



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Our Lady's Preparatory School

February 2023

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 | | 6 |
| PART 6 – Provision of information | | 7 |
| PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled | | 7 |
| PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools | | 7 |
| 3. The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage | | 8 |
| Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision | | 8 |
| Quality of education | | 8 |
| Behaviour and attitudes | | 9 |
| Personal development | | 9 |
| Leadership and management | | 10 |
| Compliance with statutory requirements | | 11 |
| Recommendations for further improvement | | 11 |
| 4. Educational Quality Inspection | | 12 |
| Preface | | 12 |
| Key findings | | 12 |
| Recommendations | | 13 |
| The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements | | 13 |
| The quality of the pupils' personal development | | 15 |
| 5. Inspection Evidence | | 18 |

School's Details

| | | | | |
|--|---|-----|-----------------|----|
| School | Our Lady's Preparatory School | | | |
| DfE number | 872/6007 | | | |
| Early Years registration number | EY548420 | | | |
| Registered charity number | 1155373 | | | |
| Address | Our Lady's Preparatory School 19 The Avenue Crowthorne Berkshire RG45 6PB | | | |
| Telephone number | 01344 773394 | | | |
| Email address | office@olps.co.uk | | | |
| Headmaster | Mr Michael Stone | | | |
| Chair of governors | Col. Matthew Ware | | | |
| Proprietor | The Church of the Holy Ghost Crowthorne Trust | | | |
| Age range | 3 months to 11 | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 235 | | | |
| | Nursery | 107 | Pre-Prep | 62 |
| | Prep | 66 | | |
| Inspection dates | 7 to 9 February 2023 | | | |

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Our Lady's Preparatory School is a Roman Catholic, independent co-educational day school and nursery. The trustees are the proprietors of the school. Since the previous inspection, additional teaching spaces have been developed and refurbished, including the establishment of a music area. The headmaster was appointed in September 2019.
- 1.2 The school comprises three sections: the nursery which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) registered setting, for children from three months to four years; the pre-prep for pupils aged from four to seven years; and the prep, for pupils from seven to eleven years. Before and after school care and a holiday club are an integral part of the education offered. The previous inspection of the registered EYFS setting was undertaken by Ofsted in June 2022.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide a Christian education and to promote an environment of academic endeavour and personal discipline within a caring setting. It seeks to develop confident young people who are kind to each other, contribute positively to society, and strive to achieve their full potential.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from families with a range of diverse backgrounds, most living within a 10-mile radius of the school. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is slightly above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified six pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and processing difficulties, two of whom receive specialist support. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 27 pupils, one of whom receives extra support. The curriculum is modified for those pupils identified by the school as being the most able.

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 (EYFS) 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](#).

Key findings

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

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school'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 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 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.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 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

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

- 2.12 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.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 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.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 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.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 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.

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

3. The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

- 3.1 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is good.
- 3.2 Leaders and managers ensure the curriculum meets the unique needs, interests, and developmental stages of each child in the setting. This includes those children with SEND and additional needs, who are extremely well supported. Staff are aware of the various needs of the children and plan activities well to engage and support their learning.
- 3.3 The setting's intention for the curriculum and its implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the provision. This ensures that all children make good and sometimes better progress relative to their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 3.4 The personal and emotional development of the children is outstanding, due to the excellent levels of care that the setting provides, and they consistently demonstrate that they feel safe, secure and happy. Dedicated staff form warm and caring relationships with all children and new children settle rapidly as a result.
- 3.5 Staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding and welfare requirements. They diligently fulfil their responsibility to protect all the children in their care.
- 3.6 Leaders and managers have an excellent knowledge of the EYFS learning requirements. There is highly reflective evidence of their strong commitment to continuous improvement, through detailed, cohesive self-evaluation and a clear vision for future developments.

Quality of education

- 3.7 The quality of education is good.
- 3.8 Curriculum coverage meets EYFS statutory requirements and is appropriate for all children in the setting, enabling them to have an excellent start to their education. The support each child receives is good. Detailed planning shows that next steps form the basis of the planning for children's learning and interests, enabling them to secure good progress in the areas of learning. However, opportunities to extend and further challenge the learning of individual children are sometimes missed. For example providing additional resources and activities in response to a child's curiosity about numbers or to introduce more complex vocabulary.
- 3.9 The excellent knowledge displayed by staff of how babies and young children learn and develop ensures that the content, sequencing and progression in the areas of learning are secured. They have consistently high expectations for the children in their care.
- 3.10 Staff readily engage with children during routine activities and take every opportunity to develop language and social skills. Children consistently hear and repeat words and phrases modelled and spoken to them, successfully increasing their vocabulary. Children listen most attentively to stories, nursery rhymes and songs, promoted by enthusiastic staff. The youngest children babble and anticipate words, older children join in with favourite songs and repeated refrains, and the oldest children show great enjoyment when acting out songs and action rhymes collaboratively. Staff make excellent use of opportunities when playing with the children, to introduce mathematical language by counting and talking to them about shape and size.
- 3.11 Regular assessments, recorded on the child's electronic learning journal and tracked against the expected levels of development ensure that each child's progress is carefully monitored, and their needs are met effectively. These are shared on the online system with parents, who are able to contribute to this by sharing with the setting their child's significant experiences and achievements at home.

- 3.12 Positive feedback is given to the children through praise and encouragement, which helps them to acquire the skills and attitudes to learn effectively. The stimulating experiences that the children receive provide them with a firm foundation for future learning. All children from the earliest age are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Behaviour and attitudes

- 3.13 Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
- 3.14 Children show great enjoyment in their learning. Accessible high-quality, low-level resources offer children opportunities to explore and make choices. They move around the rooms with confidence. The calm and purposeful atmosphere is highly conducive to the development of children's focus and concentration.
- 3.15 Children are able to maintain their focus on activities for appropriate amounts of time. The youngest children show great fascination and intrigue as they experiment with glue and paint. Older children demonstrate high levels of concentration and perseverance when selecting the correct pieces that fit together to complete a puzzle.
- 3.16 Children are active learners who are highly motivated to join in a range of activities. The oldest children were fully involved in a physical education (PE) lesson, when practising learnt skills by balancing on one leg and walking in a straight line, pretending to walk on a tightrope. Children show great pleasure and excitement when they achieve a new skill. One of the youngest children smiled with great delight when an expertly timed intervention from staff supported them to stand and take a few tentative steps.
- 3.17 As they access resources and activities, children follow their own ideas and make links in their learning. An older child followed a diagram that he had drawn to make a model out of blocks, adapting and adjusting the construction as necessary, until he had achieved the desired outcome. Children are inquisitive as they respond to the world around them. This was evidenced during a visit to the wooded area when the oldest children were able to recall facts about birds, reflecting on a recent event, when birds of prey were brought into the school.
- 3.18 Children demonstrate excellent behaviour and show respect for one another. They respond well to gentle reminders from staff about how to share resources and play co-operatively. The setting has a highly effective partnership with supportive parents, which successfully encourages regular attendance and establishes secure routines and good habits for future learning. Robust procedures are in place to investigate unexpected absences.

Personal development

- 3.19 The personal development of children is outstanding.
- 3.20 The exceptional relationships that children have with the adults around them are built on strong, secure attachments. Children form extremely positive relationships with key people and demonstrate high levels of well-being as a result. They are very settled and happy throughout the day and have warm, comforting relationships with all staff.
- 3.21 Each key person's excellent knowledge of their child's unique needs ensures they know how to respond effectively. Children confidently engage with staff at sleep times and settle quickly and independently, displaying high levels of confidence and security in both their routines and staff. They happily engage with a visitor, thus showing how secure they feel. Parents are informed of their child's routines through daily diaries accessed on the online system and by verbal feedback.
- 3.22 Children are positively encouraged to be independent. Older children self-register on arrival and dress independently for outdoors. Younger children sit confidently at the table at mealtimes, ably feeding themselves with spoons and forks. Children are encouraged to take risks in various activities, and are learning to manage their own safety, such as older children holding onto the rail when walking up and

down the stairs, sitting at a table when using scissors, and being adventurous when playing in the wooded area, such as when walking on planks or climbing trees.

- 3.23 There are many opportunities throughout the day for children to express and talk about their feelings. Staff check-in on the children's emotions and feelings at certain points during the day to ensure positive well-being.
- 3.24 A healthy diet is provided each day and staff ensure that food preferences and allergy needs are catered for appropriately. Children have opportunities for physically active play both inside and outdoors, however opportunities for the youngest children to play outdoors is currently limited. They have direct access to a large, inspiring outdoor area. However, a spontaneous approach to bespoke outdoor physically active play for the youngest children is limited as they do not have sole use of the area. Hygiene practices, which are followed by everyone, ensure that the personal needs of the children at this age are met appropriately. Staff encourage children to understand the need for, and importance of, handwashing before eating and support those unable to do it independently.
- 3.25 Staff have an excellent awareness of their responsibilities to keep children safe and have a secure knowledge of the importance of the setting's policies and procedures. The setting consistently meets the EYFS statutory requirements for safeguarding, welfare, learning and development.
- 3.26 Staff are highly effective in preparing children for life in modern Britain by enabling them to make decisions, such as choosing a book to read and deciding which particular song to sing. As they encourage them to share and take turns, children learn to respect and care for one another. British values of fairness, tolerance and kindness towards each other are actively embraced through everyday routines. The celebration of cultural festivals, such as Chinese New Year, is evident, enabling the children to develop an understanding of diversity.

Leadership and management

- 3.27 Leadership and management are good.
- 3.28 The strong direction from the leadership team results in an enthusiastic and strong team of staff who share an ambitious vision to provide high-quality education and exemplary levels of care. Leaders consistently monitor and evaluate the standards of care and provision and regularly scrutinise the curriculum to ensure that high standards are maintained. Plans to raise the quality of teaching to a consistently high level are not yet fully embedded.
- 3.29 Staff are well qualified and fully supported by leaders and managers. They benefit from regular supervision meetings and appraisals, which allow them to discuss issues, including their own well-being and development. Professional development is strong with training provided for all compulsory requirements. In addition, leaders identify other training needs through evaluation and supervision meetings. This impacts positively on outcomes for the children.
- 3.30 Leaders know the children very well and respond quickly to the needs of all, including those with SEND, EAL and additional needs. Children are extremely well supported within the setting, and leaders can access specialist help from outside agencies when required. Thorough systems are in place to ensure that every child's needs are met.
- 3.31 The setting has strong links with parents. In interviews with inspectors, they reported that they are overwhelmingly appreciative of the care their children receive. Responses to the inspection questionnaire reveal that parents have an extremely positive view of the setting.
- 3.32 Strong oversight by the trustees provides a high level of support for the management team. They offer support and guidance and are exceptionally well informed about the practice and standards of the setting.

3.33 Leaders ensure a high level of safety so that each child remains secure and happy. Great priority is given to safeguarding and all staff receive comprehensive training to keep them updated. Statutory duties are fully met with regard to equality, the Prevent strategy and safer recruitment.

Compliance with statutory requirements

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

Recommendations for further improvement

The school is advised to make the following improvements to its provision for children in the early years.

- Enhance opportunities for focused challenge, to ensure children make further progress in the areas of learning, when using both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Enhance opportunities for safe and stimulating outdoor learning for the youngest children.

4. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

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

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

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

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

| <i>School name</i> | <i>National Curriculum name</i> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Reception | Reception |
| Infant 1 | Year 1 |
| Infant 2 | Year 2 |
| Prep 1 | Year 3 |
| Prep II | Year 4 |
| Prep III | Year 5 |
| Prep IV | Year 6 |

Key findings

4.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.

- Pupils are highly articulate, have strong communication skills and achieve good levels of attainment in all areas of literacy.
- Pupils throughout the school are strong mathematicians; they calculate confidently and apply their knowledge effectively when solving problems in all subjects.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and can work confidently on their own.
- Pupils' progress is restricted where teaching does not challenge them to take initiative or think independently.

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

- Pupils are highly confident and self-assured yet possess a conspicuous level of humility.
- Pupils demonstrate an acute understanding of right and wrong and a mature appreciation of the importance of kindness.
- Pupils display an excellent understanding and appreciation of non-material aspects of life, whether religious, philosophical or other.
- From the earliest age, pupils actively support each other in a highly collaborative atmosphere, respecting and recognising individual differences and needs.

Recommendations

- 4.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
- Enhance pupils' achievement by raising expectations and incorporating a higher level of challenge into all lessons.
 - Enable pupils to develop the ability to use their own initiative and become more independent by providing more open-ended and self-directed learning tasks.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 4.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 4.5 Pupils are skilled communicators, articulate and confident. Children in the EYFS have a good understanding of the sounds letters make, and their writing and speaking skills develop steadily as they grow in confidence and maturity. Pupils throughout the school listen extremely well to one another and eagerly volunteer their opinions, showing ability to convey different viewpoints. For example in a Year 3 English lesson, pupils inferring information from a text declared that, 'He felt like it was Christmas morning,' would likely mean that he was happy and excited, full of the joy that comes with that day. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils used a high level of vocabulary to create vivid imagery, and through judicious questioning and patience, less confident, less eloquent pupils could consolidate their ideas before having to say them in front of the class. Pupils write fluently using increasingly sophisticated language and content. This was evidenced in a Year 5 lesson, based on *Secrets of the Sun King* by Emma Carroll. The creative content went across subject areas, enabling all pupils, irrespective of ability, to appreciate imaginative concepts and produce high-quality writing. Great care is taken in the presentation of pupils' work.
- 4.6 Pupils achieve at levels which are good in relation to their abilities, as confirmed by their results in national and standardised tests. Children in the EYFS work diligently on tasks, motivated by the encouragement of staff and regular praise. As a result, almost all EYFS children achieve expected levels of development by the end of Reception. The school's detailed tracking system confirms that pupils continue to make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. In response to the inspection questionnaire, all pupils agree that teachers help them to learn and make progress. In lessons observed during the inspection, there were examples of rapid progress, but this was not consistent in all observations, as teaching did not always include challenging tasks matched to individual abilities. Pupils who are less able and those with SEND and EAL achieve very well in relation to their abilities due to small classes, support which is tailored to their needs and the systems in place to monitor such pupils by highly skilled professionals.
- 4.7 Pupils' mathematical competency show incremental development as they progress through the school, supported by a curriculum that is progressive, well-planned and assessed. A high standard was observed in a Year 6 lesson converting miles to kilometres, where all pupils were appropriately challenged, and the lesson was delivered at a swift pace. In Year 2, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of using tally charts to produce a pictogram, while Year 3 pupils exhibited secure prior knowledge regarding multiplication in a problem-solving activity. Pupils display a love for numeracy and apply their strong skills to all areas of their learning. During a PE lesson Reception children showed a secure understanding of shape and space, declaring, 'We are in a circle'. Pupils of all ages, in science, woodland learning sessions and geography apply measurements and calculations with ease to practical activities, supported by skilled teaching assistants in every lesson. Younger children took great delight in proficiently scoring during a break time game of floor tennis, commenting accurately, 'I've got two more than you!'
- 4.8 Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are good, successfully developed through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, and the pursuit of the school's aim to encourage pupils to achieve their full potential. Pupils in Year 2 displayed excellent linguistic understanding as they skilfully recited

a poem, *Aliens are a funny bunch*, with effective voice projection and presence. Pupils demonstrate rapidly developing co-ordination skills as observed during a gymnastics lesson on flight. Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced when the teaching engages pupils to think for themselves, such as in a Year 6 science lesson on refraction, pupils were challenged to describe why an object changed its image in liquid. At times, however, pupils make less progress when they are presented with fewer choices or opportunities to expand their learning beyond set tasks.

- 4.9 Children begin to acquire good skills in information and communication technology (ICT) in the EYFS, learning to use different programmes to present and interpret information and to write in code as they move throughout the school. They are able to manipulate data and to present their research to an audience, as evidenced by the oldest pupils who used their ICT skills to produce excellent leaflets about internet safety, competently inserting hyperlinks to relevant organisations. Pupils of all ages effectively use computer programmes and online resources to reinforce their understanding across the curriculum. In some lessons, ICT was fully integrated and greatly enhanced pupils' learning, with technology being used to good effect. For example, research in a Year 4 topic lesson regarding weather conditions in the polar regions, highlighted pupils' ability to gather information. Year 6 confidently typed their work and carried out essential character and word counts to produce wonderful 'tweets', demonstrating competent use of office software.
- 4.10 When given opportunities to develop their study skills, pupils respond positively and produce high-quality results. This was seen in Year 6 where pupils synthesised a chapter of *The Boy in the Girl's Bathroom* by Louis Sachar to produce some excellent writing. Pupils in Year 5, were highly organised and focused during a group task, describing how, as the earth orbits the sun, the moon orbits the earth. In Year 3, pupils hypothesised how changing the distance between the light source and an object would affect the size of a shadow, analysing the information gathered to independently record their results. Pupils are willing to work individually or collaboratively, for example, when Year 1 edited a text; they can also self-help by using available resources. Pupils demonstrate these skills best when teachers' planning signposts available resources but allows for open-ended learning. This was not observed consistently, particularly where there was an over reliance on completing identical worksheets.
- 4.11 Pupils achieve success in a range of academic and other achievements throughout their time at school. This is encouraged by the celebration of their successes through a plethora of different avenues, such as house points or a leaf to place on the painted tree outside the headmaster's office. Pupils regularly gain places at their chosen senior school, with some successful in attaining academic scholarships. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils were observed having fun with friends in origami club, achieving success in judo and relaxing in mindfulness, with one pupil declaring that the club makes him a better person as it gives him time to clear his mind and reflect. Pupils achieve well in school activities including sports and subject challenges such as mathematics and poetry competitions.
- 4.12 Throughout the school pupils display positive attitudes and an enthusiasm for learning, as evidenced by their endeavours in lessons and activities observed during the inspection. They are productive when working individually, with a partner or in a group. This is due to the excellent rapport between the staff and the pupils, where there is clear mutual respect. Pupils show strong collaborative skills. This inspection judgement is supported by parents in the questionnaires, where almost all who responded agreed that the school equips their children with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life. This was also evidenced in lesson observations and in conversations with pupils. Younger pupils were just as productive when mark making on their own as they were joining others in a woodland learning session toasting marshmallows. Pupils' enthusiasm is encouraged by committed staff reinforcing a productive work ethic and positive can-do approach. The pupils value their community and gain a sense of personal achievement and satisfaction from contributing to the success of the school. The school's clear ethos and sense of family that is strongly promoted by the excellent leadership team and supported by the trustees, underpins the pupils'

desire to do their best. Furthermore, very good staff-to-pupil ratios ensure every pupil has an opportunity to shine.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 4.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.14 Pupils across all ages have the confidence to share ideas and exhibit high levels of self-esteem in a humble and respectful manner. This was illustrated in a Year 3 personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education (PSHCEE) lesson, when pupils performed alongside a music track *Boom Chica Boom*. They graded their improved confidence before and after the performance, identifying tips, such as, 'Ignore the crowd', and 'Believe in yourself'. A comprehensive PSHCEE scheme of work, which is well delivered provides wide-ranging opportunities for pupils to develop their self-understanding. Pupils engage in activities in an uninhibited fashion, clearly confident even in areas out of their natural comfort zone. They have a willingness to learn and can explain fixed mind-set. They develop self-knowledge and resilience because leaders and staff reinforce positive attitudes and encourage them to always do their best. Pupils show high levels of self-understanding for their age. Twice daily, the pupils identify their zone of feeling – blue, green, yellow or red, happy to share the reasons for their feeling with staff and peers alike. In so doing they display a mature level of self-awareness and empathy for classmates.
- 4.15 Pupils are adept at making decisions, with a mature understanding as to how making mistakes can be as valuable as getting things right. Choice is a common feature of school life, such as during morning registration pupils select what they will do after school. A younger pupil remarked that they would join their friend in free choice, whereas an older pupil was going to do homework so they could watch television when they got home. Thus, from an early age, pupils develop an extremely good understanding that decisions they make can be instrumental in determining their own future success and well-being. It was clear from discussions that pupils understand that decisions they make not only impact them but can have an impact on others, and they are diligent in seeking ways in which to minimise upsetting others when doing so. This was evident during a Year 6 sports captain discussion as to whom they would select for the interhouse netball competition. During a lunchtime discussion regarding school values, pupils cited mutual respect as being essential for effective decision-making. A mature discussion revealed that whilst there might be a lack of opportunities to make decisions regarding work, they certainly understand that the decision-making process can be a delicate one, as each person has their own opinions and that everyone is unique.
- 4.16 Pupils display an excellent openness to the spiritual, philosophical and non-material aspects of life. There were many observed moments during the inspection when pupils were totally immersed in activities, often outdoors, and displaying a complete, reverential engagement with the natural world. Year 1 pupils whilst waiting for their turn to light a fire during a woodland learning session talked enthusiastically about their love of nature, citing 'The green trees and open space'. In lessons, pupils demonstrate empathy for others, discussing issues with sensitivity. Older pupils related to the feelings of fear others may have experienced during the recent earthquake in Turkey, or in trying to understand the anger people must feel to start a war, such as the current situation between Russia and Ukraine. Pupils enrich their understanding of the non-material aspects of life through their study of different religions and faith systems, with a clear appreciation of the need to respect other cultures. Pupils can reflect on the spiritual dimensions of human existence. This is supported by the Catholic ethos as well as opportunities afforded pupils, such as reflecting during pupil-led prayers in assembly, or discussions during PSHCEE. In one such session a pupil declared how their faith helped them when facing challenges, stating their belief that Jesus will help in difficult times.
- 4.17 Pupils are extremely socially aware and their co-operative and supportive responses towards peers and younger children are instinctive. Pupils of all ages were seen collaborating, engaging in discussion, and enjoying successfully completed shared tasks, such as the youngest children building a marble run

and modifying guttering in a free flow indoor and outdoor learning session. Pupils build strong relationships and feel respected by their warm, friendly teachers and support staff, who clearly want them to do well in all aspects of school life. These factors help pupils to develop into highly considerate and empathetic young people who demonstrate a strong sense of loyalty to their school and who work together to fulfil common goals.

- 4.18 Pupils know how to stay safe, in both the real and virtual world. They appreciate the regular focus on online safety in ICT lessons and speak confidently of the need to maintain anonymity in certain scenarios and to protect passwords. They understand the importance of being physically healthy, and value the opportunities they have in school and beyond to participate in team and individual sports and activities. They also understand how to be mentally healthy and are made aware that this is an aspect of their lives which they need to nurture. In this they are ably supported by the much-loved school dog. In the inspection questionnaire a very small minority of parents commented that the school does not encourage their child to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Inspection evidence does not support this view; the food was both tasty and healthy and the opportunities for pupils to exercise plentiful. In discussion with pupils, they believe they are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle and recognise how privileged they are to be working and playing in the school's homely and welcoming environment. Without exception, they all feel safe and appreciated within the friendly community, and culture of warmth and security that pervade the school.
- 4.19 Pupils engage naturally and without hesitation with those of backgrounds and cultures other than their own, in response to the ethos of kindness and mutual respect which permeates the school. This is an area that is outwardly promoted by the adults within the school and modelled effectively by school leaders. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school encourages their children to respect and tolerate other people. Pupils have a thoughtful awareness of British society, particularly the role of respect and tolerance. They confirmed in discussion that they aim to be the best version of themselves. They recognise that others may have different views from themselves, but say that everyone is equally valued, irrespective of ability, opinion, or belief. During pupil interviews, it was shared that there is no bullying in the school, and they spoke passionately about how it is essential to be united by individuality and choose kindness as Jesus did. All pupils who answered the questionnaire agreed that the school takes bullying seriously.
- 4.20 Pupils show extremely strong moral development and distinguish clearly between right and wrong behaviours. In a Year 1 PSHCEE lesson, all pupils were able to identify the right choices made by *The Rainbow Fish*, stating how it is good to share because it makes you and other people happier. Throughout the school, pupils behave with great courtesy and consideration for others, witnessed in a music lesson when spontaneous applause broke out for a soloist. In assembly, pupils, confident in their supportive community, put their hands up to ask questions and volunteered information freely such as sharing their knowledge that it would not be good to feed the school dog grapes, raisins, or avocados. Pupils accept responsibility for their own actions, understanding that rules benefit everyone. The success of these expectations is characterised by there being very few behavioural incidents amongst pupils; any that occur are dealt with swiftly and skilfully before any escalation of behaviour management is needed. Relationships are extremely positive, and a palpable culture of respect and tolerance pervades all aspects of school life.
- 4.21 From the earliest age, pupils show a keen awareness of the needs of others. Pupils' contributions to the well-being of all, both inside and outside the classroom are obvious, positive, and highly effective. For instance, a younger pupil on realising that a classmate was without a partner during construction club invited them to join their group, an older pupil stopped an English activity, without hesitation, to help a peer who was struggling to log in. The oldest pupils described with great pride their roles as leaders, such as prefects or school council representatives, as well as their fulfilment when acting as a buddy for younger pupils. Pupils are keen to make a positive contribution to the school community by taking their positions of responsibility seriously. This was evident during a school council meeting, which involved a food tasting session, deciding if chilli or curry should be returned to the lunch menu.

Through discussions it was clear that pupils understand the importance of global responsibility and contributing to charitable causes, and they enjoy helping the wider community, such as raising money for CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development). They want to be more globally aware and they want to make a difference.

5. Inspection Evidence

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

Inspectors

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| Mrs Ruth Loveman | Reporting inspector |
| Mrs Jane Crouch | Compliance team inspector (Head, IAPS school) |
| Mr Kit Thompson | Team inspector (Head, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Valerie Holloway | Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of nursery and kindergarten, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Alyson Lobo | Team inspector for early years (Head, IAPS school) |