



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Emmanuel Christian School

October 2022

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School's Details

School	Emmanuel Christian School			
DfE number	931/6102			
Registered charity number	900505			
Address	Emmanuel Christian School Sandford Road Littlemore Oxford Oxfordshire OX4 4PU			
Telephone number	01865 395236			
Email address	admin@ecschoo.org.uk			
Principal	Mrs Lizzy Nesbitt			
Chair of governors	Rev Anthony Buckley			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	55			
	EYFS	26	Juniors	29
Inspection dates	04 to 06 October 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Emmanuel Christian School is an independent co-educational day school based in Littlemore, near Oxford. Founded with a strong Christian character over 30 years ago, the school comprises the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged 3 to 5 years and juniors for pupils aged 5 to 11 years. The school is governed by a board of governors which includes parents and independent members. The current chair of governors was appointed in 2020.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school seeks to develop children who are secure and confident in their unique gifts and character. It fosters an expectation that all children are eager to learn when given inviting and interesting ideas to stimulate their curiosity and imagination. The school promotes a deep ethos of respect and service, encouraging all children to see learning not as a competition, but to develop their gifts to the full so that they might serve others well.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from an international range of backgrounds which reflect the nearby city of Oxford. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified three pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, two of whom receive additional support. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for two pupils, neither of whom receive additional support. Data used by the school have identified five pupils as being the most able in the schools population and their needs are met through challenge within the curriculum and enrichment activities.

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 relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 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 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. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Little Acorns	Nursery
Acorns	Reception

Key findings

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

- Pupils are excellent communicators who speak with high levels of articulation and clarity.
- Pupils exhibit high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across different areas of learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent; they show high levels of perseverance and commitment in lessons.
- Pupils make excellent progress over time and achieve high standards in their academic studies, particularly maths and English.
- Pupils' computing skills are not as highly developed as other areas of the curriculum.

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

- Pupils of all ages have extremely high levels of spirituality.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of moral understanding. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils develop high levels of self-confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline and resilience.
- Pupils show excellent levels of social development, collaborating with great success in and outside the classroom.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Enable all pupils to acquire high levels of computing skills by improving the opportunities for presenting ideas digitally and independently.

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' communication skills are excellent. They speak articulately and confidently and respond to complex instructions extremely well. This was evident when Year 1 pupils explained accurately how to turn a statement into a question when writing independently to prepare interview questions. Pupils listen to others attentively and with respect from an early age. In Reception children listen carefully and absorb new vocabulary. They respond confidently to the story and associated questioning. They read for enjoyment at advanced levels for their ages and are adept at sourcing information. They write imaginatively, with high levels of creativity in creative writing lessons and produce succinct and informative posters when recording experiment results. Pupils display wide ranging, advanced vocabulary and use it in context. In a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, older pupils deployed scientific terms extremely well to describe the different zones of the ocean. Pupils in a Year 3 and 4 English lesson divided sentences accurately into main and subordinate clauses, explaining their advanced understanding with great clarity. Year 6 pupils were highly competent and expressive when performing their own poetry and acting out the Book of Moses. Children in the EYFS were able to consistently identify and suggest words beginning with specific initial sounds.
- 3.6 Pupils attain highly, particularly in maths and English, by the time they reach the top of the school. They demonstrate high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding, supported through the school's wide ranging integrated topic approach. In Year 4 pupils can explain why mixing oil and water creates levels like the levels of the sea. They can discuss how the hydrogen atoms are not broken down and they understand density and refraction and explain it knowledgeably. Pupils show an excellent understanding of their topic when talking informatively about people associated with their topic. They used their knowledge to create their own high quality fact files after they devised their own scientific experiments to test their independent ideas. The youngest children acquire new skills and understanding at a significantly rapid rate. In a successful Reception lesson, children effectively transferred their knowledge of magnets and explained how a magnet works and attracts metal objects. Pupils showed excellent understanding in their written accounts when analysing the decline of the bee population. An air of eager diligence pervades the school which helps pupils acquire and consolidate new information and techniques.
- 3.7 Pupils make excellent progress over time and achieve high standards in their academic studies. Results achieved in tests at the age of eleven confirm that pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, all the pupils who responded agreed they are encouraged to think for themselves and that teachers help them to learn and make progress. All the parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that teaching enables their children to make progress and develop skills for the future. Pupils of all abilities achieve highly and thrive on aspirational challenge and high expectations. This was seen in a very successful Year 2 English lesson where pupils acquired an excellent understanding of how to create open ended questions in order to elicit more detailed information. Pupils make consistently high progress throughout the school. This is because leaders make highly effective use of standardised data which is analysed and communicated to all staff. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) perform well, benefiting from the high quality support they receive from staff. In the work scrutiny pupils wrote well in a range of genres in English and showed a clear understanding of the structure of the language. This included informative and reflective comparisons of two paintings by Botticelli, using a wide range of connectives and fronted adverbial clauses.
- 3.8 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent throughout the school. Pupils display well-developed levels of initiative and a clear understanding of how to work independently and collaboratively. When working in groups, pairs or individually they show great respect for each other and are highly productive. This was seen in a Year 3 and 4 science lesson where pupils created effective circuits and explained their thought processes clearly. Pupils collaborate well when sharing resources and when working together to achieve a common goal. Those in the older years were seen to be extremely

understanding and patient when teaching the younger pupils how to hula hoop during break times. In Years 1 and 2 pupils worked conscientiously and successfully when digging their own Sutton Hoo holes in search of treasure. Excellent initiative was observed in a mathematics lesson where Year 6 pupils volunteered their own solutions and extended their learning when working on complex problems involving division and ratio.

- 3.9 Pupils attain good and often excellent results in mathematics and transfer their skills effectively to other areas in the curriculum. Pupils demonstrate a good grasp of the number system, including a strong understanding of concepts such as place value. Pupils make at least appropriate and often rapid progress in response to the school's effective curriculum and tracking system. The scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations by inspectors showed that pupils apply their understanding well when solving addition and subtraction sums involving one, two and three-digit numbers. Pupils' understanding of number is excellent by the time they are in Year 6. They confidently calculate percentages, add and subtract fractions and decimals and work with division sums that include remainders. Pupils constantly challenge themselves and extend their understanding through discussions and are encouraged to do so. For example, when exploring the difference between remainders and decimals pupils understood that mathematically their answers would look different. Pupils in Year 6 used their knowledge of trigonometry successfully to measure the height of trees. In the EYFS children demonstrated excellent application of measurement when estimating the height of vehicles and how many washers they needed to complete their pattern. In some lessons the more able pupils make less rapid progress due to a lack of clear differentiation. Pupils benefit from the governors' initiatives in mathematics, which has included a new scheme and specialist teaching. This has ensured pupils talk about their maths more and articulate their excellent understanding and learning.
- 3.10 Pupils' computing skills are not as highly developed as those in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils acquire basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and use these effectively in other subjects. However, opportunities to do so are limited and do not always extend their skills and understanding. Pupils use word processing facilities accurately and effectively to produce high quality end results. This is evident in their entertaining and well-written sea stories which older pupils have turned into booklets to read to children in the EYFS. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 used computers to look at propaganda around the world and to compare different styles of media through their topic work on Asia, talking knowledgeably about 'fake news'. Pupils' knowledge of basic coding is good but they do not achieve at the highest levels of which they are capable, because of limited resources and opportunities to acquire new skills.
- 3.11 Pupils develop excellent study skills over time. They show a great ability to draw upon a very wide range of sources, developing their skills from the very beginning of their time at the school. Pupils of all ages and abilities demonstrate the ability to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise. They use these skills wisely to accelerate their learning as seen in an engaging English lesson, where pupils formulated quality questioning for interviewing famous people associated with their topic on the ocean. Children in the EYFS asked probing and insightful questions when hypothesising maturely about mixing red and yellow paint to create orange. They formulated their thoughts and opinions through sensible discussion, sharing their wonder and interest in their 'magical' results. In science, older pupils hypothesised what would happen to the ocean if it was sugary rather than salty. They discussed knowledgeably and with understanding why the liver is the most important organ in a shark's body.
- 3.12 Pupils achieve well in a number of areas, as seen in their achievements in external examinations and competitions. They achieve excellent results in sport, athletics, science, chess and art. Pupils develop their abilities and acquire new skills through the school's inclusive extra-curricular programme. In the pre inspection questionnaire, all parents who responded expressed the view that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. The governors show good awareness of the pupils' needs and promote pupils' academic development and challenge pupils' thinking and ensure their progress. All pupils respond positively to the improved outdoor learning areas developed by the school and

supported by the governors. They enjoy the opportunity to take healthy exercise and the quiet areas provided for reflection and appreciation of the world around them. Pupils achieve well in a number of areas, as seen in their achievements in external examinations and success in gaining places at selective senior schools. Their achievements are strongly supported by the governors' awareness of their needs and their promotion of pupils' academic development and challenge both in and outside the classroom. They achieve excellent results in sports such as football, hockey and athletics, including particular success in tournaments arranged for small schools. Pupils achieve equally well in the county chess league and local singing competitions and perform to a high standard in their productions and concerts. They develop their abilities and acquire new skills through the school's inclusive extra-curricular programme, benefiting from the provision of high quality coaching and visiting specialists. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents who responded expressed the view that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. This view was supported by inspection evidence.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils of all ages develop extremely high levels of spiritual understanding, which permeates the school. The school's Christian ethos underpins all pupil activities and helps them to become caring and compassionate to others regardless of race, faith or background. Pupils develop a strong understanding of their Christian faith during their time at the school and value the non-material aspects of life. They appreciate the peaceful tranquillity of nature and the beauty of God's world and the quiet areas provided for reflection and appreciation of the world around them. They value opportunities to engage in healthy exercise and to learn in the improved outdoor learning areas developed by the school and supported by the governors. In 'take it apart' club pupils were fascinated by the wonder and joy of how things work. Pupils are secure in their own beliefs and write thoughtfully, sensitively and movingly. They speak articulately in discussion about the importance of being a good Christian and how it helps them in life. Pupils told inspectors that their faith equips them to deal with challenges and to be tolerant of everyone. Pupils demonstrated high levels of self-reflection during pupil led morning prayers and in their grateful journals. They spoke about accepting others as they are made in God's image, confidently stating why they were thankful. In Year 6, pupils confidently empathised with the characters' state of mind whilst portraying the role of the Israelites, Moses and the snakes.
- 3.15 Pupils' levels of moral understanding are extremely high in response to the high expectations of staff and effective classroom management techniques. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and know how their behaviour affects others. They speak emphatically about there being no bullying or bad behaviour at a serious level. Pupils respond well when the behaviour policy is implemented in class and understand the consequences of their behaviour. Pupils are respectful of the school's rules and express them eloquently alongside their confidence in the willingness of leaders and other adults in school to deal with problems and any unkindness should it arise. They accept accountability for their actions, linking this to their own faith with maturity. Pupils articulate the importance of learning from their mistakes and being respectful towards others. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, both pupils and parents agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour.
- 3.16 Pupils develop excellent levels of self-confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline and resilience. They know how to improve their own learning and performance and set themselves high targets. Pupils exhibit high levels of perseverance and can discuss ways in which they can modify their work. This was seen in a Year 5 and 6 art lesson when pupils worked creatively and confidently to produce their own sea creatures, sharing their thoughts and ideas to improve their work. Pupils of all ages exhibit an assured self-confidence and self-esteem. This is developed through the highly effective use by staff and pupils of praise and encouragement. Pupils are confident that they can approach members of staff for help and advice and appreciate the staff's input. They realise that the staff know them well

and will listen to them. Pupils have secure levels of understanding of their own abilities and respond well to the opportunities to represent the school and be successful. During pupil interviews, they spoke highly of each other and how they encourage each other to persevere. During a PE lesson when working in pairs, Reception children were able to persevere when learning to throw and catch a ball. They valued the praise given by the class teacher, commenting on their success when mastering tasks for the first time.

- 3.17 Pupils have highly developed social awareness. They work and play effectively and with a clear idea of how to achieve common goals and solve problems. Pupils are very aware of other people and their feelings. They treat people positively, and pupils of all ages interact extremely well with each other within a distinct atmosphere of mutual respect based on tolerance and the Christian ethos of the school. Pupils are kind and encouraging towards each other in response to the strong pastoral system that focuses on the core values of kindness, friendship and respect. In a Year 5 and 6 science lesson pupils showed excellent collaboration with their partners, listening carefully and discussing how to complete the tasks. Pupils use every opportunity to work together with others in the school community. This was seen at break time where pupils of different ages created their own games and rules. In year 1 pupils successfully made a bug hotel and talked animatedly about it whilst considering everyone's ideas. The older pupils took time and patience when showing younger pupils how to develop new skills when learning new games at break times. Pupils understand that once words are said, they cannot be taken back. They have a great appreciation for aspects of kindness and commented on how they treat others in the way they wish to be treated. Children in the EYFS are aware of each other's needs, take turns and work very effectively together as seen in a topic lesson where they shared resources and ideas well. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of pupils felt that they are kind and respectful towards each other.
- 3.18 Pupils show high levels of respect for all members of their community. They have a mature understanding of cultural differences and celebrate them with great joy and thoughtfulness. Pupils talked to inspectors about their strong belief that they have all been created equal and nobody is treated differently because of their backgrounds or beliefs. They spoke emphatically about serving the Lord and treating others as would be expected in scripture. They have a very clear understanding of the need to ensure there is no discrimination and they appreciate the assemblies which make it clear what is and what is not acceptable. Year 6 pupils share their skills competently with the Nursery children during shared reading times. They encouraged younger pupils through questioning and praise. All 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. The ethos of inclusivity permeates the school and is reflected in the pupils' deep-seated acceptance and appreciation of everyone.
- 3.19 Pupils make a highly significant contribution to the lives of others within the school and in local, national and international communities. They embrace the responsibilities they are given from an early age. They firmly believe that service to others comes before self and that their learning encompasses how to serve the community. Pupils are eager to make a positive difference to those less fortunate than themselves. They wholeheartedly commit to raising funds for overseas charities and enthusiastically organise and run charitable events. They speak animatedly about their involvement in raising money to finance small overseas businesses. Pupils contribute positively to the lives of others and engage in community events with commitment throughout the year.
- 3.20 Pupils benefit from an early age from the opportunities to make decisions. They show high levels of awareness when making choices that might affect their learning or their social groupings. Pupils have good decision-making skills and understand that the decisions they make are determinants of their academic success. Children in the EYFS make decisions for themselves when selecting a variety of approaches for different tasks as well as the appropriate resources. Older pupils made wise decisions in a science lesson when choosing art materials and the correct components for creating successful circuits. Pupils are not afraid to make mistakes, discussing these confidently with staff and deciding

how to put things right. Pupils show great self-belief as they learn how to accept errors as part of their personal development. They react positively to social situations and choose wisely how to resolve situations satisfactorily for everyone. In interview, pupils made it clear that they make wise decisions by going back to the school's Christian beliefs and thinking about decisions Jesus made for the benefit of himself and others.

- 3.21 Pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and healthy in all its forms is well developed. They talk informatively about the regular advice they receive about road safety, healthy eating, and safeguarding procedures. They are determined to stay safe and healthy and exhibit excellent knowledge about what this means, benefiting from opportunities in school to improve their lifestyle and the balance of life. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at the school both in the physical and online environment. They take responsibility to be safe in all they do. During discussions with inspectors, pupils spoke about being well-equipped to make good life choices and about choosing healthy food for their lunch.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Paul Easterbrook	Reporting inspector
Mrs Elizabeth Bell	Compliance team inspector (Bursar IAPS school)
Miss Victoria Playford	Team inspector (Headmistress ISA school)