for self-reflection and promotes a culture of mindfulness. Pupils are extremely appreciative of quiet time, including within PSHE sessions, in order to ground themselves. Across all ages pupils articulated their personal interpretation of joy, successfully meeting the aims of the school, to equip pupils to live with joy. For example, pupils reflected on the chemistry of joy and the importance of creating serotonin and dopamine. Others expressed how they found joy in singing and dancing or in empathising with how other creatures may perceive joy. Pupils strongly value spiritual reflection. They understand the importance of pacifism in Islam and show an aesthetic appreciation of the school's stained glass windows depicting Jesus on the cross and Saint Patrick. Pupils' sketchbooks demonstrate exceptional acknowledgement of individuality in their research of artists linking different cultures and religious faiths, coherently developing their spiritual understanding.
- 3.18 Pupils respect the school's rules, believing them to be fair, and sanctions proportionate. When moving around school, pupils were observed to be very well behaved. They display high levels of responsibility and moral understanding. The highly effective pastoral system ensures that pupils can distinguish between right and wrong, focusing on developing empathy and an understanding of the impact of their actions. A clear and consistent ethos of mutual respect is evident and upheld by all so that interactions between pupils and teachers are positive. In their questionnaire responses the overwhelming majority of pupils agreed that the school expects them to behave well.
- 3.19 Pupils throughout the school show highly developed social awareness for their age. As pupils progress through the school, they are extremely supportive of one another, as seen through pupil leadership and the frequent opportunities for effective collaboration, for example working with a local school to produce a performance at a local community theatre. In PSHE lessons pupils posed questions about 'even relationships' and whether it is better to have different or shared interests, successfully deliberating and reflecting on different societal perspectives. Pupils spoke highly of the mural project, in which a year group creates a signature piece of artwork to celebrate both collaborative and personal successes. The multi-disciplinary and PSHE curriculum in the junior school encourage self-awareness and social responsibility. In a Year 2 PSHE lesson pupils were excited to explain to their peers about roles of service that included priest, pharmacist and teacher. Pupils of all ages feel a strong sense of loyalty to the school. This is because the school's values of courage, honesty and kindness are fully embedded and enacted daily. In questionnaire responses the very large majority of parents agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills.
- 3.20 Pupils are proud of the inclusivity and diversity of their school. They demonstrate a strong appreciation of diversity and a pronounced respect for other cultures as a result of the high level of mutual respect

within their own community. They have an informed sense of justice and strive to treat everyone fairly, regardless of preferred gender identity, faith, race or needs. This is reflective of the sustained commitment of the leadership and governors of the school to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). Diversity is embedded in learning, for example in the choice of artists and literature topics and the range of world religions studied at all ages. Pupils are respectful of each other and enjoy the opportunity to learn from other cultures and viewpoints in assemblies, PSHE and philosophy and theology lessons, or through events such as diversity day. A small minority of pupils responding to the questionnaire did not agree that pupils are kind and respect each other. However, in discussions and in lessons inspectors found that the school actively encourages respect and understanding. The diversity and inclusion committee is greatly appreciated by pupils as an opportunity for meaningful pupil voice around the promotion of EDI. However, in discussion pupils said that they would value feedback on their ideas from senior leaders to understand better how they can be effective in promoting EDI.

- 3.21 Pupils show an excellent understanding of how to remain physically and mentally healthy. They know how to stay safe, including online, and they understand how to help themselves in achieving this, and who to turn to if they need support. Pupils are able to enjoy a healthy, balanced diet because of the variety of food on offer at lunchtime, supported by promotional material and teaching in PSHE and science. Pupils are effectively taught about mental health and individual well-being because of the well planned modules in the skills for life programme, and assemblies which are effectively delivered by a range of appropriately trained staff and specialists. In discussions, pupils said they valued how they are further enabled to sustain their own mental health and well-being through the opportunity for training as 'well-being warriors' and sixth form mentors, and through the support that the highly regarded well-being dog offers.

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 form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Tracy Handford	Reporting inspector
Mrs Becky Hayes	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, ISA school)
Mr Richard Cross	Team inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Dr Gerard Silverlock	Team inspector (Former headmaster, IAPS school)
Mr Bill Chadwick	Team inspector (Former deputy head, HMC school)
Miss Eleni Conidaris	Team inspector (Head of lower school, HMC school)
Mr Nigel Lashbrook	Team inspector (Former headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Lynne Renwick	Team inspector (Former headmistress, GSA school)