



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Dean Close Preparatory School

March 2019



Contents

Contents	2
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	7
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	7
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	7
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	7
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	8
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	8
PART 6 – Provision of information	8
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	8
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	9
3. Educational Quality Inspection	10
Preface	10
Key findings	11
Recommendation	11
The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements	12
The quality of the pupils' personal development	14
4. Inspection Evidence	17

School's Details

School	Dean Close Preparatory School			
DfE number	916/6034			
Registered charity number	1086829			
Address	Dean Close Preparatory School Lansdown Road Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL51 6QS			
Telephone number	01242 512217			
Email address	dcpsoffice@deanclose.org.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Paddy Moss			
Chair of governors	Mrs Kathryn Carden			
Age range	7 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	305			
	Boys	160	Girls	145
	Day pupils	235	Boarders	70
	Juniors	170	Seniors	135
Inspection dates	19 to 21 March 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Dean Close Preparatory School is a co-educational day and boarding school which provides education for pupils between 7 and 13 years of age. The school was established in 1886 and is set in 50 acres of parkland in the centre of Cheltenham, on a site which it shares with its senior and pre-preparatory schools. Boarders are accommodated in three boarding houses: one mixed for pupils between 7 and 10 years of age, and one each for boys and girls between 10 and 13.
- 1.2 The current headmaster was appointed in September 2015 when the Dean Close Foundation, consisting of three schools and five nurseries, was formed. The foundation is a registered charity governed by a board of trustees.
- 1.3 Dean Close Prep is a member of the Choir Schools' Association because the Schola Cantorum of Tewkesbury Abbey is educated at the school.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 Following its Evangelical Christian foundation, the school seeks to provide an environment where each individual's qualities, interests and potential are respected and encouraged, with the aim of giving each and every one a high quality, imaginative, well-rounded education, blending academic performance with real achievement in their individually discovered talents. It holds community, respect for others, relationship and service at the heart of its ethos, encouraging independent thinking and the self-confidence to challenge the status quo.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come predominantly from professional and business families, with the majority of day pupils living within a 20-mile radius of the school. Boarders come from the UK and from a wide range of countries, notably Japan.
- 1.6 Nationally standardised data indicates that the ability profile of the school is above average. The school has identified 30 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, speech and language difficulties and Attention Deficit Disorder, 23 of whom receive additional specialist help. English is an additional language (EAL) for 36 pupils, who receive additional support as required. Data used by the school have identified 36 pupils as being the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 47 other pupils because of their special talents in sport, music, art, design technology (DT) 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 almost all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015, and associated requirements. In order to meet all the standards, the school should take immediate action to remedy the deficiencies as detailed below.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 **The standard 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

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 In almost all respects, arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance. However, while most of the necessary recruitment checks on staff have been carried out, the school has not always checked that staff are not on the list of those who are prohibited from teaching or managing prior to the commencement of employment.
- 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 in paragraphs 6 and 9–16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 2–4, 6–10, 12, 15 and 16 are met, but those in paragraphs 7 (a) and (b) and 8 (a) and (b) and, for the same reason NMS 11, (protection of boarders) are not met.**

Action point 1

- **the school must ensure that all recruitment checks, including those against the list of those prohibited from teaching or management, are completed before staff commence employment at the school, [paragraphs 7 (a) and (b), 8 (a) and (b); NMS 11].**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.11 The school has carried out almost all of the required recruitment checks to ensure the suitability of staff and proprietors prior to the start of employment, but checks on medical fitness have not consistently been undertaken prior to the start of their employment. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 18 (2)(a-e), (4), 19, 20, 21 are met, but that part of paragraph 18 (3) relating to the completion of medical checks before staff begin work and, for the same reason, paragraph 18 (2)(f) and NMS 14.1, are not met.**

Action point 2

- **the school must ensure that before appointment it obtains and keeps a record of medical fitness for each member of staff [paragraph 18 (2)(f), 18 (3); NMS 14.1].**

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 standard 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 standard 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 Leaders and the proprietors work to 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 proprietors have ensured that the large majority of regulatory standards for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are consistently met. However, they have not ensured that all recruitment checks are completed before staff commence employment at the school.
- 2.21 The standards relating to leadership and management of the school in sub-paragraph 34 (a), (b) and (c) and, for the same reason, NMS 13.3, 13.4 and 13.5 are not met.**

Action point 3

- **the school must ensure that the leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that all of the standards are met consistently [paragraphs 34 (a), (b) and (c); NMS 13.3-13.5].**

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 achieve highly in all areas of the curriculum because most lessons are engaging and planned effectively to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils express themselves with great eloquence and self-assurance through the written and spoken word, art, music and drama.
- Pupils achieve considerable success in a diverse range of academic and extra-curricular activities, including gaining a large number of scholarships in music, sport, drama and academic areas.
- All pupils, including those with SEND and/or EAL, have an extremely positive attitude to learning instilled through high expectations and a supportive environment.

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

- Pupils have a highly developed understanding of their own strengths and capabilities as time is set aside in most lessons to evaluate what has been learnt.
- Pupils make confident and well-informed choices about their academic studies and make a substantial contribution to wider school life through their representation on the school council and house forum.
- The quality of pupils' creativity and self-expression is evident in the uplifting musical performances and the polished dramatic presentations staged throughout the year.
- Pupils understand the importance of keeping fit and maintaining a healthy lifestyle due to the encouragement they receive to participate in a wide range of sporting activities.
- Pupils have a great sense of belonging to the school community and actively involve themselves in the life of the school.

Recommendation

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

- Ensure that pupils maximise progress in their learning by providing consistently engaging lessons that meet the needs of all pupils effectively.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Pupils of all abilities make strong progress due to the broad curriculum and planning that effectively considers the needs of individual pupils. Those with SEND and/or EAL also make rapid progress in most lessons due to the highly effective support they receive and the ongoing dialogue between staff, pupils and parents. Pupils achieve highly in all areas of the curriculum through well-paced and challenging lessons that incorporate clear success criteria. Pupils are highly adept at evaluating their own learning, as time is allocated for self-assessment and reflection in most lessons. Pupils understand how well they are doing, and know what they need to do to improve, due to the effective reporting process which provides clear information on progress, attainment and attitudes to learning. Pupils frequently take responsibility for their own learning, working independently with the reassurance that support and guidance is always available if needed. They stay focussed and motivated due to the clear instructions they receive and the well-established classroom routines. Scrutiny of pupils work and observations in lessons supports the school's data that all pupils make excellent progress in all areas of the curriculum, regardless of gender, ability, age or educational need. Senior leaders monitor progress carefully, using data very effectively to plan the curriculum and inspire new initiatives.
- 3.6 Pupils of all abilities have detailed subject specific knowledge and well-developed skills across all curriculum areas; they are encouraged to challenge their skills and understanding via probing, open-ended questions targeted at individual pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils have highly developed linguistic abilities, enquiring minds and, as a result, they hypothesise, evaluate and assimilate information well across the whole curriculum. In Year 3 pupils demonstrate a highly developed understanding of the structure of a story when describing their use of a 'story mountain' to create books in Bookworms club. Year 4 pupils display a wide subject vocabulary when thinking about different habitats in the wild, accurately describing a woodlouse and where they can be found. Older pupils showed an excellent application of science knowledge in gardening club, discussing photosynthesis and why potatoes grow. High ability pupils use subject-specific vocabulary to good effect when identifying the different stages of a global supply chain in geography. Pupils develop precise, and often technical, vocabulary due to the high expectations of staff who reinforce new terminology introduced in previous lessons. Pupils demonstrate thorough understanding of musical terminology and forms as they evaluate and write reviews on short pieces they have composed, and in science they show secure subject knowledge when describing how copper carbonate was a cause of metal fatigue in the Eiffel Tower.
- 3.7 Pupils' communication skills are highly developed. They express themselves with great eloquence and self-assurance through the written and spoken word, art, music and drama. They draw upon extensive vocabulary and understanding of writing for different purposes, for example when producing attention-grabbing headlines and introductions to a newspaper report on the impact of plastic packaging on the environment. Pupils demonstrate excellent communication skills in lessons, as they confidently give detailed answers to questions or make well-reasoned contributions to class discussions and debates. Those with SEND and/or EAL exhibit equally well-developed communication skills, achieving success in a national short story writing competition, due to the encouragement they receive from staff and peers. Pupils develop confidence and resilience in their oral performances, with every pupil performing a poem to their peers through an annual competition. In recent years, pupils have achieved considerable success in a local performing arts and spoken word festival. In gardening club, pupils articulate clearly the process of planting their vegetables and what happens to the crop of plants once each one has developed. Pupils become confident communicators in more than one language due to constant encouragement to speak out in modern foreign language lessons. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 pupils presented an informative review of a recent trip to Normandy in both French and English during assembly. Boarders further develop their literacy skills as they are encouraged to write handwritten letters to family members each week, and to new boarders prior to their arrival.

- 3.8 Pupils of all abilities develop confidence in their numeracy skills due to engaging lessons that present mathematical concepts through practical activity and games. Staff are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic. As a result, pupils develop resilience when covering new topics through the effective and sensitive support offered by teachers. They demonstrate evident enjoyment when using and applying mathematical understanding in activities across different curriculum areas, such as analysing data in science or making graphs of comparative temperatures in geography. Pupils with SEND make good progress overall, due to the focused intervention by specialist staff in one to one or small group sessions. Pupils enjoy setting and solving problems for themselves, such as converting test scores to percentages and, in most lessons, planning includes additional challenge for the most able. In Year 8, pupils display excellent mathematics skills through extension work that includes scholarship examination questions. In a very small minority of lessons, pupils' progress is slower when expectations are unclear and activities presented in a less engaging manner, resulting in a lower volume of work being completed.
- 3.9 Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in the use of ICT to support their learning. Younger pupils make extensive use of ICT to complete classroom and homework tasks using a range of word-processing and presentation software. Older pupils continue to use a range of technology and software packages across the curriculum with increasing confidence. This is due to the structured ICT programme that allows skills to develop organically as pupils complete meaningful projects. For example, Year 7 pupils use design software to programme a laser cutter when making a clock in DT, while in Year 8, pupils create animated videos of the parable of the paralysed man in religious studies. Pupils' ICT skills are further enhanced through an introduction to computer coding that begins in Year 3. Pupils have successfully designed web pages, apps and computer games using the knowledge they have acquired. Pupils with SEND and/or EAL say ICT is extremely helpful in lessons as information is often easier to understand when presented visually on a computer or interactive whiteboard. All pupils, including boarders, make extensive use of technology for research outside lessons.
- 3.10 Pupils have highly developed study skills and can analyse data and material confidently across different curriculum areas because of well-established classroom management and routines, challenging questions and a positive and highly supportive learning environment. There are many opportunities for higher order thinking and pupils are challenged through open-ended questioning in many of their lessons. Pupils evaluate and reflect upon information provided to predict outcomes and solve complex problems. For example, in a Year 8 chemistry lesson, pupils arranged models of atoms to deduce which atoms fit together and why, while younger pupils predicted the outcome of experiments involving salt solutions. Pupils understand how feedback from teachers helps to support their learning and recognise the benefit of finding out answers for themselves. They know that learning happens in many ways and understand that they can apply different methods to various challenges that they face. Boarders learn to effectively manage their independent study time without the direct influence of parents. They show self-reliance in their approach to learning by taking it upon themselves to email staff when they find parts of their homework challenging.
- 3.11 Pupils display a rich and diverse range of academic and extra-curricular success. Senior pupils relish the challenge of working towards scholarships for the next steps of their education and many achieve success and recognition with these. Pupils make the most of the many opportunities for them to excel in different areas of the school: the senior boys' hockey team are national schools champions; a senior pupil was recently awarded BBC Chorister of the Year; the different choirs and musical groups perform in a range of prestigious arenas; and pupils have achieved considerable success in design technology, art drama and music. Pupils confidently discuss how many pupils achieve different types of scholarships across the school in music, sport, drama and academic areas. Pupils enthusiastically share successes achieved both in and out of school and personal achievement is recognised and celebrated on a regular basis, culminating in an end of year extravaganza which includes musical, drama, dance and gymnastics displays. Boarders develop high standards in musical performance through access to musical instruments within the boarding house and dedicated practice time for their chosen musical instruments.

- 3.12 Pupils throughout the school, including those with SEND and/or EAL, have an extremely positive attitude to learning instilled through high expectations and a supportive environment that recognises and celebrates effort as well as success. This is evident in the wide range of awards and commendations presented in assembly. Pupils are frequently encouraged to work independently: a key aspect of the school's ethos. Pupils demonstrate a highly focused and enthusiastic approach towards their learning. They are eager to start activities and demonstrate a strong sense of achievement and pride owing to well-planned lessons, a happy, positive learning environment and a wide range of resources used effectively to support pupils' progress. They listen attentively and participate fully, particularly when lessons are engaging and delivered at an appropriate pace. Pupils with SEND, actively seek out support from the learning support team when they find a particular area of study challenging. Pupils commented on how supportive the teacher was in helping to plan an English essay on persuasive writing. Relationships between pupils are a strength and they enjoy working collaboratively. In chemistry, pupils show respect towards each other's ideas as they construct models of atoms and discuss the reasons for the elements they have chosen. In art, pupils in all year groups respond positively to constructive feedback enabling them to identify areas of development and set personal targets. Pupils value the time they are given in most lessons for self-assessment and evaluation of what they have learnt. Pupils also say that the verbal and written feedback they receive provides them with clear guidance on what they need to do to make further progress.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils are very self-aware and exhibit high levels of self-discipline, resilience and self-confidence due to the supportive atmosphere throughout the school; this is based on mutual respect, where questions are valued, and learning is encouraged. Pupils have a highly developed understanding of their own strengths and capabilities as time is set aside in most lessons to evaluate what has been learnt. Boarders take responsibility for their own behaviour and, when this has been negative, reflect on events with house parents to identify ways of avoiding similar situations in the future. In the questionnaires, a small minority of boarders did not agree that boarding makes them more independent, but almost all pupils agreed that they are encouraged to think and learn for themselves. In conversation with inspectors, boarders expressed pride in making their own beds and being responsible for their shared living areas. Parents also agreed almost unanimously that pupils are helped to become confident and independent.
- 3.15 Pupils are confident in their approach to making decisions about both their academic studies and their wider contributions to school life. Pupils enjoy the sense of duty when making informed decisions about the direction the school can take through their representation on the school council and house forum. Senior pupils put themselves forward to become ambassadors where they make decisions helping with the younger members of the school. Pupils make sound decisions about their conduct and behaviour through personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), assemblies and guidance from staff when making decisions about their own behaviour. Pupils are given some guidance on careers and decisions relating to their choice of subjects, but in their responses to the questionnaire a small minority said this was not always helpful and did not prepare them fully for senior school. Inspectors found that adequate guidance is given in advance of the transition to senior school, with teachers providing an overview of what to expect if pupils chose to continue studying particular subjects. They have a profound understanding of what is needed to ensure personal success and are encouraged to do so through opportunities to reflect on their own learning.

- 3.16 Pupils exhibit a well-developed spiritual understanding, based on the school's strong Christian ethos and expressed through a deep appreciation for the non-material and spiritual aspects of life. Frequently this is through drama, music and art with which pupils engage daily. The quality of pupils' creativity and self-expression is evident in the highly proficient art work that adorns the walls, the uplifting musical performances of the various choirs and the polished dramatic presentations staged throughout the year. Pupils value the many opportunities they have to engage with the natural world, through gardening club or lessons in the woodland area. In conversation, pupils expressed appreciation at being able to go to the library at break times where it was 'nice and peaceful'. Pupils strongly appreciate the spiritual aspects of life, such as taking part in the school's weekly worship in the chapel or reflecting on the needs of others during assemblies. Music scholars regularly play, to a very high standard, as others arrive for assembly providing a meditative atmosphere for the school community to reflect on the day ahead. Boarders take time to consider their own spiritual understanding as they reflect upon the Bible verse of the week and regular prayer times held in each boarding house. Choristers are inspired by the magnificent surroundings of Tewkesbury Abbey, in which they sing four times a week.
- 3.17 Pupils have a well-developed sense of moral understanding and usually act in the correct manner; the school provides a clear moral code which is modelled by teachers and encouraged throughout the school. Pupils explain why they should always be honest and understand that actions have cause and effect. They invariably exhibit politeness and courtesy towards others in lessons and when moving around the school. They understand and respect the school rules and the expectations for good behaviour. In the questionnaires, almost all parents and pupils agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviours. Pupils make thoughtful contributions to class discussions on a wide range of moral and ethical issues. They express their views confidently and listen respectfully to the views of others.
- 3.18 Throughout the school, pupils' social development and collaboration are highly developed. Pupils work together confidently and enthusiastically to solve problems, in a spirit of mutual support; this is encouraged by teachers who give clear guidelines and regular reminders on how to work together most effectively. For example, pupils work collaboratively and with full engagement in religious studies to create a script for a courtroom drama showing the pros and cons of capital punishment. Younger pupils display great consideration for each other when putting groups together for activities in the woodland area. They discussed the makeup of each group sensibly and helped those pupils who did not have a group. Pupils find it rewarding performing musical events to local care homes. They enjoy working together to help produce different musical arrangements. Boarders express their enjoyment of boarding with a key factor being the importance placed on being surrounded by friends. Pupils look forward with great anticipation to 'headmaster's snacks' to which every pupil is invited, in small groups, providing an opportunity for all members of the school community to get to know the head and vice versa.
- 3.19 Pupils have a great sense of belonging to the school community and actively involve themselves in its life. They warmly celebrate those who are rewarded for exceptional achievements in curriculum and co-curriculum activities, or for embodying the school's ethos. In lessons, pupils spontaneously offer help and support to others, as was seen in a Year 6 music class when a pupil helped others to access an online form for evaluating musical compositions. Being part of the school council allows pupils to contribute ideas for how the school can be developed, such as a recent discussion on the positioning of a friendship bench. Senior pupils speak confidently about the warm relationships they have with the younger pupils, and they particularly enjoy break duties and helping coach junior pupils in sport. Pupils take responsibility for the school environment by picking up (and not dropping) litter. Pupils making a tangible contribution to the local community: they sing in retirement homes, and understand the importance of service when engaging in fundraising for local, national and international charities. They particularly enjoy the annual charity fair where each class raises money for a charity they have chosen. Boarders appreciate the responsibility they are given when heading into town for outings. Senior boarders put themselves forward for positions of responsibility as Ambassadors.

- 3.20 Pupils show a well-developed sense of appreciation of cultural diversity combined with a deep respect for others' values and beliefs, personifying the school's ethos of respect, inclusion, and tolerance for others. They recognise the benefit that comes from the richly diverse community within the school. This is further supported through the many opportunities pupils have to explore and discuss values and traditions from cultures different from their own. Boarders gain an understanding of other cultures through theme nights such as a recent Brazilian night where children performed in a Samba band and sampled food from Brazil. Pupils develop an understanding of what it's like to be different, to not 'judge a book by its cover'; they identified examples in history, where people have been judged to be different and the consequences that have followed. For example, pupils demonstrated great maturity and sensitivity during a discussion on the Holocaust in a Year 6 religious studies lesson. Pupils have a well-informed understanding of current affairs due to sensitive and meaningful discussions about news stories from around the world, often with a focus on those who have suffered loss and hardship. Pupils get on well, developing positive relationships, including between day pupils and boarders.
- 3.21 Pupils pursue a highly active lifestyle and have an excellent understanding of what it takes to be physically safe and healthy, because of their participation in the wide range of extra-curricular activities and their enjoyment of the varied, healthy menu choices available to them, which include fruit. They show very positive attitudes towards developing personal fitness through a comprehensive physical education and games programme that ensures all pupils have regular access to fresh air and exercise. Senior boarders said they enjoyed taking on a cycling challenge within the boarding house, and many participate in morning fitness classes. Pupils are very knowledgeable about healthy eating as they learn about nutrition, a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle in science lessons and PSHCE. Boarders have contributed effectively to the house forum, looking at healthy alternatives to snacks and packed lunches. Pupils show a clear understanding of the reasons behind safety rules in areas such as the laboratories and swimming pool, and when crossing roads. Pupils recently looked at the harmful effects of smoking and developed strategies to avoid being led by peer pressure. They understand the importance of staying safe online, and boarders appreciate the value of having time away from technology with on 'no tech Tuesdays'.

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, the chair of trustees and a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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 Chris Manville	Reporting inspector
Mrs Samantha Ransom	Compliance team inspector (Assistant bursar, IAPS school)
Mrs Sarah Knollys	Team inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mrs Caroline Tucker	Team inspector (Induction tutor and inspection manager, IAPS school)
Mr Jason Hyatt	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, IAPS school)