

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

St Edward's Preparatory School

February 2020



Contents

Contents	2
School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection	5
Preface	5
Key findings	6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	6
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	6
PART 6 – Provision of information	7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	7
The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage	8
Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision	8
Quality of education	8
Behaviour and attitudes	9
Personal development	9
Leadership and management	10
Compliance with statutory requirements	11
Recommendation for further improvement:	11
3. Educational Quality Inspection	12
Preface	12
Key findings	13
Recommendation	13
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements	13
The quality of the pupils' personal development	16
4. Inspection Evidence	18

School's Details

School	St Edward's Preparatory School			
DfE number	916/6077			
Early Years registration number	EY309807			
Registered charity number	293360			
Address	St Edward's Preparatory School London Road Charlton Kings Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL52 6NR			
Telephone number	01242 388550			
Email address	prepschool@stedwards.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Stephen McKernan			
Chair of trustees	Dr Susan Honeywill			
Age range	1 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	300			
	Boys	157	Girls	143
	EYFS	80	Juniors	220
Inspection dates	04 to 06 February 2020			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 St Edward's Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged 1 to 11 years. The school is governed by St Edward's School Trust (Cheltenham). This also oversees the senior school, two miles away. Each school operates as a separate entity with its own head, but the schools have a joint financial organisation.
- 1.2 Established in 1995, the school occupies its own 45-acre site on the edge of Cheltenham. It is divided into three sections; the kindergarten, accommodating children aged one to four; pre-prep with pupils aged four to seven; and the prep department for those aged seven to eleven. The school is Christian with a Catholic foundation, welcoming pupils of all faiths and none.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school promotes a strong sense of family, where all pupils will be valued and supported to fulfil their individual potential in a caring atmosphere with the values of Christ at the centre. The school aims to help each pupil realise they are truly unique and possess individual gifts and talents. The school intends that, through this realisation, pupils will become ambitious for self-improvement throughout their lives and so develop beyond their perceived potential.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, mostly from British families living within a twenty-minute journey to the school. Data provided by the school from standardised tests indicate that the ability of the pupils is average compared to pupils taking the same tests nationally. The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is 14. They require support with a wide variety of needs, including dyslexia. No pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHC). There are 14 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 4 require additional support. The school has identified 27 pupils as being the most able; the curriculum is modified for them and for 7 pupils talented in sport and performing arts.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports 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. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was 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 report of which appears later in this document. The 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 regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; 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 full regulations 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, the 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 uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 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

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 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

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously 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.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 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.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 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.

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

The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

- 2.19 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 2.20 Leaders have designed and implemented an ambitious and challenging curriculum which they monitor closely to ensure it meets the needs and interests of children under two. EYFS leaders evaluate and reflect on their practice rigorously, ensuring continuous improvement. Practitioners work as a strong team who strive for the very best outcomes for every child in their care. All children, including those with SEND and EAL, make excellent progress in relation to their starting points, cumulatively building the knowledge and skills needed to prepare them for the next stage of their education. Staff ensure that children feel safe, happy and secure within their setting. Children display high levels of emotional security and form strong bonds with their key people. There is a deep culture for safeguarding and welfare. All statutory requirements have been fully met and staff work together to fulfil their responsibilities and protect the children in their care. The recommendation from the previous inspection has been fully implemented.

Quality of education

- 2.21 The quality of education is outstanding.
- 2.22 Practitioners plan excellent educational programmes with exciting and creative experiences, which challenge every child according to their individual needs. Practitioners' interactions with children are of a very high quality.
- 2.23 Creative use of space and carefully researched and chosen resources include a sensory room, platform staging and information and communication technology (ICT) hub, together with specialist art and music teaching. This provision enables staff to plan carefully tailored activities that encourage children's curiosity, exploration and open-ended thinking. Children are encouraged to investigate materials and be creative in their use of them as when they are introduced to clay. They watch and listen to their teacher, then independently try manipulating the clay.
- 2.24 All practitioners have worked together to implement coherent and sequenced planning which is adult led but also child-initiated as well as spontaneous planning which arises from daily activities. It provides progression in learning and ensures children are ready for the next stage of their education. Assessment is used rigorously to check what children know and can do, and to inform next steps in teaching and learning. Thorough monitoring of the highly effective planning and assessment by leaders ensures that the curriculum's intent is met and is sufficiently challenging for the children in the setting.
- 2.25 The recommendation from the previous inspection to provide an additional outdoor area has resulted in a recently completed sensory garden for the under-tuos. The outdoor area does not as yet offer the same scope of creative and imaginary play experiences as those implemented indoors.
- 2.26 Children are highly involved in their activities and play; the curriculum has a profound influence on what they learn to do and remember. Staff have an excellent understanding of the essential knowledge that children under two need to prepare them for future success. Those with EAL are very well supported by key people to enable their language skills to develop. Their home language is celebrated in books and rhymes and staff communicate with them to establish understanding of key words.

Behaviour and attitudes

- 2.27 Children's behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
- 2.28 Children are very enthusiastic learners who are keen to explore their surroundings and respond well when encouraged to have a go with something new. For example, when choosing their musical instruments, they shake them and are delighted with the noises they make and begin to focus on their activities for an appropriate amount of time. They show a sense of awe and wonder as they explore shapes with lit up coloured torches in the stimulating sensory room.
- 2.29 Children choose their own ways to think critically; they have their own ideas. Toddlers, wanting to improve their climbing skills, attempted to climb up the toy garage when a watchful key person aware of their next steps in learning, encouraged their gross motor skill development by introducing specific climbing toys. Children are motivated to participate in a range of activities and staff give many opportunities for them to take risks, for example encouraging them and giving them confidence to jump off a wooden box in the outdoor area. Key people congratulate children for trying things, especially when they show nerves. Toddlers count fish, pointing to each one in turn as they say the correct number. They recognise and name colours as they play with different coloured remote-controlled cars. They persevere with trying to make these move, encouraged by their key person and show a huge sense of achievement when they finally succeed in pressing the appropriate key to make the white car move.
- 2.30 Children experience many opportunities to further their vocabulary, memory and thinking skills, for example during happy, calm and sociable mealtimes. Staff introduce the words 'crunchy' as a child munches on a carrot stick and 'scoop' to describe how children are eating their rice. Children consistently use the new vocabulary they have learnt to communicate successfully, for example, during a later outdoor activity, using the word 'scoop' as they fill a container with sand. Babies remember the necklaces they made when prompted about their activities during the morning and proudly show them to adults.
- 2.31 The setting has a highly effective partnership with parents which successfully promotes children's attendance. Children arrive happily at the setting showing that they are very secure with their key people. They respond enthusiastically to their routines and love the security of the 'now' and 'next' timetable displays on the interactive boards. They are confident and happy learners who listen well to key people, follow instructions and are very safe and secure within their setting, forming good habits for the future.

Personal development

- 2.32 The personal development of children is outstanding.
- 2.33 Staff provide excellent care practices which wholeheartedly support children's emotional security, thus having a very important influence in the development of their character.
- 2.34 Strong and loving bonds with key people are evident throughout the setting. The atmosphere is welcoming, calm and secure; key people know when to stroke or cuddle a baby who is just waking from their afternoon sleep, or how to comfort an unsettled child by distracting them with something that particularly interests them. Behaviour is exemplary because staff demonstrate positive behaviour at all times. Children are encouraged to share toys and take turns. They have many reminders about keeping safe as they walk safely around parked cars on their way to the school farm. Physical and emotional health is given high priority and staff quickly respond to children's needs.

- 2.35 Children begin to understand their own needs. They independently choose the correct card from the classroom wallet of 'Our Needs' cards to take to their key person should they need a cuddle or a nappy change. They are aware of hygiene routines and make a good attempt to wash their hands independently. At teatime, children choose their own finger food and concentrate very carefully on feeding themselves independently with spoons. They enjoy nutritious and healthy meals and snacks. They have many opportunities to be active in the outdoor areas and to walk in the extensive school grounds.
- 2.36 Rigorous implementation of all welfare policies and procedures ensure that children are kept very safe and all risks are managed, including those related to technology. All staff have paediatric first aid qualifications, safeguarding training and are aware of the most up-to-date safeguarding guidance. The setting adheres to a strict mobile phone policy. All EYFS statutory requirements for safeguarding, welfare, learning and development are met.
- 2.37 Equality, diversity and British values are embedded into the everyday activities of the setting. Children learn to be kind and respectful and to accept and celebrate each other's uniqueness in line with the school's aims. All are encouraged to make a positive contribution. They share their own family books with one another and with adults. They benefit from visitors, including parents, the fire service, dentist and postal staff. Parents share Christmas and Easter activities with their children who also enjoy celebrating festivals from other cultures.

Leadership and management

- 2.38 Leadership and management are outstanding.
- 2.39 Leaders share an ambitious vision and ensure exemplary levels of care. They have high expectations of what children under two can achieve in their learning and development and provide them with a rich variety of experiences. This is achieved by the strong, shared values, policies and practices.
- 2.40 A new self-appraisal system enables the highly qualified staff to receive effective and focused professional development. This has built knowledge over time. A recent course in managing toddlers' behaviour helped practitioners to further their understanding and practice as well as to support parents with useful leaflets and advice.
- 2.41 Effective supervision of staff is firmly embedded in practice, enabling key people to improve their role with both children and parents. Leaders support staff well-being. They have evaluated the workload of practitioners, and as a result, staff have explored and implemented manageable and flexible systems to reduce paperwork.
- 2.42 Children's needs are at the heart of the setting. Those with EAL or SEND are very well supported and the setting benefits from the expertise of specialist staff. Thorough systems are in place to ensure every child's needs are met.
- 2.43 Leaders engage effectively with children, parents and others in the community, including other schools and local services. Parents feel very confident about leaving their children in the setting's expert care. Home and school routines are consistent, and parents receive a daily diary of their child's day. Inspectors judged questionnaire responses to be overwhelmingly positive and parents spoken to by inspectors were delighted with calm and homely environment of the setting, the welcoming and supportive staff and the exciting activities and resources offered to their children. They appreciate the communication they are able to make and the opportunities to contribute to their children's learning and to understand the progress they are making.
- 2.44 The trustees of the school are fully aware of the requirements of the EYFS and oversee and support EYFS leaders effectively. Senior managers have an innovative vision for the setting and support setting leaders in moving forward.
- 2.45 High priority is given to safeguarding and measures are in place to prevent radicalisation and extremism.

Compliance with statutory requirements

2.46 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Recommendation for further improvement:

- Further develop the sensory garden to encourage a greater range of imaginative and creative play experiences for children.

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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

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

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

Key findings

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

- Pupils demonstrate a high level of attainment in accordance with the school's aims.
- Pupils make excellent progress as confirmed by their strong achievement in examinations and their ability to enter schools with demanding entry requirements.
- Pupils' collaborative skills and a very high level of perseverance secure excellent achievement in academic and extra-curricular activities.
- All pupils develop and demonstrate strong key skills and knowledge; these empower successful transition to the next stages of their learning.
- Pupils respond positively to high levels of challenge through strong independent learning and make accelerated progress.

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

- Pupils exhibit a strong sense of community through the school's ethos and establish excellent relationships with peers and adults.
- Pupils have a profound appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, showing excellent spiritual awareness and respect for religious and cultural difference.
- Pupils across the whole school clearly demonstrate excellent self-discipline, self-confidence, moral understanding and appreciate diversity.

Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider the following recommendation:

- Further develop the pupils' leadership and independence in their own learning through their ongoing use of technology.

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 demonstrate high levels of attainment in accordance with the school's aim for them to 'Believe, Strive and Achieve', to be the very best version of themselves and find a joy in learning. This results from the high level of commitment of the leadership to achieve high standards in all aspects of school life. Pupils acquire excellent levels of knowledge and understanding and demonstrate excellent levels of performance and creativity in extra-curricular activities.

- 3.6 In the years 2016 to 2019, the most recent three years for which comparative data is available, performance in English and mathematics show very high levels of attainment compared to others who take the same standardised tests nationally. Children in EYFS make rapid progress because of the nurturing and sensitive teaching, which meets their individual needs. They achieve the expected levels of development by the time they finish Reception, and some exceed these. This successful development is maintained throughout the pre-prep and prep sections. Pupils are successful in 11+ and senior school entrance examinations, enabling an overwhelming majority to succeed in gaining admission to their first choice of school through 11+, school examinations and scholarships for academic, art, music and sporting disciplines. Pupils are able to make informed decisions on how to improve their attainment because they benefit from the well-established assessment and tracking programme which is used to inform teaching. Pupils' rapid progress is the result of high teacher expectations and the provision of challenge and independent learning in lessons and homework. This is additionally extended through the utilisation and application of ICT resources.
- 3.7 Pupils with SEND or EAL make very good progress and are enabled to achieve standards that are in line with those of their peers. They benefit greatly from enriched support from specialist staff through one-to-one and small group support sessions. More able pupils make excellent progress, successfully responding to challenging classwork and a programme of extended activities to enhance their progress. For example, in mathematics, pupils excitedly discussed their success in solving problems and calculations through algorithms. Four Year 6 pupils solved a hand-held mechanical cube puzzle by different means and clearly explained their procedures. Pupils eagerly make use of the lunchtime subject clinics and end of day support sessions, recognising that these enhance their understanding, enable them to progress in lessons and support their examination success. Pupil enrichment is enjoyed in the wide range of extra-curricular activities such as an eager group of pupils choosing an after-school club to enhance their computer programming skills.
- 3.8 Pupils use sophisticated language confidently and are excellent communicators. Children in the EYFS enjoy talking to others and adults promote good pronunciation of words through demonstration and by gently encouraging those with less well-developed speaking skills. Children's listening skills are nurtured through personal guidance and support, as seen in carpet-time discussions and story times. In Year 2, pupils were exceptionally confident and articulate when explaining about the water cycle. They used sophisticated language such as evaporation, condensation and precipitation correctly to explain the process. Older pupils used excellent imaginative language to write newspaper headlines based on puns, rhyme and alliteration. The pupils are attentive listeners and apply knowledge and reason thoughtfully and logically. In interviews, they expressed enthusiasm for being able to discuss and debate ideas freely in and out of class on a wide range of subjects such as how to be eco-friendly and on the topic of Brexit. Children in EYFS quickly develop pre-reading and writing skills through a range of interesting and colourful learning activities. Literacy is very strong; pupils are avid readers, fully utilising the library provision which is well stocked with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. This reflects the trustees and school management strong resourcing of the school and provision of suitable learning opportunities for the benefit of all pupils. Pupils express appreciation of the opportunities they have for quiet reading and independent research. They additionally enjoy competitive reading challenges as part of inter-house competitions and national literacy festivals and language competitions.

- 3.9 Pupils have very good numeracy skills. Children in EYFS show development of understanding in how to share two-digit numbers into two groups. Year 4 pupils use number knowledge to solve problems, showing excellent ability to apply mental calculation skills in a lesson starter. Year 6 pupils used grams and percentages successfully in judging if a drink or food is healthy by looking at sugars, fats and salt levels, hypothesising if a food is healthy or unhealthy by drawing on the statistics. Pupils further show very good ability to apply numeracy skills successfully in a wide range of subjects. For example, in science, Year 5 pupils have effectively used formulae and calculation to explore speed, time and distance. Further successful utilisation of mathematical skills is through the mathematics online platform and the participation in and hosting local schools for a Maths Challenge. Pupils have competent skills in coding and programming, well above those expected for their age. Their skills in ICT enable pupils to learn how to enhance their education actively through use of technology. They do so through the successful application of video and presentation software to enhance project work as part of homework tasks. Study projects include such as those on volcanoes, with peer presentations and a history project on the Tudors which used presentation software covering aspects of Tudor life. The latter presentations included Tudor music and animations with sound effects. In the nursery and pre-prep pupils successfully use interactive screens to enhance their learning in mathematics and English. The school has not yet fully achieved its envisaged use of ICT in learning to enable pupils to develop the application of their already strong ICT skills to the fullest extent.
- 3.10 Pupils are enthusiastic and determined learners, willingly prepared to take risks, enjoy the opportunities of different styles of teaching and to rise to challenging opportunities when these are offered. They are inquisitive learners, demonstrated in a woodland activity which involved pupils producing sculptures based on the work of Andy Goldsworthy and making a video which explained the project. Pupils demonstrate a resolute sense of purpose, moving calmly to their lessons. They settle quickly and display an eagerness to learn and be involved in discussion and questioning. Pupils respond willingly to guidance in lessons and are further empowered to make progress and self-reflect on their work through meaningful and engaging marking throughout the school. This is supported by the over whelming majority of pupil questionnaire responses and interviews, who felt that marking helps them to improve. Pupils express their enjoyment of independent research projects for homework. In in class, they willingly and successfully respond to open-ended questioning and demonstrate an excellent ability to investigate and hypothesise; for example, a group of pupils investigated with success the different musical pitch of elastic bands, according to size and thickness. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about taking charge of their own learning both in school and at home and enjoy managing their own homework tasks using the homework grid.
- 3.11 Pupils become very confident public performers through their participation in the performing arts. They engage and effectively demonstrate their musical talents avidly through active involvement in the orchestra, choirs, and musical ensembles, most recently performing at the Royal Albert Hall. Pupils achieve national examination awards in music and drama at high levels, the most recent success being all the entered pupils achieved distinctions or merits. They enthusiastically discussed their participation in recent productions such as *Madagascar* and a visit to a Shakespeare schools festival where Year 4 pupils performed an abridged version of *The Tempest*. Pupils also gain positive experiences and achieve success backstage, in stage and costume design and making props for productions. Many pupils find pleasure and achieve personal and academic success in creative work in response to encouragement to develop their interest and talent in drawing, painting and textiles. Pupils enjoy the challenge of competitive sport. Active and skilful participation in team sports, includes rugby, netball, hockey, football, tennis and cricket. Success is also achieved by individuals and teams in sports such as cross-country running, athletics, swimming and gymnastics at local and national levels. An overwhelming majority of parents and pupils agreed in the questionnaires that the school's extra-curricular opportunities greatly enhance pupils' achievement.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.12 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.13 All pupils exhibit extremely high levels of self-confidence and an excellent understanding of how to progress. Pupils have a profound appreciation of the non-material aspects of school life, showing excellent spiritual awareness based on firm Christian principles and respect for religious and cultural difference. All pupils are valued and supported enabling them to fulfil their individual potential in a caring atmosphere with the values of Christ at the centre. Pupils of all ages show personal pride in the quality of their work, and their ability to enjoy and experience tasks inside and outside the classroom. Throughout the school pupils positively react to challenges and occasional setbacks and develop strong resilience and self-confidence which enable them to respond successfully to the choices appropriate to their age and stage of development. Pupils who recently joined the school report that the welcoming and supportive community atmosphere enabled them to make a very confident start to their school life. An overwhelming majority of parents and pupils agree that the school helps to develop confidence and independence. The strength of service and togetherness which is clearly apparent in the pupils and in the school reflects the commitment of the leadership to creating an aspirational and supportive ethos, to which the pupils readily respond.
- 3.14 Pupils are well prepared to face the challenges of living in modern Britain due to the strong provision of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) and development of a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Pupils demonstrate genuine understanding of the consequences of making their own decisions for individual success and well-being, and to further benefit others. They feel fully confident that they are encouraged to make decisions. Across the school pupils employ sensible and productive use of their free time, with the support of their form teachers and the pastoral system, making informed decisions regarding their choice of extra-curricular activities. Annual visits to residential courses, very much appreciated by the pupils, enable personal challenges such as being away from home, overcoming the fear of a new situation, such as climbing heights, developing their resilience and proud of their achievement. Pupils in Year 6 confidently stated that they greatly value the assistance to make informed choices regarding their senior school and are responsive to guidance from their teachers and senior staff. They understand that deciding to participate in additional study empowers them to progress and achieve success and appreciate and respond positively to the examination support offered.
- 3.15 Pupils have a strong appreciation of the non-material aspects of life through active participation in art, music, sport and theatre throughout the school. Pupils develop their faith and grow spiritually at their own pace by utilising and appreciating quiet areas such as the library and the reflection areas in classrooms. In assemblies pupils appreciated reflection and the relaxation exercises that they use to focus them for the busy day. Pupils express great appreciation in the celebration of their successes in the weekly assemblies that celebrates community family spirit through 'golden leaf' awards for individual achievement and acts of kindness.
- 3.16 Pupils exhibit respect for school rules and the class rules that they have written and agreed, and they also understand that individuals carry the responsibility for their own actions. Children in the EYFS know there are consequences arising from how they behave and the need for making good behaviour choices is learned at an early age. Pupils actively support each other by respect and help monitor the expectations of behaviour. Pupils are highly confident in articulating their acceptance of responsibility for their own behaviour. They commented that it is far better to be self-disciplined than have to be 'told what to do' when discussing aspects of the rewards and sanctions which take place in school. Pupils display great kindness, empathy and show thoughtful consideration for one another and an eagerness to help and support their peers, for example by instinctively going back to collect a classmate's snack box or being a Year 6 mentor to Year 2 pupils moving into a new part of the school.

- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding that individual success is not the only factor in their development and that co-operation can result in better outcomes. They adopt strong skills in working together as members of the school community. An overwhelming majority of pupils and parents in their questionnaire responses indicated that the school helps to develop strong teamwork and social skills. Children in the EYFS develop excellent collaborative skills through their activities in class and in the outdoor area. Throughout the school, pupils eagerly and successfully participate in carefully planned group tasks, the use of 'talk partners' and 'listening coaches' in lessons. They learn about, and understand the democratic process and experience the use of their vote; for example, in electing school council class representatives, and deciding the sponsorship of charities and the means of fundraising. Those in the school council express their opinions and can air their views and those of their class peers. This is appreciated by pupils. The councils have had an effective impact on creating codes of conduct, menu choices for lunch, and increasing the provision of activities.
- 3.18 Pupils throughout the school take lead roles successfully and with relish, such as prefects and ambassadors, pupil chaplains, librarians and sports leaders, form monitors and representatives on committees. Children in EYFS act as form leaders, and helpers. A group of pupils gain from the opportunities that the school farm offers, learning animal husbandry, feeding and working with the chickens, goats, alpacas and other animals. Pupils participated in and raised thousands of pounds for many local, national and international groups through enthusiastic service and charity sponsorship. Some pupils visit a local elderly care home to perform and the knitting group were observed making small knitted rabbits, to sell for charity. Pupils care for the environment through active and enthusiastic interest in re-cycling. Those on the eco-committee encourage and facilitate re-cycling.
- 3.19 The pupils demonstrate excellent levels of empathy and respect towards others, and value diversity. Pupils have an admirable appreciation of the wide range of cultures within the school. They celebrate other cultures and faiths through observing events such as Chinese New Year, Diwali, Australia Day and American Independence Day and further develop enriched understanding through the visits by parents who share their culture and traditions. Pupils develop their personal faith and Catholic belief through the appreciation and involvement in assemblies, chapel services, and worship at the local parish church. Pupils also noted that the opportunities to visit places of worship such as a Sikh temple and synagogue enhance their experiences and understanding of other faiths. Throughout the school pupils exhibit a spirit of inclusiveness, rather than difference, and believe this is the key to respect. They successfully acquire greater understanding of these characteristics in academic lessons, PSHEE, services and active participation in assemblies and educational visits.
- 3.20 Pupils articulated a strong understanding regarding their physical and mental well-being. They appreciate the need for a balanced approach to life, demonstrated in their willing participation in physical education and sports. Pupils state that their mental wellbeing is supported by form teachers, and chaplaincy and pastoral staff, enabling them to stay safe and healthy. They confirmed understanding on how to keep safe on-line and in cyber-space. Pupils realise the benefit of a good diet and pursue this. Pupils understand a new initiative, 'New Year New Snack', which encourages them to reduce their sugar intake and eat more healthily. In discussion pupils agreed that they are able to make informed choices from the school lunch menu. Pupils working on the farm recognised the need to wash and disinfect their hands before returning to school. An overwhelmingly number of parents and pupils in their questionnaire responses agreed that the school encourages a healthy lifestyle.

4. Inspection Evidence

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

Inspectors

Mr Alistair Telfer	Reporting inspector
Mrs Emma Patel	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Sarah Fisher	Team inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mrs Bridget Forrest	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former senior teacher, IAPS school)
Mrs Joanna Kay	Team inspector for EYFS (Former Head of pre-prep, IAPS school)