



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

St Nicholas School, Harlow

January 2022

Contents

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		7
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
3. Educational Quality Inspection		8
Preface		8
Key findings		8
Recommendations		8
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements		8
The quality of the pupils' personal development		11
4. Inspection Evidence		14

School's Details

School	St Nicholas School			
DfE number	881/6023			
Registered charity number	310876			
Address	St Nicholas School Hobbs Cross Road Old Harlow Essex CM17 0NJ			
Telephone number	01279 429910			
Email address	office@saintnicholasschool.net			
Acting headteacher	Mr Paul Wilson			
Chair of governors	Mr Robert Ellice			
Age range	3 to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	475			
	EYFS	62	Lower School	162
	Middle School	131	Upper School	120
Inspection dates	26 to 28 January 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Saint Nicholas School is an independent co-educational day school. It is a registered charity, administered by a board of governors. The school was founded in 1939 and has occupied its present site, on the edge of Harlow, since 1977. The school comprises four sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children in pre-school and Reception; lower school for pupils from Years 1 to 5; middle school for pupils from Years 6 to 8; and upper school for pupils from Years 9 to 11. Since the previous inspection, a new acting head was appointed in September 2021.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers. During this period of closure, the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils
- 1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than vulnerable children or the children of key workers received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.6 In 2020 and 2021, public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed grades and teacher-assessed grades were awarded.
- 1.7 Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.8 The school aims to provide a safe, happy and secure environment, in which pupils are able to develop academically, physically and creatively. It sets out to challenge pupils to reach their full potential and to become active and curious learners. The school seeks to encourage pupils to develop resilience, a strong sense of right and wrong and an understanding of their social responsibility in the school and the wider community.

About the pupils

- 1.9 Pupils come from families with a range of professional and business backgrounds, living within a 15-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate the ability of the pupils in the school is broadly average. The school has identified 28 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support for dyslexia, dyspraxia and other conditions. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for four pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified 63 pupils as the most able in the school's population and the curriculum is modified for them.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

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

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as met or as not met. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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

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

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

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

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

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the lower 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 At GCSE in the years 2019 to 2021, performance has confirmed 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.
- 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.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.12 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

2.13 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.

2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.15 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.17 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.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.19 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.

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

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

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

Key findings

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

- Pupils are excellent communicators; they are highly articulate and confident in their use of language from an early age.
- Pupils are highly motivated, have extremely positive attitudes to learning and are determined to make the most of the opportunities available to them in school.
- Pupils have very well-developed numeracy skills, particularly in mental mathematics, which they apply effectively across the curriculum.
- Pupils display excellent knowledge and skills in all subjects but, occasionally, these are not fully extended to enable pupils to work at greater depth.

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

- Pupils have a highly developed sense of self-understanding and an excellent awareness of how to improve and achieve their goals.
- Pupils have an extremely strong sense of right and wrong and demonstrate a mature understanding of the importance of kindness.
- Pupils have an extremely strong social awareness and enjoy positive and supportive relations with their peers and staff, reflecting the family ethos of the school.
- Pupils demonstrate a strong acceptance of those who have different beliefs and backgrounds to their own, though their understanding of cultural diversity is less well developed.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Ensure that all pupils are consistently challenged to work at greater depth and to develop their knowledge and skills to the fullest extent.
- Ensure all pupils develop an enhanced understanding of diversity within and beyond their own community, through enabling their broader awareness of different cultures and traditions.

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 of all ages are excellent communicators. For example, children in the EYFS listened carefully and were then able to retell a story accurately and imaginatively. Pupils in the lower school read and

explained fluently the meaning of sophisticated vocabulary in their English lessons. In the upper school, pupils expressed their thoughts on the features that are typical of tabloid and broadsheet newspapers persuasively, sequencing their ideas logically. In science, older pupils used technical vocabulary naturally and appropriately to explain their work and, in Spanish, pupils spoke accurately and confidently. In interviews, pupils are extremely articulate and use a variety of linguistic and verbal techniques to promote their point of view, including pace, tone of voice and good eye contact. All pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to one another, following instructions carefully, and welcoming feedback and constructive criticism. Pupils of all ages enjoy debate and discussion in lessons and ask questions confidently to enhance their understanding. Pupils' written work throughout the school displays high levels of literacy, exhibiting clear structure, excellent control of language and the ability to write for different purposes.

- 3.6 The overall achievement of pupils, throughout the school, including those with SEND and EAL, demonstrates excellent progress and successful fulfilment of the school's aim that all pupils should achieve their full potential. In the years 2017 to 2019, results at GCSE have been above the national average. Centre- and teacher-assessed grades in 2020 and 2021 show this performance has been sustained. In the years 2017 to 2019, almost all pupils achieved at least five GCSEs at grade 4 and above. Data analysed show that almost all pupils attain higher examination results than expected for their ability, indicating excellent progress. Pupils with SEND and EAL achieve at least in line with their peers because the support provided by specialist teachers shows a detailed awareness of each pupil's needs. In the lower school, data provided by the school indicate that pupils are exceeding age-related expectations in English and mathematics. In the EYFS, almost all children are exceeding the expected age-related levels, measured against the early learning goals. Recent assessment data and work scrutinised during the inspection demonstrate that pupils of all abilities continue to make excellent progress. This progress is supported by teachers who encourage pupils to discuss and set clear targets that challenge them to strive to achieve their best.
- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They concentrate hard, question enthusiastically and are keen to improve. In many lessons, pupils seek to collaborate with one another instinctively to complete tasks and to reach a shared understanding. In music, for example, pupils worked together highly effectively to produce a complex drumming rhythm and then discussed purposefully how to improve the performance. In French, older pupils supported one another as they completed tasks, sharing vocabulary and testing phrases to refine their work. Throughout the school, pupils are eager to improve their work and hone their skills, as seen in an upper school science lesson, where pupils carefully self-corrected their answers and unpicked their mistakes to ensure they enhanced their understanding. Pupils of all ages, set ambitious but realistic targets for themselves, encouraged and supported by their teachers and form tutors, who challenge them to be aspirational. Younger pupils love their learning and respond extremely positively to excellent feedback from their teachers which prompts a creative and productive dialogue in lessons and in their workbooks. Older pupils respond extremely well when teachers encourage them to work independently, relishing the chance to question incisively to extend their knowledge and expand their understanding.
- 3.8 Pupils develop excellent mathematical skills and apply them effectively across the curriculum. In the lower school, pupils' mental mathematical skills are notably strong, and they possess a rapid recall of times tables which they use extremely effectively to solve challenging questions, often in friendly competition with their peers. Older pupils apply advanced mathematical techniques adeptly in science, where they analyse statistics accurately and produce sophisticated graphical representations of their data. Throughout the school, pupils' evident confidence in and clear enjoyment of mathematics develops rapidly through the effective use of mathematics competitions and through teaching that allows pupils within a group to work at an appropriate level for their ability.
- 3.9 Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) skills highly effectively across the whole curriculum. Children in the EYFS use the interactive whiteboard enthusiastically when working independently. Lower school pupils showed extremely well-developed skills when using spreadsheets

and in designing their own websites. In a GCSE ICT lesson, pupils had a sophisticated understanding of two-factor authentication as a secure feature for data protection. Pupils of all ages use ICT easily and effectively to support their learning in most subjects. For example, lower school pupils use software productively to develop their linguistic skills and improve their spelling, and older pupils use ICT proficiently to research and record their work. Pupils' development of excellent ICT skills has been enabled by the prioritising of investment in digital resources by the leadership and management of the school.

- 3.10 Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in a wide range of subjects, as they move through the school and, in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils felt their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons. When given the opportunity, more able pupils show very high levels of achievement. In the EYFS, children demonstrate their study skills by thoughtfully choosing what to learn, hypothesising about outcomes and predicting possible consequences. In the middle school, pupils discussed aspects of Hinduism animatedly, showing a very high degree of conceptual understanding. Older pupils demonstrated an extensive knowledge and deep understanding of chemical properties in science. Pupils' understanding and use of technical language is excellent, for example in music, where pupils wrote accurately about monophonic, homophonic and atonal pieces. In most lessons, pupils demonstrate good and often excellent knowledge of what they have been taught because teachers' explanations and presentations allow pupils to question and to build on prior learning, so that pupils widen their knowledge and enhance their understanding. Pupils demonstrate extremely strong skills in many curriculum areas, such as in drama where they were adept at conveying meaning through gesture and sound. In the lower school, pupils demonstrated excellent problem-solving skills when using concepts of distance, speed and rotation to determine the effect on a falling piece of buttered toast, supported by teaching which encouraged pupils to explore their ideas and apply their knowledge. However, in a few lessons, where the teaching is more directive, pupils' progress is more limited because they do not have opportunities to take charge of their own learning, to ask questions or to explore ideas.
- 3.11 By the end of their time in school, most pupils have highly developed study skills of analysis, hypothesis and synthesis, which they use to extend their learning. Pupils learn to predict, think critically, recognize differences and persevere through a variety of activities. This was evident in a design and technology lesson, where pupils experimented creatively, reflected on their outcomes critically, and redesigned their work successfully. In a lower school English lesson, pupils analysed a range of possible story openings with a high level of proficiency. More able pupils display extremely strong higher-order thinking skills when given the opportunity. For example, in science, younger pupils predicted successfully the outcomes of science experiments, drawing extensively on their prior knowledge to hypothesise, and older pupils made creative links to deepen their understanding of molecular bonding in chemistry.
- 3.12 Pupils reach high levels of achievement in a range of physical and creative activities and speak appreciatively of day trips and overseas visits, which broaden their experiences. Pupils' lives are enriched by the many opportunities provided by the school to compete in sport, to perform in drama and music, to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme (DofE), and they enjoy a wide range of clubs and societies. Senior pupils have achieved notable successes in national swimming and cross-country competitions and, more locally, in girls' football. Pupils' artwork has won prizes in regional competitions and there are some high-level individual achievements in music. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of parents felt that the school does not provide a sufficient range of extra-curricular activities. Inspection evidence shows a wide range of available activities and high levels of participation, especially in sport, where pupils' skills are developed by the many expert coaches provided by the leadership and management of the school.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils develop notably strong self-understanding and self-belief from an early age, meeting the school's stated aim to promote confidence in every pupil. This is because of the focus given to encourage self-confidence by the school's leadership and the support provided by the committed and caring staff. In the EYFS, children tackle new challenges with energy and enthusiasm and sustain their efforts over long periods of time, remaining fully engaged in self-directed tasks and those set by staff. Older pupils have an extremely mature appreciation of their academic strengths and weaknesses because teachers' expectations are clear and staff help them to reflect and set personal targets for improvement. This maturity was evident in group activities in music and drama, where pupils were confident to offer and receive constructive criticism from their peers to improve their work, and in English, where pupils offered each other helpful advice to refine their ideas. In response to the questionnaire, most parents felt that the school encourages their children to be confident and independent. Inspection evidence from pupil interviews confirms this view. Pupils are extremely self-aware and are appropriately proud of their achievements in academic and other areas of school life. Pupil leaders display a high level of self-esteem, valuing their roles and the opportunities provided by the school for them to lead their peers and find ways to bring out the best in them. Pupils of all ages show extremely high levels of resilience. Younger pupils, for example, persevered with tasks in art to produce excellent outcomes and older pupils were tenacious in solving problems in mathematics and persistent to refine their performances in drama. Pupils in the senior school demonstrated extremely strong self-awareness when they spoke of how their involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme has taught them the importance of overcoming adversity to achieve success.
- 3.15 Pupils of all ages display excellent moral sensibilities. In the EYFS, children clearly respect each other and play happily together, sharing resources and understanding why not to encroach on others' learning activities. Mutual respect and kindness are modelled by supportive staff who create a calm and purposeful family environment. In response to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils disagreed that pupils always treat each other with respect and a few felt that the school's response to such instances is too lenient. However, in interview, pupils spoke eloquently about and demonstrated kind and supportive relationships. They reported that bullying and unkind comments are extremely rare and they felt confident that the school would take such matters very seriously and deal with them appropriately. Inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils exhibit an extremely mature understanding of right and wrong and of the importance of kindness. Their behaviour to one another in lessons, in the lunch queue and in the playground is unfailingly courteous and considerate. Pupils' understanding of the importance of good behaviour is supported by the school's leadership's embedding of a highly positive set of values.
- 3.16 Pupils have a highly developed sense of social awareness, and they work and play together extremely effectively, understanding how to achieve common goals and how to solve problems successfully. Pupils collaborate extremely well with each other in lessons and activities to improve their learning. This was demonstrated in music where lower school pupils worked extremely productively as a choral group, listening to each other's voices, and using this collaborative enterprise to improve their pitching and rhythm. Older pupils contributed maturely to a discussion in physics, sharing their knowledge and listening respectfully to others' views. In discussions, pupils showed an acute social awareness as they cued in the quieter, younger pupils to speak, collaborated instinctively, listened attentively to each other and promoted a free flow of discussion amongst themselves. In the senior school, older pupils take a lead in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme by sharing experiences and advising younger pupils about exam preparation and other choices. Throughout the school, pupils' mature social awareness is fostered by the excellent relations between pupils and staff, who encourage pupils to work together and support each other in and out of lessons. In their questionnaire responses, an overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school helps pupils to develop strong teamwork and social skills. Inspection evidence confirms these views.

- 3.17 From an early age pupils benefit from opportunities to make decisions. They make age-appropriate choices about their learning, the activities they wish to pursue, subjects to study and possible career paths. Children in the EYFS direct the days for themselves and appreciate that their happiness and success depend on the choices they make. Older pupils spoke wisely about the importance of making good choices in their personal lives as a result of focused teaching through the school's relationships and sex education (RSE) programme and, in their questionnaire responses, all parents agreed that the school's RSE programme prepares pupils effectively for life in modern society. Senior pupils actively choose to attend subject revision groups and homework club to improve their learning, and they benefit from the willingness of staff to offer individual support in these sessions. At various ages, pupils identify charities to support, often resulting from personal experiences, such as the pupil-led initiative to raise money for a kidney charity. Pupils are keen to express their views and influence decisions through the school council, with some notable recent successes in changing girls' uniform and amending lunch menus, although pupils of various ages also expressed frustration that some grumbles remain unresolved through the school council.
- 3.18 Pupils have a good spiritual appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Older pupils enjoy the tranquillity of the school's extensive grounds at lunch times, taking the opportunity to appreciate the beauty of the natural world around them. Younger pupils, in particular, enjoy sitting quietly to reflect in the butterfly garden. Pupils of all ages show a deep respect for the environment, and those in the eco club help to tend the butterfly garden and have ensured that the use of plastic is much reduced in school catering. Lower school pupils showed a good appreciation of music as an escape from everyday life. Some older pupils spoke movingly about finding escape through art and a recent batik project allowed pupils to express personal experiences through this medium. Pupils are supported in their spiritual development by the school's stress on the importance of Christian values in the broadest sense and through the celebration of harvest and Christmas at the local church.
- 3.19 Pupils make an excellent contribution to the life of the school and, when opportunities allow, to the wider community. They embrace responsibilities from an early age with enthusiasm and a high level of understanding. The younger pupils speak proudly of their roles as playground buddies and pupil helpers in art or ICT. Senior pupils in leadership roles have an acute sense of social service, displaying a clear understanding of the importance of their responsibilities. In GCSE physical education (PE), pupils willingly take the lead in demonstrating skills to their peers, offering encouragement and support to others. Older pupils take pleasure in nurturing talent in younger pupils, for example in the all-age football club. Pupils of all ages have a well-developed awareness of the need to care for those less fortunate than themselves through opportunities to support a number of charities. They raise funds wholeheartedly for good causes and actively choose which to support. Pupils develop a strong sense of teamwork and social concern through these pupil-led initiatives, such as collecting for the local food bank and organising the annual party for local elderly residents. The support and encouragement offered by the school's leadership for these charitable endeavours help to reinforce the strong sense of community and collective purpose within the school.
- 3.20 Pupils show great respect for all members of their community. They welcome pupils of all backgrounds and show high levels of tolerance and sensitivity to those from different faiths and cultural backgrounds and they speak positively about the diversity within the pupil body. Pupils spoke passionately about the importance of respecting differences and accepting people for who they really are. Pupils have a clear understanding of the need to ensure there is no discrimination within the school community. They appreciate assemblies which teach them about what is and what is not acceptable, and they express confidence in the school's readiness to deal with any unkindness should it arise. When such unkindness does occur, pupils felt that it often stems more from ignorance than any sense of malice and reflects a less mature understanding of diversity on the part of some pupils. Throughout the school, pupils of different backgrounds mix easily and naturally in lessons and in free time. In a PSHE lesson, lower school pupils showed a mature understanding of poverty and its impact and, in form time, older pupils discussed attitudes to the holocaust with great sensitivity. In their

questionnaire responses, almost all parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, tolerance and respect for other people. Inspection evidence confirms these views.

- 3.21 Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, including the importance of a healthy diet and how to maintain a positive outlook. During the periods of remote learning they say they benefited from the willingness of staff to check regularly about their well-being. Pupils are highly sensitive to their own mental health needs as a result of effective teaching through the PSHE programme and the school's investment in well-being initiatives to support pupils. Pupils have a very secure knowledge of how to stay safe on-line because they are well-educated about the risks. Pupils said they benefit from the school's policy of not allowing mobile phones because they would rather spend their free time in school with friends or in activities. In their questionnaire responses, most pupils agreed that the school encourages them to be healthy. Pupils understand the importance of health and fitness and greatly benefit from the wide-range of sporting and exercise opportunities available in school.

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 and a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. 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 Stephen Holliday	Reporting inspector
Dr Millan Sachania	Compliance Team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Sylvia Chetwood	Team inspector (Former deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr Nathan Close	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Dr Pamela Edmonds	Team inspector (Head, ISA school)