

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

**Teesside High School** 

April 2022

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# **School's Details**

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3 to 18			
327			
EYFS	25	Prep	64
Seniors	191	Sixth Form	47
26 to 20 Apri	26 to 29 April 2022		
	808/6001 527386 Teesside Highther Avenue Eaglescliffe Stockton-on-Cleveland TS16 9AT 01642 78209 info@teessid Mrs Kirsty M Mr Robert Ti 3 to 18 327 EYFS Seniors	Teesside High School The Avenue Eaglescliffe Stockton-on-Tees Cleveland TS16 9AT  01642 782095  info@teessidehigh.co.uk  Mrs Kirsty Mackenzie  Mr Robert Tindle  3 to 18  327  EYFS 25  Seniors 191	808/6001 527386  Teesside High School The Avenue Eaglescliffe Stockton-on-Tees Cleveland TS16 9AT  01642 782095  info@teessidehigh.co.uk  Mrs Kirsty Mackenzie  Mr Robert Tindle  3 to 18  327  EYFS  25  Prep  Seniors  191  Sixth Form

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# 1. Background Information

### About the school

1.1 Teesside High School is an independent co-educational day school located in Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees. The school was founded in 1970 as a school for female pupils, with male pupils being admitted to the preparatory school in 2005 and to the senior school in 2008. The preparatory school includes an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting. The school is a limited company, overseen by a board of governors. Since the previous inspection, a new head has been appointed and the senior management team re-structured.

1.2 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

1.3 The school aims to provide an environment in which pupils may achieve their full academic and personal potential and become caring, confident, self-disciplined and well-balanced adults. It seeks to nurture a sense of intellectual curiosity; encourage pupils to value creativity; and to help each individual develop a firmly rooted sense of justice and morality.

## About the pupils

1.4 Pupils come from areas across Teesside and North Yorkshire, including Stockton, Yarm and Darlington. They belong to professional and business families. The school is non-selective academically at all entry points. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in all sections of the school is above the national average for those taking similar tests. The school has identified 49 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include cognition and learning, physical and sensory, communication and interaction and social-emotional mental health; 37 of these receive additional specialist help. Seven pupils have an educational, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 14 pupils, three of whom receive additional help for their English. Pupils identified as the most able and those with particular talents have their curriculum modified or enhanced.

# 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. 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 <u>met</u> or as <u>not met</u>. 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: <u>The Education (Independent School Standards)</u> <u>Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.</u>

# **Key findings**

2.1 The school meets the 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 no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

# PART 1 - Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the prep school, 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 In the senior school, the school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2018 to 2021 confirm that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the prep 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.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

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

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

### PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.12 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

- 2.13 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.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] 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.
- 2.16 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is 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.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is 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.
- 2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

# 3. Educational Quality Inspection

#### Preface

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

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

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 a high rate of progress in changes to their attainment levels over time.
  - Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and they demonstrate strong initiative and independence.
  - Pupils develop and demonstrate excellent study skills.
  - Pupils are highly articulate and effective communicators.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
  - Pupils are mature, insightful and perceptive beyond their years.
  - Pupils show high levels of social awareness and work effectively with others.
  - Pupils demonstrate substantial self-confidence and strong self-esteem showing a clear awareness of their personal development over time.
  - Pupils show strong respect and support for the diverse nature of their community.

### Recommendation

- 3.3 In the light of the excellent outcomes, the school may wish to consider:
  - Enhance pupils' engagement in lessons by ensuring that teaching demonstrates best practice consistently.

### The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Evaluation of progress data provided by the school, lesson observations and pupils' work show that the attainment of pupils throughout the school is good. This demonstrates a high rate of progress across all areas of learning and at all age and ability ranges, in line with the school's aims. Academic data for prep school pupils and evidence of the excellent development levels of EYFS children, as reflected in the most recent nationally validated attainment results in 2019, show attainment levels well above those usually expected for their age. In the years 2018 and 2019, results in external examinations at GCSE were above national averages. In 2020 and 2021, between two-fifths and a level in 2019 were good, being above national averages. In 2020 and 2021, between two-fifths and a

half of results at A-level were at grades A\* to A in each of these years. This attainment is enabled by teaching which demonstrates detailed knowledge of individual pupils and strong, mutually respectful relationships between staff and pupils. Excellent identification of individual targets ensures that pupils focus upon key areas where they need to improve. Provision for those with SEND and EAL is strong, ensuring that these pupils also make progress in line with their peers. Those pupils identified as the most able achieve, appropriately, above and, in some cases such as mathematics, well above the level of their peers.

- 3.6 All leavers in 2021 gained places at their first choice of further education. Pupils achieve highly and show substantial pride in their school because of the excellent leadership of academic provision. Pupils are deeply engaged in the learning process. In the pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very large majority of pupils and all parents commented positively on the help and encouragement pupils receive from supportive, dedicated and experienced staff. This view is supported by inspection evidence.
- 3.7 Pupils throughout the school display excellent attitudes towards their learning. Pupils' willingness to collaborate, with their peers and staff, is evident in every area of school life. They are co-operative, well-behaved in class and respectful. Without exception, pupils settle down to work immediately, respond well to challenge and are focused. They take pride in their work, want to succeed and usually fully engage in lessons, showing no inhibitions in taking initiative in their learning. Children in the EYFS showed great delight when working on letter sounds with 'croc' the hand puppet. Prep school pupils enthusiastically embraced their topic of building a rocket to take supplies to the international space station. In GCSE science, pupils worked confidently together in a paired task on balancing chemical equations. Work scrutiny demonstrated that pupils are highly productive when working independently. They take leadership in their learning seriously and are well-equipped from an early age with the skills and confidence to be creative, enterprising and resourceful.
- 3.8 Communication skills are a real strength of the pupils. In discussions, pupils were highly articulate and were able to express their opinions in a mature, confident manner and with great clarity. They listen to each other with empathy, engagement and sensitivity and debate points with ease. Pupils read well if asked to do so in lessons. Written communication is also excellent. In GCSE art sketch books and design and technology (DT) project work, pupils used high levels of subject-specific knowledge and terminology to clearly explain their research and design processes. Older pupils in a sports studies lesson contributed lively, thoughtful, informed responses to a discussion on mental attitudes in sport. Younger pupils in the prep routinely use jottings and notes with great effect to capture ideas, for example when preparing a balanced argument for a debate on the pros and cons of school uniform. Year 6 pupils with SEND contributed with confidence when voluntarily explaining and giving examples of iambic pentameter with eloquence and accuracy.
- 3.9 In line with the school's aims, pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with SEND as well as those with EAL, display a wide range of sophisticated study habits and organisational and thinking skills. They are adept at research, being encouraged to be independent thinkers. They draw on a wide range of resources to inform their learning. For example, sixth formers spoke in detail of the research and analysis undertaken in a psychology coursework case study and how they created hypotheses independently before using appropriate tests to evaluate their validity. Children in EYFS organise their learning with a high level of independence and choose stimulating activities, often opting for academically focused ones. Prep pupils demonstrated the ability to employ higher order thinking skills in their international primary curriculum (IPC) studies. They worked collaboratively to analyse, experiment and evaluate their ideas in activities presenting high intellectual challenge. Pupils higher order learning skills are well developed, and stretch and challenge is present in most teaching. The most able mathematicians in a GCSE lesson demonstrated excellent powers of analysis and application of knowledge when solving quartic equations and using sketch graphs in order to find the number of solutions for any given equation.
- 3.10 Throughout the school, pupils have a high level of knowledge, skills and understanding. The accumulation of knowledge was seen to be most rapid in lessons where pupils are inspired by exciting

activities, for example, the visit to the school kitchens by the younger pupils. Older prep pupils in an IPC practical lesson in physics displayed excellent knowledge and understanding of angle of incidence and angle of reflection, their oral explanations being at a level far beyond age expectation. They confidently predicted the path of a ray of light through a curved prism based on their prior practical work on the use of a standard prism. Pupils in GCSE religious education (RE) displayed excellent recall of prior knowledge to explain the role polygamy plays in the acceptance of divorce in certain cultures. Sometimes pupils' progress, particularly that of the more able, is slowed when they are provided with too many worksheet-based activities offering limited challenge, contrary to the usual practice in the most successful teaching in the school.

- 3.11 Pupils' academic achievements outside the curriculum are excellent, at local, regional and national level. Many pupils throughout the school achieve notable success in sporting, musical, artistic and cultural arenas, both individually and in teams. Pupils are successful in the UK Junior Maths Challenge with many gold, silver and bronze medals achieved and in Maths and Biology Olympiads, Chemistry at Work, Young Engineer, Big Bang and STEM competitions. Success is also achieved in music, speech and drama, creative and poetry writing, public speaking, computing and cooking competitions. Pupils are highly successful regionally in tennis, rugby, cricket, hockey, netball, athletics and cheerleading and nationally in cricket, hockey, rugby and football. In discussions, pupils commented on the involvement of many pupils in the school's musical and drama productions and in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme (DofE), as a particular strength of the school and records of pupils' achievement in these areas support this view.
- 3.12 Pupils' numeracy skills and knowledge are well developed, and they apply these extremely competently across a wide range of subjects such as geography, economics, the sciences and information and communication technology (ICT). Prep school pupils show high levels of competency when measured against age-related expectations, with weaker pupils developing this competence at a rapid rate when they are challenged in teaching. Numeracy skills become increasingly sophisticated as the pupils move up the school. Senior school pupils are mathematically able and show good basic and higher order number and algebraic skills. Year 7 pupils demonstrated an excellent grasp of more advanced numeracy skills when applying the multiplier method to percentage increase and decrease questions. Younger pupils in an ICT lesson used knowledge of linear and binary equations to explain their efficiencies and defects and how both equations analyse data differently.
- 3.13 Pupils are confident users of ICT and its use is a natural part of their learning which they recognise developed strongly during periods of lockdown. Pupils spoke of how they use a wide range of software across different subjects to develop their skills and understanding. For example, older pupils in sports science use video technology effectively to analyse body movements and hence improve personal performance when playing netball. Prep school pupils spoke confidently of their use of their devices for online mathematics programmes; researching videos for topics in the IPC; and internet searches to gather vocabulary, such as in when studying poetry. Pupil digital leaders are given the opportunity to support new pupils to the school. These positive pupil outcomes are supported by leadership that creates an environment where this kind of approach to applying ICT skills is instinctive.

### The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.15 Pupils' self-understanding is excellent and a strength of pupils' personal development. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate high levels of self-confidence, resilience and a strong level of self-esteem. They understand that they have an important part to play in the school and global community. Pupils of all ages who spoke with the inspectors referred to their ability to persevere when faced by challenging intellectual situations. They are successfully reflective in their assessment of how to deal with failure and criticism. Pupils' work shows highly effective self-reflection, self-assessment and peer marking, supported by helpful teacher feedback. For example, in the prep school, 'Big Write' books

demonstrate how pupils absorb and understand information on how to improve effectively, which enables them to set themselves individual targets and move their learning forward. Key in this is praise and encouragement, which are used throughout the school to great effect and have a clear impact on pupils' self-esteem. Pupils are very self-aware and spoke confidently about feeling well-prepared for the next steps in their learning or future career options. Year 6 pupils spoke eloquently and confidently of their career aspirations and how they relate to their personal qualities and characteristics. The excellent outcomes in pupils' personal development are due to the strong commitment of senior leaders, school governors and staff to providing high levels of pastoral support.

- 3.16 Pupils are mature for their age and exhibit highly developed social awareness both in and out of the classroom. They are respectful of staff and of their peers, interactions being positive, honest and open, reflecting the strength of community that exists in the school. Pupils work together extremely well in lessons and around the school and display much enjoyment in the many opportunities for engaging in group work and paired activities. This expectation of collaboration which exists at all ages throughout the school helps pupils to develop into considerate and empathetic young people. Older pupils were extremely animated about the house system and full of praise for the opportunities it provides for all age ranges to work collaboratively. Younger pupils in the senior school, including those with SEND and those with EAL, discussed knowledgeably, in a personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lesson, the social issues regarding gender-based discrimination, displaying excellent sense and sensitivity. The school meets its aim to produce team players who embrace challenge and change with much success.
- 3.17 Pupils' moral understanding is excellent, and they take full responsibility for their own behaviour. They have a strong sense of morality and a clear awareness of right and wrong which goes beyond age expectations. Pupils have a strong awareness of the need to respect the school's behaviour code and societal rules in general. Pupils throughout the school spoke of their secure belief in the rewards and sanctions system within the school and pupil leaders display a passionate responsibility to be positive role models around the school. Senior school pupils' clear understanding of positive moral values was evidenced in their PSHE books where pupils selected the appropriate response to the online actions of fictitious characters, giving convincing reasons for their choices. In English, prep school pupils debated whether or not it is ever right to tell a lie, displaying a keen sense of consideration for the thought and feelings of others. Clear and strong leadership from all the staff encourages pupils to take responsibility for the culture and behaviour of their school.
- 3.18 Pupils show excellent respect for their own and other cultures. They value diversity, and exhibit sensitivity and tolerance towards those from different backgrounds and traditions. This was seen in lessons and evident in the varied friendship groups within the school. The pupils are at ease and tolerant with each other, supported by leadership having created a culture of openness, inclusion and acceptance. Older pupils in the senior school were perceptive in their considered support and understanding for a pupil who was fasting for Ramadan and then joined in the collective excitement in preparations for Eid. Younger pupils in a music lesson displayed a keen appreciation of different genres within music from different cultures, using this as a stimulus for creating their own themed piece of music.
- 3.19 Pupils have a strong social conscience and an excellent awareness of their social responsibilities to others and the wider world. Pupils consider the tight knit community that comes from being a small school to be a real strength. They contribute extremely positively and willingly to the school and local communities, and to society more broadly, through the broad range of clubs, activities, and charitable initiatives. Many of these are initiated and led by pupils, for example, 'grow your £2' was an extremely successful fund-raising initiative. Pupils clearly gain fulfilment from their roles on the school and food councils and as subject prefects, prep ambassadors and digital leaders, commenting positively about their experiences in such roles. Older prep pupils spoke particularly fondly of their engagement with younger pupils to support their reading and to help them enjoy playtimes. Pupils are highly aware of issues relating to inequality and express this most effectively through whole-school and house-based

fund-raising charity work. Charities that have benefitted from this recently are local foodbanks, care homes and hospital paediatric wards and most recent the local Ukraine charity projects. Pupils also spoke enthusiastically of their self-motivated community-based volunteer work and the difference they felt they were making. For example, during lockdown, pupils wrote letters to isolated members of the local community. Older pupils are also involved in the volunteering programme of the DofE scheme.

- 3.20 Throughout the school, pupils of all ages are resilient and have excellent decision-making skills. They appreciate that daily decision-making is key to their academic success, development and well-being and is an integral part of the aims and ethos of the school. Older pupils articulated their strong understanding of the implications of decisions they make regarding their online presence. They also understand well the importance of digital self-promotion when seeking university places, potential employment and prospective clients in the future. Inspectors found various forums available for pupils to make their views known and the efficacy of these is seen in the actions taken by the school in response. For example, changes introduced to the school uniform, in lunch-time food choices and in the provision of playtime equipment in the prep school. Pupils' excellent decision making is seen in their self-selection of enrichment activities with challenging ones often chosen over the less academic. Senior school pupils participate in the staff recruitment process and the heads of school interview applicants for their replacements.
- 3.21 Pupils have a good spiritual understanding and strong sense of belonging. They have a deep sense of the power of the world around them. Pupils consider that to surround themselves with positivity makes them happy and that this is good for their mental health. Younger pupils in the senior school spoke of their love of nature, the outdoors, their appreciation of the school's green setting and the stimulation that creative activities bring them. In the prep school, display boards showing pupils' written work on their thoughts on inclusion and 'giving everyone a chance to be happy' demonstrated pupils' strong sense of empathy. Boasting boards around the whole school celebrate pupil achievements and reinforce the ethos of the school that pupils are unique, smart, loved, talented, special and valued. In RE lessons, time is given to pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and perspectives and their considered responses show well-developed spiritual awareness. Sensitivity for living organisms was displayed by older pupils in a science practical as they carefully manipulated woodlice to avoid damaging them.
- 3.22 Pupils of all ages within the school know how to stay safe and understand how to be physically and mentally healthy in ways that are appropriate for their ages. This is evident particularly in terms of their approaches to diet, exercise, online safety, and a balanced lifestyle. All pupils throughout the school take part in regular physical exercise. In discussion with the inspectors, older pupils in the senior school spoke of the importance and the need to offset academic work with time away from their studies to safeguard their good mental health. Prep school pupils also commented on the space they are given to be emotionally reflective, for example, in the woodland learning environment, in PSHE and in assemblies. Almost all pupils agreed that they know how to stay safe online, and that they feel safe and secure in school, a consideration supported by an overwhelming number of parents who responded to the questionnaire. Inspection evidence confirms these views.

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# 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 a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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**

Mr Michael Evans Reporting inspector

Ms Adrienne Richmond Compliance team inspector (Former head, GSA school)

Mrs Cathy Braithwaite Team inspector (Head of prep school, HMC school)

Mr Jason Lewis Team inspector (Head, ISA school)