



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Hopelands Preparatory School

October 2021

Contents

School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection	5
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	6
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
3. Educational Quality Inspection	8
Preface	8
Key findings	8
Recommendations	8
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements	9
The quality of the pupils' personal development	10
4. Inspection Evidence	13

School's Details

School	Hopelands Preparatory School			
DfE number	916/6051			
Registered charity number	1007707			
Address	Hopelands Preparatory School 38 Regent Street Stonehouse Gloucestershire GL10 2AD			
Telephone number	01453 822164			
Email address	admin@hopelands.org.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Sheila Bradburn			
Chair of governors	Mr Richard James			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	74			
	EYFS	11	Juniors	63
Inspection dates	12 to 15 October 2021			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Hopelands Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between 3 and 11, founded in 1954 and accommodated in two large Victorian houses in Stonehouse. It is a charitable foundation administered by a board of governors. The school has a combined EYFS class for nursery and reception pupils, followed by individual classes for Years 1 to 6. Since the previous inspection the school has invested in additional equipment for information and communication technology for pupils' use.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers.
- 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.
- 1.7 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held.
- 1.8 Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.9 The school seeks to enable each child to achieve their full potential by creating a nurturing, supportive environment where every child is encouraged to be the best they can.

About the pupils

- 1.10 Pupils come from a range of diverse professional backgrounds living within a 15-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is broadly average. Four pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including learning difficulties such as dyslexia. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Two pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL).

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.

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](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

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 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. 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. 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 provision made for first aid does not ensure that there is at least one person in the EYFS who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present or accompanying children when on outings.
- 2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 7–12 and 14–16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met, but that in paragraph 13 [first aid] is not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that there is at least one person in the EYFS with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available at all times when children are present or accompanying children when on outings [paragraph 13; EYFS 3.25].

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

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

- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.15 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.19 The proprietor does not ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

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

Action point 2

The school must ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and 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'.

Key findings

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

- Pupils' achievement across the entire curriculum is good.
- Pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes towards learning.
- Pupils with SEND achieve well as a result of the school's effective support.
- The most able pupils' progress is limited as a result of insufficient challenge.
- Younger pupils lack confidence in their use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning.

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

- Pupils show deep respect for diverse cultures.
- Pupils are highly effective when working in collaboration.
- Pupils are confident decision makers.
- Most pupils have a good sense of moral responsibility and behave well.
- Pupils have a sound spiritual understanding.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Enable the most able pupils to make more rapid progress by ensuring provision consistently offers sufficient challenge.
- Enable younger pupils to develop their ICT skills further by increasing the curricular opportunities for its use.
- Strengthen younger pupils' sense of moral responsibility to enable them to more consistently meet the school's high expectation of their behaviour.
- Enable all pupils to deepen their spiritual understanding and appreciation of the world around them by providing more opportunities to explore open questions on philosophical themes.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 Pupils, including those with SEND, make good progress over time, as demonstrated through lesson observations, scrutiny of their work and the school's own assessment data up to the academic year 2019 and since September 2020. Most children in the EYFS are meeting expected standards by the end of their reception year. Older pupils achieve above expectations for their age and abilities. Some of the most able pupils achieve highly. However, their progress is at times limited as a result of insufficient challenge in some lessons. Many school leavers gain entry to their preferred choice of senior school, including some which are academically selective. Pupils with SEND are also successful in gaining entry to their preferred choice of school because of the effective support they receive. All pupils and almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that pupils make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 3.6 Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are good, successfully developed as a result of leaders' provision of a varied and stimulating curriculum. For example, children in the EYFS demonstrated well-developed co-ordination skills for their age by successfully dressing up in play clothes and cutting shapes using moulds from modelling compounds. In a history lesson, younger pupils successfully recalled the name of the first man on the moon. In a science lesson, pupils in the middle of the school demonstrated excellent knowledge of how to make electrical circuits by successfully designing interactive games using the correct symbols for the components they intended to use in accurately drawn diagrams.
- 3.7 Pupils are articulate and confident speakers, listen well in lessons and demonstrate a wide range of interests through their choices of reading books. Children in the EYFS are able to speak in well-formed simple sentences, giving sensible reasons for their choices of activity. Pupils with EAL successfully read out loud questions written on the board, demonstrating strong progress in spoken English as a result of leaders' carefully structured in-class support. Older pupils in a numeracy lesson gave eloquent explanations for how mistakes had arisen in calculations due to the misalignment of digits. During conversations with inspectors, pupils were articulate when discussing the artefacts that had stimulated their imaginations on a recent school trip to a museum. Pupils communicate their knowledge and understanding successfully in writing, although some needed additional support to clarify and order their ideas. The youngest children successfully wrote words and simple phrases supported by leaders' initiative to ensure the effective teaching of letters and sounds throughout the younger age groups. Older pupils in a literacy lesson demonstrated good vocabulary knowledge by successfully applying words such as "atrocious", "inauspicious" and "tenacious" within their writing.
- 3.8 The school's own assessment data indicate that male pupils' achievement in writing is below that of female pupils. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations confirm that male pupils are beginning to make better progress in writing as a result of leaders' and governors' recent initiative to broaden the range of writing topics in tasks. Pupils are confident and successful learners of other languages. Older key stage pupils accurately recalled the days of the week in French and successfully guessed the meanings of words from contextual clues in stories and pictures.
- 3.9 Pupils' numeracy skills are good. Younger EYFS children successfully counted up to their own age, with older children counting well beyond that to at least fourteen. Younger pupils demonstrated secure knowledge and understanding of number bonds up to ten and in an ICT lesson accurately created pictograms. Pupils successfully apply their knowledge of measuring in activities such as cookery club. The oldest pupils accurately calculated fractions of large numbers as well as carrying out complex calculations using division determined to several decimal places. The progress of the most able pupils in mathematics is sometimes less rapid as a result of tasks that offer them insufficient challenge.
- 3.10 Older pupils are effective users of ICT across a variety of curriculum areas as well as in ICT lessons. They made proficient use in geography to find relevant information about national parks from the internet. Other older pupils successfully used presentation applications to recount to their peers in an

assembly relevant and interesting biographical information about significant scientists from ethnic minority backgrounds. Pupils in the middle of the school were able to change the data on a spreadsheet application so that when graphed a straight line was transformed into a smile. Pupils with SEND successfully consolidated their understanding of sentence construction using appropriate computer applications during a registration period. However, younger pupils' use of ICT is less confident as a result of fewer opportunities to use technology in their learning. Pupils' online learning during the periods of lockdown in the recent pandemic was supported by trustees' significant investment in resources to ensure suitable access.

- 3.11 Pupils show effective study skills for their age and ability. Younger pupils asked sensible questions of staff to clarify their understanding of how to complete a simple writing task. Others successfully collaborated, shared and developed their ideas to find sensible and well-reasoned explanations for how penguins are adapted to live in cold areas. In a French lesson, older pupils successfully applied word order rules and understanding of gender to combine simple phrases and words to make accurate sentences, describing the places they might visit in a town. Pupils in a dance lesson worked both independently and in groups to reflect effectively on a recent performance they had given to the rest of the school. Older pupils in a design technology lesson demonstrated effective evaluative skills during group discussion about how to improve their windmill designs following testing.
- 3.12 Pupils achieve well across a broad range of activities and sport each year. Many of the oldest pupils succeed in entrance examinations to academically selective state and independent schools, and a small number of pupils win scholarships for academic achievement. Pupils have been highly successful, both as individuals and in groups, in an annual national art competition and have had regular success in news-report writing as part of a local "Mock Trial" competition. Pupils are successful and confident performers, demonstrating their skills in a range of performances arranged by the school across the year, such as the Harvest Festival that took place during the inspection and in local music festivals. Many pupils receive individual instrumental lessons and succeed to a high standard in external grade examinations. School sports teams have been successful in local, regional and national tournaments across a variety of sports such as netball, swimming and cross-country. Cross-country and swimming teams have been overall winners in district championships.
- 3.13 Pupils' attitudes towards learning are mostly positive overall. Pupils in the middle of the school focused well during a science lesson when working in collaboration to design games for Halloween. High levels of engagement by older pupils in a French lesson enabled them to be highly productive and make rapid progress. In a numeracy lesson on negative numbers pupils worked productively both individually and with their partners. On occasions there were differences in some younger classes between the engagement and attention of all the pupils. For example, during a science lesson, younger male pupils needed more adult support and guidance to remain engaged than their female peers. Most pupils, however, are enabled to participate successfully by the gentle encouragement of staff and leaders, reflected in the positive and kind culture of the school, in keeping with the school's aims.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.15 Pupils are self-confident and reflective learners, often showing resilience when completing challenging tasks. For example, when undertaking a "fun run" during the inspection, pupils showed high levels of mutual support and encouragement for their slower peers, who responded by showing sufficient resilience to successfully complete the race. Pupils reflect well on their learning, such as during a dance lesson when older pupils discussed maturely how to improve their performances further. Many pupils respond sensibly to feedback from teachers, giving clear indications of whether or not they feel their learning is secure. The oldest pupils say that they feel very ready for the next stage of their education and some have clear and realistic ambitions, reflecting their interests and demonstrating good levels of self-understanding.

- 3.16 Pupils are confident decision-makers, willing to engage actively with their own learning. Children in the EYFS made appropriate choices of practical activities to reinforce their successful learning about the sounds letters make. Older pupils made exciting and creative decisions about the best components to use in electrical circuits to achieve the results they wanted. Pupils grasp willingly the opportunities they have to influence decision making in the school. For example, older female pupils campaigned successfully for a change to the school's summer uniform to take account of their needs in warmer weather.
- 3.17 Pupils exhibit a well-developed awareness of the aesthetic and cultural aspects of the world around them. For instance, pupils in the middle of the school responded with awe to a piece of art inspired by native American culture. Pupils demonstrate an appropriate appreciation for the non-material aspects of life through their active engagement with the creative arts. Older pupils discussed with excitement the artefacts they had seen on a recent visit to a museum, and how taking part in a workshop on traditional dancing from a culture different to their own enabled them to consider the world from an alternative perspective. Their ability to discuss and reflect on the spiritual is constrained by the limited opportunities within the curriculum to respond openly to philosophical questions.
- 3.18 Most pupils have good moral understanding. They understand the importance of showing consideration to one another and strive to meet the school's high expectations of them. Pupils were observed to behave well at lunchtime while waiting in turn to be served their food in well-ordered queues before sitting appropriately at their tables. Younger pupils are given significant support in developing their behaviour by older pupil acting as buddies, whose successful modelling enabled younger pupils to participate appropriately in an assembly. The vast majority of pupils are attentive and well-behaved towards others and successfully distinguish right from wrong. On occasions a small number of pupils struggle to behave well towards their peers, and require the support of adults to meet the school's expectations.
- 3.19 Pupils' social development and collaboration are excellent. They work well together in small groups and teams. For example, in a design technology lesson, older pupils successfully worked in teams to design and make wind turbines. Children in the EYFS successfully sat together in a circle, counting in unison and responding to their teacher's questions individually and correctly, demonstrating an ability to take turns and listen respectfully to others. Older pupils successfully care for their younger peers in assemblies and activities, such as in the recent *global awareness week*, when pupils successfully worked in all-age groups to undertake a range of activities. Older pupils as team leaders diligently fulfilled their responsibilities to ensure all members of their team, however young, arrived safely at their designated activities on time and to schedule.
- 3.20 Pupils' contribution to others, the school and the wider community is good. They are diligent when undertaking roles as monitors in classrooms and as leaders for the whole school as house and school captains. Older pupils fulfil their responsibilities to care for younger pupils in the EYFS with deep conviction as a result of the embedded culture of kindness that pervades the school community and is successfully promoted by school leaders. Pupils participate actively through the school council to choose charities for fundraising events, such as collecting donations for the local food bank and also to effect change in the school's provision. Pupils contribute positively to the local community through a variety of initiatives including planting crocuses on their local high street, participating in dance activities and events with pupils from a school for pupils with SEND.
- 3.21 Pupils have a deep respect for the diversity of society and their cultural understanding is good. They recognise the value of difference and participate with enthusiasm in the regular opportunities to celebrate the diversity of cultures within the school. In discussions with inspectors, pupils explained their interest in the diversity of global cultures, further enhanced by their willingness to share, with the support of parents, their own family heritages. Older pupils in a cookery activity led by a parent successfully prepared and ate popular Nigerian dishes. Pupils' nuanced understanding of the successful contribution to the world made by famous and successful role-models from all ethnicities,

as demonstrated in their assembly presentations and the subsequent questions asked by peers, is well supported by leaders' focus on initiatives such as *Black History Month*.

- 3.22 Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe at school, outside of school and when online, supported by governors' diligent focus on maintaining pupil safety through appropriate curriculum provision. Pupils have a secure understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle, explaining in interviews the importance of staying physically fit and what a balanced approach to life means. For example, in an assembly to prepare for harvest festival pupils of all ages were able to give good examples of what we need to live a healthy and happy life. Older pupils have a strong awareness of the importance of mental well-being and were able to reflect maturely in interviews with inspectors on the strategies that enable them to manage moments of stress. Pupils successfully set-up a lunchtime relaxation club for their peers and designed posters explaining the importance of maintaining good mental health. The school is successful in fulfilling its aim to create a nurturing, supportive environment, where many pupils are enabled to achieve their potential.

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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. 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 Matthew Lovett	Reporting inspector
Mr Oliver Chambers	Compliance team inspector (Assistant head, HMC school)
Mrs Caroline Goodsman	Team inspector (Head, ISA school)