



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

The Worthgate School

January 2023

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School's Details

School	The Worthgate School			
DfE number	886/6075			
Address	The Worthgate School 68 New Dover Road Canterbury Kent CT1 3LQ			
Telephone number	01227 866540			
Email address	studentcommunications@worthgateschool.com			
Principal	Dr Nicola Robinson			
Chair of Proprietors	Mr Christopher Stacey			
Proprietor	CEG Colleges Ltd			
Age range	13 to 22			
Number of pupils on roll	304			
	Day pupils	8	Boarders	296
	Seniors	77	Sixth Form	169
	Pupils aged 19 to 22	58		
Inspection dates	17 to 19 January 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Worthgate School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. The school caters primarily for international pupils and is owned by CATS Global Schools, the trading name of Bright Scholar (UK) Holdings Ltd. The directors of CEG Colleges Ltd (the proprietor) form the governing body with the Chief Executive Officer as the chair. The school was founded in 1952 and moved to its present site in 1974. The school has eight boarding houses, all of which are within a short walk of the main school site. The inspection focused on pupils under the age of 19.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the school, which was previously known as CATS College Canterbury, has changed its name and there have been two changes of principal.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide an education which, through its teaching, pastoral care and boarding, enables pupils to leave as well-rounded, confident and responsible individuals who aspire to achieve their best and who can contribute positively to the demands of a changing world.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from many parts of the world, including the UK. Many cultures and family backgrounds are represented, and most pupils are boarders. Nationally standardised tests indicate the ability profile of the seniors is below average, and of the sixth form is broadly average. The school has identified 10 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and hearing impairment, none of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 237 pupils, 172 of whom receive English lessons in addition to their other academic subjects. The school identifies more able pupils and aims to provide a programme of educational opportunities to meet their needs.

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.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#).

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, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022 and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2020 to 2022 confirm 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. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, 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. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standards relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 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. 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 food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils do not always pay due regard to current statutory guidance in all areas. In particular, barred list checks, DBS checks and prohibition from teaching checks have not been carried out for all staff before they begin work. Suitable references have not always been obtained for staff before they commence work. Suitable checks have not always been carried out for contractors. In particular, the school has not ensured that the required checks have been carried out by taxi companies and by the school before unaccompanied pupils are transported to activities.
- 2.11 The school's approach to risk assessment is not strategic. In particular, the potential risk to the welfare of the pupils aged 18 and under from contact with pupils aged 19–22 is not always assessed.

- 2.12 Provision for boarders' medical and health care is not suitable. In particular, the physical health of boarders is not always promoted, and they are not supported in maintaining a healthy lifestyle as the school provides facilities for the pupils to smoke.
- 2.13 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9–15, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 and NMS 3, 5–6, 10–12, 15–16 and 20 are met, but those in paragraphs 7 [safeguarding], 8 [safeguarding in boarding], 16 [risk assessment], NMS 7 [boarders' health], NMS 8 [safeguarding] and NMS 9 [safety of boarders] are not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that suitable references are obtained and barred list, DBS and, where relevant, prohibition from teaching checks are carried out before staff commence working at the school [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8(a) and (b); NMS 8.1].

Action point 2

The school must ensure that all of the required checks by taxi companies and by the school are carried out before pupils are taken unaccompanied to activities by taxi [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8(a) and (b); NMS 8.1].

Action point 3

The school must ensure that the potential risk to the welfare of pupils aged 18 and under by contact with pupils aged 19–22 in the school is properly assessed [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 16(a) and (b); NMS 9.3].

Action point 4

The school must ensure that the welfare of the pupils and the physical health of the boarders is promoted and that the boarders are supported in maintaining a healthy lifestyle by not providing areas on the school site where pupils are permitted to smoke [paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8(a) and (b); NMS 7.1, 7.2 and 8.1].

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

- 2.14 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of supply staff. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised.
- 2.15 The school carries out the required checks for staff, but does not always check the identity, right to work in the United Kingdom and qualifications of staff before they commence working at the school. The school does not always confirm a proprietor's right to work in the United Kingdom. The single central register does not always record as required the dates of pre-employment checks for proprietors.
- 2.16 The school's arrangements for guardianship are not suitably managed.
- 2.17 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraph 19 is met, but those in paragraphs 18, 20 and 21 [suitability of staff and proprietors] and NMS 19 [staff recruitment and checks on other adults] and NMS 22 [educational guardians] are not met.**

Action point 5

The school must ensure that checks are undertaken on staff regarding their identity, right to work in the United Kingdom and all relevant qualifications before a person's appointment [paragraph 18(3); NMS 19.1].

Action point 6

The school must ensure that checks are undertaken on proprietors to confirm their right to work in the United Kingdom before they commence working at the school [paragraph 20(6)(b)(ii)].

Action point 7

The school must ensure that the single central register of appointment records, as required, the date on which pre-employment checks are made for proprietors [paragraphs 21(1) and 21(6)].

Action point 8

The school must ensure that it takes appropriate steps to ensure that any guardianship, or equivalent, arrangements promote the welfare, physical wellbeing and emotional wellbeing of the boarder [NMS 22.3].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.18 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.
- 2.19 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation in paragraphs 23–30 and NMS 4 and 9 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.20 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.
- 2.21 **The standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.22 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.

2.23 The standards relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.24 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. The leadership and management of boarding do not ensure that all the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

2.25 The standards relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 and NMS 2 are not met.

Action point 9

The school must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their roles effectively so that independent school standards are met consistently, and the school actively promotes the wellbeing of pupils [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b), and (c); NMS 2.1–2.8].

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 demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and abilities.
- Pupils are articulate communicators who listen well.
- Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to facilitate their learning.

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

- Pupils have a highly developed ability to collaborate, and they support each other extremely well.
- Pupils make rapid progress in developing their self-confidence, resilience and self-understanding.
- Pupils are inclusive, showing respect for and appreciation of each other's cultures.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, but this is not always put into practice.
- Some pupils are reflective and show a strong aesthetic awareness.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Encourage all pupils to be physically healthy by creating further opportunities for regular exercise and proactively discouraging them from an unhealthy lifestyle.
- Strengthen pupils' philosophical and spiritual understanding by extending opportunities for reflection and aesthetic appreciation.

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 make excellent progress, as evidenced by comprehensive tracking data. Their progress in lessons is facilitated by focused teaching, alongside a culture where pupils are determined to make the best use of their time. Pupils' attainment at A level in 2022 was strong, with over half of the results being achieved at the highest two grades. In 2020 and 2021, in centre-assessed and teacher-assessed assessments, pupils' results were equally as strong. In 2022, three-fifths of IB assessments were graded at the highest three grades. In 2020 and 2021, over four-fifths of IB assessments were graded

at the highest three grades. A small number of pupils are entered for GCSEs and their attainment is in line with national averages. Data analysed suggest that almost all pupils attain higher grades than those expected for those of their ability. In discussions, pupils were keen to point to the quality of teaching and the individual support they receive as key contributory factors to their academic success.

- 3.6 Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently excellent. They take a high level of responsibility for their studies, demonstrating both the motivation and determination to do well. This amply fulfils the school's aim for pupils to become responsible individuals who aspire to achieve their best. In response to the questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school equips their children with the teamworking, collaborative and research skills they need in later life. In psychology, Year 12 pupils engaged extremely well in very effective peer-led teaching on the retrieval of information. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are keen and active learners who engage readily in independent work. In history, Year 13 pupils showed excellent independence in seeking out additional resources to support their learning. Year 9 pupils took responsibility for developing their language skills by practising the pronunciation of terms throughout a lesson whilst continuing to work on set tasks. Pupils take notably strong leadership in their learning. This is evident in art portfolios, which show much originality, and in extended projects on a diverse range of topics.
- 3.7 Pupils' oral communication and listening skills are excellent. They listen carefully to one another and contribute willingly to discussions both inside and outside the classroom. This was evident in sociology when Year 12 pupils discussed the changes brought about by the printing press. In discussions with inspectors, pupils were able to express their opinions with confidence and clarity. Pupils for whom English is an additional language rapidly develop the ability to express themselves clearly and use technical subject-specific terms, such as 'phospholipid' and 'cytoplasm'. This is as a result of the effort teachers make to ensure that pupils have a deep understanding of the new vocabulary that they are learning. Pupils develop strong reading skills, as seen in economics where pupils with EAL read aloud accurately and with confidence. Pupils' writing skills are extremely well-developed as seen in art sketchbooks, personal, social and health education (PSHE) workbooks and extended essays. In all of these areas, a strong contributory factor is the commitment of the school's leadership team and the staff to embed English language development into pupils' living and learning experiences.
- 3.8 Pupils are confident in using information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning. This is partly as a result of the multitude of digital resources and platforms available for pupils and the encouragement of leadership to embed the use of ICT within the curriculum. Pupils use online learning platforms very successfully to access assignments and material that has been previously covered in lessons. In physics, Year 9 pupils with EAL used translation software effectively to enable them to use technical language to describe the sun's orbit. In art, pupils demonstrate a high level of competency in the use of photo-editing software. Pupils with SEND make good use of ICT to enable them to progress in line with their peers.
- 3.9 Pupils are numerically competent and display an excellent ability to apply their numerical and mathematical knowledge to a range of problems. Their skills are well-developed as they have frequent opportunities to put them into practice across the curriculum. In chemistry, Year 13 pupils displayed excellent numerical skills when performing calculations involving moles of acid and acid pH. In the scrutiny of work, Year 11 pupils showed an excellent ability to analyse graphical and statistical information when considering the relation between an increase in population and job opportunities. In discussions, pupils stated that they used their statistical skills extremely successfully to support their sixth-form studies in subjects such as psychology, geography and economics.
- 3.10 Pupils make rapid progress in developing knowledge, skills and understanding. This is a result of the culture within the school which means that the pupils want to succeed. Pupils join the school with a range of English language skills. A well-structured curriculum and strong teaching enable pupils to develop excellent linguistic skills which they use in all of their subjects. In economics, Year 13 pupils displayed excellent knowledge of the issues of specialisation in relation to a country's production, using subject-specific advanced vocabulary with confidence. In history, Year 10 pupils displayed a high

level of understanding during a class discussion using a cartoon about the allies launching a pincer attack on Germany. Pupils explore ideas and make excellent use of concepts acquired in previous lessons. For example, Year 13 pupils applied their excellent knowledge of ions, charge and bonding to enable them to understand the behaviour of strong acids. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few pupils did not agree that lessons are interesting. Inspectors found that pupils demonstrated high levels of engagement in response to the teaching they receive. For example, Year 11 pupils responded with enthusiasm when learning how to order food in a restaurant in Spanish.

- 3.11 Pupils develop strong study skills during their time at the school. Sixth-form pupils display extremely well-developed thinking skills in a range of subjects. In sociology, Year 12 pupils showed good analytical skills as they considered the characteristics of a sub-culture as well as what is meant by anti-establishment. In physics, Year 13 pupils gave an in-depth analysis and synthesis of information on how air resistance affects the efficiency of a coffee filter. Pupils display an excellent ability to research effectively by using a wide range of sources. This was seen in extended essays ranging from the impact of animal agriculture on wildlife to an exploration of female transformation in 19th century literature. Pupils' ability to research results from the effective promotion by leadership and governance of an environment of academic endeavour and curiosity. It is also supported by a curriculum and co-curricular programme that provide opportunities to develop and apply such skills.
- 3.12 Pupils' success in co-curricular activities is good, and in some areas excellent. Pupils have gained success as Queen's Bench accolades, in CREST awards and, by artists and the Diversity Committee, as ISA award winners. Pupils also gain success in Science and Economics Olympiads, the UK Maths Challenge and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Pupils achieve well in these areas partly because they have strong independent and collaborative skills, but also because they are encouraged by leaders and staff to pursue their interests to the highest level.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.14 Pupils demonstrate a strong level of respect for each other, value the diversity in the school and relish the opportunity to learn about each other's cultures. Boarders spoke to inspectors about the discussions they have with each other about cultural differences and assimilation into British society. Pupils on the diversity committee show an extremely strong commitment to raising an awareness that diversity extends beyond cultural and religious diversity. In discussions, boarders spoke about celebrating diversity in LGBTQ+ week and of the encouragement they receive from boarding staff to respect each other. In the questionnaire responses, an overwhelming majority of parents said that the school actively promotes the values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. Governance, leadership and staff successfully promote a highly tolerant and inclusive community where everyone is treated equally and is comfortable to be themselves.
- 3.15 Pupils are extremely good at supporting others in the school community and collaborating with their peers in lessons and beyond. In conversations with inspectors, they spoke warmly of a culture of mutual support where pupils and staff will go out of their way to help each other. In physics, Year 9 pupils willingly offered advice to each other when working together to make a pinhole camera. In discussions, boarders spoke of how they take pleasure from helping new pupils to settle into the school as they remember how it feels to be away from home in a different country. Boarders spoke of how they appreciate the opportunities they have to work together in the common rooms, as they feel that they gain a better understanding by sharing ideas. This is as a result of the sense of community within the boarding houses. Pupils' strong social awareness is evident in the ease with which they talk to and interact with adults, and in their positive engagement with each other both inside and outside lessons. Through the assumption of leadership roles, such as mentors or student ambassadors, pupils contribute positively to the school community. Boarders make an excellent contribution to the development and wellbeing of their peers as they support each other whilst they are away from home.

Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community and to wider society through charity and outreach work. For example, pupils offer language support at local schools, and funds are raised for a local charity which works with the homeless.

- 3.16 Pupils have a strong understanding of how the decisions they make now will influence their own future success. In discussions, pupils spoke of how they had thought carefully about their decision to study in the UK as it would enable them to be well-prepared for their future studies and employment. Pupils spoke of good decisions they had made to change an academic pathway for a course where they would be more successful. This was facilitated as a result of the range of academic pathways available at the school, and strong support from personal tutors. In discussions, pupils confirmed that they have a clear understanding of how to improve their own learning. They respond actively to feedback from teachers and persevere to improve their work.
- 3.17 Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of staying safe, both in terms of their digital lives as well as with regards to their physical and mental health and well-being. They have a strong appreciation of issues surrounding sexual health and how to manage relationships. In RSE feedback forms, pupils identified the importance of listening as an important communication skill in a healthy relationship. Pupils have a good knowledge of the need to exercise and of what constitutes a healthy diet. They are also aware of the health risks related to alcohol, drugs and smoking. This is because pupils' wellbeing is strongly promoted through the PSHE and RSE curriculum. In art, Year 12 pupils displayed a good understanding of positive mental health as they described how listening to music and submersing themselves in creativity helped them to relax. Pupils have a good appreciation of a healthy and balanced lifestyle. In discussions, boarders showed a good awareness of the importance of managing their workload during examinations and of the positive contribution made by trained mental health champions in the boarding houses. Although all pupils have a good understanding of how to stay physically and mentally healthy, there are a sizeable number of pupils who fail to exercise and who adopt unhealthy habits, such as smoking.
- 3.18 Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and accept responsibility for their own behaviour. They understand and respect the school rules as they realise that they are necessary for a cohesive community. This is demonstrated in the low number of sanctions being applied and the positive interactions between staff and pupils. The number of points awarded to pupils for caring characteristics indicate that pupils make good responsible decisions. This meets another of the school's aims.
- 3.19 In discussions with inspectors, pupils on the diversity committee displayed a strong sense of justice as they discussed morality, right and wrong in the context of diversity. In theory of knowledge, Year 12 pupils displayed a strong moral understanding as they engaged in a lively discussion about personal and collective responsibility. During the inspection it was seen that pupils are kind to each other, show respect to visitors and are well-mannered.
- 3.20 Some pupils show a good appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. For example, in an English language lesson, pupils demonstrated a good concern for the impact of climate change on the planet. In art, Year 11 pupils spoke of the sense of calm within the classroom and of how immersing themselves in their art helps them to relax. In discussions, pupils spoke of how discussing metacognition with teachers and listening to a lecture on epistemology had a positive effect on the way they now learn and approach life. There was, however, little evidence of spiritual awareness amongst the pupils. In some areas, such as art, pupils display an excellent aesthetic awareness and an appreciation of nature. However, pupils have few areas where they can appreciate stillness and relaxation.
- 3.21 Pupils show a distinctive degree of self-confidence. They relish contributing to discussions and conferring with their peers to enhance their learning. In their PSHE and relationship and sex education (RSE) lessons, pupils discuss challenging topics with a high level of self-confidence. This is facilitated by the expertise of personal tutors who provide a safe environment for discussion. In their

questionnaire responses, an overwhelming majority of parents said that the school helps their children to be confident. Inspection evidence confirms this view. Clear feedback and opportunities to discuss their work with teachers mean that pupils are self-reflective and have an objective awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. In lessons observed, there was a real sense of personal growth within the classroom, facilitated by encouraging and supportive teachers who leave no learner behind. Pupils show strong resilience in their learning. In economics, Year 13 pupils persevered when responding to questions which required deeper thought. In discussions, pupils discussed how, having recognised public speaking as a weakness, they had shown strong resilience by electing to speak in a mock trial in the law society. Boarders display excellent self-confidence and resilience as they take responsibility for themselves in an unfamiliar country, and often away from home for the first time. In discussions, boarders said that they feel well-supported by boarding staff. This meets another aim of the school to provide an education which, through teaching, pastoral care and boarding, enables pupils to become confident individuals.

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 and observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Sue Clarke	Reporting inspector
Ms Samantha Sawyer	Compliance team inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mrs Melanie Pople	Team inspector (Former deputy head, GSA school)
Mr Alan Sturrock	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head pastoral, SofH school)
Mr Andrew Thomas	Team inspector for boarding (Director of boarding, HMC school)