



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

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

**Mayfield School**

**October 2018**



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### School's Details

|                                  |  |     |                   |     |
|----------------------------------|--|-----|-------------------|-----|
| <b>School</b>                    | Mayfield School  |     |                   |     |
| <b>DfE number</b>                | 845/6035   |     |                   |     |
| <b>Registered charity number</b> | 1047503  |     |                   |     |
| <b>Address</b>                   | Mayfield School<br>The Old Palace<br>Mayfield<br>East Sussex<br>TN20 6PH |     |                   |     |
| <b>Telephone number</b>          | 01435 874600   |     |                   |     |
| <b>Email address</b>             | admin@mayfieldgirls.org  |     |                   |     |
| <b>Headmistress</b>              | Miss Antonia Beary   |     |                   |     |
| <b>Chair of governors</b>        | Lady Davies of Stamford  |     |                   |     |
| <b>Age range</b>                 | 11 to 18   |     |                   |     |
| <b>Number of pupils on roll</b>  | 398  |     |                   |     |
|                                  | <b>Boys</b>  | 0   | <b>Girls</b>      | 398 |
|                                  | <b>Day pupils</b>  | 205 | <b>Boarders</b>   | 193 |
|                                  | <b>Seniors</b>   | 280 | <b>Sixth Form</b> | 118 |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>          | 9 to 11 October 2018   |     |                   |     |

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Mayfield is an independent, Catholic day and boarding school for girls aged between 11 and 18 years. It is a registered charity with a governing body whose members are also the trustees. The school opened in 1872, founded by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, and the last headmistress from the order retired in 2000. The sisters retain 2 places on the board of trustees. The current headmistress has been in post since 2008.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the boarding houses have been re-structured. There are four boarding houses, one for Years 7 and 8, two for Years 9 to 11 and a sixth-form boarding house. Cricket has been introduced and the equestrian centre developed further.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school's mission statement is to 'realise the unique potential of each student within an inclusive community that is rooted in the Catholic tradition of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus'. Its aim is to educate girls to become mature, independent, confident and well-formed individuals, ready to make a positive difference to society.

### About the pupils

- 1.4 Day pupils mainly come from a range of professional backgrounds and live within a 30-mile radius of the school. Boarders come from the UK and overseas with currently 25 different nationalities represented. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in the senior school is above average, and in the sixth form is broadly average. The school has identified 78 pupils as having special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND) of whom 39 receive additional support. English is an additional language (EAL) for 83 pupils of whom 62 receive additional support with their English. One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan funded by the local authority. The school has identified the more able pupils by awarding 53 scholarships this year and these are supported by a programme of extension activities and lessons.

## 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 their 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 statement of boarding principles [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'.**

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

## Key findings

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

- Pupils display very positive attitudes towards their learning and are proud of all they achieve.
- Pupils' academic achievement and progress are excellent across the school.
- Pupils are confident and articulate communicators, both inside and outside the classroom.
- Pupils demonstrate very strong independent learning skills and take responsibility for their own learning.
- Pupils show a real willingness to take risks with their studies, make mistakes and then learn from these.

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

- Pupils thrive as individuals within the non-judgemental atmosphere of the school.
- Pupils display a very strong sense of responsibility for themselves and for others in their community.
- Pupils are well-prepared for the next stage of their lives, helped by the pastoral programme of the school.
- Pupils show a genuine respect for other cultures and see themselves as all part of one inclusive community, following the Cornelian principles of the school's founder.
- Pupils demonstrate strong levels of self-confidence and resilience which enables them to be independent and determine their own lives.

## Recommendation

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

- Ensuring that all teaching and marking are consistently at the level of the best practice seen in much of the work, so that pupils make strong progress across their subjects.

## The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The school meets its aim to realise the unique potential of each student, by promoting a dynamic and challenging style of teaching which enables pupils to explore their ideas fully and raises their level of attainment markedly. At GCSE, pupils achieve above the national average for maintained schools and make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities. At A level, pupils achieve above the national average and make rapid progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities. Pupils with SEND or EAL also achieve excellent results, benefiting significantly from the strong level of support they receive, put in place by the leadership. The most able pupils fulfil their potential successfully, reflecting the excellent quality of the extension lessons offered by the teaching. This high level of achievement comes from the excellent use of information on pupils when they join the school and the exceptional monitoring of their progress, directed by the committed approach of the school's leaders. The clear evidence of lesson observations and the work scrutiny reinforces this picture of excellent achievement. Most of the leavers from Year 13 last year gained their first choice of university, and the majority went to universities with high standards of entry.
- 3.6 Pupils display strong knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of learning. They discuss ideas in considerable depth and make excellent use of concepts acquired in previous lessons. They are also very adept at using information acquired from other subjects and making perceptive comparisons. This was seen in an English lesson where they showed excellent collaborative working, challenging each other's ideas and developing their own lines of thought, using their historical knowledge to put the text into its social context. Pupils display advanced skills of analysis in their work, identifying complex threads in the subjects being studied. A Year 13 group analysed information thoughtfully to highlight price discriminations and then make intelligent conclusions on the problems for business. Pupils do not just have a strong grasp of information, they also have a clear understanding of how this knowledge should be used effectively. Pupils in a science lesson demonstrated a detailed understanding of genes in answering questions in class. Another group employed sophisticated, technical language in their articulation of responses to questions on ethics. Pupils across the school take time in their learning to assess their own progress and understanding in a highly mature manner. A GCSE art group reflected upon their work with insight and frankness, which in turn helped them to refine and consolidate both imagery and creative ideas. The results of this reflective approach can be seen in the outstanding practical work of the creative departments. A high level of individual skill was seen in lessons across the subjects. Pupils in a GCSE class identified sophisticated linguistic techniques in a study of poetic texts. Younger pupils demonstrated excellent physical skills in their hockey lesson. In interview, pupils spoke positively of the support they receive from the teaching, which was seen during the inspection to be of high quality in most though not all lessons. Pupils also receive considerable help from the excellent quality of marking and teachers' helpful comments in their books, although there is some inconsistency here. Pupils also benefit enormously from the many subject clinics which clarify their understanding and help them to deepen their knowledge and skills. This excellent provision is the consequence of the leadership's determination to develop the pupils' potential as learners and ensure that their thinking and understanding are stretched to their fullest extent. In this aim, the school is very successful.
- 3.7 Pupils are confident communicators in the classroom, in their extra-curricular activities and in their written work. They use sophisticated vocabulary in their writing. They are very articulate in the way they discuss ideas and they also listen carefully, so that their arguments can be even more confident. Pupils in a sixth form enrichment session debated vigorously the decision for their business product, arguing alternative marketing approaches and seeking to persuade the rest of the group. Pupils in a Lower School group were highly articulate when answering questions on surveying. Pupils show exceptional skills of written communication, recording information effectively and expressing their ideas with great clarity and sophistication. This was seen in the observation of work in lessons and in the work scrutiny. In the latter, one pupil was using a full range of linguistic techniques to ensure a

detailed understanding of the material, ranging from mind-maps to lists and traditional note-taking, resulting in an exceptional quality of work. Some pupils with EAL were handling a high level of historical and scientific terminology and concepts. These strong skills of communication are assisted by a well-stocked library and the provision of time for personal reading in the curriculum. Pupils also benefit from highly focused teaching which understands their individual needs and enables the targeting of specific skills in language. Outside of the classroom, pupils further develop their strength in communication through activities such as debating competitions and the varied opportunities to participate in school councils.

- 3.8 Pupils have excellent numeracy skills which they apply confidently in their mathematics lessons. This was seen in a group of younger pupils displaying an excellent quality of mental arithmetic. Another mathematics group showed a comprehensive grasp of terminology associated with surveys and sampling. Pupils studying A level displayed high levels of numeracy in solving probability questions. Pupils also apply their mathematical skills securely in related subjects, as seen in a physics lesson where they were accomplished at incorporating equation rearrangements and change of units within their calculations, utilising their knowledge of unit size with aplomb and accuracy. Pupils comment that they benefit enormously from the school's unusually coherent approach to the teaching of numeracy, where departments present a common strategy to assist mathematical understanding. This is achieved through teaching workshops organised by the leadership.
- 3.9 Pupils demonstrate a strong range of skills in using information and communication technology (ICT). They benefit from dedicated lessons in the subject, and the opportunities to use ICT skills and knowledge in other subjects. In one lesson, pupils had to decide which media form to use in their project, enthused by the strong teaching. In an art lesson, the confident use of digital media enhanced the quality of their creative work. Pupils in a geography lesson delivered their presentations on deserts, skilfully using technology to manipulate images, so that their learning was enhanced considerably. Pupils in interview said that they appreciate the opportunities to develop their skills, describing how they used their knowledge of spreadsheets to make sense of the geographical data they were analysing. Pupils benefit significantly from the leadership's belief in preparing them for working in the modern world.
- 3.10 Pupils are highly confident in their approach to work. They display a considerable level of skill in their studies. They are exceptional in analysing problems and present their own ideas confidently in class, following this with perceptive and detailed written work. This was seen in an English lesson where pupils presented some sophisticated views on different texts about bringing up children, with one pupil making a clever comparison to the nurturing of plants. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were highly effective at drawing upon their knowledge of binomial expansion to create a probability table for a fairground game. Pupils were able to hypothesise that the distribution is linked to the binomial and showed excellent thinking skills to establish a general formula for this. In a history lesson, younger pupils analysed with perceptive empathy the effects of the closure of the local monastery on the characters they had created, appreciating the concepts of consequence and result.
- 3.11 Pupils are successful beyond the classroom and benefit from the wide range of activities offered by the school, a significant achievement given its size. Pupils show considerable commitment to the clubs in which they are involved. This was evidenced by the purposeful atmosphere around the school during the timetabled activities sessions. Some pupils commented on the advantages they have as boarders in developing new skills. There are individual regional and national representatives in different sports, as well as team success in regional competitions. These include pupils winning a regional tennis tournament and gaining second place in the regional stage of a national indoor cricket tournament, losing only to the eventual national champions. Some individuals also go on to achieve national recognition, including a member of the England elite rounders squad, a member of the National Youth Ballet, and competitors in national dressage finals and international equestrian events. Pupils compete in national maths and science challenges and regularly gain gold awards. Pupils achieve the highest grades in external music and drama examinations. Pupils participate in The Duke

of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) and gain awards at all three levels. Pupils benefit from the excellent facilities provided by the school, a reflection of the leadership's desire to offer a broad educational experience at the school and promote achievement in all areas.

- 3.12 Pupils display an excellent attitude to their learning. They work together with great purpose. They have a notably mature and focused approach to working independently and see it as a normal and exciting part of learning. In this respect, they benefit considerably from a teaching strategy which seeks to promote individual learning through expecting pupils to show a high level of initiative. Pupils show strong qualities of leadership in their learning and a determination to ensure that, as individuals and as a group, they can all progress at a high level, commensurate with their ambition and aptitude. In a games lesson, younger pupils showed an outstanding attitude to the session, alternately leading, coaching and supporting each other. Pupils show exemplary levels of self-motivation in their work, always ready to challenge themselves and experiment with new ideas. This was seen in a mathematics lesson on enlargements, which they found difficult but nevertheless persevered, demonstrating that they benefit from working independently. Pupils display an exceptional ambition to be successful and this drives them to take responsibility for their own work. They are helped in this by the system of self-review and target-setting, established by the leadership as well as the non-judgemental atmosphere created by the teaching, in which pupils feel able to be creative and suggest ideas without any fear of making mistakes. They see these as being essential in improving their learning and achieving their best.

## The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils show an exceptional level of self-understanding. They are very resilient in facing new challenges in their work and are prepared to take risks and learn from their mistakes. This is very much facilitated by the leadership's belief in encouraging pupils to be creative in their learning and not to be afraid of being wrong. Pupils with SEND are encouraged to explain to their teachers what they need to help them learn, thus taking responsibility for ensuring their progress. In interview, pupils commented that the school encourages them to challenge themselves and explore even further with their learning. Senior pupils said they had benefited enormously from the revised life skills course which included a topic on their professional futures, and this had challenged them to look ahead more purposefully.
- 3.15 Pupils learn to make decisions for themselves from the outset, reflecting the leadership's aim to develop independence in their pupils. They willingly participate in school councils and help in making decisions on aspects of life in school. They interview prospective staff, learning to develop considered opinions and making choices based on these. Pupils in the sixth form showed great confidence in establishing an environmental group, reflecting their desire to make a difference to the world, learning how to develop a project from scratch. From this they have become aware that decisions on issues such as the use of plastic can have profound effects on the quality of life. Pupils take a significant degree of responsibility for making their own choices for subjects at GCSE and A level. They commented that they appreciate the honest advice they receive, and they also benefit from the leadership's aim to accommodate any combination of subjects. Those pupils who are boarders at the school are very appreciative of the considerable benefits they gain from living in this close community and the need for them to be more responsible for themselves.
- 3.16 Pupils embrace wholeheartedly the Catholic heritage of the school and the precepts encompassed in the Cornelian principles of the school's founder, which gives them an added dimension to their thinking and enhances their development as rounded individuals. Pupils benefit from the opportunities provided by the school's leadership to have time for quiet reflection during the day, seen in the mornings, as well as in the weekly timetabled liturgy sessions. At lunch, a pupil asked to say grace in her native language and the other pupils stood respectfully as she did this, reflecting the spiritual nature of daily life in the school. In an English lesson, pupils discussed with exceptional insight a description of a public execution and put forward different interpretations of the crowd's reaction, understanding that their own reactions related to their individual perspective on life. In interview, they talked enthusiastically of the role the chapel plays in their lives at school, teaching them to see a broader vision of life. They describe vividly events such as the crib procession through the village at Christmas and other special services, where they gain an understanding of the spiritual element in the world. At the same time, this sense of spirituality is not just a Christian-centred concept but takes in all faiths, philosophies and cultures, so that pupils embrace fully an appreciation of the non-material elements of life. There is a self-assured sense of calmness and purpose in the way that the pupils go about their lives in the school. This is not just about the task of academic learning but about how to live thoughtfully in the inclusive community that is Mayfield.
- 3.17 Pupils have an inherent grasp of a moral code which enables them to behave in a highly thoughtful and purposeful manner. They benefit enormously from a programme of life-skills which includes teaching about moral choices but, much more than these curricular opportunities, they learn daily from the leadership's strong determination to establish an inclusive community based on moral principles. Pupils appreciate that they should take responsibility for their own futures and are fully committed to doing so; they are involved in deciding what topics should be included in the life-skills programme. Pupils show a significant level of responsibility all through the school. In each section of the school, they willingly take on the role of prefects; they act as buddies to new pupils on taster days, developing a sense of ownership for the school and their role within it. Younger pupils show prospective parents around school, taking genuine pride in their community. Senior pupils act as valuable mentors for younger years, showing their exceptional qualities of compassion and caring,

which are such an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils also learn about systems of rules and laws through the curriculum. This reinforces an understanding of such issues and how they apply to their behaviour in daily life. In interview, pupils spoke with great maturity about the need for a code of conduct in school and that, when this code was broken, there should be sanctions. Pupils also commented that the school uses rewards effectively and this creates a positive atmosphere in the houses and makes them value the experience they gain as boarders. They appreciated this positive approach, encouraged by the school's leadership, and felt that it makes them more responsible because they feel trusted.

- 3.18 Living and working together in harmony within an inclusive community is central to the school's ethos, and pupils embrace this concept wholeheartedly, learning valuable lessons for their own futures. This key aim of the school teaches pupils to work together successfully both inside the classroom and beyond, in their activities and in their houses. The excellent relationships between older and younger pupils and between pupils and all staff are very strong and central to the personal development of the pupils, building their confidence. In interview, the boarders said that they benefit considerably from the experience of living and working together in an atmosphere of kindness, where they learn to support and take responsibility for each other. Pupils understand that they will often in life need to meet challenges directly, both individually and in groups. They felt that problem-solving is a valued feature of the work they do in school and they are fully confident in their ability to do this successfully. A group preparing for a DofE expedition worked together effectively to allocate particular tasks that each individual needed to do, so they could all benefit from this mutual collaboration.
- 3.19 Pupils have an exceptional concern for the world beyond the school gates and appreciate their own advantages. Pupils want to contribute positively to the wider community and play their part in the outside world and, to that end, they involve themselves wholeheartedly in raising money for charities which they choose themselves and then decide how they will raise the funds. Older pupils take pride in helping in local schools, care homes and organisations such as Riding for the Disabled. These opportunities are part of an excellent programme developed by the school's leadership. This helps to broaden significantly the pupils' experience of life outside of school. In the same way, individuals have been encouraged to go on volunteering placements overseas, which enrich further their understanding of the world and follow a key motto of the school: 'Actions not Words'. This involvement adds substantially to their skills, which they can use for the benefit of others and helps considerably to put their own lives into perspective.
- 3.20 This is a truly international community, and pupils value enormously the opportunities that this diversity brings them. They do not see differences, only the chance to meet people of other cultures and learn from them. Pupils from other countries are encouraged to make presentations to their peers about their homeland, and this is appreciated by all. They work together effectively in lessons, regardless of their nationality, and they mix together successfully beyond the school day. This was seen in an interesting discussion among sixth formers of the ways they had dealt with taking exams in their own countries, reflecting the different cultural pressures on them, so that the whole group could develop a stronger understanding of themselves and the world around them.
- 3.21 Pupils benefit significantly from the school's promotion of a healthy lifestyle. They acquire an important understanding of personal safety and good health through the curriculum, which reinforces the messages. This was seen in lessons and in pupils' work, with valuable information on areas such as internet safety, diet and hygiene, all of which significantly help support pupils' personal development. The school helps them with this by providing a good range of food at mealtimes with excellent displays of the nutritional content of different foods and advice on a balance diet. Pupils participate fully in a range of sports both within the curriculum and in the activities programme. They benefit enormously from all the facilities on the school site. In interview, pupils declared that they have a balanced lifestyle with a mix of academic, creative and physical lessons and activities, all of which give them an excellent perspective on life. The school also focuses strongly on issues of emotional and mental health to ensure that pupils keep a firm measure of balance in their lives, and

this is of significant benefit to them with all the pressures they face in the modern world. The leadership's promotion of this element of health is forward-thinking. Senior pupils are trained in counselling skills and provide hugely beneficial support to others in the school. One of the school's declared characteristics is not to be an academic hot-house but to ensure that pupils enjoy a wide range of opportunities so that pupils become mature, confident individuals able to take their place in the modern world. Mayfield pupils benefit considerably from this considered and balanced approach to education.

## 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 a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and chapel. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Mr Gareth Price     | Reporting inspector  |
| Mrs Danielle Clarke | Compliance team inspector (Principal, Society of Heads school)     |
| Dr Philippa Davies  | Team inspector (Head of department, HMC school)                    |
| Mr Karl McCloskey   | Team inspector (Principal, GSA school)                             |
| Mr Richard Jones    | Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, Society of Heads school) |