Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

John Lyon School

26 to 28 November 2019
# Contents

**School's Details**

1. **Background Information**
   - About the school
   - What the school seeks to do
   - About the pupils

2. **Regulatory Compliance Inspection**
   - Preface
   - Key findings
   - PART 1 – Quality of education provided
   - PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
   - PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils
   - PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors
   - PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools
   - PART 6 – Provision of information
   - PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled
   - PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

3. **Educational Quality Inspection**
   - Preface
   - Key findings
   - Recommendations
   - The quality of the pupils’ academic and other achievements
   - The quality of the pupils’ personal development

4. **Inspection Evidence**
### School’s Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>John Lyon School</th>
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<td>Address</td>
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<td>Middle Road</td>
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<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>Miss Katherine Haynes</td>
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<td>Chair of governors</td>
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<tr>
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1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 John Lyon School is an independent day school for pupils aged between 11 and 18 years. It is registered as a single-sex school for male pupils. The school is part of a Royal Charter Corporation, which is a charitable trust. It is overseen by a board of governors who have delegated powers from the Foundation.

1.2 The school was founded in 1876 by the governors of John Lyon’s Foundation. It retains close links to Harrow School, also part of the Foundation, but operates as a separate entity. The school is divided into the main school for pupils aged 11 to 16 and the sixth form for pupils aged 16 to 18. Since the previous inspection, whole-school dining has been introduced, as have hockey, a new timetable structure with an extended curriculum and co-curriculum, and a new pupil passport system.

What the school seeks to do

1.3 The school aims to: provide an excellent all-round education, combining high academic standards with excellence in sport and the arts; to treat every boy as an individual; to provide outstanding pastoral care; and to offer a broad range of opportunities outside the classroom.

About the pupils

1.4 Many pupils come from the boroughs of Harrow, Hillingdon, Ealing and Brent, drawn from professional households, and represent the cultural diversity of the area. Nationally standardised test data indicate that the ability profile of the school is above average and average in the sixth form.

1.5 The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is 34, all of whom receive additional support and one pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Five pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and receive support for their English. The school runs an inclusive excellence programme which includes provision for the most able and talented pupils.
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.

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 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. 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. 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.
Key findings

2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 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 2016 to 2018, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools.

2.3 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2016 to 2018 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.

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 variously 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. 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 superb results in sports, performing and creative arts.
  - Pupils demonstrate very high levels of competence in communication.
  - Pupils have outstanding levels of competency in information and communication technology (ICT) and its application to other areas of learning.
  - Older pupils have extremely well-developed attitudes towards their learning, demonstrating leadership, initiative and independence.

3.2 The quality of the pupils’ personal development is excellent.
  - Pupils demonstrate very high levels of respect for, and appreciation of, their cultural diversity, showing sensitivity and tolerance to those of different backgrounds and traditions.
  - Pupils make excellent contributions to the school and community, fulfilling their roles and responsibilities to an inspiring level.
  - Pupils are very socially aware and so are able to work highly effectively with others.

Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school is asked to consider:
  - ensuring the highest level of pupils’ achievement in every lesson by bringing the standard of all teaching up to that of the very best.

The quality of the pupils’ academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of the pupils’ academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2016 to 2018. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. At GCSE, results have been well above the national average for maintained schools with almost two thirds of pupils achieving A* or A grades or their equivalent. At A level, three-fifths gained grades A*, A or B. Results in 2019 suggest that these levels of attainment have been maintained. Evidence from lesson observations, interviews with pupils, work scrutiny and standardised measures of progress show that pupils make excellent progress over time. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), those with English as an additional language (EAL) and the most able.

3.6 The overall quality of pupils’ knowledge, skills and understanding is excellent. Pupils write highly effective, analytical essays that demonstrate strong linguistic skills and sophisticated interpretations of challenging texts. In a lower school English lesson, for example, pupils wrote well-structured and clearly expressed explorations of Othello’s character, demonstrating sophisticated analytical and interpretational skills. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge to excellent effect across a number of subjects, most notably in the sciences, but also subjects such as economics and geography. In a lower-sixth chemistry lesson, for example, pupils used their knowledge of percentages and their graph-drawing skills to find solutions to problems involving rates of reaction in a very effective and accurate manner. In a GCSE chemistry lesson, the more able pupils confidently applied previously taught material to use a burette to perform a titration. In many lessons, pupils make excellent progress in developing their knowledge and understanding because teachers use clear and probing questions which elicit clarity and consolidation. For example, in a sixth-form history lesson, effective questioning was used to help pupils make links between Catholicism and communism. In a sixth-form business studies lesson, probing questions helped pupils to reflect with insight on the impact of large...
companies on humans and the environment through their understanding of Elkington’s triple bottom line data. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils did not agree that most lessons have interesting activities or used the time well. In a few lessons, the inspection found that pupils do not develop their knowledge, skills and understanding as well as in other lessons because the teaching does not always set a high enough level of challenge or fails to manage pupils’ behaviour effectively.

3.7 The overall quality of pupils’ communication skills is excellent. Pupils speak highly efficiently and effectively about complex subjects, articulate opinions confidently in group discussions and respond well to their peers’ contributions. In an A-level history lesson, for example, pupils listened respectfully as others presented their responses clearly and persuasively. Pupils develop excellent debating and public speaking skills. Members of the debating club have achieved considerable success in national competitions and pupils gave outstanding presentations at the school’s inaugural TEDx event. Pupils show a strong aptitude for reading and write effectively for a wide range of purposes. Articles written and edited by pupils for school publications are of an extremely high standard such as in their reporting of their involvement in reading and discussing the books shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal.

3.8 Pupils demonstrate an excellent grasp of numeracy as they confidently apply their numerical knowledge in mathematics and in other subjects. They use and manipulate formulae with ease. In a GCSE chemistry lesson, for example, pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of Avogadro’s Law as they rearranged equations and formulae with precision. Pupils are skilled at realising how basic arithmetic operations are fundamental to a range of higher-order concepts and take great care to ensure accuracy. Pupils in a mathematics lesson in Year 7, for example, demonstrated using multiplication, division and prime numbers to find highest common factors with skill and determination. Older pupils are highly skilled at analysing and manipulating data. For example, sixth-form physicists very competently analysed data from a swinging pendulum to determine which variables affected the period of the motion and knowledgeably discussed the correlations. Pupils not only achieve excellent results in public examinations but also achieve success in national competitions, frequently qualifying for subsequent higher rounds of competitions, as a result of a culture where mathematical prowess is celebrated and revered.

3.9 Older pupils develop excellent ICT skills and apply these expertly across the curriculum. Pupils in the sixth form, for example, used extremely well-developed skills in order to research and develop ideas in a business studies lesson, seamlessly interspersing their own research with teacher-provided documents. In a science lesson in Year 9, pupils very keenly participated and demonstrated their understanding of standard form through the use of software which encouraged competition. Pupils enthusiastically attended, and demonstrated competence in, the pupil-led lunchtime virtual reality club. School leaders, working closely with the governing body, have promoted pupils’ learning in this area by successfully implementing a ‘bring your own device’ policy with an ambitious range of subject-specific software which allows pupils to take increasing ownership and responsibility for their own learning. In a very few lessons, connectivity obstructed pupils’ efforts to use ICT, preventing the effective and efficient use of class time.

3.10 Pupils display very good study skills. They are taught and practise study skills through subject-specific activities, the extended project qualification (EPQ) and presentations from external organisations. Sixth-form pupils describe how completing their EPQ helped to hone their skills. They demonstrate a very good ability to hypothesise. For example, in psychology pupils discussed very skilfully the differences between different types of hypotheses giving clear and detailed examples. Older pupils show excellent independent learning and research skills. Sixth-form economics pupils maturely and confidently discussed and assessed the reliability and accuracy of newspaper articles on the current economy as well as demonstrated excellent skills of reflection and evaluation about the implications of government decisions. Pupils understand how to use their notes and other resources to promote their own revision; for example, in mathematics they make excellent use of self-devised flashcards to create a bank of questions from which to test themselves. The overwhelming majority of pupils who
responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teachers help them if they have problems with their work.

3.11 The overall quality of pupils’ academic and other achievements is very good as a result of leadership and management promoting very effectively the school’s aim to combine high academic standards with excellence in sport and the arts. Many pupils excel in regional and national competitions, such as exhibiting art work in a national gallery, choral scholarships with a prestigious choir and subject olympiads. Pupils realise highly accomplished artwork which is displayed around the school and are highly successful in the vast number of opportunities in music or drama. Pupils also achieve highly in sport as a result of the school’s ‘Sport for All’ philosophy, promoting participation and increasing access. School teams have regular success in local and county competitions, and a good number of pupils play at regional and county level. Several pupils have been selected for elite training or professional academies.

3.12 Pupils show extremely positive attitudes to learning, especially in the older year groups. Where the teaching involves high expectations, well-planned lessons and stimulating material, pupils engage fully with tasks and activities, maintaining their focus. Pupils participate eagerly, work collaboratively, debate, discuss and support each other. In modern foreign language lessons, all pupils show a keenness to practise their speaking skills, as a result of positive reinforcement and modelling of the target language. They show initiative and independence when completing demanding tasks in which they take leadership of their learning. In art, sixth-form pupils take insightful and highly personal approaches to creative projects, producing wonderfully well-developed and expertly realised portfolios. Pupils recognise the value of cooperation and sensitively take on board the views of others. For example, in a sixth-form physics lesson, pupils discussed the ramifications of a previous piece of work without the intervention of a teacher, reaching conclusions collectively. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils stated the school encourages them to think and learn for themselves which matches the values of the school.

The quality of the pupils’ personal development

3.13 The quality of the pupils’ personal development is excellent.

3.14 All pupils demonstrate high levels of self-confidence, self-esteem and self-awareness. In conversations with inspectors, as well as in lessons and other activities, pupils reflect honestly and effectively on their experiences, demonstrating mature self-knowledge. Pupils confirmed that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do in order to reach their targets as a result of the quality and extent of written and oral feedback. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few parents felt the school does not provide their children with suitable advice about choices for careers. This was not corroborated by inspection evidence. Bespoke school events and careers guidance enable pupils to make informed choices. They speak knowledgeably about their plans for university or their choice of career pathway. Older pupils are self-disciplined and show a keen awareness of how to improve academically. They attend subject-specific clubs in order to enhance their outcomes, as well as a wide range of music, drama and sports clubs. This confirms leaders’ success in ensuring the aims and values of the school are embedded.

3.15 Pupils are acutely aware of the influence and impact which their attitudes to learning have upon their progress. In discussions with inspectors, they reflected honestly about their improved behaviour and how this had helped their academic outcomes improve. Pupils recognise and appreciate that staff have high expectations and allow them sufficient independence to develop self-control and self-motivation. In drama, pupils were allowed to make their own decisions about stagecraft when devising a scene and their selections of vocal techniques and use of transitions made the outcome of their performance more fluent and poignant. Pupils are allowed to make decisions about the level of difficulty they wish to attempt through differentiated lesson planning. For example, pupils in a Year 9 mathematics lesson on expanding brackets keenly attempted the more challenging problems.
3.16 Pupils show an excellent level of spiritual understanding and a high level of appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, benefiting greatly from an extensive series of guest speakers, pupil-led assemblies and house events. They demonstrate an excellent awareness of spirituality, for example when discussing the beginnings of life during a religious studies lesson in Year 9. They reflected very perceptively on issues associated with abortion, pro-life and pro-choice, whilst providing sound reasoning for their opinions. Life and death were also themes in a GCSE English lesson, where pupils maturely discussed stories of near-death experiences referring to a sense of peace and enlightenment. Pupils’ strong appreciation of the non-material aspects of life was evident when they discussed their awareness and pride in the school’s heritage, making reference to displays around the school and their own sense of privilege.

3.17 A very large majority of both pupils and parents feel that the school actively promotes good behaviour and pupils are well behaved, demonstrating a keen understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The robust behaviour, sanctions and rewards policy provides a clear set of expectations and its effectiveness is reflected in the low proportion of repeat offenders. A sanction is often followed by a conversation between staff and pupil which provides further guidance and support, as well as creating a sense of fairness. Pupils proudly spoke about their contribution to the school’s values, as evidenced in the anti-bullying policy which contains contributions from the student council. Pupils develop a strong understanding of, and respect for, systems of rules and laws through lessons and co-curricular activities such as pupil-led model united nations. In a Year 9 form time, pupils sensitively considered a day in the life of someone with learning difficulties and the morality of judging people by their appearance and how to treat others fairly.

3.18 Pupils demonstrate an excellent ability to work together. In lessons, pupils were observed working extremely effectively in small groups on a common task, using each other’s knowledge to improve outcomes. In a sixth-form geography lesson, pupils worked together to develop their understanding of the character of a place using evidence from a map and their wider geographical knowledge, each contributing in a very effective manner to increase the understanding of all. In art, one pupil’s individual work on Frida Kahlo was used as a catalyst to enhance understanding for all through shared ideas and alternative interpretations which were offered in a sensitive manner. The digital innovation room, designed by pupils, also saw them collaborate to successfully build a computer, whilst the combined cadet force and Duke of Edinburgh’s Award scheme provide excellent opportunities for pupils to work with others. The number of pupils successfully completing their awards and the high standard of sporting achievements also demonstrate that pupils are extremely effective when working within teams.

3.19 Pupils contribute to very good effect to the school and local community and have a significant impact on the wider community through the service aspect of the co-curricular programme. Pupils work in local primary schools, writing and teaching a classics course, teaching computer coding and phonics as well as assisting with a variety of sports and activities, which all contribute to the pupils’ well-developed sense of philanthropy. Music scholars have taken part in an orchestral mentor programme to work with primary school pupils to successfully stage a concert. Both older and younger pupils appreciate the benefit that subject-specific academic mentors bring to themselves in lessons and extra-curricular clubs. Pupils in Year 7 were overwhelmingly positive about the support provided by the senior prefects in the first few weeks of September. A small minority of parents in the questionnaire do not agree that the school listens to pupils; inspection evidence does not corroborate this. The student council plays an extremely effective role in galvanising student voice and stimulating action in order to effect change, both within and beyond the school community. A recent example is the development of the school’s recycling scheme. Many pupils develop a keen sense of altruism through the school’s focus on charity and the wealth of opportunities which enables many pupils to contribute very positively to the lives of others both at home and abroad. Many activities are pupil-led and include an annual coffee morning for charity, sending coats to Syria and donating to food banks. Pupils spoke about the value of other opportunities such as the international trip to Laos as part of the John Lyon Foundation.
3.20 The school community transcends cultural differences and exudes an ethos of inclusivity through natural acceptance. Pupils demonstrate high levels of sensitivity and tolerance to those from other backgrounds and traditions. In response to the questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils felt that the school encourages them to respect and tolerate other people, and comment that diversity is the essence of the school. They speak with pride about the annual diversity week which originated as a pupil-led initiative and recognise the school’s efforts at raising awareness by inviting different speakers and sixth-form pupils to share their cultures and experiences during assemblies and form periods. In a religious studies and philosophy lesson, pupils demonstrated an excellent awareness of different traditions and cultures and could apply this knowledge to how different cultures practise worship and interpret good and evil. Pupils in Year 9 reflected on how they can make a positive impact on their community, both in school and out, by treating people fairly and with respect. They spoke eloquently in a discussion about the importance of fairness and equality, demonstrating high levels of empathy when discussing learning difficulties.

3.21 Pupils have an excellent comprehension of how to stay safe. They understand personal security, recognising the school’s approach to developing a safe site. They spoke knowledgeably about online safety, appreciating their own role, and highlighted the school’s guidance via assemblies, tutor periods, external agencies and the annual safety week. Pupils are aware of the role of the school’s designated safeguarding lead and accurately describe what child protection entails. Pupils commented upon the value they place on the role of the pastoral team. In the questionnaire responses, a very small minority of pupils do not agree that the school encourages a healthy lifestyle. Discussions with pupils, however, indicate that they have an excellent awareness of making healthy choices at lunch, speaking confidently about the importance of a healthy diet and keeping fit. Pupils readily described the benefits of physical health and what the school does to encourage it. They highlighted the many opportunities to be active, explaining how physical fitness is both desirable and achievable, and praised the school’s efforts to signpost them to a range of ways to participate.
4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited 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

Mrs Louise Robinson Reporting inspector
Mrs Amy Fleming Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, ISA school)
Mr Andrew Holman Team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Nicholas Hopton Team inspector (Head of department, HMC school)
Mr Graham Yates Team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)