



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

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

**The Oratory Preparatory School**

**November 2021**

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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	The Oratory Preparatory School			
<b>DfE number</b>	931/6055			
<b>Address</b>	The Oratory Preparatory School Goring Heath Reading Oxfordshire RG8 7SF			
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9844511			
<b>Email address</b>	office@oratoryprep.co.uk			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Rob Stewart			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Oratory Preparatory School Limited			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 13			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	348			
	<b>Day pupils</b>	337	<b>Boarders</b>	11
	<b>EYFS</b>	58		
	<b>Juniors Years 1 to 4</b>	123	<b>Seniors Years 5 to 8</b>	167
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2 to 5 November 2021			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 The Oratory Preparatory School is a Catholic day and boarding co-educational school for pupils between the ages of 2 and 13 years. The school is owned by Bellevue Education, who have governance oversight for the school. Boarders are accommodated in the boarding house which is situated in the main school building with separate areas for male and female pupils.
- 1.2 During the period March to May 2020, the school was closed except for children of key workers. From June to the end of the school year, in July 2020, the school reopened. No boarders remained on site from March 2020 to the end of the school year July 2020. During this period of closure, the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils and home-learning materials for children in Nursery and Kindergarten.
- 1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home, or with guardians in the case of overseas boarders. The school was also open for children in Nursery and Kindergarten.
- 1.6 Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.7 The school aims to respect each child as an individual and give each one the confidence and self-esteem to develop his or her talents to the fullest, allowing them to develop intellectually, morally, socially, spiritually, aesthetically and physically. It aims to develop an effective three-way partnership between children, parents and school. As a Catholic School, it aims to offer the experience of living in a Christian community and to encourage a personal relationship with God through prayer and participation in worship.

### About the pupils

- 1.8 Pupils come from a range of backgrounds and nationalities mostly from families living within a 15-mile radius of the school and with boarders from overseas, predominantly Spain, China, Nigeria and France, as well as the UK. Nationally standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is just above average compared to pupils taking the same tests nationally. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan. The school has identified 56 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 50 of whom receive additional support. Nineteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL); they are taught in small groups and also supported by their classroom teachers. The needs of more able pupils identified by the school are met through the curriculum and extra-curricular provision.

## 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 statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. 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.

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](#).

**COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.**

## 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, 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.
- 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. 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 17 and 19 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 and access to a programme of activities. 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 2–4, 6–12, 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 and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.12 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**

- 2.13 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 5 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 18 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 13 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. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Nursery	Nursery (two-year-old children)
Kindergarten	Nursery (three-year-old children)

#### Key findings

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

- Pupils have excellent information and communication technology (ICT) skills, which they use effectively to support their learning in many areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding; they take initiative, facilitated by their excellent ICT skills.
- Pupils' sporting attainment and skills are excellent.
- Pupils' study skills are highly developed for their age.

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

- Pupils have excellent social skills and are outstanding collaborators because of the many opportunities pupils of all ages have to work together.
- Pupils have outstanding levels of self-confidence.
- Pupils have a highly developed moral code; their behaviour and understanding of right and wrong are excellent.
- Pupils have excellent understanding of the importance of leading healthy lives.

#### Recommendation

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

- improving pupils' abilities to be even more self-reflective, helping them to understand how to identify independently which skills need further improvement and so enable greater readiness for the next stages in their lives.

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

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Pupils have excellent knowledge and skills across all areas of the curriculum. EYFS children have excellent levels of knowledge of the world around them because of the very many sensory and engaging activities provided for self-exploration. For example, though their work on the theme of fireworks they have gained a strong understanding of colour, and knowledge of associated descriptive language, above age expectations. Older pupils have outstanding scientific skills. They use equipment confidently to investigate changes in the state of materials, for example, using thermometers to measure temperature accurately or using microscopes to investigate Brownian motion. Pupils have strong creative and artistic knowledge and skills. They understand how the techniques of Andy Warhol influenced pop art culture and can use ICT creatively to reproduce their own interpretations of his work. Pupils have highly developed physical skills; for example, they confidently lead their peers in hockey warm-up drills, demonstrate accurate rugby passing skills and play in sound formation with clear understanding of rules. Pupils' human and social knowledge and skills are excellent for their age; they explain accurately how different historical figures influenced British history. They can describe, using specialist vocabulary above that expected for their age, the geographical features of volcanoes or discuss the impact of global warming based on interpretation of geographical evidence. Pupils of all ages enjoy singing and have excellent musical abilities for their age. Younger pupils enthusiastically demonstrated their understanding of creating ostinatos on the open string of the ukulele, and the school orchestra played a complicated Latin rhythm with enthusiasm and increasing accuracy. Pupils' knowledge and skills across all subject areas are high because of the inspiring activities and challenging tasks set, the supportive environment which enables risk taking, and because of access to high-quality resources and teachers' high levels of knowledge. This is supported by an emphasis from governance in encouraging a teaching style that challenges and engages pupils. Many pupils commented that the best thing about the school was the way it helped them to learn.
- 3.6 Pupils have outstanding communication skills in all areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Communication skills are a strength in the EYFS, observed when children confidently contributed their suggestions as to how an invitation to a celebration should be created. Early writing and mark-making skills are excellent for the age of the children; this is because of the many opportunities children have, throughout the EYFS, to use fine-motor and writing skills as part of 'play'. Pupils of all ages listen attentively to one another in class and confidently share ideas and opinions. They are enthusiastic verbal communicators and engage confidently in thought-provoking conversations, as equal participants with adults, using high levels of vocabulary for their age. They are competent readers with high-level inference skills and the ability to interpret information from different sources. Older pupils write with excellent grammatical awareness and in a variety of genres; for example, they presented clear written analysis and clearly debated the strengths of different characters in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Junior pupils use beautiful cursive handwriting naturally. Communication skills are high because of the strong emphasis on collaborative group work, the opportunities to share ideas and because of the support given by teachers to improve work further using marking comments to identify what pupils have done well and how the work would be 'even better if'.
- 3.7 Pupils have excellent understanding of number and apply this in a variety of contexts. EYFS children have an excellent understanding of positional language, such as 'more than', 'less than', and the concepts of addition and subtraction. This is because of the way teaching encourages pupils to be physically involved as 'counters' so they experience first-hand how the number system works. Younger pupils understand how inverse operations can be used to solve addition and subtraction questions and can confidently manipulate numbers over one hundred. Older pupils confidently apply their knowledge of rotational symmetry to solve more complex problems, such as reflecting and transforming the location of shapes on an x/y axis, describing this using vectors. Pupils accurately apply their mathematical skill in a variety of subjects, for example considering information about population density in geography. They create graphs effectively and use their understanding of

formulae in physics when considering the relationship between time, speed and distance. Attainment in mathematics is high by the time pupils leave school because of the many opportunities given to apply their knowledge across different subjects, the teachers' high levels of knowledge, the appropriately fast pace of lessons, and the supportive relationships in class so that pupils are prepared to persevere when applying previously learnt concepts to new areas.

- 3.8 Pupils have outstanding ICT skills which they use extremely effectively to support and enhance learning in other areas of the curriculum. From an early age, pupils can use their coding skills to program simple robots, with older pupils demonstrating more complex understanding, using more sophisticated coding programs. They have the skills and knowledge to use a variety of programs including those to enhance work in art, carry out research and give presentations. Pupils use other facilities built into their computers effectively, such as the camera, to enhance work by including still or moving pictures. This is because of the availability of, and focus on, including ICT in planned lessons and the passion pupils themselves demonstrate in using ICT.
- 3.9 Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is just above average compared to pupils who take the same tests nationally. By the end of Reception, children have made good progress from their starting points with nearly all meeting the Early Learning Goals in all areas and some exceeding them. By the time pupils leave the school, all have made at least good progress, with many making rapid progress in mathematics so that attainment is high for the age. Pupils with SEND and EAL make at least good progress and, in some cases, rapid progress because of the individual support they are given. Progress is supported by excellent use of information from assessments, to monitor progress for all pupils and then identify areas where support is needed. Almost all parents and staff who responded to the questionnaire felt that the boarding environment helps pupils' progress because of the support given by duty staff and because of access to Saturday enrichment activities available to boarders, and all older pupils, if they choose.
- 3.10 A high proportion of children achieve entry to their first-choice selective senior schools with many gaining scholarships in sport, academic and creative subjects. They achieve considerable group or individual sporting success in a variety of sports at county, regional and national level for the age group. For example, a small number of pupils have trials to represent county cricket teams, others have achieved recent success at cross-country events or are selected for county hockey squads. Many pupils achieve highly in music and drama exams or in external competitions such as maths challenges. A small number of parents commented that they do not think the school supports careers education. The inspection disagreed and found the school is responding, in a suitably age-appropriate way, to enable pupils to develop the necessary skills for entry to their next schools.
- 3.11 Pupils have outstanding attitudes to learning. In the EYFS, children happily work independently, for considerable lengths of time for their age, on a variety of activities chosen to develop a range of skills including phonics, gross- and fine-motor skills or early numeracy. This is because the activities are engaging and well-chosen based on children's observed interests. Older pupils demonstrate initiative in volunteering observations in class discussion, which they know will support all in completing tasks. Pupils are enabled to contribute positively because of the excellent supportive relationships they have with their teachers and peers. The oldest pupils demonstrate outstanding levels of leadership and initiative when working collaboratively to produce their independent assembly presentations, as part of their 'Newman Awards', a bespoke school initiative to promote personal development, moral integrity and service to others as well as developing intellectual skills within the curriculum. The high level of pupil collaboration and co-operation at all ages is because of the influence of the leadership in promoting a consistent approach to teaching across the school which reinforces and emphasises these skills and because teachers deliberately plan many opportunities for pupils to work together across all subjects. Pupils' excellent ICT skills enable them to respond positively to the demands for independence, initiative and collaboration.
- 3.12 Pupils have outstanding study skills and higher-order thinking skills for their age. They analyse information from a variety of different sources, hypothesise in science to predict investigations or

when considering information in geography such as wondering what it would be like living in the shadow of a volcano. They synthesise information, for example interpreting a picture of the Bayeux tapestry to create a re-enactment in class, allowing them to consider the skills historians need to interpret the past from available evidence. This is because of the incorporation of opportunities into lessons to use ICT and the expectation that these skills will be used. Almost all parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire felt that the school develops skills and attitudes needed in later life effectively.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils have outstanding social skills and work exceptionally well with each other to achieve common goals. The youngest children carefully share toys and equipment when role-playing, knowing that it is much more fun to create games together. Older pupils supported one another when solving complex algebraic questions or when developing their inference skills. Younger pupils were observed enthusiastically working in pairs to solve a series of practical mathematical games. The excellent social skills are built through the very many opportunities pupils are given to work together. The school council sets its own agenda and runs its own meetings. Small teams of older pupils put on the Christmas fair, working effectively to comply with the logistics of COVID-19 restrictions and bubbles. High levels of co-operation are encouraged by teaching which responds positively and supportively to pupils' independent initiatives and through the planning of residential trips or enrichment activities which include many opportunities to build teamwork skills. The vast majority of parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire felt the school helps children to be supportive and develop good teamwork skills.
- 3.15 Pupils are highly self-confident learners. In this way, the school meets one of its key aims. EYFS children are prepared to take managed risks when playing in their woodland environment, climbing trees and helping build fires. They demonstrated excellent speaking and listening skills when negotiating during role play 'driving on the motorway' or having 'superfast wheels'. The children's confidence in communication was because of the support given to them by staff helping them to build vocabulary and use language appropriately. Pupils of all ages play full active roles in lessons, enthusiastically sharing ideas or answering questions. They are prepared to make individual responses to tasks, taking risks that their ideas will be valued, for example, when creating beautiful individualised Egyptian clay jewellery. Pupils expressed how they feel enabled to have the confidence to speak in front of large groups because of the very many opportunities they have in school to perform or participate in pupil-led assemblies. Older pupils spoke about the confidence they have in enacting their roles of responsibility because of the many previous challenges they have been faced with and met successfully. Pupils have good levels of self-understanding, but they depend on the positive and constructive feedback teachers give on their work, rather than being highly self-reflective and setting their own targets. Pupils show high levels of resilience, in line with one of the 'Newman' values, prepared to keep going when faced with early setbacks, such as in a rugby match or when developing better arguments to support their opinions of Charles Dickens' work. This is because of the excellent supportive relationships they experience from both their peers and their teachers and through assembly themes on topics such as resilience. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire felt the school helps their children to be confident and independent.
- 3.16 Pupils have an outstanding understanding of right and wrong and strong personal morality. Their behaviour is excellent both in lessons and around school. They listen respectfully to the opinions of their peers and demonstrate real empathy for others in difficult situations. They expressed strong understanding of the effect unkindness can have on the lives of others and so are willing to adhere to the school's clear behaviour code. Older pupils act as excellent role models and the younger pupils really value their 'anti-bullying ambassadors', pupils who volunteer and are selected and trained to help spot and resolve any conflicts. Although a few pupils who responded to the questionnaire made

negative comments about minor unkindness among pupils, this was not substantiated in discussion with pupils in school, who were quick to state that the school responds immediately to any reports of unkindness and sorts out any small issues, should they occur, quickly. This was also supported by evidence in the school's comprehensive behaviour logs.

- 3.17 Pupils have an outstanding understanding of the importance of leading healthy and safe lives. They are exceptionally physically active thanks to the many opportunities and space given for all to play and use the school grounds, and the time in the curriculum for all to engage in games, physical education and exploring the woodland environment. The school council has worked hard to make appropriate suggestions for improving food, based on what they know are healthy options. The youngest children naturally choose fruit as an alternative for pudding. During lockdown, older pupils initiated making presentations, to be used online for the whole community, to stress the importance of mental health. The presentations encouraged all to stay connected and lead a balanced life taking every chance to get out and do exercise. All of the pupils understand a variety of ways they can be safe online and can clearly explain how the school's strong filtering system prevents them accessing unsuitable material. A vast majority of parents felt the school helps their children adopt healthy lifestyles, with very many pupils commenting that sport was a strength of the school for both male and female pupils of all ages.
- 3.18 Pupils are highly respectful of the diversity in their own community and show sensitivity and tolerance for those from different backgrounds. Pupils explained how they enjoy learning about Spanish food and culture from the boarding community. They show high levels of sensitivity and understanding of diversity in wider society through their work in 'perspectives' lesson and in reading material in English or coverage of topics including sexism and racism in personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- 3.19 Pupils' contributions to their school and the wider community are excellent. Older pupils contribute through leadership roles, such as house or sports captains, prefects or 'anti-bullying ambassadors', to improve school life for their peers and particularly the younger pupils. All have a chance to contribute to improvement through the school council and there are many opportunities to engage with the wider community through extensive charity work, which is both school-initiated and arising from interests and concerns of the pupils. On recent residential trips to South Africa, pupils have helped teach village children the importance of dental hygiene, taking thousands of toothbrushes with them.
- 3.20 Pupils are highly spiritual. Older pupils explained how 'perspectives' lessons help them view the world in a bigger picture, not just revolving around their own lives, considering the sanctity of life in general. They show high levels of interest in pondering questions without clear answers, such as 'What do you think true happiness is?' This is because of the many opportunities they are given to be philosophical, for example whilst taking part in a 10K pilgrimage, with questions for reflection at different stages, answering questions in science lessons such as, 'Is electricity the greatest invention?' or when studying philosophical questions as part of the PSHE programme. Pupils describe how important the spiritual life of the school is to them, in taking an active part in the daily rituals of prayer which remind all to be thankful for the food they have. They value the chance to sit quietly, listen and think in Mass if they choose to. Older pupils reflected on how they value the opportunity to take a break from the daily business of life, whether they are Catholic or not. They have an excellent understanding of how faith can have an impact on lives either through direct experience of celebrating in school or from studying world religions and values common to all faiths, such as the importance of generosity and kindness.
- 3.21 Pupils are excellent decision makers, either in making appropriate choices in social groups or in understanding how the choices they make in lessons will result in positive or negative consequences. The youngest children know they must 'use kind words and kind hands' when coming to a right decision. Pupils explained how they know it is important to have goals and that sometimes to reach their goal might involve doing, or asking for, extra work. They are prepared, however, to choose the harder path, because they know their teachers want the best for them. If their teachers believe in them, it empowers the pupils to feel they can do better. Older pupils make excellent decisions in building positive social relationships, either through readily apologising when they get things wrong or by making unselfish choices for the good of others.

## 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 of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assembly. 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

Mrs Vivien Sergeant	Reporting inspector
Mr Richard White	Compliance team inspector (Bursar, IAPS school)
Mr Huw May	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Crispin Cole	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, IAPS school)