



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Ackworth School

February 2023

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School's Details

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|----------------------------------|--|-----|-------------------|-----|
| School | Ackworth School | | | |
| DfE number | 384/6000 | | | |
| Registered charity number | 529280 | | | |
| Address | Ackworth School Pontefract West Yorkshire WF7 7LT | | | |
| Telephone number | 01977 233600 | | | |
| Email address | reception@ackworthschool.com | | | |
| Headteacher | Mr Anton Maree | | | |
| Clerk | Mr David Bunney | | | |
| Proprietor | Ackworth School Limited | | | |
| Age range | 2 to 20 | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 495 | | | |
| | Day pupils | 419 | Boarders | 76 |
| | EYFS | 56 | Juniors | 101 |
| | Seniors | 232 | Sixth Form | 85 |
| Inspection dates | 21 to 23 February 2023 | | | |

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Ackworth School is an independent, co-educational day and boarding school located in Ackworth, Pontefract. It was founded in 1779 on behalf of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). It comprises a nursery, junior and senior schools, and an autism resource centre which acts as an additional resource to support mainstream lessons, all situated on a single site. The school also provides education for pupils who are part of their football and table-tennis academies. Boarding is offered from the age of eleven in one of two boarding houses which are segregated by gender. The school is an incorporated registered charity and is administered by a board of governors known as the school committee, whose chair is called the clerk.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to develop pupils as part of a well-integrated and self-disciplined community, with an international dimension, underpinned by Quaker values. The school seeks to help all pupils progress at a pace appropriate to their age, aptitude, interests and ability so that they may leave the school well qualified and equipped to lead a full and responsible life in the wider world. In following the Quaker ethos, pupils are encouraged to grow in self-respect, consider others before self and look for the good in people, being honest and trustworthy at all times.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Day pupils come from a range of professional and business backgrounds, within a 25-mile radius of the school. Boarding pupils represent 21 different nations worldwide. School data indicate that the ability profile of the pupils is above the national average for those taking similar tests. The school has identified 64 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 51 of whom receive additional specialist help. There are 23 pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 69 pupils of whom 34 receive additional support for English. Pupils identified as the most able and those with particular talents have their curriculum modified or enhanced to support their individual development.

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, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. 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, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management.

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

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

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, 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, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, 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 In the junior school, the school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 In the senior school, the school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2020 to 2022 confirm that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.**

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

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 and 22 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.14 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4, 7 and 23 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.16 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.18 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.20 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 wellbeing of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 2 are 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> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1st Form | Year 7 |
| 2nd Form | Year 8 |
| 3rd Form | Year 9 |
| 4th Form | Year 10 |
| 5th Form | Year 11 |
| Lower sixth | Year 12 |
| Upper Sixth | Year 13 |

Key findings

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

- All pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make rapid progress in their learning throughout the school.
- Pupils have well-developed communication skills which they apply confidently to their learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and they demonstrate strong initiative and independence, both individually and collaboratively.
- Pupils demonstrate highly developed study skills when lessons challenge them to think about and use higher-order skills of analysis and hypothesis.

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

- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate excellent self-discipline and resilience in all aspects of their school lives.
- The spirituality awareness of the pupils is highly developed.
- Pupils of all ages demonstrate a mature sensitivity to the needs of others.
- Pupils make excellent contributions to the lives of others in the school, particularly within the boarding community and to society more broadly.
- Pupils deeply respect and show strong appreciation of the diverse nature of the school community, this is especially embedded in the boarding environment.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Improve pupils' ability to hypothesise, analyse and synthesise by ensuring that all receive consistent challenge in lessons to develop and use these skills.

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 make rapid progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. Children in the EYFS make progress which results in them meeting the Early Learning Goals. Analysis of school data, lesson observations and work scrutiny show that at GCSE, most pupils attain grades higher than expected for those of their ability. In 2022, over two-fifths of results were at the top grades, in line with the centre- and teacher-assessed grades in 2020 and 2021. At A level in 2022, just under one third of results were achieved at the top two grades. This good level of attainment mirrors the centre- and teacher-assessed results achieved by pupils in 2020 and 2021. These results both at A level and in GCSE show that the school's aim to enable pupils to achieve their potential academically is met and exceeded. They reflect the high quality of teaching which pupils receive and the excellent learning skills which pupils develop. Most leavers in 2022 gained a place at their first-choice university, many of which are universities with high entry requirements or equivalent institutions in specific fields. Pupils with SEND make strong progress, in line with their peers, including those in autism resource. They particularly benefit from provision of one-to-one support. These levels of attainment overall are enabled by excellent leadership of academic provision and teaching which demonstrates detailed knowledge of individual pupils and strong mutually respectful relationships between staff and pupils.

3.6 Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, develop an excellent range of knowledge, skills and understanding across all age ranges. For example, Year 12 pupils demonstrated deep understanding of set texts by Ibsen and Rossetti, reflecting sensitively on the effect of these works on the social mores of the eras in which they were written. Pupils at GCSE level distinguished skilfully between the economic, environmental and social factors that affect the lives of those living in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. In a music lesson, older pupils displayed strong understanding and recall of musical terminology. They coherently explained the meaning of dynamics, phrasing, sonority and tonality in terms of the piece of late romantic music they were listening to. Children in Nursery demonstrated highly developed vocabulary, confidently initiating conversations with peers and staff using complex sentences when describing the story of the three little pigs. Pupils in the autism resource demonstrated excellent manual dexterity in the model-making club and produced an excellent piece of detailed needlepoint using fine motor skills. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils agreed that their teachers are supportive and know their subjects well. Pupil discussions and other inspection evidence does not support the view expressed by some pupils in questionnaire responses that lessons are not interesting.

3.7 All pupils, including those with EAL, speak with confidence, fluidity and clarity, expressing themselves articulately. These are features of some of the most effective learning in lessons. Pupils listen well and always respond to other pupils and staff with engagement, empathy and understanding. Pupils in an EAL lesson delivered succinct answers to questions on the use of articles in sentence structure confidently and articulately. In history, pupils with EAL used sophisticated vocabulary in the correct context when describing the consequences of the cold war and its relevance to current world events. In science, music, art and drama lessons, pupils of all age ranges made accurate and appropriate use of technical terminology and are able to explain their work articulately. Pupils' written skills are excellent. Pupils express complex ideas successfully and provide clear explanations and analysis of their arguments in their work. In Spanish, Year 9 pupils made excellent oral progress in a group activity

that allowed all to gain confidence with key vocabulary in the native language. In a Year 3 guided reading lesson, pupils read confidently and engaged strongly with challenging texts.

- 3.8 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils display very positive attitudes towards their work and are extremely productive in lessons. The opportunities for them to develop independence are considerable. For example, in design technology (DT), GCSE pupils working on their coursework took clear responsibility for the progress of their project and ensured that individual steps were completed to a very high quality. In mathematics, Year 7 pupils worked diligently on their own, displaying much resilience in order to complete a number of increasingly complex tasks. Frequent collaboration confirms the excellent attitudes pupils have to each other and to staff. In a Year 1 outdoor learning lesson, pupils displayed a strong team spirit coupled with much enthusiasm when discussing and creating the Great Fire of London. Very co-operative and collaborative pair and group work was displayed by A-level pupils in psychology when reviewing and discussing their understanding of the processes of minority influence. Pupils are deeply engaged in the learning process as seen when many pupils opt to attend the after-school prep clubs.
- 3.9 Pupils are highly successful in their development and use of study skills. Throughout the school, when opportunities arise, pupils display a wide range of sophisticated study habits and organisational and thinking skills. For example, A-level pupils demonstrated excellent skills of analysis when considering the motivations of Offred in *The Handmaid's Tale*. Their comments demonstrated excellent depth and pupils made extremely perceptive links with other dystopian literature studied. Pupils in GCSE computer science (CS) displayed insightful analysis of the structure of the database presented by offering specific examples of potential improvements. Year 9 pupils displayed strong application of their historical knowledge to explain why Jesus might have been depicted in different ways during different periods of history and societal development. Older junior school pupils thought creatively and critically on ways in which to improve their own skills in hockey. Overall, however, opportunities for pupils to enhance their skills of hypothesis and synthesis are less frequent in lessons for the younger pupils in the senior school.
- 3.10 Pupils of all ages have excellent information and communication technology (ICT) skills. They recognise that these skills developed during periods of lockdown and have been further enhanced by the provision of electronic devices for all pupils from Year 5 upwards. Pupils use their devices skilfully to support and reinforce their learning in all subjects. For example, in drama, Year 8 pupils used their devices successfully to brainstorm a mind-map on a fictional theatre brand they were creating. Pupils with EAL were observed to make excellent use of electronic translators in many lessons to help them access the mainstream curriculum. All pupils make use of learning platforms to organise their work, and pupils with SEND in particular, speak of the benefit of technology in helping them keep notes and homework clearly filed and available. In DT, GCSE pupils exhibited excellent ICT skills in using software to produce high-quality product designs. Children in Reception used their devices independently and confidently to compare objects in order of size.
- 3.11 Pupils' numeracy skills and knowledge are highly developed. Pupils commented on how they use them across a wide range of subjects such as the sciences, geography, economics and business studies and psychology. Children in Reception demonstrated strong numeracy skills when measuring the height of different sets of plants using multi-links cubes and confidently using number bonds up to 15. The work of Year 6 pupils clearly demonstrates the accurate use and application of graphical and quantitative analytical skills. The pupils also use appropriate mathematical terminology for their age. In further mathematics, Year 12 pupils demonstrated excellent numerical aptitude when solving highly complex quadratic equations with ease. Year 10 pupils in a personal, social, health and economic education (PHSE) lesson on household budgeting made accurate percentage tax calculations based on variable amounts of income.
- 3.12 Many pupils throughout the school achieve excellent and notable success individually and in teams in sporting, musical, artistic and cultural arenas. Achievements outside of the curriculum include exceptional success in competitions at regional and national level in mathematics challenges and

science olympiads, music and drama (LAMDA) examinations and instrumental and singing examinations. Many pupils are members of regional and national youth orchestras. Other areas of success include creative writing and essay competitions and dance. Pupils are highly successful regionally in many sports such as cricket, football, hockey and netball. Success nationally has been achieved in athletics, equestrian sports, gymnastics, squash and table tennis and internationally in karate and motor racing. The football and table tennis academy pupils along with those pupils who play sport at a high level commented on how much they appreciate and benefit from the supportive scheduling and guidance provided by the school. In discussions, pupils commented on the involvement of many pupils in the highly popular and successful school musical and drama productions. They referred to both these and participation in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE), as particular strengths of the school. Records of pupils' achievement in these areas support this view.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils throughout the school, both day and boarding, show an excellent understanding of the areas they excel in, the areas that they find more challenging and those they need to work on to improve their academic performance. All pupils, especially those with SEND and EAL, demonstrate perseverance and excellent resilience and self-discipline, including in the face of academic challenge. This was particularly seen by those pupils who are supported by the autism resource. They know who they can approach for support and advice and willingly do so, often citing drop-in sessions as the source of this targeted personal support. Key in this support are praise and encouragement, which are used throughout the school to great effect and have a clear impact on pupils' self-esteem. Older junior school pupils were extremely self-reflective in their assessment of how to improve their LAMDA performances and in the effective setting of personalised targets in their academic work. A very large majority of parents in the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child be confident and independent. Inspection evidence confirms that the school's aims are successfully realised in these respects. These excellent outcomes in pupils' personal development are due to the strong commitment of senior leaders, school committee and staff to providing high levels of caring and nurturing pastoral support.
- 3.15 Pupils have a strong sense of belonging, especially in the boarding houses. They demonstrate highly developed spiritual understanding, in response to the spiritual values of Quakerism central to the school's ethos. The power of silent reflective contemplation was clear in the regular meetings for worship, punctuated with effective, powerful and thoughtful insights from pupils on topical issues affecting them. All pupils engage in the meetings respectfully and with reverence. Many pupils, even those without a strong faith commented upon how beneficial they find these times at the start of the day as an important period of reflection for them. Year 1 pupils in their outdoor learning lesson exemplified their awe and wonder when lighting a fire. They were excited, enthused and felt enlightened. Pupils in autism resource displayed a sense of peace and calm during their silent worship and a pupil musical performance. They commented strongly on the happiness and joy it engendered in them. Boarders talked fondly about the rural ambience of the school, its gentle tranquillity and the beauty of the grounds, particularly, they said, on a crisp frosty morning.
- 3.16 Pupils deeply respect, and show excellent appreciation for, the diverse nature of their community. They are extremely tolerant and caring, and they show sense and sensitivity to all those within their community, irrespective of their beliefs or background. This was seen in lessons, in which pupils with EAL and SEND, including autism, are fully integrated. It is evident in the varied friendship groups within the school. A very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of decency, respect and tolerance. This is underpinned by the school's Quaker values and ethos, and leadership creating a culture of openness, inclusion and acceptance. This is enhanced by the culture within the boarding community where boarders commented upon the diverse backgrounds which foster a society where it is more than acceptable to be who you want to

be. Junior school pupils also have a strong knowledge of other cultures through their curricula thematic work.

- 3.17 Pupils have a strong social conscience and an excellent awareness of their social responsibilities to others and the wider world. The school fully meets its aim to create a sense of community where pupils are sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils of all ages talk most positively about the various roles for them within the school that enable them to support their peers; for example, as school officers, house captains, school and boarding council members, peer mentors for the younger pupils and peer buddies for pupils new to boarding. They fulfil these roles with humility and a focus on service, befitting the school's Quaker ethos. All pupils are highly aware of issues relating to inequality and express this most effectively through whole-school and house-based fund-raising charity work. Charities that have benefited from this recently include local foodbanks and hospices, Ukraine charity projects, international disaster funds and cancer research. Pupils spoke most enthusiastically of their self-motivated, community-based volunteer work, such as litter-picking, for example, and of the difference they felt they are making.
- 3.18 Pupils' moral understanding is excellent, and they take full responsibility for their extremely positive, caring and supportive behaviour towards their peers. They are able to empathise with other pupils' needs and situations and understand the importance of cohesion in their community. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and respect the views of others. Prep school pupils in their PHSE lesson gave very strong and passionate speeches on the importance of welcoming refugees from Turkey and Syria. They reflected emotionally on the living conditions of the refugees and the need for all communities to help their plight. In a Year 13 Spanish lesson, pupils demonstrated excellent ability to analyse the moral framework of the forced adoption of children under the Argentine dictatorship. Pupils in a GCSE geography lesson confidently discussed their concerns about the living conditions of those living in the Brazilian favelas and displayed excellent awareness of the moral imperative of helping others less fortunate than themselves. This strong moral awareness is deeply embedded in response to the Quaker ethos, values, policies and behavioural practices of and in the school.
- 3.19 Throughout the school, pupils' social skills are highly developed. They demonstrate excellent social awareness and their interaction with others is of high quality, being positive, honest and open. This is due to the strong culture of community and expectation of collaboration which exists throughout the school in response to the school's aims. In a Year 3 music lesson, pupils using boomwhackers and chime bars in small groups, displayed excellent co-operation and collaboration as each pupil took their turn to play and listen attentively. Year 10 pupils worked extremely well together to successfully complete a multi-stage experiment, collaborating in pairs to share responsibilities for different aspects of a science investigation. Outside of the classroom, pupils develop excellent interpersonal skills as a result of the many opportunities provided for leadership and collaboration. In the questionnaire, a very large majority of parents agreed that the school helps pupils develop teamwork and social skills. Inspection evidence shows that pupils develop into highly considerate and empathetic young people.
- 3.20 Pupils throughout the school are fully aware of the need to make careful, thoughtful and informed choices. They appreciate that decisions they make about academic work, relationships and their own feelings will impact upon their success, development and wellbeing. The school councils make meaningful decisions about different aspects of school life, which are readily implemented by the school. These have included changes to the school uniform, food provision in the dining hall, and the introduction of a peace garden. Academy pupils in a GCSE physical education (PE) lesson showed excellent ability to evaluate the pros and cons of training techniques and then decide where improvements are possible, and how to go about achieving them. Junior school pupils are given choice in many of their lessons and use this profitably. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils decided to attempt beginner, intermediate or challenging work when working out the perimeter of compound shapes. In their questionnaires, a small minority of both parents and pupils did not agree that pupils received helpful advice about subject choices and careers. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Although there has been some disruption in staffing of careers, this has been

remedied and pupils confirmed in interviews that they had received the support they needed to enable them to make successful decisions in their applications for further study.

- 3.21 Pupils show a balanced and mature understanding of the fundamental aspects of staying physically and mentally healthy and are able to relate these readily to their own lives. They are aware of the need for a healthy diet and exercise and make choices that will actively support them to achieve this. Pupils value all the opportunities in the school day to reflect on and demonstrate their awareness of mental health issues. They feel positive that they know how to access support for themselves, their peers and all people in their school community. The pupils who fulfil roles as peer mentors play a key part in this. Prep school pupils commented on the space they are given to be emotionally reflective, for example, in the woodland learning environment, in PHSE and in assemblies. A very large majority of pupils, including those within the boarding setting, agreed that they know how to stay safe online, and that they feel safe and secure in school. This was supported by a very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire. Inspection evidence confirms these views.

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 members of the committee, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and a meeting for worship. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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 Michael Evans | Reporting inspector |
| Mr David Williams | Compliance team inspector (Former head, IAPS school) |
| Mr Duncan Byrne | Team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school) |
| Mr Umeshchandra Raja | Team inspector (Former head, ISA school) |
| Mr Garry Binks | Team inspector for boarding (Former housemaster, HMC school) |