



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

## **Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports**

**Sompting Abbotts School**

**March 2019**



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### School's Details

<b>School</b>	Sompting Abbots School			
<b>DfE number</b>	938/6125			
<b>Address</b>	Sompting Abbots School Church Lane Sompting Lancing West Sussex BN15 0AZ			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01903 235 960			
<b>Email address</b>	office@somptingabbotts.com			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Stuart Douch			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mrs Patricia Sinclair			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 13			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	105			
	<b>Boys</b>	55	<b>Girls</b>	50
	<b>EYFS</b>	22	<b>Years 1-2</b>	18
	<b>Years 3-6</b>	49	<b>Years 7-8</b>	16
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12 to 14 March 2019			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Sompting Abbotts School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between 2 and 13 years. The school was founded in Brighton in 1875 and moved to its present site in Sompting in 1921. In the 1940s, the school was evacuated to Wales and the current proprietor's family re-established the school at Sompting Abbotts after the war. The school has been administered by three generations of the same family since 1946. Its members act as principal, bursar and executive director.
- 1.2 The early years and pre-prep classrooms are housed in the stable block and prep classes are accommodated in the main building.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide a comprehensive, fully rounded education developing the physical, moral, spiritual, creative and academic sides of pupils to produce confident, well-balanced individuals. The school's goals are: individual responsibility; reliability; self-discipline; care and consideration for others; and good manners within a strong moral framework based on Christian principles.

### About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds, and in many of the households both parents work. Most pupils live within a 15-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability profile of the pupils in the school is above average. The school has identified 39 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and other conditions, five of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil has an educational health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for one pupil, whose needs are supported in class by their teacher. Data used by the school have identified eight pupils as being more able and twelve as being talented in art, drama or sport. Their needs are met in class and through the provision of extra-curricular enrichment and extension activities.

## 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. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. 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](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

## Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy 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.
- 2.6 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils do not always pay regard to current statutory guidance. The school has not always ensured that, where applicable, checks of the barred list and for prohibition from teaching orders have been completed before staff commence work. In addition, the school has not always ensured that, where necessary, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate has been applied for before staff commence work. There is also no nominated safeguarding director, which, in conjunction with the absence of the requisite knowledge, skills and expertise amongst the directors, means that the directors are unable to fulfil their role of ensuring appropriate oversight and monitoring the implementation of safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.9 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9 to 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 but those in paragraph 7 [safeguarding] are not met.**

#### Action point 1

- the school must designate one of the directors to take a lead with regard to responsibility for safeguarding arrangements and ensure that they have the requisite knowledge, skills and expertise to undertake this role [paragraph 7(a) and (b)].

#### Action point 2

- the school must ensure that staff do not start work before the completion of checks against the lists of those barred from working with children, DBS certificate and prohibition from teaching orders, as required by statutory guidance [paragraph 7(a) and (b)].

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of the proprietor and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 All the required recruitment checks, including of enhanced criminal record certificates and medical fitness are not always carried out before staff commence work at the school.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 17, 19 and 21 are met but those in paragraph 18 [suitability of staff] are not met.**

### **Action point 3**

- **the school must ensure that all checks including of enhanced criminal record certificates and of medical fitness have been completed before staff commence work [paragraph 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(d) and 18(3)].**

## **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. Acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.14 Whilst the premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety, some security arrangements are inadequate.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation in paragraphs 23 – 24 and 26 – 29 are met but those in paragraph 25 are not met.**

### **Action point 4**

- **the school must ensure that all the requirements relating to the maintenance of premises and accommodation are met [paragraph 25].**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

- 2.16 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 pupils 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.
- 2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.18 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.

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

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.20 The proprietor does not ensure 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.

**2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.**

### **Action point 5**

- **the school must ensure that 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 [paragraphs 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].**



### 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. 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-Prep 1	Nursery
Pre-Prep 2	Reception
Pre-Prep 3	Year 1
Pre-Prep 4	Year 2

## Key findings

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

- Pupils make good and sometimes excellent progress in their learning, although systems for gathering and monitoring assessment data are not yet fully developed.
- Pupils are excited about learning and demonstrate good study skills which they apply with success across the curriculum.
- Pupils' communication skills, both verbal and in writing, are excellent, and they are proud of their ability to listen and its positive impact on their work.
- Throughout the school, pupils collaborate effectively and enthusiastically in the classroom, in team work and on projects.

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

- The pupils are happy, keen to try hard and resilient in facing set-backs.
- Pupils' personal development is enhanced by their belief that the school helps them to become the best version of themselves that they can be.
- Pupils begin to develop independent working skills in the Nursery; these develop throughout their time in the school, resulting in highly self-motivated individuals by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils readily articulate the importance of treating everyone with respect and actively demonstrate this in school.

## Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Build on good practice in the pre-prep to ensure that more effective use is made of the school's assessment framework to track and further improve individual pupil performance across the school.
- Further improve pupils' academic outcomes by ensuring strategic responsibility is assigned for co-ordinating teaching and learning, including provision for pupils with SEND.

## The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 Pupils throughout the school make good and sometimes excellent progress in their education. Most children reach the expected level of development at the end of the EYFS and a few exceed it. This good progress is facilitated by staff monitoring progress and adapting provision, by building on children's individual interests to encourage them to try new activities; for example, creating work tables using favourite animals to stimulate participation and interest in a new area of learning. The school's own data for Years 1 to 8, including that from standardised tests in Years 1 to 6, indicates that attainment is above average in relation to national age-related expectations. This judgement is supported by inspection evidence from work scrutiny and lesson observations. Teachers' awareness of individual pupils' progress enables them to tailor teaching to their needs, especially in Years 7 and 8, where scholarship candidates make excellent progress from their starting points. Since strategic oversight of teaching and learning, including analysis of assessment data across the school, is inconsistent, the extent to which all pupils are achieving their full academic potential is not readily identifiable. The progress that all children with SEND make as they move through the school, and the impact of any interventions implemented in response to the identification of their needs, are similarly not easily discernible. A recommendation of the previous inspection to ensure that all leaders have sufficient time and training to carry out their responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation has been accomplished in the pre-prep and has begun to bear fruit in the prep. All the parents and pupils who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school enables pupils to learn and make good progress.
- 3.6 Pupils are excited by their learning as they develop skills across the curriculum and teachers successfully adapt their teaching to pupils' needs. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows tasks being completed at a brisk pace, and that pupils consistently consolidate their progress over time. Knowledge and skills in science are outstanding. For example, in science, pupils in Year 5 showed substantial knowledge of friction and were able to hypothesise that water resists objects and which modelling clay shapes might offer greater resistance; they then tested their hypotheses in an investigation. The considerable progress demonstrated in this lesson was built upon carefully crafted questions by the teacher, enabling pupils to work out for themselves what controls would be necessary for success. Across the school, pupils clearly articulate when they need further explanation, underpinned by a warm, supportive and nurturing classroom atmosphere. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate well-developed physical skills, such as in a tag rugby lesson where eager lower-school participants developed their skills in a purposeful way. Encouragement and effective teaching in music enabled pupils in Year 6 to sing a challenging song in Latin. Achievement in art throughout the school is noteworthy, and scholarship successes in Year 8 are promoted in earlier years, such as when pupils in Year 6 take inspiration from nature to *Weave the Downs*.
- 3.7 The pupils' excellent communication skills foster their self-assurance. All pupils who conversed with inspectors were open and self-assured, expressing their opinions in an articulate manner. This fluency is rooted in the trusting and secure relationships between staff and children in the pre-prep, enabling them to develop the confidence necessary for the development of communication skills. Systematic teaching of the principles of grammar in Years 3 to 6 enables pupils to write ably, showing high levels of literary articulacy and a firm grammatical foundation upon which to build their common entrance and scholarship work in later years. Creative written work throughout the school springs from carefully planned teaching that sparks pupils' imagination and interest. For example, pupils in Year 2 were inspired by a circus skills workshop to produce some exceptional writing, and those in Year 5 effectively developed and enthusiastically traded Shakespearean insults. Pupils proudly attribute their progress in all areas in part to their developing listening skills, which are fostered by staff explaining and modelling their importance. The pupils' conspicuous enjoyment of reading is promoted through initiatives, such as the use of older pupils as librarians and the development of an inviting reading area in the well-resourced library.

- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate good and sometimes excellent capability in numeracy. In the pre-prep, careful classroom management and thoughtful and focused open questioning enable children to develop progressive fluency with mathematical vocabulary. Children in Nursery develop confidence through focussed praise and incorporating favourite animals in counting games. The creative use of blocks and open challenges in a Year 2 mathematics lesson piqued the pupils' interest and enabled them to increase their understanding of statements for multiplication and division and to begin to understand the concept of remainders. Older pupils work well on problem-solving involving prime factors due to well-planned and adaptable teaching. They are also able to apply their mathematical skills in science, such as when thoughtful scaffolding by the teacher enabled them to draw bar graphs to show the speed at which sound passes through different materials. Thorough marking and consistent target-setting enable pupils to understand and work towards next steps. Younger pupils are encouraged in maths by maths prefects from Year 8, who teach maths to the whole school in assemblies and set weekly maths challenges with prizes.
- 3.9 Pupils develop competence in information and communication technology (ICT), which they are able to apply to other areas of learning. Children in pre-prep develop their hand-eye coordination and build knowledge, understanding and creativity by running remotely controlled cars around the classroom, building bridges for them and powering up depleted batteries. The use of voice controllers and tablet computers aids the children to learn both additional ways to communicate and how to take turns. In the prep, all pupils use laptop computers and office software and internet search engines to create documents such as French menus, Science Week posters and cross-curricular projects, as well as increasing their vocabulary through practice using internet resources. Pupils take pride in their ICT competency, citing their developing coding skills, their enjoyment of having to think through problems set and how happy and excited they are when creating cross-curricular projects combining English, personal, social and health education (PSHE), mathematics and history.
- 3.10 By the time pupils are in Years 7 and 8, they have developed highly effective study skills. Pre-prep pupils build these skills in mathematics lessons, which call on them to analyse and hypothesise. Pupils develop creative and open mindsets through learning that divergent problems may be solved in multiple ways. Resilience in continuing to work through tasks found difficult is built up through an accepting and open class atmosphere. In French, older pupils demonstrate keen analytical and hypothesising skills in their approach to comprehending unseen texts. The quality of the pupils' independent projects in geography and science is high, showing their strong awareness of how to use multiple sources in determining appropriate content. Pupils' work in science demonstrates that they are familiar with, and able to form and test predictions. Pupils in Year 8 created striking mind maps to assist with revision of Thomas Beckett, with high quality examples on display for all to learn from.
- 3.11 Pupils achieve well in both academic and other pursuits. Senior pupils successfully gain places at a range of senior schools and some are awarded scholarships. Pupils enjoy participating successfully in team games, and especially thrive on the many and varied drama and performance opportunities offered to them in school. Pupils in Year 6 have regularly won a science challenge organised by a local senior school and several pupils in Year 8 have gained gold certificates in the United Kingdom Mathematics Challenge. The netball team, which is made up of players of varying aptitudes, has enjoyed success at a local prep school tournament. These successes are promoted and enabled by factors including the wide range of clubs available to pupils, extra tuition provided to scholars by staff and the development of decision-making skills through the school as the children and pupils take on increasing levels of responsibility from Nursery upwards. This is highly successful throughout the school, a particularly noteworthy example being Year 7's idea to build a bench in the woods out of discarded plastic bottles filled with waste plastic, managing the entire project themselves.

- 3.12 Pupils' excellent attitudes towards learning, fostered by the emphasis placed on them by the school's leadership, make a strong contribution to their achievements. All pupils spoken with were very happy to be in school; they were aware that this stemmed from the positive environment within the school, which fosters quiet confidence and pride. Within lessons, pupils focus on success through achieving their learning goals, assisted in this by positive and supportive teaching and carefully differentiated work to maintain pupil motivation. In the pre-prep, this is facilitated by gentle but clear reminders of behavioural expectations and provision of tasks sufficiently interesting to maintain focus and attention by all pupils most of the time. Successful collaboration in some lessons rests on carefully planned work enabling success whilst allowing pupils time and space to work together to achieve this. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to give of their best to produce work of a high standard, confident that this will be acknowledged by teachers.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils' self-discipline increases as they move through the school, since they are encouraged as they grow older to take greater responsibility for ensuring they arrive at each lesson appropriately prepared. This process begins in the EYFS, where children learn to come into class alone, enabled by a warm classroom atmosphere created by teachers that gives children the confidence to leave their parents at the door. Pupils demonstrate an increasingly mature ability to consider and understand when and how best to act in social situations and the parallel importance of self-respect and respect for others. Pupils' increasingly assured self-understanding develops in tandem with that of their social understanding, buoyed by self-esteem and resilience; these are fostered by the school's ethos and by the teachers, who utilise the challenges thrown up by the increasing responsibilities of school and community life as opportunities to increase self-knowledge. Pupils understand how to improve their learning from written and verbal feedback by teachers. They also comprehend how to recover from the inevitable failures that follow from working hard for a variety of goals: pupils clearly articulate their awareness that making a mistake in work does not matter, as long as they have tried. Their confidence stems from their awareness that all their teachers want to help them to achieve their best and are available when support is needed.
- 3.15 Pupils think for themselves both in lessons and about their behaviour as members of the wider school community. Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning and its outcomes by making appropriate decisions for themselves. When things go awry, pupils understand the need to take responsibility for their actions, apologise where necessary and work on rectifying any wrongs done. They appreciate the impact their words and actions have on others and that they can be used positively both to prevent damage and to heal. Their trusting relationships with staff enable the self-reflection and action necessary to create positive changes in behaviour whilst engendering greater respect and trust moving forward. Pupils are aware of the need to look at both sides of an argument before coming to a decision. This understanding stems from the school's teaching and encouragement. Pupils learn to be fair and grow in understanding of the effects of their actions and decisions through the provision by caring staff of circle time to discuss any issues.

- 3.16 Children in the EYFS are profoundly aware of the natural world growing and changing around them. Outdoors is seen as their world and the excellent opportunities offered by the extensive grounds and gardens mean that they can, for example, climb the apple tree every day, see it blossom and come into fruit, lose its leaves and then bud again, and they enjoy eating the apples in the autumn. The teachers share this appreciation of the natural world and build on it to enthuse the children, underpinning their growing appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Older pupils demonstrate an understanding of the need to recycle and to conserve the environment, as well as a sense of moral responsibility towards those less fortunate, talking sensitively about their needs. The leadership's emphasis on family, at home, in school and in the world, as well as individual teachers providing opportunities for the children to develop their understanding in assemblies and PSHE lessons, strongly supports pupils' spiritual development.
- 3.17 Pupils are scrupulously aware of right and wrong and can articulate why bullying and unkindness are unacceptable, explaining that both affect self-esteem and undermine everyone. They recognise that they have a responsibility to others in school and in the community. The school's atmosphere and the effective implementation of its behaviour policy encourage and develop this. When pupils infringe one of the rules regarding their behaviour towards others, they accept responsibility for their action, consider the impact it has had on other people and take what measures they can to right the situation, such as writing a letter of apology. This comprehension results from the school's pastoral system, which is devised to ensure that children feel safe, secure, supported and guided. Pupils understand that rules and laws are necessary and to be respected because of the role they play in ensuring that everyone is treated fairly, so that there is order rather than chaos in the school and society. The whole school approach to educating through assemblies and PSHE lessons is instrumental in the inculcation of this understanding.
- 3.18 Pupils are socially aware as they interact with others and move through the school buildings throughout the day, generally being polite, kind and thoughtful. They play table tennis together collaboratively before school, and assist each other and staff members by carrying books and bags and hold doors open for those passing through. At lunch, older pupils serve those in the lower years and designate differing members of their tables each day to clear plates and wipe the tables. The small size of the school and its caring, supportive character mean that all pupils are nurtured individually and this in turns enables them to become mindful of those around them. In the pre-prep, pupils collaboratively support and help each other formulate answers to questions, and older pupils collaborate on self-generated STEAM hydraulic projects, presenting an excellently executed hydraulically operated crane, bridge and hand to the rest of the school in assembly. Prompted by form teachers, classes work together to decide how to raise money for charities, and pupils prepare assemblies in groups about their school work or on issues about which they wish to raise awareness.
- 3.19 Pupils assume various positions of responsibility in school, ranging from children in Reception chosen as special helpers to hold the door open for the class, through pupils across the school being responsible for tidying their classrooms, older pupils taking younger ones to and from lunch, to subject prefects, house captains, head pupils, librarians and pupils in Year 8 reading on a weekly basis to those in Year 3. They welcome these opportunities to serve their community, setting an example and supporting one another as if they are family. Staff encourage an ambience in which pupils recognise the importance of serving their community. Pupils proudly raise funds for local and national charities and participate in community events, such as singing in a festival at Chichester Cathedral. The school educates the children to be responsible through taking and attending assemblies, and through its nurturing values, which are so actively promoted by leadership and embraced by staff, who are excellent role models. Older pupils volunteer that they are supportive of each other because they are aware that they are all preparing in different ways for entry to their next schools and they support each other on those journeys; this approach is inculcated in them by the teaching and behaviour of their teachers.

- 3.20 Pupils demonstrate that they understand that not everyone is the same and that difference is to be understood, embraced and celebrated; they are also aware of and reject prejudice and discrimination. Pupils are keen to volunteer to take assemblies about their different faiths and cultural backgrounds, as they are listened to respectfully and with interest. This attitude is fostered by the school through its celebration of different cultures from the earliest years. Every pupil feels valued, and this inclusivity encourages and promotes tolerance and respect for all, irrespective of background or culture; pupils comment on how teachers set the example in this regard. The classroom contracts, drawn up under the guidance of each form teacher, demonstrate understanding by all class members of the importance of behaving fairly and kindly towards everyone. All parents and pupils believe that the school treats pupils fairly, regardless of gender, faith, race or needs and that the school actively promotes respect and tolerance of other people.
- 3.21 Pupils are aware of the importance of eating healthily, getting regular exercise and enough sleep and the need for a work life balance, topics which are taught in science, physical education and PSHE lessons. They enjoy the school grounds as a place to let off steam or just to reflect on life, and talk of art as therapeutic, as well as a useful subject in its own right. Pupils speak of always having someone to go to in school if they are unhappy. The school takes great care of its pupils and encourages them to take time to reflect and to value themselves and one another. This outlook helps ensure children are safe and understand the need for balance in their lives. Pupils are confident that they know how to stay safe online. They express the opinion that online safety is not an issue in school at all; this is due to the school's implementation of its online safety policies and the teaching of cyber-safety in ICT lessons.

## 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 proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. 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

Ms Rhiannon Williams

Reporting inspector

Ms Saskia van Schalkwyk

Compliance team inspector (Deputy headmistress, IAPS school)

Ms Jacquelyn Pain

Team inspector (Former head, GSA school)