



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Regulatory Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports  
For Schools with Residential Provision**

**Queen Ethelburga's College**

**February 2019**



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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	Queen Ethelburga's College			
<b>DfE number</b>	815/6014			
<b>Early Years registration number</b>	EY285382			
<b>Address</b>	Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate Thorpe Underwood Estate Ouseburn York North Yorkshire YO26 9SS			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01423 333300			
<b>Email address</b>	info@qe.org			
<b>Principal</b>	Mr Steven Jandrell			
<b>Chair of the Collegiate Board</b>	Miss Amy Martin			
<b>Age range</b>	0 to 18			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	1042			
	<b>Boys</b>	510	<b>Girls</b>	532
	<b>Day pupils</b>	226	<b>Boarders</b>	816
	<b>Early Years</b>	45	<b>Chapter House Years 1 to 5</b>	105
	<b>King's Magna Years 6 to 9</b>	407	<b>College Years 10 to 13</b>	485
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19 to 21 February 2019			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Queen Ethelburga's College is an independent day and boarding school for boys and girls aged between 0 and 18 years. Originally, Queen Ethelburga's School was a Woodard Corporation school, founded in 1912 and located in Harrogate. In 1991, the school was purchased by the Martin family, renamed Queen Ethelburga's College and moved to its current site on the Thorpe Underwood Estate to the north west of York. It is now part of Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate, which also includes the Faculty, which offers a broader curriculum of academic and vocational courses to pupils in Years 10 to 13 and which was inspected separately at the same time.
- 1.2 Queen Ethelburga's College comprises three schools: Chapter House, which caters for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for pupils up to the age of five, and Years 1 to 5; King's Magna, for pupils in Years 6 to 9; and the College, for pupils in Years 10 to 13.
- 1.3 Directors of the Collegiate, known as the Collegiate Board, are responsible for the governance of the schools. All four schools share the same core and boarding facilities, and many staff teach across different schools. Boarders are accommodated from the age of 6 in 12 boarding houses. Since the previous inspection in February 2017, the school has undertaken internal and external refurbishment of Chapter House.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school sees its mission as enabling pupils to aspire to the Hill Standard: 'To be the best that I can with the gifts that I have.' It seeks to instil the virtues of mutual respect and support, tolerance and compassion, and to equip pupils to become considerate, self-assured, independent and resilient adults. It aims to promote the highest academic standards by providing a challenging, stimulating and varied curriculum, which fosters confidence, enthusiasm and curiosity.

### About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. Just over half of the pupils are from overseas, representing more than 50 different nationalities. Around one-third of the pupils are from forces families. One-fifth are day pupils who live within a 30-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 34 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, of whom 30 receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. English is an additional language (EAL) for 488 pupils, of whom 195 receive additional support for their English.

## 2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

### Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools ('boarding NMS'). It also comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards, including the boarding NMS, may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

**This is a REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, 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.

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

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

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

## Key findings

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

### **PART 1 – Quality of education provided**

- 2.2 In the junior school, the school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2015 to 2017, performance has been well above the national average for maintained schools.
- 2.4 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2015 to 2017 have been well above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 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. 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.
- 2.8 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**

- 2.9 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 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.
- 2.11 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**

- 2.12 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.
- 2.13 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**

- 2.14 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.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

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

- 2.16 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

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

- 2.18 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.19 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**

- 2.20 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.
- 2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are met.**

## **The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

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

- 2.22 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 2.23 Due to the excellent care and learning experiences that the setting provides, almost all children under the age of two meet or exceed the level of development that is typical for their age. Systems to identify children with additional needs are highly effective and overseen by experienced and well-qualified staff. Carefully planned activities reflect children's interests and ensure that their individual needs are met extremely well. Staff make very good use of the setting's resources.
- 2.24 Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority and, as a result, is excellent. Babies and toddlers separate quickly from their parents and settle easily with their key person. Each child benefits from high-quality individual time with adults who ensure that they are safe, happy and secure.
- 2.25 The requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare are fully met. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities for protecting children and have a thorough understanding of how to keep children safe. All necessary checks have been undertaken to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.
- 2.26 The outstanding outcomes for children are a result of knowledgeable and highly effective leadership and management that has established rigorous and supportive systems of monitoring, evaluation and assessment. All policies are implemented well, and this ensures that all children receive the best possible support and care. Self-evaluation is thorough and the setting's development plan highlights realistic targets for continuous improvement.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management**

- 2.27 The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding.
- 2.28 The strong direction provided by the leadership team results in an enthusiastic and strong team of staff who share an ambitious vision to provide high-quality education and exemplary levels of care. A cycle of one-to-one supervision meetings and appraisals for staff ensures that staff are extremely well supported in their roles as key people and that any training needs are identified and met. This has a positive effect on children's learning and development.
- 2.29 Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and comments from interviews with parents during the inspection reveal that parents have an extremely positive view of the setting. They are overwhelmingly appreciative of the care their individual children receive from the time they first join the school.
- 2.30 Through comprehensive self-evaluation and ambitious plans for future development, leaders and managers strive to improve the provision for care and learning to ensure the children receive an excellent start to their education. The leadership team is highly effective in overseeing the education plans, staff practices and children's records, ensuring that the curriculum is suitably covered. All children are treated as individuals and are offered a range of exciting and interesting learning experiences. Planning focuses on the children's interests and is monitored alongside assessment data. This ensures that learning experiences are matched to children's individual needs and interests, and that they are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- 2.31 Appropriate resources are provided to stimulate children's awareness of other cultures. Equality, diversity and British values of respect and tolerance are woven into everyday experiences and routines. Poor behaviour is managed effectively, and staff act as excellent role models for the high standards of behaviour expected. In this way, even the youngest children learn to respect each other.



2.32 Procedures for safeguarding are fully adhered to across the setting. Staff undertake regular safeguarding training, and they are highly aware of the actions to be followed if there is cause for concern. Consequently, this ensures a safe environment for children. Adherence to the procedures outlined in comprehensive documentation and policies ensures that children are kept safe. Procedures at the start and at the end of the day also ensure a safe environment for all children.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

2.33 The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding.

2.34 The staff have consistently high expectations for the children in their care. They have an excellent understanding of how babies and young children learn and develop, and they support them extremely well. This means that all children, including those with additional needs as well as the more able, make excellent progress in relation to their ability. The staff know the children really well and engage with them sensitively to promote and extend their learning. Staff model language effectively for babies and toddlers, and they use books creatively to increase children's vocabulary.

2.35 The staff apply their secure knowledge of age-appropriate goals for individual children extremely well. Assessment information is gathered continually through photographs and written observations of the children and is carefully documented in each child's personal electronic record of learning. Parents contribute to their children's learning records with observations and information from home. Key people make use of assessment information to plan the next steps in children's learning. They track individual children's progress against age-related expectations. This alerts staff to any emerging needs or gaps in learning, which are then addressed effectively. This ensures readiness for their next stage in learning.

2.36 Interactions between staff and children are timely and purposeful, and they help to extend children's understanding and development. For example, a member of staff engaged sensitively with a group of children who were exploring ice, thereby helping them to discover how to make it melt. However, such opportunities for children to explore and investigate using natural resources are limited, thus reducing the opportunity to extend children's curiosity.

2.37 The staff praise and encourage children effectively so that they know they are doing well and are confident to engage in their learning. Key workers model good behaviour, kindness and good manners. Staff engage positively with children during routine daily activities, such as at meal times and when attending to personal needs. As a result, children's social and language abilities develop strongly.

2.38 Excellent relationships with parents enable information about the children to be exchanged seamlessly at handover times. Daily feedback provides parents with information about food and sleep. A comprehensive handbook for parents provides clear information about the setting. Detailed transition reports are shared with parents at meetings. Progress checks when the children are two years old highlight any potential concerns, and well-established links with local agencies ensure that advice can be obtained swiftly.

2.39 Staff recognise and embrace diversity. The children's cultural awareness is deepened through the celebration of various cultural festivals from around the world. The curriculum is underpinned with the characteristics of effective learning which ensures that all children are provided with equal opportunities to develop into enthusiastic and independent learners.

**Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

- 2.40 The personal development, behaviour and welfare of children are outstanding.
- 2.41 Leaders and staff support and encourage children to develop their confidence and independence. They have created a secure and happy environment which enables children to be highly successful learners. Children are confident to take risks and seek new challenges. They enjoy a sense of achievement when they succeed, observed, for example, when a toddler persevered to climb the large slide steps.
- 2.42 Opportunities for babies to share some activities with older children allow them to become familiar with the staff prior to transitioning to the next stage of the setting. Detailed handovers between staff ensure that essential information about each child is passed on, enabling children to transition smoothly to the next room.
- 2.43 Children have extremely well-developed social skills for their age and feel emotionally secure within the setting. They play co-operatively and happily alongside each other and are beginning to engage in activities together, for example taking turns when pressing buttons to make noises with an electronic toy. They relish opportunities to use their imagination, for example when a toddler in the home corner attempts to put a nappy on a doll and feeds it with a bottle.
- 2.44 Introductory taster visits help new children settle smoothly into the setting's routines, and careful consideration is given to preparing children both socially and emotionally for the move to their next class. The strong key person system ensures warm relationships and close bonds with children and their families. Well-established routines enable children to feel safe and secure emotionally and physically. Staff promote prompt and regular attendance and keep accurate records.
- 2.45 Excellent behaviour is encouraged by vigilant staff. Careful supervision ensures that children treat each other with kindness, and any incidents of challenging behaviour are addressed quietly, such as by reminding children about kind hands. Children of all ages are encouraged to share and take turns. Younger children are content to play alongside each other, sharing resources as necessary.
- 2.46 Nutritious food at lunch time ensures that children have a balanced and healthy diet tailored to their needs. Time is spent outdoors regularly, ensuring that children develop an understanding of the importance of fresh air and exercise. High standards of care and hygiene support their personal needs.
- 2.47 The children's excellent personal development at this young age ensures that they respect others; for example, a child found another child's favourite toy, called his name and returned it to him. This lays the foundations for their contribution to wider society and life in Britain.

### **Outcomes for children**

2.48 Outcomes for children are outstanding.

2.49 All children progress extremely well from their individual starting points. Children explore their environment with determination and excitement in response to the personal encouragement and individual care given to them. They access an excellent range of regularly rotated toys and resources independently.

2.50 Babies respond to their familiar adults, turning towards them when their names are called. They delight in throwing and attempting to catch a ball, developing skills for the future. Toddlers are inquisitive and happy as they use roller paint and chalks to make marks. During a singing session, children anticipated the song by the use of familiar props. They showed their delight by clapping and cheering. The children can feed themselves and are confident when using spoons and cups. They love to play alongside each other and use a familiar adult as a secure base to grow in independence.

2.51 All children enjoy their learning, and their growing concentration spans demonstrate enjoyment and perseverance. They persist at activities, developing the key skills needed for their next stage of learning extremely well.

### **Compliance with statutory requirements**

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

### **Recommendation for further improvement**

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

- Enhance the provision of natural and real-life objects to encourage curiosity and investigation.

### 3. Educational Quality Inspection

#### Preface

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

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

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

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

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

## Key findings

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

- Pupils achieve very high standards in their GCSE, IGCSE, BTEC and A-level examinations and make excellent progress across all areas of learning throughout their time in the school.
- Pupils are highly articulate and have excellent communication skills; pupils who speak English as an additional language make exceptional progress as a result of the support they receive.
- Pupils achieve much success in a very wide range of sporting, cultural, academic and outdoor activities, facilitated by the very comprehensive programme of extra-curricular activities on offer.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards their work and activities, showing the ability to work both collaboratively and independently, and a strong desire to take responsibility for their own learning.

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

- Pupils display great self-confidence, self-awareness and resilience; they reflect on their learning and demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to improve further.
- Pupils in all year groups collaborate well and are supportive of each other; relationships amongst the pupils and between staff and pupils are strong.
- Many pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community, through undertaking roles of responsibility or acting as mentors and buddies, and to the wider community through volunteering and involvement in charity work.
- Pupils from a very wide range of different cultures get on extremely well with each other in an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding, recognising that each pupil is unique and valuing their differences.

## Recommendations

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- Examining how the creative approaches to the teaching of younger pupils might enrich the teaching of older pupils;
- Strengthening the links between boarding and academic staff to ensure that the level of support within boarding in the evenings equals that provided during the day;
- Ensuring that its various provisions to promote pupils' spiritual development enhance the positive development of pupils' spiritual understanding and appreciation of non-material aspects of life.

## The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aim to promote the highest academic standards and to enable pupils to accomplish its mission statement, which is: 'to be the best that I can with the gifts that I have.' Pupils achieve high academic results, acquire additional skills through the very wide-ranging extra-curricular programme and develop highly positive attitudes to learning, all of which equip them well for their lives beyond school. The fact that almost half of the pupils speak English as an additional language makes the school's successes even more remarkable.

- 3.6 High levels of achievement start in the EYFS, where all children in the group exceeded national expectations in all seven areas of learning in 2018; they continue in Chapter House, where data indicate that pupils achieve above the level predicted by standardised assessment tests; and they are consolidated further in King's Magna. In the College, in the years 2015 to 2017, the most recent three years for which comparative data are available, results in GCSE examinations have been well above the national average for maintained schools and above average for maintained selective schools. Results in IGCSE examinations have been higher than worldwide norms. At A level, results have been well above the national average for maintained and maintained selective schools. Over the last four years, just under 85 per cent of A-level examinations have been passed with grades A\* or A and almost every BTEC pass has been awarded distinction or starred distinction. Value-added data indicate that, by the end of Year 13, pupils have made excellent progress overall. This includes pupils with EAL, those with SEND and the most able pupils. In their responses to the questionnaires, the vast majority of parents and pupils agree that pupils are making good progress and many parents commented favourably on the quality of academic support provided for their children.
- 3.7 Pupils develop knowledge, understanding and skills well across all areas of learning, but their skills are particularly strong in mathematical and linguistic areas, where A-level results in recent years have been exceptionally high. During the inspection, pupils were observed performing at a high level in all year groups and many areas of learning. Pupils in Year 2, for example, played a recorder piece with exceptional confidence, whilst pupils in Year 5 showed ability well beyond the norm for their age when using terms such as 'protease', 'lipase' and 'enzymes' to explain the digestive system. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated very competent use of coding in an ICT lesson. In Year 7, they showed excellent ability when demonstrating how to create space when passing in football and, in an ethics lesson in Year 9, they displayed excellent knowledge of religious vocabulary and key words. In the sixth form, pupils demonstrated excellent understanding of kinetics in chemistry, the cardiac cycle in biology and skill in comparing demographic differences of two localities.
- 3.8 Many factors account for the excellent progress and high standards. The collegiate board and the school's leaders have invested heavily in continuing professional development for teachers, resulting in knowledgeable and highly competent staff who are keen to try out new ideas. The teaching is very well planned. It makes excellent use of questioning, not just seeking answers, but challenging pupils to explain their reasoning. Tasks are pitched at different levels to provide support for those with SEND, linguistic help for those with EAL and high levels of challenge for the most able. Staff are encouraging and supportive, and they have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. They develop a climate in which pupils feel safe about making mistakes and establish a culture in which knowledge, skills and understanding can thrive. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) activities within and beyond the curriculum enhance scientific and technological knowledge and skills. International liaison officers help pupils to settle to their work when they first arrive and provide ongoing support when needed. The feedback provided for pupils is extremely helpful. Marking is of a high quality and follows consistently the guidelines laid down by senior staff. Progress points help pupils to understand what they need to do next, and the system of 'vivos' provides incentive to do well. Pupils speak highly of the school's programme of clinics which take place at lunchtime and after activities as a major contributory factor in helping them to improve. The approach to learning up to Year 8 is often highly creative, making good use of cross-curricular skills and encouraging pupils to express their learning in different ways. Such approaches are not always as evident in the teaching of older pupils where, occasionally, over-reliance on worksheets does not provide the best outlet for pupils to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge and understanding.

- 3.9 Pupils' excellent attitudes to work and their willingness to employ higher-order skills also play a major role in their academic, and extra-curricular success. Children in the EYFS are inquisitive, motivated and eager to learn. These positive traits stay with them as they move through the school and are absorbed by the many pupils who join at different stages in their school career, such as those coming from abroad or children of forces families, many of whom value highly the stability which boarding brings for them. Younger pupils took great delight explaining carefully thought-out mnemonics which help them to develop key skills and positive attitudes to learning: pupils are expected to try three things before asking for help; use their brain; consult a book; ask a buddy and only if these are unsuccessful, ask the teacher. Others explained that 'RACECAR' helped them to solve mathematical problems by: **R**eading the question, **A**sking yourself what is wanted, **C**hoosing a method, **E**xperimenting, **C**hecking your answer, **A**nswer the question and **R**eporting back. Throughout the school, pupils are good at working both collaboratively and independently. They are curious about their learning and eager to progress. They are inquisitive, keen to ask questions and take responsibility for their own learning. School leaders have invested heavily in providing support for pupils to develop positive attitudes, such as study skills days, the life-long learning programme, guidance on how to revise, and the THRIVE@QE initiative which, among other objectives, helps pupils to develop independence. Staff seek to promote a culture of independence and responsibility rather than giving pupils the impression that they will have everything done for them.
- 3.10 Within this climate, basic communication, numeracy and ICT skills are developed to a high level. Pupils are highly articulate. A pupil in Year 2 was observed, for example, giving a highly accomplished verbal presentation on polar regions, speaking with confidence, engaging peers and then answering questions. Many pupils gain speech and drama qualifications. Myriad opportunities to develop speaking skills, such as theatre performances, house events in debating and performance, the leading of assemblies, participating in different groups to represent the pupil voice, and regular presentations in class, all contribute to the development of these skills. Pupils listen carefully to others and, from an early age, have a mature understanding of the importance of reading. The school provides constant reminders to read, gives suggestions for reading books and provides reading challenges. Pupils in Year 11 help younger pupils to read once a week in prep time. The collegiate board has provided excellent library facilities which are used well by the pupils. Writing skills are excellent. In Chapter House, pupils' spelling and grammar are particularly strong. Pupils in Year 2 were observed using advanced technical language, whilst pupils in Year 5 were seen to write with enthusiasm and high levels of ability. Older pupils have received commendations in national essay competitions, and the writing of their Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) assignments are of very high quality, reflected in the fact that the large majority are graded A\* or A. Supportive and developmental marking, time given at the start of lessons to improve work which has been marked, very clear guidance on what to improve, and opportunities to draft and redraft work all contribute strongly to the development of these skills.
- 3.11 Pupils with EAL make excellent progress in learning English. It is not uncommon for pupils to join in Year 10 or 11 speaking little English and within a short space of time to perform well in their GCSE English examinations. Leaders have put much thought into the EAL support programme which works extremely well. Many teachers have received specialist training in helping pupils with EAL. In boarding, pupils are allocated rooms with those of different nationality, and key words are displayed in some boarding houses in order to help with language development. Pupils show equally good progress in learning foreign languages, where participation in language clubs and the presence of native speakers also contribute strongly to their progress.

- 3.12 Exceptional results in mathematics and further mathematics at GCSE and A level reflect the very high level of mathematical development. Younger pupils say that mathematics is taught in a fun way. Quick-fire mental mathematics sessions, a 'maths mania' group aimed at pupils with SEND, and individual and group numeracy sessions run by the learning development team help to develop numeracy skills. Teachers encourage pupils to have a go by choosing their own level of mathematical challenge, and their progress is monitored carefully, as it is in other subjects, and the information is used well to plan and evaluate lessons. Pupils apply their skills well in different areas of learning. In Year 6, for example, pupils used statistics, scale drawings and data to construct graphs when undertaking their model village project in geography. Other examples observed during the inspection were three-dimensional work in design and technology in Year 8, competent use of mathematics in physics and chemistry in Year 10, and excellent graph-plotting skills to explain the mathematical relationship between temperature and the speed of particles when exploring kinetics in Year 12. Pupils' mathematical success is also seen in the many awards obtained in senior, intermediate and junior individual and team maths challenges, with many of the more than 350 entrants gaining top awards.
- 3.13 Pupils also demonstrate high levels of competence in ICT and the facility to use tablets, computers and a wide range of software to enhance their learning in other areas. Pupils in Year 1 used a movie-making program to produce a presentation for a celebration assembly for their parents. Pupils in Year 2 are already using presentation and spreadsheet software, whilst pupils in Year 5 use databases and coding. Older pupils use digital folders to produce their coursework and have taken in their stride a move in the English department to a paperless environment. Other examples of competent use of ICT are e-learning in chemistry, the use of the internet for research, 2D and 3D computer-aided design programs to develop ideas, 3D printing and laser cutting in the creative arts, recording in music, and the use of a wide range of software to enhance learning in many subjects.
- 3.14 As a result of a very wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities, pupils achieve success in many different areas beyond the formal academic curriculum. Various pupils spoke to inspectors to explain how they arrived at the school not interested in much, but quickly developed a wide range of interests through their participation in extra-curricular activities which are available for the youngest to the oldest pupils. In sport, college teams have won association and national competitions over the last few years in rugby sevens, netball, basketball, athletics and football. Individual pupils have achieved national success in athletics, swimming, rugby, hockey, basketball and football. Individuals have been selected to represent local clubs and development squads, and 17 pupils are now on scholarship programmes in the UK and the USA for their sporting talents. In the performing arts, many pupils pass music exams up to grade 8, and some pupils have achieved even higher qualifications. Success is evident in drama and musical productions involving over 100 pupils, and a recent gym and dance performance showcased the talents of almost 200 participants. The collegiate board's investment in the construction of the King's Theatre has provided excellent facilities for pupils to develop their dramatic and musical talents. An increasing number of pupils develop further skills through their involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award and the Combined Cadet Force. Many pupils achieve gold, silver and bronze awards in science Olympiads, chemistry and engineering challenges or develop entrepreneurial skills through their participation in Young Enterprise. National Geographical awards, creative writing competitions, arts awards, first-aid certificates, diving and lifeguard certificates also contribute to the long list of pupils' other achievements. The school amply meets its aim to provide an enrichment programme that complements the academic curriculum and promotes a sense of fulfilment and achievement in its widest sense.



## The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.15 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.16 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aim to nurture, educate and equip its pupils to become considerate, self-assured, independent and resilient adults. Pupils display high levels of self-confidence, both in lessons and when interacting with adults. They are self-disciplined, keen to do well and are not afraid to have a go at new challenges or to make mistakes, which they regard as positive aids in helping them to learn. They have an excellent understanding of how to improve their own learning and performance, responding in a mature manner to feedback from their teachers, reflecting upon both their academic work and personal development and setting themselves targets for improvement. In discussions with inspectors, various pupils recounted arriving at the college as shy individuals, lacking in confidence and with few interests, but then gaining rapidly in confidence and self-esteem through their participation in the excellent range of activities provided by the college. The collegiate board has invested heavily in providing a strong support network for pupils, and the school's leaders have set up many initiatives which have a direct and beneficial impact on the pupils' personal development. From an early age, pupils are taught the college's LEARN policy – listen, engage, attend, respect, never give up – developing resilience as a result. The safe and secure environment, a dedicated personal development department, and a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) programme all contribute positively to their development. Pupils acknowledge that even unpopular decisions, such as restricting access to the boarding houses at lunchtime, have had a positive impact on improving their study habits. Teachers constantly seek to embed a culture of perseverance and set aspirational challenges. Attendance at THRIVE@QE sessions helps pupils who may be struggling and seeks to imbue confidence. The Year 6 enrichment award encourages pupils to try new things and not to fear challenges. 'Wow walls', 'vivo' certificates, weekly champions and 'special mentions' all help to build confidence and self-esteem. Participation in the wide range of sporting, drama and music activities, frequent calls to speak in front of others, taking on roles of responsibility and acting as peer mentors all act as further spurs to developing the pupils as confident and resilient learners. Academic and pastoral staff know their pupils well and offer timely help and support. Whilst there is a great deal of support within the boarding houses, responses to pupils' and parents' questionnaires indicate that not all boarding staff have the same in-depth understanding of the boarders in their charge and, although new systems have been introduced to improve liaison between boarding and academic staff, this remains a slight weakness in an otherwise comprehensive and highly effective chain of support for pupils' personal development.
- 3.17 Pupils have an excellent moral understanding, seen, for example, in the youngest pupils who display virtues of kindness, honesty and excellent behaviour in every aspect of school life, in the classroom, in the playground and while moving around the school. This emanates from the whole teaching staff who model, nurture and encourage such behaviour. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, understanding the need for rules, rewards and sanctions, and seeing the latter as a coaching aid rather than as a punishment. Pupils engage positively in debate about moral issues. For example, in an English lesson in Year 12, pupils displayed an excellent understanding of morality, human rights and women's rights, whilst pupils in Year 9 showed maturity in their views on issues such as sex and relationships, abortion and medical ethics. A strong pastoral care system, sessions with tutors each morning, personal development lessons, mentoring and a range of additional support programmes contribute positively to all aspects of pupils' personal development.

- 3.18 The pupils also have excellent social awareness. In a very diverse community, friendship, mutual respect and care characterise relationships between pupils of all ages and between pupils and staff. Pupils engage and collaborate enthusiastically in a wide range of academic and co-curricular activities. Their strong sense of social awareness engenders a willingness to take responsibility for supporting their peers, seen, for example, in the way they provide helpful and constructive criticism and support in lessons. There are many opportunities for pupils to work together to solve problems and achieve common goals, such as the Year 6 enrichment programme, working together in small groups towards achieving their DofE awards, participation in international trips where pupils complete project work to support conservation and community needs, or working as part of a stage crew preparing for large-scale school productions. Boarding house committees work together to enhance the experience of living in a large and diverse community.
- 3.19 The collegiate board and the school's leaders have done much to enhance the opportunities for pupils to contribute to the lives of others within the school, including in boarding, in the local community and wider society. The creation of a specialist co-curricular department and the appointment of a head of outreach ensure a balanced calendar of outreach events. Many pupils engage in volunteering activities, such as practical sessions for local primary and secondary schools in the creative arts, overseas conservation trips or visits to a local care home. School-wide productions, such as the recent *Beauty and the Beast* production, provide opportunities for a large number of pupils from Years 6 to 13 to work collaboratively on all aspects of performance, stage craft and musicianship. Pupils are keen to be involved in supporting others, whether as peer mentors acting as role models who provide help and guidance to pupils in the year groups below, or as peer buddies looking after a pupil in the same year group. Many pupils contribute to one of the groups which conveys the pupils' voice to the school's leaders, such as the school council, the food council or the boarding council. Many are involved in charity work, which is driven by the pupil-led charity committee which decides which charities to support and which activities will contribute to raising substantial sums of money every year.
- 3.20 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aim to foster a culture of understanding and tolerance, so that pupils are kind and respectful of each other and recognise that each pupil is unique. In their responses to the questionnaires, parents and pupils agree that the college actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance. The wide range of cultures and nationalities within the college's population provides fertile ground for developing pupils' understanding of culture and diversity, and pupils interact and learn from one another through their common participation in a wide range of activities. The school's leaders do much to promote tolerance and understanding. For example, all staff undertake 'culture shock' training to help them to become more aware of the issues faced by pupils arriving from a variety of cultures, countries and backgrounds. Personal development lessons for pupils also deal with the concept of culture shock. The pairing of different nationalities in boarding and the seating of pupils in lessons next to pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures enables them to establish bonds and value opinions and traditions of others. International week in December, cultural week at the start of the year and the presence of international liaison officers contribute to the seamless integration of pupils.

- 3.21 Pupils have a very good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. They are very aware of the dangers of the internet and social media and understand the importance of keeping passwords and log-in details secure. Posters around the school give details of whom to contact if they have concerns. Assemblies on safeguarding and training of pupils in fire prevention and evacuation procedures contribute to their sense of safety, as do activities during e-safety awareness week, talks by external speakers, form times, personal development lessons and the school's life-long learning programme. A very large majority of pupils engage in at least one, if not more, physical activities each week beyond their normal physical education (PE) and games lessons. Many pupils access the gym, attend fitness classes or use the swimming pool on a regular basis. Their participation is made possible by the collegiate board's investment in excellent facilities and high-quality equipment for sport and leisure as well as a large and dedicated team of sports staff and professional coaches, who provide training in fitness and nutrition. Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of the importance of their mental and emotional well-being and talk about mental health in a positive and constructive way. Pupils freely access the many support services within the college, including a school counsellor, independent listener, THRIVE@QE sessions, the pastoral team, the school chaplain and the medical centre.
- 3.22 In all areas of their personal development, pupils show a well-developed ability to make sensible decisions which affect their day-to-day work, their behaviour and relationships and their future subject and career choices. As in so many areas, the school has well-thought-through systems which help pupils in their decision-making processes. They are given clear guidance by staff with regard to subject and career choices, have opportunities to talk to older pupils about their experiences and attend options meetings. They take advice, but ultimately make their own decisions. On a more mundane level, boarders can choose whether to send clothes to the laundry or wash them themselves, but the school facilitates their decision-making by providing the requisite facilities. Pupils in King's Magna learn to make sensible decisions about their prep and to take responsibility for their actions. Staff have devised a flexible system, sometimes giving pupils a choice of task, at other times giving them a choice in the difficulty of the task. This has had long-term benefits in terms of training pupils to make decisions and take more responsibility for their actions. In lessons, pupils make sensible decisions because they are taught to think and evaluate and come to their own conclusions. So, for example, pupils in a design and technology lesson in Year 6 made appropriate decisions about the best materials to use for their subsequent project based on cost, durability, practicality and aesthetics.
- 3.23 As in all other areas of their development, the school provides various opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual understanding and appreciation of non-material aspects of life. There are many opportunities to engage in art, music and drama, or to be involved in outreach programmes and charity work. Pupils are taught the importance of gratitude, empathy and compassion. There are opportunities to explore religious education, mindfulness and meditation and for boarders to attend a church service at the weekend should they so wish. Pupils attend the chaplain's assemblies. There is a reflection room and there are plenty of quiet areas around the college. Whilst all of these opportunities undoubtedly have the potential to influence pupils, their spiritual development is the least well-developed aspect of their personal development, and the school's leaders and pupils found it hard to articulate what outcomes result from such provision, especially as few pupils attend some of these activities. Notwithstanding, this should not detract from the tremendous influence the school's leaders and staff have had in devising systems, initiatives and opportunities which have a markedly positive impact on pupils' overall personal development and which produce well-rounded, capable individuals who are very well equipped for their future lives.

## 4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair and other members of the collegiate board, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mr Graham Sims	Reporting inspector
Mrs Daphne Cawthorne	Accompanying inspector
Mrs Alison Shakespeare	Compliance team inspector (Bursar, HMC school)
Mrs Sarah Fisher	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Andrew Ireson	Team inspector (Head of department, HMC school)
Mr Michael Phipps	Team inspector (Former associate head, state school)
Mrs Lynne Renwick	Team inspector (Former head, GSA school)
Mr David Williams	Team inspector (Head, SofH school)
Dr Tracey Martin	Team inspector for boarding (Former senior teacher, HMC school)
Mr Alex Osiatynski	Team inspector for boarding (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Jonathan Shaw	Team inspector for boarding (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Valerie Holloway	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of early years, IAPS school)
Miss Sally Donaldson	Team inspector for early years (Head of kindergarten, IAPS school)