



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Wycliffe Preparatory School

September 2022

Contents

School's Details	3
1. Background Information	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection	5
Preface	5
Key findings	6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	7
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	7
PART 6 – Provision of information	7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	7
3. Educational Quality Inspection	8
Preface	8
Key findings	8
Recommendations	8
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements	8
The quality of the pupils' personal development	10
4. Inspection Evidence	13

School's Details

School	Wycliffe Preparatory School			
DfE number	916/6018			
Registered charity number	311714			
Address	Wycliffe Preparatory School Ryeford Hall Stonehouse Gloucestershire GL20 2LD			
Telephone number	01453 820499			
Email address	prep@wycliffe.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Helena Grant			
Chair of trustees	Mr Simon Lloyd			
Age range	3 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	219			
	Day pupils	159	Boarders	60
	EYFS	19	Juniors	106
	Seniors	94		
Inspection dates	21 to 23 September 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Wycliffe Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. The school was founded in 1928 as the prep school to Wycliffe College and is owned and governed by the trustees of the college.
- 1.2 The school admits pupils into the Nursery from the age of three. Boarders, from Years 3 to 8, are accommodated in two houses on the school site. Most pupils subsequently transfer to the senior school at the age of 13. Since the previous inspection, in September 2020 a new head of the prep was appointed, and in September 2021 a new chair of trustees.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school holds the core values of respect, responsibility, resilience, and empathy as central to its aims, so that pupils achieve their academic, spiritual, physical, and creative potential, behave with unassuming confidence, and show generosity of spirit, respect for others and appreciation of diversity. The school sees its vision statement of promoting a pioneering spirit and encouraging individuals to embrace their futures as global citizens, as being central to building on these core values through personal development, curriculum opportunities and connections across the world.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds, with most pupils living within 20 miles of the school. There are some international boarders, and some from domestic, ex-patriate and military families. Twenty-seven pupils have been identified by the school as requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including dyslexic-spectrum and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. Two pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Fourteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). All these pupils receive specialist support according to their needs. The school has identified twenty-three pupils as able, gifted or talented, for whom the curriculum is adapted or a specific programme of enrichment opportunities is provided.

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. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards, 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](#), [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 2022, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. 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 standard 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 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.9 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 3, 5–12, 15 and 16 are met.**

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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4 and 7 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.19 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 2 are met.**

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

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

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

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

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

Key findings

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

- Pupils at all ages, including in the EYFS, are highly effective communicators.
- Pupils develop strong mathematical skills and knowledge which they apply well across the curriculum.
- Pupils with SEND and/or EAL make good progress due to their personalised learning programmes which are effectively matched to pupils' needs.
- Pupils develop high levels of competence with information and communication technology (ICT), but have insufficient opportunities to use these skills in lessons.

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

- Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-confidence as a result of the individual support they receive from staff who know them very well.
- Pupils' cultural understanding and commitment to equality is very well-developed for their age and stage of development.
- Pupils of all ages have a secure understanding of how to keep safe and lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong and in most situations make positive choices to follow expected standards of behaviour.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Ensure pupils benefit from the skills they develop through ICT lessons by the greater use of digital learning by pupils across all areas of the curriculum.
- Ensure older pupils fully recognise the impact the decisions they make about their personal behaviour has on their future success.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 Pupils achieve well across the school. In the EYFS, analysis of data provided by the school, shows that a very large majority of children achieve a good level of development. Throughout the school, most pupils make good, and sometimes excellent progress over time, reaching good levels of attainment in

relation to age-related expectations, for those taking the same tests, at the end of Year 6 and Year 8: the points at which pupils make the transition to senior school. In the pre-prep, progress in reading is slightly less marked than in other areas. Progress for all pupils is aided by well-planned lessons and responsive teaching across the curriculum. Pupils with SEND and/or EAL make strong progress due to the personalised learning programmes which are very effectively matched to pupils' needs. Pupils' individual progress is carefully tracked to ensure support and intervention is provided promptly and effectively. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all parents agreed that teaching enables their child to make progress, and that their particular individual educational needs are met effectively. The well planned and carefully executed transition programme helps to ensure that pupils move confidently from one stage of their education to the next. For older pupils a programme of talks and other activities related to subject and career choices, as well as broader life skills, prepares pupils for their move to senior school and beyond.

- 3.6 Pupils develop good, and sometimes excellent knowledge, understanding and skills across all areas of the curriculum and in a variety of contexts, in line with the school's aim to encourage pupils to achieve their academic, spiritual, physical, and creative potential. Throughout the school, pupils draw upon what they have previously been taught to further develop their learning. This begins in the EYFS where the foundations for later learning and development are securely embedded as children play and explore with activities and resources carefully prepared to meet their needs and interests. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from a broad range of curricular and extra-curricular experiences that enable them to acquire a wide variety of knowledge and skills. For example, in geography, Year 8 pupils correctly use key terminology such as birth rate, death rate, life expectancy, narrow base and wide base to explain population pyramids. Challenging lessons and strong teaching contribute strongly towards pupils' acquisition and application of knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 3.7 Pupils display well developed speaking, listening and writing skills. Data provided by the school indicate that progress in reading, particularly in the early years is less pronounced than for other aspects of language and communication. In response, the school has introduced a 'reading for pleasure' strategy which the pupils say has encouraged them to develop their reading skills. Older boarders take pride in being able to support younger pupils with reading in the evenings. Pupils are thoughtful and articulate communicators who express themselves clearly using a good range of vocabulary and phrasing, often above the expected level for their age. This was particularly well highlighted in an assembly where pupils spoke confidently and intelligently about their artwork in front of the whole school. This was also witnessed in a number of lessons during which pupils spoke fluently in front of peers and teachers. Pupils also listen well to others, showing patience when waiting for their turn to speak, knowing that their answers will be respected by their peers even though they may not hold the same views. High expectations, applied consistently across the school, help to foster these listening skills. Pupils' written work is of a consistently good standard. From the EYFS, children develop a confidence in writing that is clearly evident in the work they produce. For example, in Year 3, pupils provided highly imaginative examples of similes, such as 'his eyes are as bright as a laser', to describe the big bad wolf for a wanted poster. Similarly, in Year 7 English pupils are able to create atmosphere within poetry using their senses to enhance the imagery they use.
- 3.8 Pupils display strong numerical skills. From a young age, children in the EYFS and pupils in the pre-prep gain a firm foundation in the use of numbers and basic mathematical concepts as was seen in Year 1 as pupils manipulated number lines to accurately count on from any given number up to 10 and identified the missing number in a sequence. Pupils continue to develop and apply a secure understanding of mathematical concepts as they progress through the school. This was particularly evident in a Year 5 mathematics lesson when children confidently identified angles using a protractor and used appropriate terminology to label them as obtuse, reflex and acute. Pupils regularly use their developing mathematical knowledge and skills in other areas of the curriculum such as science, or when counting in a modern foreign language.

- 3.9 Pupils display sound computing skills when given the opportunity to use them. This is particularly evident in the dedicated ICT lessons where, for example, Year 6 pupils construct multi-media presentations using hyperlinks and embedded files. Well-equipped computing rooms and well-planned ICT lessons enable the pupils to develop and refine these skills. However, opportunities to employ computing knowledge and skills in the classroom as a tool for learning are, as stated by pupils and observed by inspectors, limited.
- 3.10 Pupils display strong study skills across a range of lessons. They work well independently and in small groups, applying a variety of higher order thinking skills and accessing a good range of supportive resources to solve problems. For example, pupils in Year 2 demonstrated excellent analytical skills and an ability to hypothesise as they planned and executed an experiment and then tried to explain what happens when light passes through a prism. In Year 6, pupils competently analyse various sources to identify key facts about Queen Victoria as part of a history lesson. Well planned lessons, which often include time for pupils' own investigations and research, support pupils in developing their study skills. Some pupils complete projects for which they liaise with pupils in other schools globally on similar topics, requiring considerable planning and research for those involved, and embodying the schools aim for them to embrace their futures as global citizens, making connections across the world.
- 3.11 Pupils achieve widely outside of the main curriculum due to the wide range of opportunities they have to participate in activities. They enjoy success in a number of areas, both academic and in sport, music and drama. In discussions, pupils indicated that they regularly win sports matches against other schools, but also stated that playing well is more important than winning. Pupils also perform strongly in music and drama competitions both internally and as part of external competitions. Pupils' success is underpinned by steps taken by senior leaders, including trustees, to promote the development of excellent facilities for sporting and artistic activities. Academic success is widely celebrated in assemblies and at other appropriate opportunities. Pupils regularly gain keenly contested scholarships to the senior school and other selective schools. They also achieve highly in activities outside of school, including participation in the National Youth Choir, county level cricket, swimming and football, and the national squash team. Academically, away from the curriculum, there have been recent successes in national Youth Speaks and Young Writers' competitions, including a recent district runner-up award in 2021.
- 3.12 Most pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils are, for the most part eager to learn and work very well with each other, collaborating without fuss and showing a consistent enthusiasm for their work. In science, pupils work together effectively to investigate forces using straws and Maltesers and draw rational conclusions from their collaborations. Staff demonstrate consistently high expectations for behaviour in class and clearly have very positive relationships with their pupils. However, in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils stated that lessons are not always interesting. In such lessons, pupils can become distracted and, in the case of a small number of lessons and other activities observed by inspectors, create an atmosphere that can be counter-productive to a positive learning environment.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.14 Pupils, from the earliest stage of their education, are self-confident and keen to achieve their best. They are proactive in asking questions to understand how they can improve their work. Most pupils are clearly aware that the decisions they make in class will determine their levels of success. For most pupils there is a recognition of and willingness to work hard for improvements to be made. Pupils speak modestly but with genuine pride about their achievements, recognising that there are systems in place which reward their efforts. In discussions with inspectors, pupils expressed a clear understanding of the benefits of pushing themselves to attempt the higher-level work when offered a choice in a mathematics lesson. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and

appreciate the level of challenge put before them as a means to boost their self-confidence. As a result they continue to grow in confidence as they meet academic and other challenges. However, in a small minority of lessons, pupils do not always demonstrate the necessary self-discipline to remain focused on the work at hand, particularly when lessons move at a slower pace. Overall, pupils, show a good level of understanding of their strengths and areas which need further development as they prepare to move up to senior school. Responsibility is encouraged in all, and pupils value the formal positions available to both day and boarding pupils. The extensive programme of activities for boarders encourages them to step out of their comfort zone and challenge themselves, developing resilience, self-discipline and confidence.

- 3.15 Pupils have a well-developed spiritual understanding and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. For example, younger pupils expressed their wonder at natural phenomena as they observed light splitting into a rainbow as part of a science lesson. Older pupils say they value the library as a source of peace and tranquillity, and how they also seek out the sensory garden as a place to relax and reflect. Pupils spoke of their sense of peace and wonder on an evening during a residential trip watching the sun set over the beach.
- 3.16 Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They behave well most of the time in lessons, assemblies, and at meal and break times. These high standards are reinforced by staff setting clear expectations for pupil behaviour towards adults and their peers. In most situations, pupils embrace a positive philosophy and recognise that following expected standards of behaviour has a positive outcome. Occasionally, however, pupils do not make these positive choices.
- 3.17 Pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of responsibility and recognise that this is closely linked to making good choices in their school lives. They value the senior pupil positions, and the various positions of responsibility available to boarders, and can identify positive traits in those who hold such roles; they are good citizens who seek to serve the school and their peers. Pupils understand the rules that exist and underpin the school and boarding houses and generally show respect for them. There is a culture of mutual support, and, for the most part, pupils are polite and friendly towards each other, as well as respectful to adults. The school council is taken very seriously by pupils who are keen to have their voice heard. This, and other pupil voice activities, such as food council, ethos and culture council and regular pupil surveys, act to ensure that pupils have a meaningful say in issues that affect the continued development of the school. They are proactive in raising issues and have had some impact on the variety of food provided, and changes to the school uniform.
- 3.18 Pupils are socially aware and work effectively and with enthusiasm to solve problems and achieve common goals. For example, they worked together effectively during a house assembly in which they were spilt into small groups and then tasked with considering the school values. They were able to identify how they could make the school a better place by applying its values to a variety of scenarios. Living in the boarding house also plays an integral and important role in the life of the pupils, helping them to work with others to solve problems and live harmoniously alongside each other. A variety of residential trips, many of which include challenging physical activities, are greatly enjoyed by the pupils, and contribute significantly to the development of confidence, resilience, teamwork and leadership.
- 3.19 Pupils have a keen understanding and respect for diversity and other cultures. They discuss with great maturity the importance of Diwali to the Hindu religion, and pupils in Year 1 demonstrated great sensitivity and respect for items such as a kippah, and a menorah, as playing an important role in Judaism, as they examined and passed these to their classmates. Pupils recognise and value the importance of respecting individuality and have a deeply held regard for equality. They speak respectfully of the range of faiths within the school community and how the religious studies and life skills curricula contribute to their understanding of differing faiths and provide opportunities for reflection on philosophical questions such as how to be a good friend.

3.20 Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. From the early years, children show an understanding of the importance of personal hygiene, and can explain, in age-appropriate terms, the benefit of exercise. Older pupils demonstrate a keen understanding of a healthy diet and the beneficial effects of exercise. Pupils say this is regularly reinforced in science lessons and assemblies, and through the life skills programme. Pupils appreciate the need for exercise and greatly enjoy the many opportunities in the curriculum, at lunchtimes and in the extra-curricular activities, which promote a healthy lifestyle. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all parents and the vast majority of pupils agree that the school encourages pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are acutely aware of the potential dangers of social media and other online activity, and know how to take steps to keep themselves safe.

4. Inspection Evidence

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

Inspectors

Mr Chris Manville	Reporting inspector
Mr James Bishop	Compliance team inspector (Former bursar, ISA school)
Mr William Austen	Team inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Follett	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, HMC school)