



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report
Pilgrims Pre-Preparatory School**

March 2023

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School's Details

School	Pilgrims Pre-Preparatory School			
DfE number	822/6010			
Early Years registration number	EY453343			
Registered charity number	1066861			
Address	Pilgrims Pre-Preparatory School Brickhill Drive Bedford Bedfordshire MK41 7QZ			
Telephone number	01234 369555			
Email address	enquiries@pilgrims-school.org.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Joanne Webster			
Chair of governors	Mrs Sarah Wheeler			
Proprietor	The Harpur Trust			
Age range	0 to 7 years			
Number of pupils on roll	329			
	EYFS	213	Main school	116
Inspection dates	21 to 23 March 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Pilgrims Pre-Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school and nursery. It is one of four schools within the Harpur Trust, the origins of which date back to 1556. The Trust has strategic responsibility for the school whilst the operational governance is delegated to the Pilgrims Pre-Preparatory school committee. The school comprises two sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which includes the registered EYFS setting, for children aged three months to four years, and the main school, for pupils aged five to seven years.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, additional teaching spaces have been developed and refurbishment of many areas has been undertaken.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to inspire its pupils to develop a love of learning, whilst engaging with the wider community and the world beyond. It seeks to stimulate enjoyment, imagination and creativity in every pupil, helping them to flourish and achieve their full potential. Underpinning the school's aims are the three values of curiosity, kindness and respect.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The majority of pupils come from professional families living in the local area. Nationally standardised assessment data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 31 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), all of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 11 pupils, none of whom require additional support for their English. The curriculum is modified for those pupils who are identified as being the most able in the school's population.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

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

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

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

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

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

- 3.1 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 3.2 Leaders use their experience and understanding of child development to implement an extremely well-structured curriculum that meets the relevant statutory requirements and the needs and interests of the children.
- 3.3 Leaders and staff monitor progress regularly. This ensures that all children, including those with SEND and additional needs make excellent progress relative to their starting points and are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 3.4 Due to the very high-quality care that the setting provides, the personal and emotional development of the children is excellent, and they consistently demonstrate that they feel safe, secure and happy. Relationships formed between the children and their key people are strong and positive.
- 3.5 Staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding and welfare requirements. They fulfil their responsibility to protect children in their care diligently.
- 3.6 Leaders and managers have an excellent knowledge of the EYFS learning requirements. There is highly reflective evidence of their strong commitment to continuous improvement through detailed, cohesive self-evaluation and a clear vision for the future. This ensures that all children receive the best possible support and care.

Quality of education

- 3.7 The quality of education is outstanding.
- 3.8 The curriculum, with its strong emphasis on a child-led, play-based approach is extremely well balanced. Staff knowledge of how children learn and develop ensures that children's progression in the areas of learning are secured.
- 3.9 The enthusiastic and highly skilled staff readily engage with children during routine activities and take every opportunity to develop communication and language skills. Children listen attentively to stories and join in enthusiastically with action songs, rhymes and ring games. Children consistently hear and repeat words and phrases modelled to them and successfully increase their vocabulary. They respond to questions and make their requests clear, as seen when a young child approached an adult with an electronic toy, saying 'on'.
- 3.10 At the end of the day, group time allows children to reflect on their day. Children use their developing vocabulary to review their experience with great confidence and enthusiasm. Skilful interactions from staff translate children's individual experiences into stories enjoyed by all.
- 3.11 Regular observations are recorded on each child's electronic learning journal and tracked against the expected levels of development for their age. These ensure that each child's progress is carefully monitored, and their needs are met effectively. These observations are shared with parents, who in turn are able to report their child's significant experiences and achievements at home, thereby actively contributing to the evaluation of children's progress.
- 3.12 The extremely well-designed setting provides all children with a wealth of opportunities to choose from high-quality resources and experiences, thereby consolidating and deepening their knowledge and skills. The natural environment of the setting affords an abundance of outdoor opportunities for children to explore, discover, and be curious. For instance, after observing frogspawn in the school pond, children were introduced to the life cycle of a frog learning new relevant vocabulary, thus allowing them to broaden their experience of the natural world.

- 3.13 Staff readily use praise and encouragement, and this helpful feedback enables children to gain the skills they need to learn. The stimulating experiences that the children receive provide them with a solid foundation on which their future learning can be built. All children from the earliest age, are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Behaviour and attitudes

- 3.14 Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
- 3.15 Children show much enjoyment in their learning and make excellent use of the available resources to explore and make choices. Open-ended resources encourage and foster exploration and investigation, enabling children to demonstrate characteristics of effective learning such as confidence and independence. For example, older children showed their problem-solving skills as they investigated cornflour and how they could transfer it into a container before it solidified. With sensitive support from an adult, they discovered this could be achieved by adding more water.
- 3.16 Children are active learners who show much enthusiasm to find out more and keep trying. They show great pleasure and excitement when they achieve something they set out to do. A younger child was observed persevering to climb into a rocking box, trying many different ways before eventually working out how to get both legs into the box at the same time.
- 3.17 Children act on their own ideas and show high levels of motivation and interest. For example, a group of older children found an injured worm on the hard surface outdoors. They decided to carefully take it back to the soil area in the garden, declaring that they were like doctors. They then went on to talk about the characteristics of the worm, whilst revisiting previous learning by recalling a song and poem about a worm.
- 3.18 Children demonstrate excellent behaviour and show respect for one another. They respond well to gentle reminders from staff about how to share resources and play co-operatively. The setting has a highly effective partnership with parents, which successfully promotes children's attendance. Suitable procedures are in place to investigate unexpected absences.

Personal development

- 3.19 The personal development of children is outstanding.
- 3.20 High-quality curriculum provision provides opportunities for children to develop confidence, resilience, and independence. Each key person's secure knowledge of their children's unique needs ensures positive relationships.
- 3.21 Extremely effective care practices support children's emotional security, so that children feel happy and safe. At sleep time children were observed being comforted by staff and gently rocked or stroked to sleep, ensuring they felt emotionally secure. Children engage confidently with visitors, sharing books and saying hello, thus showing how secure and confident they feel.
- 3.22 Excellent support from staff provides many opportunities for children to develop greater independence. At mealtimes, older children confidently use knives and forks, pour their own drinks and clear their plates. The youngest children ably feed themselves using spoons and forks and learn to wash their hands before eating. They take off their shoes and socks at sleep time and put on their boots for outdoor play.
- 3.23 Children are encouraged by staff to take risks and do adventurous things with confidence, such as balancing when walking independently across planks and crates and negotiating spaces when riding balance bikes and tricycles in the outdoor area.
- 3.24 Children are highly motivated to be physically active both inside and outdoors. All children have regular access to outside areas that are extremely well equipped to promote physical activity. Older children enjoy weekly swimming lessons. A healthy diet is provided each day. Children are provided

with high-quality cooked food, fresh drinking water and fruit. Staff ensure that food preferences and allergy needs are catered for appropriately.

- 3.25 Hygiene practices, which are followed by all staff ensure that the personal needs of the children at this age are met appropriately. Staff encourage children to understand the need for, and importance of handwashing before eating and support those unable to do it independently.
- 3.26 All staff give high priority to safeguarding and are fully aware of their responsibilities to ensure that they meet the requirements for safeguarding, welfare and learning and development.
- 3.27 Staff are highly effective in preparing children for life in modern Britain, including by enabling them to make decisions, such as choosing books to read and deciding what activity to explore. As they encourage them to share and take turns, children learn to respect and care for one another. Staff are excellent role models and consistently promote these values. The diversity of the community is valued, and cultural events are celebrated. British values of fairness, tolerance, and kindness towards one another underpin the setting.

Leadership and management

- 3.28 Leadership and management are outstanding.
- 3.29 Leaders' commitment to providing the highest level of care and education for all children ensures that each child accesses excellent learning opportunities and is extremely happy and well cared for. They successfully implement shared values, policy, and practice. Leaders and managers consistently monitor the standards of care and regularly scrutinise the curriculum to ensure that high standards are maintained. They have high expectations of what all children under two can achieve and support all children to achieve the best outcomes.
- 3.30 Staff are well qualified and are well supported by leaders and managers. They benefit from regular professional development meetings and annual appraisals and are able to discuss their own well-being and development. Professional development is highly effective, and this translates into improvements in the teaching of the curriculum. Training opportunities are provided for all staff, together with training for all compulsory requirements. This results in a positive impact on the care and outcomes for the children. However, opportunities for staff to share experience and best practice across rooms and age groups is limited.
- 3.31 Leaders know the children very well and respond quickly to the needs of all children, including those with SEND and additional needs. The setting has ready access to specialist support, both within the main school and from outside agencies. The setting has strong links with parents. Parents who spoke to the inspectors reported that they are extremely appreciative of the care their children receive and the information they are given.
- 3.32 Governance is strong and works closely with leadership and management. They offer effective support and guidance and are extremely well informed about the practice and standards of the setting.
- 3.33 Safeguarding and health and safety are given the highest priority, so that all children are kept safe. Statutory duties are fully met, including those set out in the Equality Act 2010, those linked to safer recruitment, and the duties in relation to the 'Prevent' strategy.
- 3.34 The recommendation from the previous inspection to extend the use of natural resources has been met.

Compliance with statutory requirements

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

Recommendation for further improvement

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

- Enable staff to share experience and best practice across rooms and age groups within the EYFS to further increase their skills, knowledge and understanding.

4. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

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

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

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

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

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Pre-School	Nursery

Key findings

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

- Pupils' achievement is excellent; they make rapid progress and achieve high levels of attainment for their age.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and thoroughly enjoy learning.
- Pupils develop excellent communication skills; they speak, read and write with fluency.
- Pupils achieve excellent levels of knowledge, skills and understanding, evident in high levels of success at the point of transfer to their next schools.

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

- Pupils develop strong self-esteem and self-confidence, with the resilience to see mistakes as a step to improve their learning.
- Pupils have a well-established sense of right and wrong, supported by a clear framework of school values.
- Pupils form strong relationships. They are caring, courteous and respectful of each other and all members of the school community.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of what they need to do in order to achieve a healthy body and mind.

Recommendation

4.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Strengthen pupils' ability to independently apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills more widely across the curriculum.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 4.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 4.5 Attainment of pupils across the school is excellent and represents successful fulfilment of the school's aim to inspire every pupil to develop a love of learning and achieve their full potential. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work confirmed that pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and the most able, make excellent progress over time. Collaborative planning and highly effective use of assessment data by leaders, enables activities to be put in place to support those who need it and to challenge those with particular skills and abilities. Pupils are academically well prepared for entry to their future schools with most gaining places at their first-choice independent school. Children in the EYFS make rapid progress from their different starting points so that all children, reach or exceed expected levels of development for their age. Older pupils continue to make rapid progress due to the high expectations of all staff. Pupils stated in discussion how positive their teachers are, giving them the confidence to learn and do well. This was confirmed by the small number of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire as all stated that their teachers help them learn. In addition, almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire said that teaching enabled their child to make progress.
- 4.6 Pupils have excellent communication skills. From the earliest years, children are highly articulate and demonstrate extremely well-developed listening skills. Nursery children successfully develop secure pre-reading and writing skills. This can be attributed to the sequential introduction of letters and sounds. This strong foundation continues in Reception where children confidently discuss and identify more complex letter blending and word structure and use these effectively to write independently, with the most able writing accurate sentences with full stops. Older pupils display excellent attitude to the written form, writing most skilfully for a variety of purposes. Year 2 successfully used the present progressive tense to write a speech, and through discussion they identified the importance of using imperative verbs when writing commands. Older pupils have acquired excellent comprehension skills. They are able to answer simple questions based on a text but also infer information from the author's choice of vocabulary. Pupils apply their communication skills effectively across a range of subjects because of a focus on the development of early reading, writing and speaking skills and the strong home-school partnership in this area.
- 4.7 Pupils of all ages and abilities demonstrate strong knowledge, skills and understanding and are highly effective at applying these skills across the curriculum. Nursery children were very proud of a long string of beads they joined to make a bridge, exhibiting excellent fine motor control. Pupils enjoy a thematic curriculum which links subjects together and stimulates imagination, and creativity. Year 2 pupils demonstrated strong creative skills, and excellent understanding of shape and colour when they created a space picture in the style of artist Peter Thorpe using the techniques of painting, marbling and drawing. During a music lesson, pupils showed swift understanding of different musical rhythms and beats. Books seen show advanced knowledge across the range of subjects. Typically, the quality of work is beyond that expected for the pupils' age. For instance, Year 1 topic books exhibit developed knowledge about historical figures such as Amelia Earhart and Year 2 applied geographical skills effectively when identifying facts about Paris, writing their answers in French, demonstrating strong linguistic skills. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the range of subjects is suitable for their child.
- 4.8 Pupils of all ages develop strong skills in numeracy. Throughout the EYFS, children are provided with firm foundations and confidently apply their skills in a variety of circumstances. During a woodland learning lesson younger children were able to use their subject knowledge of shape and space to arrange themselves quickly in a circle. Older pupils demonstrate excellent use of number, manipulating with confidence and accuracy when faced with challenge. The most able Year 2 pupils successfully calculated the amount of change they would get from 20 pounds, applying mental arithmetic skills well beyond those typical for their age. Other pupils successfully used a variety of strategies to achieve a similar goal. Year 1 pupils showed advanced mathematical knowledge and

understanding, in their work about subtraction, time and fractions. Pupils make rapid progress in their understanding as a result of practical activities combined with well-chosen resources and, in teachers' frequent use of praise. Governors have supported senior leaders' strong emphasis on problem-solving, repetition and deep learning, which ensures that all pupils meet their potential in this area.

- 4.9 Pupils demonstrate strong study skills for their age. Reception children showed developing skills of hypothesis such as making predictions about the number of objects in their jungle, before working out the most efficient way to count them. Older pupils make sensible predictions during science experiments and then test their hypotheses, such as seeing if an object sinks or floats. Pupils in Year 1 showed good analytical skills as they synthesised the information provided to retell the Easter story. During a Year 2 ICT lesson, pupils drew on a range of logical reasoning skills to understand the advantages and disadvantages of a game, challenging peers to improve on their design. The older pupils work collaboratively on half-termly problem-solving activities such as, 'designing and making a structure to get a train across a river', strengthening their study skills. Pupils' thinking skills are constantly encouraged by teachers' probing questioning and encouragement to challenge themselves.
- 4.10 Pupils achieve success in a range of academic and other achievements throughout their time at school, encouraged by the celebration of their successes through a plethora of different avenues. Pupils proudly display the stickers earned in the course of the day's lessons and enjoy helping to add up the house points they have contributed to the overall total. Given their age, their achievements are significant in the range of activities in which they participate. Many pupils take instrumental lessons, play in assemblies and perform in concerts for parents. Members of the choir spoke about how they enjoy performing, including on a much larger stage as part of the local 'Proms in the Park' event. Pupils develop excellent co-ordination in their physical education lessons and enjoy playing against other schools. Pupils' creative talents and expertise were evidenced through high-quality displays, including artwork on the theme of 'celebrations'. Pupils' non-academic achievements are supported and strengthened by the wide range of clubs and activities that leaders and staff provide. In the questionnaire, all parents felt the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities.
- 4.11 Pupils are competent users of ICT. Children begin to acquire skills in ICT in the EYFS, learning to use different programmes to present and interpret information and to write in code as they move throughout the school. Children in the EYFS can make accurate observations about how their programmable toy moves, depending on the instructions they give it when pressing buttons. In a Year 1 ICT lesson, pupils successfully produced an e-book, competently using previously learnt skills such as adding animations and sound. Pupils have a confident grasp of using ICT as a research tool and display strong word processing skills taught through their specialist lessons. However, pupils' ability to use and develop these and other computer skills independently in their learning across the curriculum is not as strongly developed, due to limited opportunities to do so.
- 4.12 Throughout the school pupils display positive attitudes and an enthusiasm for learning, as evidenced by their endeavours in lessons and activities observed during the inspection. The school is highly successful in encouraging pupils' innate curiosity and creating in them a genuine delight in learning. Pupils told inspectors that the best things about school are working hard and learning new things. Pupils are highly self-motivated and thrive on challenge. For example, in a Year 2 ICT lesson pupils gave astute feedback about how improvements could be made to their partners' games, always opting to make things more difficult, such as having fewer lives. Pupils of all ages often show initiative and independence as well as an excellent ability to work collaboratively. This was seen on many occasions such as when nursery children worked as a group to cross their play area on age-appropriate stilts. Committed staff continually reinforce a productive work ethic.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 4.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.14 Pupils have excellent levels of self-understanding which are consistently reinforced by the school's values and the high-quality pastoral provision. Pupils are unafraid to make mistakes, as a result of the 'can-do' approach to learning promoted by all staff. Pupils are able to recognise and talk about their emotions from an early stage, supported by strategies such as 'feeling flowers' and 'talk time'. For example, pupils in Year 2 were extremely confident to express themselves to others during a workshop building resilience, through, as they put it, displaying positive thoughts, doing positive things, and having positive conversations. Pupils explained to the inspectors that they feel confident in activities and are encouraged by a warm and friendly atmosphere to speak their mind freely. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that school helps their child to be confident and independent. Observations throughout the inspection support this view.
- 4.15 Despite their relatively young ages, pupils soon become adept decision-makers, understanding from an early stage that their actions have consequences. During a swimming lesson Reception children assessed potential risk at jumping in and swimming a length and sensibly chose appropriate aids to face this suitably challenging activity. Pupils learn to make informed choices both indoors and outdoors, exhibiting strong levels of independence and conscious that the choices they make will directly affect their success. This was seen by nursery children putting wellies on so that their feet did not get wet and Year 2 pupils following instructions carefully during a cookery session, producing wonderful Easter biscuits. Pupils understand that decisions are an opportunity to affect change. For example, they spoke enthusiastically about being a member of the school- and eco-councils and explained how these helped to make the school and in a small way the planet a better place. Pupils from a young age display keen understanding that choices in words directly affect their relationships with others. For instance, pupils were seen reflecting during 'talk-time' on how they feel when given, or giving, a compliment.
- 4.16 Pupils have an extremely positive outlook on life, developing a spiritual understanding and a strong appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. This is supported and underpinned by the school values of curiosity, kindness, and respect. Year 2 pupils who spoke to inspectors conveyed mature, reflective ideas about what is important to them in life, mentioning family, friends, and happiness. Pupils of all ages have a high regard for the benefits of the outdoors and the natural world. Many pupils demonstrate a clear appreciation of nature and articulated how being outside makes them feel relaxed and happy. Reception children coherently explained how they like to sit outside and listen to the birds, expressing amazement as to how frogspawn grows into a tadpole before becoming a frog. Older pupils have a strong understanding of spirituality and engage positively in discussions about some differences in a range of religions such as a star of David being an important symbol in Judaism and a cross in Christianity. Pupils develop an awareness and appreciation of different religions from an early stage as they explore special events and festivals celebrated by members of the local and wider community such as Chinese New Year, Harvest, Christmas and Diwali.
- 4.17 Pupils' social awareness is excellent, and this helps to create a harmonious and happy community. Pupils collaborate well in every aspect of school life, both in lessons and elsewhere. Reception children discussed the quickest ways to tidy up in swimming, taking turns to bring equipment to the side. They then congratulated each other for getting it done so quickly. Older pupils showed excellent awareness of the needs of their peers during breaktime, inviting others to share and join in a game they had created. In discussions it was clear that pupils are aware of being part of a big school team and they work effectively alone, in pairs and groups. They build high levels of trust and communicate effectively as seen in a Year 1 games lesson focusing on the cricket skills of throwing and catching. They worked collaboratively together to achieve success in a variety of challenges. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school equips their child with the team working and social skills they need in later life.

- 4.18 Pupils of all ages display excellent levels of courtesy and politeness to each other and to adults. They develop a keen sense of personal responsibility from the earlier stages. Reception children quietly and efficiently hung their own coats and bags in the correct place on arrival, entirely without prompting, so that not a single item remained on the floor. They spontaneously wished one another and adults good morning and asked how they were feeling. Pupils have a strong awareness of right and wrong. This was clearly seen by the 'tidy-up' inspectors in nursery, who ensure that peers are given honest feedback if things are not put away in their correct place. Pupils are clear that their positive behaviour can influence and affect others to act in the same way and understand the importance of saying sorry, and meaning it, if a mistake is made. Older pupils were quick to explain that they know how to behave well, because of the school values, which emphasise kindness, and because of the consistent use of behaviour management strategies by all adults, such as 'one, two, three, magic'.
- 4.19 The pupils take an active role in contributing to the lives of others within their community and beyond. Pupils variously undertake roles of increasing responsibility as they progress through the school and show a keen awareness of the needs of others. Younger children look forward to serving as line-leaders, door-holders and library monitors. The oldest pupils are excellent role models. Pupils through the school who demonstrate a keen interest and awareness of the environment put themselves forward to join the eco Committee as 'eco warriors'. These pupils champion the school's eco code to help ensure the school's continued Green Flag status, encouraging litter-picking, recycling and saving energy around school. Pupils explained how they work together to raise money for agreed charities. Furthermore, to help pupils understand the importance of charitable giving, this is often linked to a topic, such as Reception raising money for 'Teddies for Loving Care' for their topic 'Bear Necessities'. Pupils take seriously the opportunities they have to be involved in the local community. They understand how they can help improve the lives of others by their kindness, tolerance and respect as well as through practical actions such as charitable contributions. Members of the choir explain how proud they feel when they go to sing to the local elderly people. The school fully meets its aim to inspire pupils to engage with the wider community and the world beyond.
- 4.20 Pupils are entirely accepting of each other and know that they are all unique individuals with their own special abilities. Through thematic work, assemblies, and special days, such as celebrating different religious festivals, pupils grow in their understanding of living in one world and are proud that their friends come from a range of diverse cultures. Pupils exhibit outstanding appreciation of diversity for their age, understanding the unacceptability of unequal treatment based on race or gender. Pupils in Year 2 eagerly told inspectors excellent facts about significant figures such as Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King. They articulated with feeling the importance of rights and expressed passionately that all human beings should have the same rights. In discussions, pupils said that respect and kindness go hand in hand and were very accepting of those from diverse cultures and backgrounds and those with different views to their own. They said that if someone is unkind it causes hurt in your heart and that would not be acceptable at the school. In the questionnaire, the vast majority of parents felt the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. Inspection evidence support this view.
- 4.21 Pupils demonstrate high levels of understanding of the importance of being healthy in body, mind and spirit. They are able to express what makes them feel safe and compare what makes them feel happy and sad. Children in the EYFS explain why it is important to sleep and understand why they need to point scissors downwards when walking with them. Pupils explained the importance of choosing healthy snacks, taking regular exercise, drinking water, and avoiding known dangers, like crossing a road. While preparing for a cookery lesson, Year 2 pupils explained why it was important that they had all washed their hands with soap instead of just water, so that their food would remain hygienic and safe to eat. Pupils displayed a very clear understanding of what to do in case of a fire and are capable of identifying important ways of staying safe when online, including alerting a trusted adult should something appear that does not look right. The school has been successful at creating a culture of safety across all year groups.

5. Inspection Evidence

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

Inspectors

Mrs Ruth Loveman	Reporting inspector
Mr Richard Raistrick	Compliance team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mr Grant Whitaker	Team inspector (Former director of studies, IAPS school)
Mrs Valerie Holloway	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of nursery and kindergarten, IAPS school)
Miss Sally Donaldson	Team inspector for early years (Head of kindergarten, HMC school)