



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Kew House

April 2022

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School's Details

School	Kew House		
DfE number	313/6005		
Address	Kew House 6 Capital Interchange Way Brentford TW8 0EX		
Telephone number	020 8742 2038		
Email address	info@kewhouseschool.com		
Headmaster	Mr Will Williams		
Proprietor	Mrs Maria Gardener		
Age range	11 to 18		
Number of pupils on roll	573		
	Seniors	442	Sixth Form 131
Inspection dates	27 to 29 April 2022		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Kew House is an independent co-educational day school for pupils, situated in Brentford. The school is overseen by an individual proprietor who leads the Gardener Schools Group Ltd, supported by its board of directors. The group is a family-owned company founded by former teachers. The school comprises two sections: the senior department, for pupils aged 11 to 16 years; and the sixth form, for pupils aged 16 to 18 years.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the school has appointed a new headmaster in September 2020.
- 1.3 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to enhance the individual abilities of each child, welcoming students with varying academic profiles and placing emphasis on confidence, self-esteem and creativity. It seeks to enable every pupil to realise their potential and achieve excellent academic results through a rich and broad curriculum, involvement in the community and a modern, pioneering approach to education.

About the pupils

- 1.5 The pupils come from a range of professional and business backgrounds, predominantly from West London. A minority have international backgrounds. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the students is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school provides additional support for 260 students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and processing difficulties. There are 11 students with English as an additional language (EAL). Six students have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. The school modifies the curriculum for those pupils it identifies as the most able in the school's population.

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. 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](#).

Key findings

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

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2018 to 2021 confirm 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 and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

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

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

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

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

The headline judgements apply one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

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

- Pupils display excellent attitudes to their learning, evident in the extremely high levels of success in public examinations.
- Pupils are extremely articulate communicators, both inside and outside the classroom.
- Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, develop very good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning.
- Pupils achieve highly in a wide variety of academic and other areas, such as creative arts and sports.
- Pupils apply highly competent information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum.

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

- Pupils have high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. They show resilience, perseverance and a determination to succeed.
- Pupils enjoy working collaboratively, displaying excellent commitment to each other and a strong desire to support each other and achieve common goals.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and uphold the values of the school.
- Pupils of all ages have a mature understanding of, and respect for, diversity and tolerance of individual differences.

Recommendation

3.3 The school should make the following improvements.

- Consistently provide sufficient challenge to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress.

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 show excellent knowledge, skills and understanding. They develop as highly resilient learners as they progress through the school. Pupils generally make rapid progress in most of their lessons enabled by a wide range of activities and effective planning which leads to teaching which develops their learning. In a few observed lessons challenge and differentiation was lacking and this limited

pupil progress. A majority of pupils noted that they can build effectively on previous knowledge and work, aided by the setting of targets in lessons and personal tutorials. These, pupils say are very supportive in developing their understanding how to achieve their long-term goals. This was reflected in a physics lesson where pupils used their previous knowledge to explain clearly the properties of atomic particles and charges. In a music lesson, pupils demonstrate a confident knowledge of musical terms such as arpeggios, with several pupils able to identify an arpeggio in B minor. Pupils are very positive about the teaching that they received online during lockdown, saying that this enabled them to continue to make progress in their learning and understanding. They speak highly of teachers' support for them in their academic studies through effective marking and feedback, using the school's electronic classroom software. Catch-up and challenge clinics further enable pupils to prepare for their GCSE and A-Level examinations. Pupils stated that they develop their academic, sporting and creative skills to a high level because the teaching and coaching inspires them and helps them to improve and make personal progress.

- 3.6 Most pupils show rapid progress that enables a smooth transition between year groups and into the sixth form. At A level in 2018 to 2021, the average pass rate was 96.6% (grades A to C). In 2021, 100% of pupils achieved three A levels. Attainment at GCSE for the years 2018 to 2021 shows the average pass rate to be 96.4% (grades A–C). In 2021, 98.6% of pupils achieved ten or more GCSEs. Pupils with SEND and EAL make rapid progress towards their long-term goals. This is because they receive highly effective support which is focused individually and thoroughly evaluated. Such progress was maintained during lockdown. More able pupils gain awards in creative arts, music and sport. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching enables their child to make progress. Most pupils who responded to the questionnaire expressed the view that they learn a lot in most of their lessons. Inspection evidence supports these views. Progress, as shown by assessment data provided by the school and by observations and work scrutiny, is excellent.
- 3.7 Throughout the school pupils communicate with great confidence, be it through speaking, reading aloud or in their writing and creative arts. Year 8 pupils exhibited excellent listening skills and were able to follow instructions accurately when learning to make and bake savoury scones. In an art lesson, sixth-form pupils listened attentively to each other. They were able to express subtle and very mature ideas about the nuance of a photograph and the impact of how it was displayed on its meaning. Pupils write highly effectively in a range of styles and show clear understanding of writing techniques. For example, in a Year 11 English lesson, pupils, including those with SEND and access arrangements, were able to write at length and to structure exam style responses in a language paper with confidence. During the most recent period of remote learning, pupils aided their progress with innovative ideas and by creating new opportunities to communicate, using discussion, debating and music to enhance their experiences. An example of this was noted in the sixth form; with the use of mobile phones in art to record and track their progress at A level. Pupils have embraced this way of working and it allows them to review and develop their work very effectively.
- 3.8 Pupils of all ages develop excellent supportive mathematical knowledge and skills they apply effectively across the curriculum. They are very adept at numerical and algebraic manipulation and are able to use formulae and equations with insight to solve problems. SEND pupils successfully respond to numerical tasks and are very well supported. For example, during a Year 11 physics lesson pupils tackled resultant force calculations with confidence using simple geometry, invariably deriving the correct answer. In a Year 9 biology lesson, pupils recorded times and distances and related activities within the photosynthesis experiment with great care and accuracy. They were able to express thoughts on the validity of the experiment's methodology.
- 3.9 Pupils of all ages demonstrate high competence in the use of information and communication technology (ICT). They effectively apply their ICT skills across the curriculum to support their learning. Pupils with SEND needs and special access arrangements work in a very effective way with technology in class. They can describe the benefits to themselves of using a laptop and apply their touch-typing skills to the completion of examination paper questions effectively. Pupils demonstrated excellent

computer skills in a Year 8 Design Technology (DT) lesson, searching the internet for low cost materials to buy to construct their 'Entrepreneur' products to sell for charity. They used spreadsheets to display costings and DTP for the presentation of the projects. Pupils' well-developed ICT skills were additionally seen in the design work evident in the art department, in displays around the school and in the extra-curricular design projects offered as part of the Gifted and Talented programme. GCSE pupils used digital technology with teachers to engage in effective dialogue about their coursework. These strategies enabled pupils to improve their outcomes.

- 3.10 Most pupils throughout the school display outstanding attitudes to their learning and are determined to succeed, as exemplified during a review of the components of a music GCSE examination. Pupils listen carefully to one another, offering useful and pertinent ideas engaging fully with the teacher-led discussion. They respond positively to teaching which generally aims to help each pupil to make progress, discover their own passions and have aspirational goals, which aligns with the ethos of the school. This is exemplified in the 'Extended Project Showcase' where Year 8 and Year 9 pupils design, plan and run a project of their own choosing. These projects can then tie into Extended Project Qualifications (EPQ) in Year 12. Pupils become sophisticated learners. They develop good study skills and use them to make progress. Pupils value working with success criteria and targets to evaluate their progress and improve through their use. They become independent and well motivated, many choosing to attend study on offer before the start of the school day and after school in the week. Such attitudes are a strong factor in pupils' successful and enhanced academic outcomes. Pupils are very positive about the fact that teachers do not always give them the answer directly but provide prompts to help them strategize suitable methods that led to solutions. In the questionnaire and discussion, a small minority of pupils noted that not all lessons were interesting. Inspectors found that a very large majority of pupils exhibited highly positive attitudes towards teaching and learning. Senior leaders believe that this is the result of increased class observations and the sharing of best practice to enhance pupil interest and learning.
- 3.11 Pupils develop strong physical skills in the extensive sports programme and in co-curricular activities. Pupils improved their hockey, netball, rugby and football skills by playing in house team competitions in school during the period when external matches were not possible. Achievements beyond school have included county, national and international representation in football, athletics, hockey and rowing. Pupils have successfully completed The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) at bronze, silver and gold levels. In the creative arts, pupils have embraced opportunities to perform and show high levels of individual and collaborative skill. This is exemplified by the 100% pass rate in national music and drama awards, with over 60% of all entrants receiving distinctions. Pupils demonstrate very high levels of artistic prowess, whether by singing in the school choir, playing in instrumental ensembles and bands or by preparing highly imaginative artwork which is displayed around the school. Pupils of all ages relish taking part in drama performances. This was exemplified during the inspection as pupils prepared for the lower school production of *39 Steps*. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the previous term's production of *Sister Act*, saying that they gained positive experiences and achieved success backstage, on stage and costume design and making props for productions.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.12 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.13 Pupils develop strong self-understanding and self-belief, achieved because of the focus given to encouraging self-confidence by the school's leadership and the support provided by dedicated pastoral and academic staff. In all year groups, pupils are happy to take risks with learning and firmly believe that they learn from any mistakes. Pupils believe in their own abilities and take opportunities to praise each other, thus increasing the self-esteem of their peers. In doing so, they respond well to the school's culture of mutual respect and celebrating success. For example, Year 12 pupils were confident to listen to the feedback offered by their peers on their photography work, listening closely to what was said and responding positively to the suggestions presented. Pupils successfully explore

their own identity through art, music and drama. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to be confident and independent. Inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils, including those with SEND, say that their self-confidence has developed meaningfully over their time in school, due to the very effective individual strategies provided to assist them. Pupils spoke of the need to be resilient and persevere. They said that academic and personal targets discussed with their tutors help them to understand their own strengths and weaknesses and provide the opportunity to work to improve. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that their personal development has been enhanced during remote learning through effective teaching that continued to consider individual pupils' needs. Pupils spoke of feeling empowered by the fact that they take control of their learning. Pupils feel safe to explore new things, such as embarking on their GCSE options in Year 8.

- 3.14 Pupils of all ages are active and well-informed decision-makers. They are empowered to make age-appropriate decisions about their learning, subjects to study, the sports and activities they wish to pursue, and their possible career paths. Year 9 pupils discussed maturely the importance of considering their academic life choices, when choosing subjects for GCSE and A-level. They displayed an awareness of the effect that those choices could have on life choices post-18. Staff say that pupils see the 'bigger picture' and actively engage to influence the school strategy on issues such as racism, LGBTQ+ and the restructuring of the rewards and sanctions system. Older pupils say that they feel empowered to take control of their learning by deciding how to prioritise homework tasks and manage time effectively. Senior pupils actively seek out their subject teachers to aid their academic progress and attainment and can understand how doing so helps to improve their outcomes.
- 3.15 Pupils' spiritual understanding is good. Pupils who spoke to inspectors reported that they value the importance of spirituality and mindfulness. Leaders and staff promote a school ethos which enables a majority of pupils to develop some form of spirituality and cultural sensibilities. Pupils show an excellent understanding of the non-material aspects of life. They spoke enthusiastically about art, music and drama activities in the school, and extra-curricular activities such as visits to the theatre, local places of worship and gardens. Pupils described moments of joy and satisfaction, whether it be in creating a work of art, helping and supporting others or the interaction with their friends and peers. Since returning from remote learning pupils exhibit a palpable sense of pleasure at being part of a community with a regained collective purpose.
- 3.16 Pupils demonstrate excellent relationships with peers and adults and exhibit a strong sense of community. They show an excellent moral compass in discussions, in class, during meal times and in the library. They live out the school's ethos by clearly demonstrating the qualities of being inclusive and showing respect to others. Pupils showed much consideration and a sense of responsibility for the impact of their own behaviour and choices on others. For instance, GCSE Drama students worked very effectively in groups sharing ideas and developing group performances which reflect the contributions of individuals in the group. Pupils behave well overall. Most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the concepts of right and wrong through their daily relations with each other and staff. In their questionnaire responses, a majority of pupils agreed that the school has high behavioural expectations. Inspection evidence supports this view. In discussion, pupils discussed intelligently the connection between their code of conduct in school, especially in the team games that they played, and the laws by which society is run. Younger pupils say that they look up to their peers in the senior forms and see them as very positive role models.
- 3.17 Pupils collaborate very effectively within and across age groups in lessons and during activities. The youngest pupils work together instinctively. For example, they successfully worked well in small groups whilst carrying out a practical investigation of exothermic and endothermic reactions. Pupils are organised and helpful when working, checking their work and offering helpful corrections to each other. In sport, pupils show good teamwork skills, such as when passing footballs to each other. Pupils develop understanding of relationships, including between genders, through school leaders challenging any inappropriate attitudes or behaviours. An overwhelming majority of parents who

responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills. Inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils develop excellent inter-personal skills when they play sport in teams. Pupils say that they gain self-confidence by being a team member or working in group situations such as the DofE, and that this helps to strengthen their individual skills.

- 3.18 Many senior pupils choose to spend time helping with younger pupils and in so doing enhance their own personal development as well as that of the children they support. The older pupils support others through reading with younger pupils in school or at one of the groups' prep schools, tutor form support and acting as subject mentors. As well as enjoying these experiences, pupils say that they are helping to strengthen and enrich the family community that they respect. Pupils engage very successfully with the world outside school, choosing charitable causes and carrying out fund-raising activities. Before the COVID lockdown, pupils from the school annually visited Laos to take part in exploration and to participate in community projects. Senior pupils say that they value the opportunity to explore recent global issues such as the *Black Lives Matter* movement. From this, they gained a deeper understanding of racial inequality. In discussion pupils expressed their appreciation of the diversity of culture and beliefs in the school. A further example includes the formation of an LGBTQ+ awareness group. They believe the school is a place where everyone is committed to the support of each other. An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- 3.19 In discussion, pupils voiced very clear understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, including of the importance of eating a healthy diet and how to maintain a positive outlook on life. Pupils' feedback through the school council has led to the implementation of healthier lunch options. Pupils appreciate and take the advantage to enhance their mental health using the support of the well-being centre and additional support of the school counsellors. They commended the school's 'Zen room', where they can go to "chill out" when necessary. Pupils are enabled to make good choices regarding healthy living so that they are able to participate in personal and team sports and additional physical activities such as the DofE. They have a clear understanding of the need for a healthy mind and feel that they can benefit from mindfulness and reflection. An overwhelming majority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that they understand how to stay safe online. This was confirmed during the inspection. In discussion, pupils demonstrated a strong awareness and understanding of the importance of online safety and how to avoid the potential risks of electronic media use.

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 the proprietor and a group of directors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited 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

Mr Alistair Telfer	Reporting inspector
Mrs Valerie Stewart	Compliance team inspector (Former assistant principal, HMC school)
Mr Alan Cooper	Team inspector (Former senior teacher, HMC school)
Mrs Claire Osborn	Team inspector (Education principal, ISA school)
Mr Steven Pearce	Team Inspector (Former head of faculty, HMC school)