



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

BOUNDARY OAK SCHOOL

JUNE 2017



CONTENTS

SCHOOL'S DETAILS	1
PREFACE	2
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	3
1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. KEY FINDINGS	5
Recommendations	5
3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	6
4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9

SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Boundary Oak School			
DfE number	850/6047			
Address	Boundary Oak School Roache Court Fareham Hampshire PO17 5BL			
Telephone number	01325 280955			
Email address	office@boundaryoak.co.uk			
Headmistress	Mrs Hazel Kellett			
Proprietor	Quo Vadis Education			
Age range	2 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	213			
	Boys	125	Girls	88
	Day pupils	174	Boarders	39
	EYFS	53	Pre-prep	42
	Prep	68	Senior	50
Inspection dates	14 to 15 June 2017			

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.

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 following their inspection 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 unmet standards identified at their previous inspection.

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.

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 an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting 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.

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 the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. 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'.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Steven Popper	Reporting inspector
Mrs Flora Bean	Accompanying inspector
Mrs Ann-Marie Elding	Team inspector (Head, Society of Heads school)
Mr Adrian Hathaway	Team inspector for boarding (Senior teacher, IAPS school)

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Boundary Oak School was founded in 1918 and moved to its present site in 1961. The school was purchased by Quo Vadis Education in 2014, and the current headmistress took up her position in April 2014. Quo Vadis Education and its directors are the proprietors of the school. An advisory panel of educational and other professionals provide independent advice to the school.
- 1.2 The school consists of four departments: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children aged 2 to 5 years; Pre-Prep, for pupils aged 5 to 8 years; Prep, for pupils aged 8 to 11 years; and Senior School, for pupils aged 11 to 13 years. The school has one boarding house, which caters for pupils from Year 3 to Year 9.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to value and treat each pupil as an individual within a family community and to develop and support differing needs whilst fostering an enjoyment of learning and promoting a 'growth mindset'.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Most pupils come from professional families based in the school's local area, with a few pupils from families who live and work abroad. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils on entry is above average. The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is 19. They require support with dyslexia, dyscalculia and a range of other conditions. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 19 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), 13 of whom receive additional support for their English. Data used by the school have identified 18 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 13 other pupils because of their special talents in dance, art, music and sports.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- Pupils' attainment and progress are good overall.
- Pupils demonstrate good knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent.
- Pupils are not consistently given a high level of challenge to enable them to progress rapidly.
- Pupils of different abilities do not always achieve as much as they can, because teaching is not always well matched to pupils' needs.

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

- Pupils demonstrate substantial self-confidence and belief in their own abilities.
- Pupils' social development is excellent.
- Pupils exhibit an outstanding appreciation of diversity and respect for others.
- Pupils display a strong understanding of right and wrong.

Recommendations

2.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Ensure that all pupils receive a consistently high level of challenge to enable them to progress rapidly.
- Ensure that teaching is always well matched to pupils' needs, so that pupils of different abilities always achieve as well as they can.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.2 The proprietors and leaders are successful in their aim to foster an enjoyment of learning and promote a growth mindset to develop and support differing needs. An overwhelming majority of parents and pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire thought that the school enabled pupils to learn, make good progress and develop skills for the future.
- 3.3 The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests, but the available evidence from scrutiny of leavers' destinations, pupils' written work, lesson observations, and the school's own assessment data, shows attainment to be above in relation to national age-related expectations. A very large majority of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) achieve or exceed national expectations for their age, while school leavers regularly achieve places and sometimes scholarships in senior schools of their choice.
- 3.4 Pupils' books show that pupils from all ability groups and across all age ranges produce work to a good standard overall. Pupils' books, along with lesson observations and the school's own assessment data, reveal that pupils make typically good and sometimes rapid progress. Pupils receiving additional learning support make good progress in line with that of other pupils, as was seen through observations of some one-to-one support given to pupils and through scrutiny of the school's own assessment data. The school has met the recommendation of the previous integrated inspection of 2012 to extend the monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure effective use of assessment data. Pupils' good achievement is supported by the leaders' and proprietors' introduction of a school baccalaureate that enables pupils to understand their own achievements and what they need to do to develop these further. For example, pupils can use the clear baccalaureate 'learning grids' to see what they should aim to accomplish next.
- 3.5 Pupils demonstrate good knowledge and skills across the full range of subjects. For example, during a geography lesson, younger pupils displayed good knowledge of the countries that make up the United Kingdom. Similarly, in a science lesson, older pupils were able to classify groups of living organisms using scientific terminology. Pupils' good knowledge and understanding is supported by teachers' clear explanations and levels of challenge that are typically good. Pupils receiving additional learning support make good progress, as was seen through observations of some one-to-one support given to pupils. However, the level of challenge is variable across the school so pupils do not always progress rapidly or extend their subject knowledge as strongly as they could. The school has partially met the recommendation of the previous integrated inspection of 2012 to ensure that tasks set in lessons are suitable for the differing needs of the pupils. However, teaching is not always well matched to the needs of all groups of pupils, with the result that pupils' knowledge and skills are not always extended or applied as strongly as possible.
- 3.6 Pupils display excellent attitudes to learning from the EYFS upwards. They are eager to learn and make very good use of opportunities to work independently and show initiative when these are provided. For example, younger children were seen leading and engaging in a spontaneous and protracted game based around characters from a popular picture book. Similarly, in a mathematics lesson, older pupils listened carefully, asking questions if unsure, and worked independently, using their initiative and previous knowledge to good effect in order to solve complex problems. Information from baccalaureate assessment data shows that pupils typically receive merits and distinctions for positive attitudes such as: 'participating with an excellent level of interest, motivation and enthusiasm'; 'excellent effort and persistence in the majority of tasks' and 'reacting positively to and often learning from mistakes, criticism and the success of others'. Pupils' highly positive attitudes are promoted by warm and

- encouraging staff who use praise highly effectively to motivate pupils. However, sometimes staff do not consistently communicate high expectations of pupils' attention or presentation of work, which occasionally leads to pupils losing focus or presenting work less carefully than possible.
- 3.7 Pupils' progress has benefited from the leaders' and proprietors' introduction of a 'growth mindset' culture that has developed pupils' study skills. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that they were able to approach their work in different ways, and gave examples of their successful research into, for example, nutrients, ingredients, and a week-long research project completed in prep and free time about food in different cultures. Pupils' books demonstrate well-applied study skills. For example, older pupils' books demonstrate their ability to extract key information from a range of sources about why there was an economic boom in the United States of America between 1919 and 1929. Such learning skills have been developed by the leaders' and proprietors' introduction of the baccalaureate and its 'learning grids', which clearly identify precise study skills, such as the ability to present an argument to an audience independently, so that pupils are aware of what these are.
- 3.8 Pupils' communication skills are excellent. Children in the EYFS are extremely confident in sharing and expressing ideas verbally and listen to the staff and each other very well, as demonstrated when they shared activities at the sand tray or played a role-play game with hand puppets. This is because of the constant rich communication with children by EYFS staff, and their excellent modelling of expressive vocabulary and their promotion of the value of communicating ideas. Children's writing is of an excellent standard for their age, featuring very clearly formed and joined letters, accurate punctuation, accurately constructed sentences and short pieces of text of outstanding quality. Older pupils speak and articulate ideas very clearly, as illustrated when pupils confidently answered questions and gave explanations for their thoughts about insects' habitats during a science lesson. This is because teachers encourage pupils to explain their thoughts and organise groups to enable pupils to discuss their ideas well. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors talked very positively about their opportunities for public speaking, such as in debating competitions, at speech day and during assemblies.
- 3.9 Children in the EYFS demonstrate a very strong interest in mathematics and possess advanced mathematical skills for their age. This is because EYFS staff teach mathematics in a very enthusiastic and stimulating manner and take excellent advantage of spontaneous opportunities to encourage EYFS children to explore numbers and shapes, count, compare mathematical properties and write numerals. For example, older children actively found and identified simple shapes correctly while creating their own games using different resources such as sand and lentils, while younger children spontaneously painted correctly formed numerals up to 10 using water and paintbrushes outside. Pupils in the rest of the school demonstrate an understanding of complex mathematical ideas and apply mathematical skills well. For example, some older pupils worked effectively together to budget and plan a holiday for four to Australia for seven nights, while others were able to successfully create angles on a three-point circle using circle theorems they had learnt. Pupils' mathematical skills develop well because teachers give pupils opportunities to solve challenging mathematical problems and apply their skills across different subjects.
- 3.10 Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) very confidently and ably. For example, they have built their own websites, can use different programs and understand coding. Pupils are able to apply their ICT skills to other subjects. For example, they use ICT to research and share their discoveries about the Tudors. This is because leaders and proprietors have developed the school's ICT scheme of work so that pupils develop their skills through discrete ICT lessons.

3.11 Pupils' academic and non-academic achievements are good. Some pupils have achieved academic and other scholarships. Pupils have also achieved local and national successes in a range of sporting, artistic and other events. For example, several pupils have achieved bronze or gold awards at the national junior mathematics challenge. The school's Irish dancing group have come second in national competitions and the school's ballet troupe reached the semi-finals at the British Arts Festival. Several pupils have been selected for the Hampshire county cricket team, while other pupils have been selected to play for the national under-14 team at the Youth World Cup. One pupil swims for the under-12 county team and has been chosen for the national team. These achievements are often because leaders ensure that all pupils participate in a range of sports, and that they are given many opportunities to develop their skills through specialist music, dance and drama teaching and extra-curricular clubs.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils demonstrate substantial self-confidence and belief in their own abilities from the EYFS upwards. Children in the EYFS were seen to be very happy, relaxed and confident as they settled in and left their parents to start the school day. Pupils showed excellent confidence and belief in their own abilities during lesson observations across the school. For example, pupils in the middle years of the school were very confident when engaging in expressive work with each other during drama activities in a personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education (PSHCEE) lesson. Pupils consistently display very strong perseverance, such as when working out how to convert measurements and make given amounts using standard units, or continuing to look for particular insects outside even when they are disappointed not to have found any. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors referred to themselves as 'self-disciplined' and said that they had become more confident while attending the school because teachers expect them to answer questions and give them opportunities to show their work and voice their opinions to the rest of the class. Pupils also said that they 'learnt to deal with things if they go wrong' as a result of teachers encouraging them not to give up and remain patient and it is clear that they are very good role models in this regard. Pupils said that their self-discipline developed as a result of team building activities and residential trips.
- 4.3 The school nurtures children's self-confidence through the very warm relationships between staff and pupils, and the extremely positive and encouraging approach of staff that shows how much they value pupils' interests and achievements. Pupils receiving additional support show strong self-confidence and self-awareness as a result of the caring learning support that they receive, which was evident during the support sessions that were observed. Boarding staff nurture and care for boarders extremely well and are very responsive to individual boarders' needs, enabling boarders to become particularly self-confident and possess a high level of self-esteem. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire thought that the school promoted an environment which successfully supported their child's personal development, and all parents of boarders agreed that the boarding experience had helped their child's progress and personal development. The school is entirely successful in achieving its aim to value and treat each pupil as an individual within a family community.
- 4.4 Pupils' social development is excellent. Children in the EYFS share activities and resources with delight and are extremely supportive of each other. Older pupils work together very co-operatively and help each other succeed. This was seen during a geography lesson, where younger pupils were very supportive of each other and praised one another for the work being produced and the ideas being put forward. Similarly, during a physical education lesson, older pupils displayed excellent teamwork throughout the lesson. Pupils' outstanding social skills are nurtured by responsive and encouraging staff who model working together and supporting each other extremely well, and organise pupils so that they have experience of working with all the different groups of pupils in their classes. Pupils' social development is also nurtured by the considerate, caring and inclusive ethos that leaders and proprietors have successfully embedded across the school.
- 4.5 Pupils demonstrate an outstanding appreciation of diversity and respect for others. Pupils from a wide range of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds mix extremely well, notably in the boarding house. Pupils are very respectful and tolerant of different faiths and lifestyles. For example, younger pupils' topic work on the differences between their lives and others', such as those in Kenya, demonstrates their respect for other cultures. Similarly, pupils' respect towards different faiths and viewpoints was seen during an English lesson where older pupils discussed the concept of 'honour'. Different cultures are respected within the boarding community, and boarding staff go out of their way to accommodate international and other

- pupils' needs. For example, pupils who are currently observing Ramadan and fasting have been placed in their own dormitory so that they can get up at different times to observe their cultural and religious beliefs. All parents and almost all pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that the school actively promoted values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 4.6 Pupils exhibit a strong understanding of right and wrong and are able to explore deep ethical issues thoughtfully and articulately. For example, during a religious studies lesson, older pupils expressed thoughtful views on the issue of assisted dying and showed a strong understanding of and mature responses to different viewpoints on the subject, such as those from Christian, Muslim and secular perspectives. Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of moral responsibility and appreciate the need for school rules, which they help to formulate for themselves. They show empathy for others less fortunate than themselves, including victims of recent tragedies. Staff develop pupils' moral sensibilities by enabling pupils to discuss complex ethical issues during PSHCEE lessons and other subjects. Leaders and proprietors have successfully inculcated a strongly supportive community spirit into the school, and this has also nourished pupils' moral understanding. Almost all parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire thought that the school encouraged pupils to behave well.
- 4.7 Pupils display strong spiritual understanding. They show a very strong thankfulness for the natural beauty that surrounds them. For example, pupils who spoke to the inspectors voiced how lucky they were to be able to experience the grounds and space surrounding the school, and reflected how it would feel to live in a city with no open spaces or trees. This is because pupils are given very good opportunities to reflect, such as in the 'mindfulness' club. Pupils value and appreciate religious and secular perspectives about the world and the human condition, as exhibited by their discussions about genetic engineering during a science lesson.
- 4.8 Pupils enjoy contributing to the lives of others in the school and the wider community. They willingly take on roles of responsibility, such as prefects and captains of house and sports teams. For example, older pupils collect the younger ones from registration and walk them to assembly. Established pupils act as buddies for new and international pupils, including boarders, to help them settle into school life. Pupils raise funds for a wide range of local and international charities, such as a local counselling project, national and international children's charities. The school provides well-planned opportunities for pupils to support others and engage in charity work.
- 4.9 Pupils have an excellent understanding of the consequences that the decisions they make can have on their lives. They are able to make confident and informed choices about, for example, GCSE subjects and different types of work experience. This is because staff understand the needs and interests of individual pupils and give them effective guidance and time to reflect and make sensible choices.
- 4.10 EYFS children demonstrate a very good understanding of the importance of good personal hygiene and cleanliness. This is nurtured by reminders from staff about the importance of handwashing and good hygiene, together with the regular handwashing routines that are clearly embedded in the school day. Staff sit with children and younger pupils to promote their understanding of healthy eating. Pupils are very aware of how to keep safe and avoid risks, including when online and using the road. For example, the science books of pupils working to achieve their 'Bunsen burner licence' show their careful consideration of laboratory safety rules. Staff encourage pupils to make sensible choices with regard to diet, exercise and lifestyle, with the result that pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep healthy and safe.