



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Papplewick School

March 2022

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School's Details

School	Papplewick School			
DfE number	868/6000			
Registered charity number	309087			
Address	Papplewick School Windsor Road Ascot Berkshire SL5 7LH			
Telephone number	01344 621488			
Email address	schoolsec@papplewick.org.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Tom Bunbury			
Chair of governors	Brigadier (Retired) Alwin Hutchinson			
Age range	6 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	209			
	Day pupils	119	Boarders	90
	6 – 11	134	11 – 13	75
Inspection dates	7 to 11 March 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Papplewick School is an independent day and boarding school. Founded in 1947, it now operates as a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. It is registered as a single sex school for male pupils. Boarding is optional for those in the lower years and compulsory from the summer term of Year 6.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection a new boarding house for Year 8 pupils has been built and other boarding areas refurbished. Designated areas for both learning support and English as an additional language (EAL) have been created.
- 1.3 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to offer an outstanding all-round education and enable its pupils to achieve their potential by ensuring they feel secure, confident and happy. It seeks to provide pupils with the broadest possible range of academic and extra-curricular experiences.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come from a range of professional and business families who mainly live in the surrounding area, with others coming from London and overseas. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that although there is a wide spread of abilities, the ability of pupils is above the national average overall. The school has identified 51 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 36 of whom receive additional support. No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 48 pupils for whom English is an additional language and, of these, 17 receive support in this regard. The school has identified 46 pupils as being the most able in the school's population and these pupils are provided with extension work as well as enrichment activities that are based upon identified interests and talents.

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, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. 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, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key 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.

[The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 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 in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. 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. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 are met.**

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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.

- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.15 A range of information is 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.16 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.19 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are met.**

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

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

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

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.

Key findings

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

- Pupils achieve high levels of success both academically and beyond the classroom.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils are confident, highly articulate communicators.

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

- Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-understanding and awareness which lead them to being confident and ambitious in their learning.
- Pupils have a highly well-developed sense of respect and value for all people, appreciating the value of positive relationships.
- Pupils have a strong understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.

Recommendations

3.3 The school should make the following improvement:

- Enable pupils to enhance their achievement by using ICT as an aid to learning across all areas of the curriculum.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 Pupils achieve high academic standards, reflecting the school's success in fulfilling its aims. The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests, but the available evidence shows attainment to be well above average in relation to national age-related expectations. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that teaching, including any online provision, enables their child to make progress. Pupils' high level of achievement and excellent progress are confirmed by evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of the school's assessment data. Pupils who are identified as being more able, or particularly talented, become scholars. By their final year, scholars are working to an extremely high level of attainment in a wide range of subjects, including art and music. School leavers succeed in achieving places at schools of their choice, with many achieving academic and other scholarships. Throughout the school, pupils with SEND achieve extremely well in relation to their starting points because their needs are identified accurately and planned interventions are implemented effectively. Pupils with EAL progress quickly in

using English confidently, responding positively to specialist support. All pupils benefit from the leadership's encouragement to work hard which contributes to their achievements.

- 3.6 Pupils develop excellent speaking, reading, writing and listening skills. Pupils' confidence and competence in public speaking is nurtured by the breadth of opportunities provided across the curriculum such as the many drama productions. Pupils are eager to contribute during lessons, for example, Year 2 pupils enthusiastically and skilfully expressed themselves in a French speaking game. Older pupils practising for a recitation competition performed their poems with passion and empathy. Pupils listen well to their teachers and to each other. For example, a Year 3 class was observed listening attentively and responding thoughtfully to *Newsround* in their morning form period. Pupils' reading and writing skills are highly developed. Pupils enjoy choosing books to read from the library and progress quickly using an accelerated reading programme. Pupils in a Year 7 English lesson showed excellent writing skills when recreating a photograph in words by adeptly applying ambitious vocabulary, including imagery and figurative language.
- 3.7 Pupils' development of numeracy is excellent. Pupils of all ages, needs and abilities enjoy working with mathematical ideas engendered by the enthusiasm and subject knowledge of their teachers. Year 2 pupils demonstrated excellent numerical fluency, identifying odd and even numbers in a doubling and halving challenge. Year 4 pupils worked effectively, applying their previous knowledge of shape and space to problem solve. Year 8 pupils demonstrated excellent knowledge and skills in manipulating number to solve complex algebraic equations and expressions. Work scrutiny showed that pupils use their numeracy skills well to enhance their learning in other subjects. For example, Year 4 used their measuring skills effectively when investigating shadows during a science project. Older pupils regularly achieve highly in national mathematical competitions.
- 3.8 Pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, skills, and understanding across a wide range of subjects, characterised by teaching which is well planned and carefully matched to pupils' needs. This was particularly evident in a Year 7 French lesson where pupils made rapid progress in elevating their letter writing skills using higher level vocabulary and a variety of tenses. In responding to the questionnaire, the vast majority of pupils agreed that their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons. In a Year 3 History lesson, pupils demonstrated high level skills, knowledge and understanding when using primary sources to explore the past. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding develop strongly across the curriculum. This is because in response to the recommendation from the previous inspection, senior leadership, governors and teachers have increased the effectiveness of the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- 3.9 Pupils have good information, communication and technology (ICT) skills. ICT skills are taught through well-planned, discrete lessons and a range of devices are used to build confidence. Year 6 pupils demonstrated good skills in formatting text boxes to create a newsheet. During a coding lesson, Year 8 pupils made good progress as they developed their skills using the hints and notes available to them. Evidence from lesson observations, work scrutiny as well as interviews with pupils and staff, confirm that the application of ICT is not used regularly as a tool across a range of subjects. Pupils interviewed said that the use of ICT in other subjects is limited. They feel confident about using technology in coding, using programmes such as word and excel, and within a few commercial programmes. When opportunities are taken to use technology in other subject areas, for example, in music technology or maths, pupils are stimulated in their learning, improving their subject specific skills. However, the use of ICT by pupils to enhance their learning was not evident in many subject areas and is underdeveloped as a learning tool.
- 3.10 Pupils have highly developed study skills relative to their ages. For example, Year 4 pupils used dictionaries effectively and efficiently to ensure accuracy in their written work. In a geography lesson, Year 6 pupils demonstrated well developed analytical and hypothesising skills when considering various ways in which to remove carbon dioxide from the air. In a theology, philosophy and religion (TPR) lesson, Year 7 pupils demonstrated excellent higher-order thinking skills when discussing the

arguments for the existence of God. This is because teaching uses well-chosen challenging tasks which encourage pupils to think for themselves.

- 3.11 Pupils are extremely successful in their achievements beyond the classroom, such as sports, art and music. At an individual level, pupils have played sport at county level and for highly competitive external clubs, including in football, swimming, athletics and cricket. Other pupils have featured in West End productions. School football teams achieve success in both regional and national competitions. In responding to the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents and pupils comment positively upon the range of activities available. Pupil discussions highlighted their appreciation and successes within the extensive and diverse programme of activities including bibliomaniacs, chess, herpetology, polo and kart club. Many pupils learn to play a musical instrument, attaining good grades in external music examinations. Pupils demonstrate excellent artistic skills applying them skilfully across a broad range of mediums and techniques.
- 3.12 Pupils talk enthusiastically about the school and display excellent attitudes to learning in line with the school aim of providing an atmosphere in which pupils feel secure and confident. Many pupils show good levels of independence in their learning. During a design and technology (DT) lesson, pupils in Year 6 worked well independently to design how a mobile phone may look and function in the future. In pupil discussions boarders expressed the view that the boarding experience enabled them to develop greater independence in their learning habits. Pupils were observed collaborating effectively in a Year 5 music lesson working ably together to play a piece of Latin music. In an art lesson, Year 8 pupils exemplified high levels of concentration and determination allowing them to make excellent progress in developing their brush technique while discovering the art of Chinese Dragon painting. Pupils are motivated to do their best for themselves and their teachers, responding well to the positive praise culture of the school which is promoted by the leadership and management team.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils of all ages demonstrate excellent self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors, showed a relaxed willingness to talk and expressed themselves in a very self-assured manner. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on their work and their books exhibit careful consideration and self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses and a determination to learn from their mistakes. Year 2 pupils demonstrated they are highly successful in achieving personal targets which are displayed in the classroom enabling them to take responsibility for their learning. Pupils' high levels of self-esteem and self-worth are nurtured through a well-structured personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum and a wide range of opportunities for them to perform and speak in public. For example, in drama productions and concerts and, as observed, by their willingness to contribute and express themselves confidently in class and whole school chapel. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. In interview pupils and a very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the boarding experience has supported their child's personal development, and this is borne out by inspection findings. Pupils' excellent outcomes in their personal development are attributed to the strength of the pastoral care system and the commitment from leadership and management and the staff team towards ensuring every pupil's well-being.
- 3.15 Pupils display strong decision-making skills. In interviews pupils said they appreciate the opportunities they have to make choices from the wide range of activities available, for example, to join choir or a music group or to learn new skills such as chess or origami. Year 8 music scholars used their decision-making skills considerably in deciding among themselves to share a dormitory so as not to disturb fellow boarders when rising early to practice. As pupils progress through the school, they take a more active role in how they respond to marking. They confidently identify their own learning targets, as observed in a French lesson where pupils were using teacher feedback to create their own list of objectives to improve their next piece of work. Pupils actively participate in school improvement

through the school council or as representatives on one of the many other committees in both day and boarding provision. These committees offer all pupils a forum to express their views and ideas and understand they can influence positive developments in school life. As a result, new recreational activities have been provided and socials with other schools have been increased.

- 3.16 Pupils develop excellent spiritual awareness and understanding of the world religions. They are supported in their spiritual development by a comprehensive and well-structured TPR and PSHE curricula and regular chapel services. Pupils' spiritual understanding and awareness is deepened by being able to contribute to, and take an active role in, leading these services through reading, leading prayers or contributing to worship through music. All pupils participate in the service respectfully, and pupils said they appreciate that they are free to join in or stay silent during the prayer according to their own beliefs. This respect for other faiths and cultures is a particularly strong feature of the school. Pupils apply their spiritual awareness and knowledge maturely and highly effectively when considering philosophical and ethical concepts, as was seen in Year 4 books, as they presented extremely thoughtful and appropriately balanced arguments to questions such as, *which is more important, being right or nice?* In Chapel, pupils were observed to be deeply moved by the contribution of the choir and musicians. Pupils commented that playing in music ensembles gives a real sense of joy because you are creating music with your friends.
- 3.17 Pupils are well-behaved and well-mannered towards other pupils and adults. Relationships between pupils of different ages are extremely good, as observed when they played happily and purposefully together at break time. An overwhelming majority of parents and pupils in responding to the questionnaire, agreed that the school actively promotes and expects good behaviour. Inspectors noted the proactive stance of the school's senior leaders and the staff in encouraging kindness at all times. During discussion, pupils demonstrated they have a strong understanding and acceptance of the school rules and the need to work within them. On the few occasions when they make the wrong decision, pupils reflect on their mistakes and learn from the event. Boarders benefit greatly from the warm family atmosphere in the boarding houses and appreciate the separate reward and sanctions system.
- 3.18 Pupils have excellent social awareness and collaboration skills. They interact well with their peers and adults alike and readily engage in conversation, for example, at lunch and with visitors. Pupils work well in collaboration with others in sport, music and in the classroom. Pupils in Year 6 were observed working productively together in designing an experiment to test acidity and alkalis. From the summer term all Year 6 pupils become boarders. Pupils are committed to helping each other. New boarders appreciated being allocated more experienced 'buddies' who steer them through the early days of their boarding life. Some senior pupils have specific roles of responsibility, for example, head boy, prefect, warden or verger. Pupil discussion showed they aspire to take on these responsibilities. They understand well that each position comes with responsibility to look after others and set an example, a role which they undertake seriously and effectively. Pupils make a good contribution to the local community and have a strong awareness of others less fortunate than themselves. For example, pupils initiate and organise charity events such as cake sales to raise money to benefit those who may have suffered from a natural disaster or to take part in the annual walk to raise money for chosen charities. Pupils in the choir, tour and perform successfully in various cathedrals, learning the value of their commitment and effort in contributing to the worship of others in the congregations.
- 3.19 Pupils have a strong understanding of cultural diversity and awareness of individual differences. They treat each other with kindness within a community that is calm and inclusive. Pupils mix happily and support each other regardless of their background, responding positively to the school's family atmosphere. In their questionnaire responses, the vast majority of parents and most pupils felt that the school encourages a culture of respect and tolerance and this is seen in practice. There is the time and space for those of all faiths to pray in accordance with their belief. Pupils discuss differences between their backgrounds warmly and respectfully. In discussion, pupils showed an excellent understanding of what diversity, inclusion and respect mean and were clear that there was no place

for racism or discrimination in their school. This is because the leadership and management reinforce the message that pupils should treat everyone equally.

- 3.20 Pupils have a notably strong awareness of what constitutes a healthy and balanced lifestyle. They make the most of the many opportunities on offer, from using the school grounds at breaktime, participating in sports, to enjoying taking up or developing one of the new interests available to them. Boarders value returning to their boarding houses at the end of the school day, benefitting from the rest and recreation offered, appreciating that it is a home and not a place for more work. This distinction helps pupils in the management of their emotions and when dealing with stress in their lives and is an important factor in the development of their well-being as they move through the school and life. Pupils know how to stay safe online. Pupils understand the need for safe practice in practical subjects. This was demonstrated in a Year 6 science and a Year 8 design and technology lesson, where pupils correctly identified and used the safety equipment effectively when conducting an experiment or using power tools respectively. As they leave the school, they are healthy, self-confident and have a balanced view of life which prepares them well for their senior school experience.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 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 form meetings and chapel. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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

Mr Timothy Cannell	Reporting inspector
Mr Paul Dunn	Compliance team inspector (Director of operations, HMC school)
Dr Steve Bailey	Team inspector for boarding (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Emma Stanhope	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)