



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report
For Schools with Residential Provision**

Barnard Castle School

April 2023

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School's Details

School	Barnard Castle School			
DfE number	840/6003			
Registered charity number	1125375			
Address	Newgate Barnard Castle County Durham DL12 8UN			
Telephone number	01833 690222			
Email address	genoffice@barneyschool.org.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Anthony Jackson			
Chair of governors	Mrs Catherine Sunley			
Age range	4 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	733			
	Day pupils	543	Boarders	190
	EYFS	12	Juniors	160
	Seniors	386	Sixth Form	175
Inspection dates	25 to 27 April 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Barnard Castle School is a co-educational independent day and boarding school, set in 65 acres near a market town in the north east of England. It is owned by the Barnard Castle School Charitable Trust and overseen by the governors of Barnard Castle School. The present headmaster has been in post since 2017. Pupils are grouped into Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); prep, for those aged 5 to 11; seniors for those aged 11 to 16; and sixth form for those aged 16 to 18.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, there is a new chair of governors, two new deputy heads in the senior school and new boarding house leaders.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 By creating an inspirational, compassionate and unpretentious environment, the school aims to develop young adults with character, who are confident, resilient, intellectually curious, tolerant and driven, with an undercurrent of humility, and are ready and prepared to face, embrace and lead in an ever-changing world.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come mostly from the north of England. Boarders are mostly British, some from overseas countries representing ten nationalities. Data indicate the ability profile of the senior school is above average and of the sixth form is broadly average compared with others taking the same test nationally. At the prep school, pupils show average ability profiles on entry. The school has identified 161 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan (EHC). English is an additional language (EAL) for 35 pupils, whose needs are supported by classroom teachers. The school has identified a number of pupils as more able, who are supported through specialist programmes 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, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. 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. 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](#), [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 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 prep 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 prep 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. The school makes appropriate arrangements to provide long-term lodgings for some boarders.
- 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.

Key findings

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

- Pupils have excellent communication skills.
- Pupils are highly engaged learners and are positive about the opportunities offered to them.
- Pupils make good, and often excellent, progress through the school.
- Older pupils have a good understanding of basic information and communication technology (ICT) and would benefit from further developing these skills.
- Pupils' collaborative skills in learning are not as well-developed as expected, because they are not always given the opportunity to 'think, pair, share' which is an identified school focus.

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

- Pupils are extremely self-confident and understand how to improve their own learning and performance.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of service to their community which is reflected in many aspects of their school lives.
- Pupils have a very well-developed awareness of spiritual understanding and an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life.
- Pupils' moral understanding is excellent.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Ensure that all pupils learn about current developments in the use of technology.
- Enable pupils to have a consistent experience of 'think, share, pair' in order for them to further develop their skills for collaboration.

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' attainment at A level in 2022 was in line with national results. This mirrors the centre- and teacher-assessed results in 2020 and 2021, when approximately one-third of pupils achieved one of the top grades. Results in GCSE in 2022 are above national averages, with well over one-third of pupils

achieving top grades. This follows a similar pattern of previous years. Data provided by the school show that pupils attain slightly higher grades than expected for those of their ability at GCSE and in-line with national expectations at A level. Year 6 pupils achieved above average national standardised scores, with the vast majority of pupils working at or above age-related expectations. A similar number of children at the end of EYFS met expected levels of development. This correlates with observations in lessons, where pupils make good, often excellent, progress. In a very small number of lessons, opportunities for pupils to progress at their own rate were missed because prior learning had not been considered and the pace of the lesson was slow, resulting in a lack of challenge for pupils. In both senior and prep schools, data show that pupils with SEND and EAL, make similar progress to their peer groups, often from considerably lower starting points. Pupils expressed confidence in the support from their teaching, boarding and house staff, the student-mentor scheme and subject tutorials. Their immersion into school life allows them to access the curriculum and respond to the positive actions of the academic support department. This was reflected in the confidence shown through the pre-inspection parental questionnaire where the vast majority of parents felt their child's individual needs were met and that teaching enables their child to make progress.

- 3.6 Development of pupil knowledge, understanding and skills across the areas of learning is excellent. The youngest pupils in the school increase their skills and application of their knowledge through well-planned lessons. In PE, children explored how to increase the length of their jumps using their arms to provide additional propulsion. The more able pupils introduced a step as they progressed to the long jump technique. Senior school pupils apply their knowledge very effectively, demonstrating an openness and willingness to learn in a safe and yet educationally-challenging environment. Pupils in Year 7 English, developed their ability to construct correctly a soliloquy as a result of the lesson structure. Pupils reach for higher levels of knowledge and attainment whilst also having the freedom to make their own educational choices. For example, in Year 10 art screen-printing, pupils described in detail the processes involved to produce a final print, how and why each image had been chosen and manipulated using ICT. Older pupils were observed to have developed these skills to a much greater degree. In Latin, whilst translating an A-level set text on Tacitus, pupils made excellent links to modern day parallels with opponents of Russia's President. In many sixth-form lessons, pupils apply their skills and knowledge adeptly through the skilled questioning techniques deployed in the teaching, as in a psychology lesson in an exploration of nature/nurture arguments.
- 3.7 Pupils display excellent communication skills. They are articulate and listen respectfully with a view to learn from these interactions. The youngest children were encouraged to develop their language skills whilst creating clay teacups, describing the look and feel as 'silky smooth to touch'. Pupils express themselves with increasing levels of sophistication, observed in Year 6 letter writing, where pupils read aloud letters using engaging expression and pace. Many pupils develop an expertise for public speaking, observed in the singing rehearsal when the vocal warm up exercises were led with maturity and verve by one pupil. Pupils in Year 10 Spanish, took great care to hone their accents, gaining confidence when listening to each other in their spoken ability. Pupils' writing skills are equally well developed. In preparation for the forthcoming examinations, A-level history pupils wrote with great panache on the state of the British economy in the period leading up to the Great War. Older pupils commented upon the value they placed upon the dedicated weekly reading period and how it enhanced their extended vocabulary as well as giving them a sense of peace in a busy schedule.
- 3.8 Pupils' development of their competence in numeracy and the application of their knowledge and skills in mathematics to other areas of learning is excellent. In mathematics lessons pupils demonstrate ability in numeracy and apply their skills logically and creatively. For example, in Year 13 further mathematics pupils discussed the elements of constant acceleration equations; and in Year 7 designed questions to test and further challenge their own understanding. The ability to think logically and apply skills quickly develops from a young age. Year 4 pupils used their tables knowledge to complete the grid method of multiplication with increasing confidence. Cross-curricular application of these skills was seen in many areas of the school: in Year 5 art, pupils applied their knowledge of symmetry and

proportion when sketching self-portraits. Older pupils stated they used their numeracy skills across all areas of learning, including logarithms in chemistry and percentage change in biology.

- 3.9 Pupils' development of ICT competence and its application to other areas of learning is good. They confidently research and access online resources and competently use ICT to complete project work and assignments, employing basic skills effectively to support their learning. Various platforms are used well by the pupils, including the school-developed personal recording and reflection tools. Senior pupils stated that they would benefit from additional ICT skills as they progress through the school because they felt their understanding was limited to basic skills and software. Where ICT is used within specific subjects in the senior school, pupils' skills are excellent, for example in manipulating images in art. Younger pupils are skilled in more sophisticated software and Year 6 pupils spoke about their experiences in website design and coding games.
- 3.10 Pupils develop study skills expertise as they progress through the school as a result of the well-planned curriculum and lesson structure. In a prep school science lesson, pupils demonstrated excellent understanding of fair testing to compare their bridge constructions using incremental weights. After evaluating the experiments, they devised more complex and robust designs. In their studies of the Tudors, Year 8 pupils displayed excellent abilities in hypothesizing why Bloody Mary was unlikely to be successful in returning England to Catholicism. In biology, older pupils revised together to deepen their understanding of eutrophication and the function of a mitochondria in a cell, adeptly analysing and making links between the topics. These excellent study skills were seen at their very best in the extended project qualification (EPQ), where pupils analysed and synthesized a wide range of sources for their submissions, for example schizophrenia through the ages; in this way the school successfully achieves its aim of developing pupils who are resilient and intellectually curious. Pupils are highly engaged learners and are positive about the opportunities offered to them. They were clear in discussions that widening your opportunities gives rise to a self-discovery that would otherwise not be realised. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are facilitated by the warm, collaborative working relationships with staff. Pupils have a keen sense of responsibility and good levels of independence for their own learning through regular evaluation which identifies areas for improvement. In biology, Year 8 pupils displayed initiative, showing purposeful collaboration to effectively design and choose suitable materials to represent different parts of the ear and confidently deliver short presentations. However, opportunities for collaboration are not widely embedded in the planning of lessons, and the school philosophy of 'think, pair, share' was not always deployed, resulting in a lack of progress and development for pupils. For example, in a lesson on shapes prep school pupils were not given the opportunity to discover the properties for themselves and share their findings, and in the senior school, in some lessons pupils worked in isolation making individual sound progress, but did not share their conclusions. In the pupil questionnaire, a small minority felt that lessons were not interesting or challenging, and inspection concurred.
- 3.11 Pupils' achievements outside of the formal curriculum are excellent. They enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities, in which participation levels are high and enrich their education and personal development. Pupils achieve excellent levels of attainment in music and drama, and enjoy participation in the school's many concerts and productions. There is an excellent choral tradition within the school both at the top level with the recent Choral Evensong from Durham Cathedral and through the 'singing for all' culture. Some pupils achieve success in academic competitions, such as Olympiads. In team sports, pupils are successful in the main sports of rugby, cricket, netball and hockey, but pupils were also proud that the senior football team was undefeated this season. Pupils participate widely in house events including hockey, cricket and cross-country, including the legendary 'Barney run', from an early age. Pupils talk passionately of their participation and successes in external competitions and awards in the Combined Cadet Force and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Pupils are proactive in organising activities in boarding time which enables them to develop leadership responsibilities. The expectation from senior leadership that all pupils participate in extra-curricular activities to develop personal and interpersonal skills is a major factor in the success of the pupils' self-development and this is further enhanced for boarding pupils. Almost all parents agreed that the

school provided a suitable range of extra-curricular activities and that the boarding experience has supported their child's development.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.12 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.13 Pupils develop rapidly their self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-discipline and resilience, and understand how to improve their own learning and performance, so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their lives. In a Year 7 tutor meeting, pupils enthusiastically reflected on their prepared talks on the word of the week. In discussion, pupils commented that these experiences improve their confidence in public speaking. In Year 6 English, pupils produced a succinct timeline of their important life events and then wrote creative, autobiographical sentences, highlighting the highs and lows of their experiences. They display a calm and assured outlook on life and are keen to share their experiences. They discussed openly the challenges of moving to senior school, felt supported by the school and were looking forward to the next step. Older pupils spoke of the many opportunities throughout the school which lead to taking senior leadership roles. They recognise how they learn about themselves in the process and develop skills of leadership, confidence and public-speaking through being, for example, the captains of house singing or hockey. In the pupil questionnaire and in discussion, a very small number of pupils questioned their individual careers advice and guidance; however, the inspection found the provision to be sound, and this was echoed by other pupils who appreciated the advice they had received for university applications, gap year opportunities and apprenticeship applications. The excellent personal development of all pupils is a direct result of the values and ethos of the school. This is driven by the senior leadership team through the innovative use of assembly and tutorial time, which is endorsed by the governing body, thus fulfilling the school's aim to develop young adults with character.
- 3.14 Pupils' decision-making is excellent. They quickly become aware of their responsibility for any decisions or actions, and take advantage of the many opportunities offered, valuing the support given to them by staff in the knowledge that mistakes are also valuable learning tools. Pupils use the school software to create their own portfolio of experiences which includes merits and awards, as well as noting areas for improvement. Year 4 pupils were observed updating their log of the residential activity trip with images as well as reflections of what they had experienced and learnt. Year 12 pupils enthusiastically discussed their individual research project choices for the EPQ, for example, *The development of women in literature* and *fashion-trend predicting*. The oldest pupils questioned whether they could be given more responsibility for making decisions about the use of their time in the period before examinations and the inspectors noted that this was an opportunity for them to further develop responsibility for their own futures.
- 3.15 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of their own sense of spirituality. This was evident in discussion with older pupils where they cite a real connection with their time in chapel and how they appreciate coming together as a community. They have a highly developed appreciation of the weekly themes and are keenly aware of the depth of values embedded within the school. The non-material aspects of life were summed-up by Year 11 pupils as they reflected on the inspiring physical context of the school, the change of seasons offering different inspirational backdrops to their learning and expressed their gratefulness for the experience. This was also observed in a Year 4 outdoor education lesson, where pupils explained the lifecycle of the chickens they had hatched in their classroom, and now roosting on their own eggs. Pupils' sense of awe and wonder in this circle of life was contagious.
- 3.16 Pupils' moral understanding is excellent, reflecting an embedded appreciation of rules, behaviour and expectations. They portray positive attitudes towards each other: in lessons pupils demonstrate excellent behaviour and in general circulation around the school they are courteous and well mannered. In discussion, senior pupils explained that the staff modelled the school's ethos. In a visit to the junior boarding house, a pupil was asked about going from the girls' side of the house to the

boys' side; the response was *'that's not the Barney Way'*. Pupils described how the school is built on trust and making the right choices.

- 3.17 Pupils' social awareness is excellent; they work effectively with others, solve problems and achieve common goals. In a prep school computer lesson, pupils worked productively in small groups and performed confidently with digital music. They were able to critique each other's work and provide constructive feedback. Pupils, when given the opportunity, demonstrate excellent collaborative and co-operative skills that reflect the schools core values. Senior pupils in a chemistry lesson explained how working in pairs helped them to consolidate their learning concerning halogens and reactivity because they were encouraged to explain the concepts. In the boarding houses older pupils very effectively support younger ones in their learning. The house structures and activity programme create a family ethos where co-operation and competition support the development of problem-solving and working together.
- 3.18 Pupils' contribution to others and the wider community is exceptional. Within the boarding houses pupils show a deep sense of gratitude and this is evidenced weekly when pupils nominate each other for awards for doing a good turn for someone else. They contribute as global citizens by working on international projects, such as raising money for the Ukrainian crisis. They collect, and work, for local food banks. Pupils reported a feeling that they are truly listened to by the school, that *'their opinion matters'*, and the school council and other committees are very active. They cited recent successes ranging from the environmental clean-plate initiative through to their current involvement in the new sixth-form uniform. Such strong pupil input into the life of the school starts at the prep school, where they recently chose to welcome guinea pigs. In addition, through assigned roles such as the anti-bullying ambassadors, pupils relish the responsibilities they are given. Pupils' successful development results from the expectation from leadership and the governing body that all pupils will undertake a form of service.
- 3.19 Pupils' ability to respect and value diversity within society, show respect and appreciation of their own and other cultures, and demonstrate sensitivity and tolerance to those from different backgrounds and traditions is excellent. The youngest children, whilst sharing a coronation tea party, took turns and showed kindness and care for each other. Prep pupils spoke about studying Black History Month and the roles of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, stating that they feel inspired by these amazing and courageous people. Older pupils spoke about the value they place on welcoming pupils from overseas and how they enjoy sharing their celebrations and culture. They are confident in discussing sensitive issues and creating LGBTQ+ and diversity committees, because of the open and supportive nature of the school management, which has already adapted structures to be more welcoming to those of a different background or tradition. In the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt the school did not treat them fairly or that boarders were not treated fairly. During interviews, pupils told inspectors that the different boarding houses had slightly different practices and this was confirmed by the inspection team. The governing body has a programme of future refurbishment and are working to increase the consistency of management between houses.
- 3.20 Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy through a combination of dedicated PSHE lessons and cross-curricular links in other subjects. In a Year 1 outdoor education lesson, pupils were able to explain the dangers of using the fire pit and how to stay safe. In their training session for the South Africa rugby tour, older pupils ably performed on their cardio-vascular work and conditioning whilst practising their skills. Pupils have an excellent understanding of physical wellbeing, and the importance of exercise and diet. Prep school pupils enthusiastically took part in the physical *'ready body, ready brain'* activities during registration. Whilst pupils commented upon the recent improvements in food, some pupils still felt further improvements could be made. In discussions, the oldest pupils knew many ways to help themselves stay mentally healthy and quoted the time given in personal tutorials and support from staff to reflect on their own mental health during stressful periods. The pupil head of house gave an excellent *'thought for the day'* during assembly, reflecting on the importance of compassion for themselves especially during examination times. Pupils

have a good understanding of online safety, stating this is covered regularly in school and they know the protocols if they have any concerns. Almost all pupils feel safe in school, and for those pupils who need extra care, individual staff are assigned to support their wellbeing. Younger pupils referenced their *hand of support*, whilst senior pupils quote *the twelve to turn to*, on where to seek support. The comprehensive and experienced pastoral care team are a huge strength of the school and embody the values and ethos they wish to promote. Overall, an overwhelming majority of parents and most pupils responded positively to the statements in the pre-inspection questionnaire.

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 house meetings and chapel. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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

Ms Louise Robinson	Reporting inspector
Mr David Williams	Compliance team inspector (Former headteacher, IAPS school)
Mrs Tania Davidson	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, GSA school)
Dr Marie Bush	Team inspector (Former deputy head, GSA school)
Mr Christopher Emmott	Team inspector (Former headteacher, ISA school)
Mr Stuart Thompson	Team inspector (Former deputy head, GSA school)