



ISI

Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Talbot House School

September 2022

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School's Details

School College	Talbot House School			
DfE number	839/6005			
Address	Talbot House School Firs Glen Rd Winton Bournemouth Dorset BH9 2LR			
Telephone number	01202 510348			
Email address	admin@talbothouseschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Emma Haworth			
Proprietor	Mr Mark Broadway			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	120			
	EYFS	15	Prep	105
Inspection dates	21 to 23 September 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Talbot House School is an independent day school for male and female pupils aged between 3 and 11 years. Founded in 1969 in a residential area of Bournemouth, the school is now owned and governed by the current proprietor. It comprises the lower school for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the middle school for those in Years 1 to 3 and the upper school for those in Years 4 to 6. The current head has been in post since 2013. Many parents at the school aim for their children to gain places at grammar schools for their senior education, whilst some transfer to local independent or maintained schools.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to nurture, encourage and challenge pupils 'to be the best me I can be' in a happy and successful environment. It seeks to ensure that pupils come to school each day with a desire to learn, a smile on their face and motivation to do their best.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a range of professional families with diverse cultural backgrounds, mostly living within a short journey of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified one pupil as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who is supported with a personalised learning plan. No pupil in the school has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 33 pupils, none of whom require additional support.

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. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

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

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found. Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

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

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

Key findings

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

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. 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 good.

- Pupils of all ages are excellent communicators who are articulate and express themselves confidently in conversation and discussion.
- Pupils develop competent skills in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) which they use confidently in many areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils' development as independent learners is hindered by too few opportunities to employ initiative and independence in their learning.
- Pupils' progress is restricted when individual needs are not catered for with appropriate challenge and interesting tasks.

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

- Pupils' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the beliefs of others' faiths and cultures is excellent.
- Pupils show a mature level of moral understanding with a strong sense of right and wrong and they readily take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Pupils' sound appreciation of non-material aspects of life and of the natural world around them is evident when they have time to reflect on what they see, hear and feel.
- Pupils' good decision-making skills come to the fore when they are given time to think for themselves in lessons and not overly directed by their teachers.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Enable pupils of all abilities to develop initiative and independence in their learning through provision of appropriate challenge and interesting activities across the curriculum.
- Strengthen pupils' appreciation of non-material aspects of life through a broad range of experiences and time to reflect.
- Enable pupils' decision-making skills and ingenuity to be further increased through thinking time and less teacher direction.

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 of all abilities achieve high standards in English and maths. They make good progress over time from their individual starting points. The vast majority of pupils in the EYFS achieve the expected learning outcomes by the end of the lower school. At the top of the school, the majority of pupils are successful in grammar school entrance assessments and some transfer to local independent or maintained schools. Most pupils attain results in standardised assessments for English, mathematics and verbal reasoning that are above the average for pupils taking these tests. The youngest pupils make rapid progress, encouraged by their nurturing and well-resourced learning environment. The strengths and weaknesses of pupils in the core areas of learning are recognised in analysis of assessments by senior leaders, enabling those who are having academic difficulties and those who are more able to be identified. The rate of progress made by all pupils is good when teaching uses such information to provide activities at a fitting level, but is sometimes limited by overuse of worksheets and lack of appropriate challenge. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, almost all parents agreed that teaching enables pupils to make progress.
- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate good knowledge, skills and understanding. The proprietor's and leaders' commitment to providing a thorough preparation for grammar school assessments ensures that pupils acquire a high level of knowledge and skills in English, mathematics and reasoning. This is particularly evident in their assured literacy skills. In humanities, pupils develop good knowledge and skills. In creative subjects their standards are sound, their progress restricted when opportunities for teaching skills and techniques are missed. In the earliest years, children confidently show secure levels of knowledge, skills and understanding for their age and ability as they extend their learning through interesting classroom activities, role play areas and child-initiated activities. Older pupils use technical language with increasing accuracy in science and technology. For example, in a science lesson, Year 4 pupils used key vocabulary and secure prior learning to classify living things into categories of their choice.
- 3.7 Pupils show excellent communication skills, which they confidently apply to all aspects of school life. They are extremely articulate and express themselves clearly when speaking to visitors. The youngest pupils listen carefully to each other, taking turns to speak and listen, and progress rapidly in using phonics and writing simple words. They quickly become confident readers and recognise that stories have a beginning, middle and end. Pupils' writing skills develop at a good pace and younger pupils realise that by including adjectives their work becomes more interesting for the reader. For example, Year 1 pupils effectively chose words such as 'enormous' to describe their imagined monsters. Pupils' learning is often supported by praise and constructive feedback from teachers, but sometimes their progress is limited by over direction, uninteresting tasks and few opportunities to show independence and initiative in their work. Older pupils apply an increasing range of literary devices to their writing, independently producing imaginative and interesting pieces of extended work. For example, in writing to an imaginary pen friend overseas, Year 6 pupils engaged the reader's interest with similes such as likening people flocking to the beach to birds when they see bread. They demonstrate high levels of speaking skills to deliver eloquent presentations in lessons and assemblies, recognising the importance of using an audible, clear voice, with appropriate pitch, pace and tone.
- 3.8 Pupils are extremely competent in using ICT to enhance their levels of attainment. From a young age, pupils use technology to discover new information using search engines, and to present some of their work. Pupils become adept at using ICT, employing portable electronic devices with ease. They use a range of programs to enhance and extend their learning, notably to practise, develop and reinforce their mathematical and literacy skills. Older pupils effectively create presentations and animations. For example, Year 6 completed projects resulting in excellent detailed slide presentations on someone who had influenced them. They are competent at employing animations to create imaginative animated reviews of a school trip. Pupils use their online classroom with confidence and access it on a daily basis in their learning and for completion of surveys.

- 3.9 Pupils' numeracy skills are good. Most pupils demonstrate a confident understanding of mathematical concepts for their age and a confident grasp of numerical skills which are fine-tuned at the top of the school to prepare for grammar school assessments. A few pupils commented in the pre-inspection questionnaire that mathematics lessons were not as interesting as they might be and inspection evidence found that in some cases pupils' progress is hindered by a lack of pace and reliance on worksheets, without tailored challenge for their individual needs. In lessons where these needs are fully catered for, pupils show determination to succeed. The youngest pupils develop secure foundations in numeracy facts and key vocabulary through well-planned activities and encouragement from teachers. For example, Reception children were able to demonstrate a simple number sentence using toys and begin to use key vocabulary such as one more and adding on. They show confidence in the use and application of basic numerical skills, enhanced by the hands-on mathematical activities provided for them.
- 3.10 Pupils develop a good level of study skills. Those in the early years demonstrate the ability to question and experiment, encouraged by the freedom to find out for themselves in child-initiated activities. As they progress through the school, they are able to draw on a range of sources when opportunity is given. For example, in Year 3 history pupils were successful in classifying information about which homes had, and had not, Anglo-Saxon features, by comparing different sources of information. Pupils in Year 4, made observations and deductions from a variety of paintings from the Victorian era, showing that they are quick to process, analyse and question, and that they focus well and show perseverance. Pupils pose pertinent questions, predict outcomes, successfully draw conclusions from a range of resources and take risks in their learning when lessons are well-paced and include a variety of tasks. Pupils begin to develop thinking and reasoning skills, analysing and hypothesising to a good level in science. For example, Year 2 pupils talked excitedly about the properties of different materials, how they made predictions and experimented to discover which were waterproof. Pupils' reasoning and independent thinking is less successful where teaching is more strongly directed and resources less interesting. Where teaching is more strongly directed and resources less inspiring, opportunities for independent thinking and reasoning are fewer.
- 3.11 Pupils show positive attitudes towards their studies and good levels of motivation, spurred on by the school's aim to encourage them to be the best they can be. They are conscientious and keen to rise to the high expectations and encouragement of the school leaders. Pupils usually settle down to tasks quickly and relish challenges but can lose focus when faced with an uninteresting worksheet. Children in the lower school show early independence and initiative in their learning by selecting engaging activities and colourful resources. In other parts of the school their positivity remains high when they are inspired by the high expectations of their teachers, an interesting variety of activities, the opportunity to work collaboratively and when there is opportunity for their initiative and independence to shine through.
- 3.12 Academic achievements in grammar school entry assessments are high. In terms of scholarships and competitions, other academic distinctions, and success in sports, the performing and other arts, achievements are sound. In their small school setting, pupils enjoy a variety of activities and some go on to achieve success in their interests out of school. For example, a pupil in Year 1 achieved a contract with the junior section of a premier league football club. A few pupils are successful in music examinations and all pupils enjoy sports and performing arts. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of parents disagreed that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. Given the small site and number of staff, an adequate range of extra-curricular activities is provided, which is enhanced by the choices of activity available to pupils in their Friday enrichment programme.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.14 Pupils' appreciation of diversity and cultural understanding is excellent. The school enjoys a diverse population which is celebrated through festivals, assemblies and languages days. Pupils show great respect for everyone in the school, regardless of their background or role. They are fully accepting of each other and greatly appreciate learning about their own and different cultures, beliefs and traditions. The warm family ethos of the school and positive relationships between everyone supports this. Pupils are encouraged to talk to their classes about their own family celebrations. For example, children in the lower school learned about Rosh Hashanah when one of them had enjoyed this new year festival at home. The school leaders place an emphasis on respect and kindness to all and these qualities are demonstrated across the school community. In their responses, all parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. In discussions, pupils spoke positively about how well they all get on and respect each other's differences and talked excitedly about discovering information about different religions and cultures.
- 3.15 Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with SEND and EAL, show good levels of self-knowledge, self-confidence, determination and resilience. This reflects successful fulfilment of the senior leaders' aim for pupils to come to school each day with a desire to learn, a smile on their face and motivation to do their best in a happy environment. In discussions, pupils expressed confidence in their own abilities and are happy to be themselves. They willingly contribute to school surveys and put forward ideas to the school council, knowing that their voice will be heard by senior leaders. Children in the earliest years develop increasing self-esteem through their nurturing learning environment. As they move through the school, pupils develop understanding of how to improve their learning independently in lessons where a clear framework of tasks is presented and feedback is thorough. This is less evident in lessons where tasks are unstructured and feedback is brief. Pupils at the top of the school employ thoroughly taught revision techniques in their preparation for grammar school assessments. Most Year 6 pupils agreed that they are well prepared for senior school life and almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed.
- 3.16 Pupils develop a sound appreciation of spirituality. They have a strong awareness and knowledge of other religions, enhanced by effective values and beliefs lessons in which they contemplate similarities and differences of comparative religions; for example, the use of candles for Diwali and Christmas. Pupils extend this understanding by considering a diverse range of celebrations in assemblies. However, pupils' understanding and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life is less well developed. The youngest children delight in being outside and excitedly embrace the chance to run and play in the fresh air. In discussions, however, older pupils showed little awareness of the beauty of the world around them or of how different atmospheres, sounds or sights make them feel. In some activities, pupils did not consider the spiritual aspects naturally presented in the joy of creating or singing due to insufficient opportunities to reflect on their feelings and experience.
- 3.17 Pupils show a mature level of moral understanding with a strong sense of right and wrong. They express secure understanding and respect for rules and laws and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Pupils realise the need for everyone to adopt the school and classroom rules, which they have written together, to ensure a happy and friendly environment in which to learn and play. All pupils are confident and polite when meeting new people, and show excellent manners. Discussions with staff and pupils and scrutiny of records show that when any issues arise, they are fairly and sensitively managed, helping pupils to learn from the consequences of their actions. Pupils understand that the clear system of rewards and sanctions is there to encourage them and believe that they are awarded fairly. They are acutely aware of the feelings of others and acts of thoughtfulness are celebrated with awards in the same way as academic and other achievements.
- 3.18 Pupils' social skills are well developed, actively encouraged by the school leaders' emphasis on being kind and respectful. They speak of how well everyone gets on together in work and play and in their

questionnaire responses, most pupils agreed that pupils are kind and respectful to each other. Children in the lowest years develop excellent co-operation through the activities in their classrooms and outdoor area. Pupils form positive relationships and show excellent collaborative skills when working together for the good of the school or charities, both in their house teams and as a whole community. Older pupils work successfully together when serving on the school council, benefiting all pupils by putting forward ideas for extra-curricular clubs. A positive team ethic is evident in the house system and pupils work well together across year groups in team sports. From their first days in the school, pupils form mutually supportive and respectful friendships with both their peers and pupils in different year groups through the chance to spend play times together. Pupils feel positive about their school community, build strong relationships and feel respected by others.

- 3.19 From the earliest years, pupils develop a good level of knowledge and awareness of how to keep healthy and safe both physically and mentally, including when on line. Their increasing knowledge is supported by lessons in science, physical education (PE) and the well planned personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme. Pupils develop resilience as they go through the school and know how to communicate with teachers if they need support. Their well-being is carefully monitored. In discussions, pupils showed they understand that eating lots of vegetables and fruit helps to keep them healthy and that sugary items should be treats. They talk of being physically active by running at play times and in their PE lessons. In discussions, pupils recognised the value of a balanced lifestyle in order to feel happy. They know how to stay safe online, citing safety tips gained from their lessons. Almost all parents and pupils agreed in the questionnaires that the school encourages the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.
- 3.20 Pupils' ability to make decisions is good and they benefit from making decisions for themselves when opportunity arises. In the lower school, children assuredly decide which resources to use in solving problems and which activities to choose outdoors, sensitively guided by teachers. They make quick decisions about where to put things when efficiently unpacking their book bags on arrival. In lessons where there is encouragement to think for themselves, pupils make independent decisions. In others their decision-making is restricted due to over-direction by the teacher. Older pupils are confident in choosing their lunch from the menu and decisive in choosing which extra-curricular clubs and enrichment activities to participate in. Pupils consider carefully who to elect for the school council on the annual democracy day, realising that this will affect how they are represented. They understand that by deciding to persevere they will achieve their best and by behaving well they will enjoy their school days.
- 3.21 Pupils' contribution to others, the school and the community is excellent. They fulfil responsibilities well and contribute extremely positively to the lives of others within the school, the local community and wider society. Older pupils help younger ones in a warm and supportive way at break times. Pupils rise to the opportunity to take on roles of responsibility in their classes. The oldest pupils enthusiastically carry out their roles as ambassadors in different aspects of school life with pride and conscientiousness. Pupils talk of their responsibilities with enthusiasm and aspire to being head pupils, house captains or elected to the school council. They show a caring attitude towards others, as well as a sense of responsibility to aid those in need in the local community. They make items such as bracelets to sell at an annual art and craft day to raise money for a chosen charity and recently organised a special event to successfully fund a defibrillator for the school community. As part of their activities, the eco club members undertake litter picking in the locality. Year 6 pupils include active community involvement and life skills in working towards the school diploma. Pupils relish the chance to help others and they understand that it helps the world to be a better place.

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, 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. 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 Penelope Austin	Reporting inspector
Mr Philip Gibson	Compliance team inspector (Assistant head, IAPS school)
Mr Bryan Kane	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)