



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Blundell's School

January 2019



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School's Details

School	Blundell's School			
DfE number	878/6011			
Registered charity number	1081249			
Address	Blundell's School Blundell's Road Tiverton Devon EX16 4DN			
Telephone number	01884 252543			
Email address	info@blundells.org			
Head	Mr Bart Wielenga			
Chair of governors	Mr Cedric Clapp			
Age range	11 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	602			
	Boys	348	Girls	254
	Day pupils	212	Boarders	390
	Seniors	405	Sixth Form	197
Inspection dates	29 to 31 January 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Blundell's School is an independent day and boarding school, for boys and girls, aged between 11 and 18 years. It was founded in 1604 and moved to its present location, just outside Tiverton, in 1882. The school is an educational charity, whose trustees form the governing body. There are two mixed and five single-sex boarding houses, all of which are located on the main school site. Most pupils join the school at 11, 13 or 16 years, and all are allocated to one of the houses. The current head took up his post in September 2018. Since its previous inspection, the school has refurbished its boarding and teaching accommodation.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to provide a rounded education for the whole person, encouraging ambition amidst humility and a sense of service for each pupil, in line with its founder's wishes. Its objectives include to provide pupils with 'roots' for security that are based on friendship, respect for others, personal values and 'wings' to succeed in the challenging world beyond school, based on self-confidence, a sense of excitement and an appreciation for the environment. Blundell's admits pupils regardless of their faith background.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Most day pupils live within 20 miles of the school and come from a range of family and social backgrounds. Boarding pupils represent a variety of different countries. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is broadly average. The school has identified 140 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 65 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of SEND. English is an additional language (EAL) for 105 pupils, 58 of whom receive specialist support. The school has identified 76 pupils as being the most able in its population. The curriculum is modified for them and for 69 other pupils because of their special talents, within areas including sport, music and drama.

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. 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.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools ('boarding NMS'). It also comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

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, including the boarding NMS, 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, 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 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, together with the NMS covering the same areas. 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](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#).

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 2015 and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 At GCSE, in the years 2015 to 2017, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools.
- 2.3 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2015 to 2017 have been above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.
- 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 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 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 and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 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 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 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. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.

2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.

2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.15 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include 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. They also include 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.

2.16 The standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.

2.18 The standards relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are 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. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

2.20 The standards relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 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.

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'.

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make extremely good progress from their starting points.
 - Pupils show extremely positive attitudes to learning and display very well-developed study skills.
 - Pupils' performance in public examinations has shown significant improvement in recent years.
 - Pupils achieve extremely well in a range of sports, as well as in music, drama, and a variety of other non-academic activities.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils develop high levels of self-knowledge and self-awareness.
 - Pupils demonstrate extremely well-developed moral awareness in their behaviour and in their attitudes to others.
 - Pupils show excellent social awareness, developing very productive working relationships with staff and their peers, and make strong contributions to the school and wider community.
 - Pupils from different backgrounds relate extremely well to one another, and develop an excellent knowledge and appreciation of their own and others' cultures and traditions.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider the following recommendation:
- Enable all pupils in all subjects to benefit from detailed and informative written feedback about their work in order to maximise their progress.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2015 to 2017. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. In IGCSE examinations, results have been in line with world-wide norms. Results in both GCSE and A-level examinations have been above the national average for maintained schools. This confirms that pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make extremely good progress from their various starting points. Recent results, as well as pupils' performance in lessons observed and the school's accurate assessment of pupils' attainment, indicate a sustained improvement in pupils' attainment. School leaders' success in improving the effectiveness of teaching, especially in subjects where pupils' performance had previously been relatively weaker, has contributed strongly to this improvement. This confirms leaders' effective response to the recommendation from the previous inspection, to strengthen their monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders have also raised pupils' achievement by adapting the curriculum to include courses which are better suited to pupils' abilities, interests and aspirations. Pupils with EAL achieve high pass rates in internationally recognised examinations. Pupils' academic achievement makes a strong contribution to them being very well prepared for the next stage of their education, as well as for future employment. This reflects the school's success in achieving its ambitious aims.
- 3.6 Pupils develop extremely good communication skills, both in English and in a range of modern foreign languages. This was evident from examples of written work examined by inspectors, as well as pupils' performance in lessons. Pupils in an English lesson in Year 9 took part in a lively discussion on the

attractions of different holiday destinations, showing the ability to use a wide range of relevant vocabulary. In a lesson in Year 12, pupils communicated with ease in French, both with the teacher and with each other, benefiting from the teacher's highly accurate and fluent modelling of the language. Their written work showed their ability to move from simple to more complex structures, as well as their confidence and accuracy in using the subjunctive. In discussions with the inspectors, pupils were able to describe, clearly and cogently, how teaching had enabled them to develop their learning in a variety of subjects. Pupils with EAL demonstrated their excellent progress in developing communication skills through the ease, confidence and accuracy they showed in these discussions.

- 3.7 Pupils' very well-developed numeracy skills are apparent throughout the school. During a mathematics lesson in Year 8, pupils made extremely good use of their knowledge and understanding of the required techniques to solve a complex problem. The teacher explained the task very clearly and enabled those who were first to reach a solution to consolidate their understanding by explaining the process to their class-mates, thus ensuring that they completed the task successfully. In a mathematics class in Year 12, excellent use of questioning by the teacher enabled the pupils to gain a very clear understanding of three-dimensional matrices. Pupils apply their mathematical skills well in a range of subjects, including design and technology, where pupils in Year 11 used these skills to develop models of graphic products with great skill and accuracy. In doing so, they benefited strongly from the teacher's effective planning and structuring of the task.
- 3.8 Pupils have extensive opportunities to develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT), showing their ability to use them to extremely good effect in a variety of lessons and situations. For example, pupils in Year 8 used excellent online research skills to produce newspaper articles, showing a very good understanding of 'fake news', as well as of how to stay safe online. In carrying out an experiment in a physics lesson, pupils in Year 12 used ICT very effectively to record the velocity of projectiles. The governing body, working closely with school leaders, has successfully promoted pupils' learning in this area by ensuring that teachers and pupils benefit from using up-to-date equipment and resources.
- 3.9 School leaders have focused strongly on improving pupils' study skills. Their achievement of this objective is evident in the pupils' extremely well-developed ability, in solving problems and formulating hypotheses, to draw from a wide range of sources in both analysing and synthesising information. In a history lesson, pupils in Year 11 successfully created a timeline, working collaboratively whilst using a variety of resources. This was because the teacher provided them with a well-structured task, which was very well matched to the pupils' interests and abilities. During a psychology lesson in Year 12, pupils made excellent use of mobile devices whilst preparing for and responding to a test on their knowledge of offender profiling. The teacher gave them instant feedback on their results and, through highly effective use of questioning, enabled the pupils to share and develop their understanding of the topic. In discussions with inspectors, pupils demonstrated a strong ability to illustrate and justify their responses to questions. They confirmed that they knew how well they were doing and what they needed to do to reach their targets. Pupils said that this was because of the help that they received from their teachers, including in the boarding houses, and the written and oral feedback they received from them. Many teachers regularly provide pupils with detailed written comments, which enable them to build on their strengths and to identify the next steps needed to improve their work. Leaders have successfully prioritised development in this area but are keen to ensure that excellent practice is shared even more consistently throughout the school.
- 3.10 Pupils throughout the school make excellent progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding in a wide range of disciplines and subjects, including physical education, as well as the creative and performing arts. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents agreed that teaching enables their children to make progress, and that the school helps them to develop skills for their future. In responding to their own questionnaires, pupils and staff reflected similarly positive views. Teachers' extremely secure and detailed knowledge of and their passion for their subjects was clearly evident, both during lesson observations and in

interviews with the inspectors. These strengths, together with their strong understanding of how pupils learn, enable teachers to plan stimulating activities that correspond with pupils' interests and abilities, including those with SEND and EAL. Teachers explain topics and tasks clearly, and respond accurately to pupils' questions. For example, during a film studies lesson in Year 12, the teacher drew on her enthusiasm for and wide knowledge of both French and American cinema to provide pupils with telling examples, which enabled them to compare and contrast different approaches. As a result, pupils showed that they were making rapid progress in their understanding of the topic.

- 3.11 Pupils throughout the school show highly positive attitudes to learning. Teachers' high expectations, as well as their establishment of a stimulating environment for learning in and around classrooms, encourage pupils to engage fully with tasks and activities. Pupils' ability to work independently and collaboratively, along with their enthusiastic and well-focused participation in classroom discussions, demonstrate the school's success in meeting its ambitious aims. This was evident in both classroom-based lessons and outdoor activities. In a lesson in Year 11, pupils demonstrated strong initiative and independence as they worked on individual design projects. In discussions during a religious studies lesson, pupils in Year 8 showed considerable resilience and determination whilst coming to terms with complex and challenging ideas. In games lessons, pupils of all ages and abilities showed a high level of commitment to improving their performance, both as individuals and as teams.
- 3.12 On leaving the school, a large and increasing proportion of pupils gain entrance to higher education establishments and courses with demanding entrance requirements. Pupils achieve high levels of success in a variety of fields, including in regional and national competitions in mathematics and chemistry, as well as in debating and public speaking. Senior pupils have made a significant contribution to a research project in sports science at a local university. Pupils have gained prestigious scholarships and awards in engineering and design, as well as in art and photography. In music, individuals and ensembles perform at well-known venues in the UK and overseas. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in drama productions. This has enabled a significant number to pursue careers in this area, including in acting and stage management. School teams regularly compete at a high level, regularly winning national competitions in rugby and hockey. Pupils represent their country in a number of sports, including rugby, athletics and kayaking. The school places a strong and successful emphasis on participation in sport for all pupils, including those with greater or lesser ability, and on providing them with support that enables them to fulfil their potential.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils throughout the school demonstrate strong development of self-confidence and self-awareness, at levels appropriate to or, for many, beyond their age. Almost all of the parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school helps their children to be confident and independent. Many of them, including those whose children are boarders, took the opportunity to comment favourably on the ways in which the school had successfully fostered their children's development in these respects. In conversations with inspectors, as well as in lessons and other activities, pupils showed their justifiable pride in their own and in others' achievements, without appearing in the least arrogant or excessively competitive. In sixth form classes in French and Spanish, pupils showed a 'can-do' approach, demonstrating their willingness to persevere and to self-correct if their initial responses to questions included inaccuracies. Younger pupils in Year 8, in a mathematics lesson, adopted the same attitude. In games activities and drama lessons, pupils show a strong capacity to learn from their mistakes and to co-operate with others. In drama and the creative arts, pupils demonstrate their ability to work independently, and to take the initiative in pursuing their own interests and developing their particular talents. These factors reflect teachers' strong commitment to fostering pupils' self-confidence by providing them with stimulating activities, which match their interests and stages of development, including the more able pupils, as well as those with SEND. They also demonstrate the school's success in preparing pupils to meet the challenges that they will encounter in higher education and their future careers, in line with the school's aims.
- 3.15 Pupils develop extremely good decision-making skills, which are apparent in a variety of areas. In their responses to questions in lessons, older pupils in particular showed an excellent ability to select appropriate evidence and suitable arguments to deploy in support of their views. In hockey lessons across different age groups, pupils demonstrated strong decision-making skills when choosing whether to run with or pass the ball, and when to commit to stopping opponents' shots. Pupils of all ages benefit from many opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Pupils fulfil their responsibilities extremely well in mentoring younger pupils, obtaining memberships with representative bodies including the school council and various committees, as well as captaining teams.
- 3.16 Pupils show a very well-developed understanding of and appreciation for the non-material aspects of life. This was apparent from their wholehearted participation in singing hymns in chapel, as well as from the respect that they showed in observing opportunities for reflection, prayer and listening attentively to presentations. Following an assembly commemorating Holocaust Day, pupils confirmed how much they had been moved by a fellow pupil's account of a member of his own family's involvement in these events, as a refugee who came to this country as part of the 'Kindertransport' scheme. In religious studies lessons, pupils gain a strong understanding of the spiritual aspects of different religions, including, in a lesson in Year 8, the concepts of karma and reincarnation in Buddhism.
- 3.17 Pupils show excellent moral understanding in their response to the school's clear focus on promoting kindness, tolerance and respect for others. They demonstrate this through their extremely good behaviour in lessons and around the school, as well as the courtesy and consideration that they show to one another, and also to visitors. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all the pupils confirmed that they understand the school's expectations with regard to their conduct. In a discussion with inspectors, boarding pupils stated that they feel that they are supported and encouraged in many ways to develop a strong moral compass, and to take responsibility for their own behaviour. They also confirmed the impact of house staff in providing strong role-models within the boarding communities. This underlines leaders' success in ensuring that all members of the school are aware of their responsibilities and moral obligations.

- 3.18 Pupils throughout the school display strong social awareness. This is evident from the respectful and productive relationships that they form with their teachers, and their willingness to work collaboratively in a variety of settings. Inspectors observed, on many occasions, how supportive pupils are of one another in their learning. One example of this was the constructive and encouraging way in which pupils in Year 10 responded, in an art lesson, to the task of discussing and assessing each other's work. Another was pupils' excellent approach to working together on the topic of passive verbs in a Latin lesson in Year 10. Pupils benefit from a very wide range of opportunities to develop their social and collaborative skills. These include membership of the Combined Cadet Force, participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme and contributions house play productions.
- 3.19 Pupils show an extremely well-developed understanding of the need to contribute to both the school and the wider community. The school provides pupils of all ages with a wealth of opportunities to take on positions of responsibility, as prefects and monitors, and as members of pupil-led committees, such as the e-safety committee. Pupils make a strong contribution to the community beyond the school by raising considerable sums of money for local, national and global charities. Pupils also provide invaluable contributions to community projects, such as visiting care homes. They also develop their awareness of the role of local and national representative bodies, principally by attending meetings of the local council and the Houses of Parliament.
- 3.20 Pupils develop an excellent appreciation of, as well as respect for, their own and other cultures and traditions. Pupil's understanding of and support for the key values that underpin life in modern Britain, including democracy and the rule of law, are evident from their behaviour and attitudes, and from the views that they express. This is strongly related to the school's ethos, which it successfully promotes through assemblies and house meetings, and throughout the curriculum. Prayers said in chapel services reflect the different faiths represented in the school, as well as in the wider community. Pupils join together in celebrating festivals, such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year, as well as Christmas and Easter. The school makes sure that pupils' religious and cultural needs are met. For example, the school provides appropriate menus in the dining hall. In lessons and other school activities, inspectors observed pupils from different backgrounds working and playing harmoniously together. In their discussions with inspectors, many pupils commented favourably on the diverse nature of the school community, and on how much they had gained from their friendships with those from different countries and traditions. In their questionnaire responses, almost all the pupils agreed that the school encourages them to respect and tolerate other people. The overwhelming majority of parents indicated their agreement with a similar statement.
- 3.21 In lessons and other activities, as well as in conversations with inspectors, pupils demonstrated their very strong understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. They show an acute awareness of the potential hazards involved in the misuse of ICT, and of how to avoid them. They behave sensibly and safely when conducting scientific experiments and whilst undertaking craft activities. In sports lessons, pupils are prepared to be adventurous in their movements, while respecting the need not to compromise their own and others' safety. In their questionnaire responses and discussions, pupils confirm their trust in the school to keep them safe. Staff show that this trust is well placed through, for example, their careful assessment of risks, including in practical activities in science and design and technology. Staff also take appropriate actions to reduce any risks that have been identified. All the members of staff who responded to their pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they agreed that the training they receive from the school in keeping pupils safe is effective. Pupils appreciate the benefits of the healthy options provided by the catering staff, as well as the extensive opportunities for exercise made available by the school, including the annual whole-school cross-country run. Older pupils commented on the school's increasing focus on mental health. This is helping pupils to develop an excellent understanding of the importance of staying mentally as well as physically healthy.

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 governors and another governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended chapel. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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 Robin Gaff	Reporting inspector
Mr John Aguilar	Compliance team inspector (Former principal, SofH school)
Mrs Fiona Angel	Team inspector (Deputy master, HMC school)
Mr Mark Hoskins	Team inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr Alistair McConville	Team inspector (Director of teaching and learning, HMC school)
Mrs Sally Cunliffe	Team inspector for boarding (Former housemistress, HMC school)
Mr James Dahl	Team inspector for boarding (Senior deputy head, HMC school)