



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Warwick Preparatory School

May 2022

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School's Details

School	Warwick Preparatory School			
DfE number	937/6019			
Registered charity number	1088057			
Address	Warwick Preparatory School Bridge Field Banbury Road Warwick CV34 6PL			
Telephone number	01926 491545			
Email address	info@warwickprep.com			
Headmistress	Mrs Hellen Dodsworth			
Proprietor	Warwick Independent Schools Foundation			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	509			
	Pre-prep (EYFS)	139	Pre-prep (Years 1 and 2)	151
	Prep	219		
Inspection dates	10 to 13 May 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Warwick Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day school situated on the outskirts of Warwick. It is adjacent to King's High School and Warwick School, the other two schools that form part of the Warwick Independent Schools Foundation, whose directors administer all three schools. The school comprises the pre-prep, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for male and female pupils aged 3 to 7 years, and the prep, for female pupils aged 7 to 11 years.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has completed a new music school, shared with King's High School.
- 1.3 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to foster a love of learning, intellectual curiosity, independence of thought, and effective learning habits. It seeks to provide a safe, stimulating and supportive school environment, where each pupil can feel inspired, challenged and valued. The school endeavours to develop resilience and confidence, inculcate integrity and provide a rich and stimulating school experience where pupils can explore and develop their interests, gifts and talents, and discover new ones.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Most pupils come from local families representing a range of professional and business backgrounds. The school's own assessment data indicate that the ability of pupils on entry to the school is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 54 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These include specific learning difficulties, speech, language and communication and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Of these pupils, 47 receive additional specialist help. No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 25 pupils, of whom five receive additional support for their English. The school modifies the curriculum for pupils it identifies as the most able in the school's population.

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. 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, 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. 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](#), [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, 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. 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.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

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

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

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 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.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 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.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 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.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 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.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is 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 excellent.

- Pupils' attainment and progress are excellent.
- Pupils display outstanding skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils' communication skills are notably strong.
- Pupils demonstrate outstanding attitudes towards learning and achievement.

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

- Pupils' self-awareness and self-esteem are outstanding.
- Pupils demonstrate notably strong spiritual awareness and understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils display excellent social development across the school.
- Pupils exhibit a very strong awareness of how to stay safe and keep healthy.

Recommendation

3.3 The school should make the following improvement.

- Enable pupils to even more consistently apply their strong ability to explore and express ideas in depth across the range of subjects.

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' attainment and progress are excellent. The school's own assessment data show that attainment is far above average for those taking the same tests nationally. Pupils' books and lesson observations confirm that pupils, including EYFS children, the most able pupils and those with SEND and EAL, make excellent progress from their starting points. Most leavers continue to the sister senior school in the foundation, while others are successful in obtaining places at other competitive senior schools. Leaders and staff use their analysis of assessment data highly effectively to ensure that teaching meets pupils' needs and enables them to progress very well. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching enables their child to make progress. Inspection evidence supports this view.

3.6 Pupils display outstanding skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, Nursery books demonstrate strong knowledge in different areas, such as the number of legs bees have and names of

different colours. Pupils' artwork in a range of different media, such as older pupils' self-portraits and representations of abstract surfaces and younger pupils' work on Impressionism, is of very high quality. The work of pupils in the middle of the school on different aspects of science, such as digestion and mass, shows strong understanding of the subject matter. Older pupils' work on the Tudors demonstrates considerable understanding of some key events and historical figures of the time. Older pupils also demonstrated outstanding skills when using the pentatonic scale and composing pieces of music based on Debussy's work. Books from across the school demonstrate very strong subject knowledge across the curriculum. This is because teachers communicate very high expectations and offer a high level of challenge during most lessons. They encourage pupils to think critically about the subject at hand. Most pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that teachers know how to help them to learn. Inspection evidence supports this view. Most work demonstrates pupils' own perspectives on the subject matter, such as independent research on Yosemite National Park and consideration of the Jewish Mezuzah. However, pupils do not always apply their strong ability to explore and express ideas in depth, particularly when they use worksheets that ask closed questions or put limits on pupils' possible responses.

- 3.7 Pupils' communication skills are notably strong. For instance, Nursery books show that children can identify the initial letters that the names of different animals start with well. Reception children make very good choices of adjectives to describe particular story characters and demonstrate excellent reading skills for their age. They produce well-constructed simple sentences in well-formed handwriting. Younger pupils' writing based on Samuel Pepys' diaries is highly imaginative, extended and well-structured, featuring excellent choices of vocabulary. Pupils in the middle of the school use personification and similes to strong effect, such as 'snowflakes danced down from the sky like ballerinas'. Older pupils' writing about Medusa is highly evocative and demonstrates much knowledge of the character and myth. The oldest pupils' writing features highly expressive choices of vocabulary, effective use of similes, rhetorical questions and titles that capture attention, such as '*The Symphony of Death*'. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors were extremely articulate for their age. They were able to express complex ideas confidently and in depth. Pupils develop extremely positive relationships with staff which enable them to feel secure and be confident to express themselves verbally at school.
- 3.8 Pupils demonstrated outstanding attitudes towards learning and achievement in almost all lessons seen. For example, in a science lesson, the youngest pupils investigated very enthusiastically how dragonflies balance. The oldest pupils' 'Skills for Life' portfolios demonstrate considerable engagement with the tasks that they needed to complete and a determination to succeed. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors conveyed much pride in their achievements and explained how significant they were. Pupils develop their highly positive attitudes because leaders and staff convey very high expectations and consistently praise pupils for their achievements. The school fully achieves its aim to foster a love of learning, intellectual curiosity, independence of thought, and effective learning habits.
- 3.9 Pupils' mathematical skills are very strong. For instance, Nursery children demonstrate excellent counting skills for their age. This is because staff make highly effective use of spontaneous opportunities to encourage children to count. Reception children show very good understanding of numbers, such as when they explained about how numbers were ordered up to 50 and back again. Older pupils exhibited excellent understanding of money and of decimal place value. Mathematical work from all year groups shows advanced understanding for the pupils' age of mathematical aspects such as time, addition, fractions, decimals and angles. Children and pupils develop a deep understanding of numeracy as a result of highly effective use of visual and physical resources and the many opportunities to apply mathematical concepts in their play and other subjects, such as art, science and design and technology (DT).
- 3.10 Pupils' ICT skills are outstanding. Younger pupils log on, use word processing programs and create electronic presentations very well. Their work demonstrates much skill in safe searching on the internet, selecting pertinent images and researching information, such as that related to a topic about Kenya. They programme robots to perform simple tasks and send and receive e-mails confidently, as

seen in work on the first landing on the moon. Their digital animations, such as those about the Great Fire of London, are very sophisticated for their age. Older pupils use formatting tools, as seen in independent work generated for their 'Skills for Life' projects. Their green screen animations, such as those about conservation, and e-books based on the *Little Miss* books, are highly expressive, imaginative and very well crafted, including excellent use of music and sound effects. Pupils plan and design projects ranging from researching different topics to creating games and websites, including about homework. Pupils use ICT extremely well to support and express their learning in other subjects, including work about angles in mathematics and about Anglo-Saxon life. Pupils' ICT skills grow because they learn mouse control from Reception, such as in activities about the relationship between letters and sounds. Older pupils learn about computer science and develop skills such as creating green screens, adding effects to stop-go animation and creating websites. Pupils' ICT competence and confidence benefit from specialist teaching in this area. The school enables pupils to use different applications to learn about topics across a wide range of subjects.

- 3.11 Pupils exhibit excellent study skills. For example, Nursery children used pertinent and specific questions to try to find out what might be hidden in a box, such as 'Is it long?', 'Is it soft?' and 'Is it spiky?', successfully deducing what the hidden items were. They make intelligent use of clues such as 'Part of it is wooden'. They were supported by the teacher's very clear and good-humoured guidance about the type of question that might help the children find out what the hidden item might be. The older pupils' ICT research on influential women in technology is detailed and sophisticated for their age. Their work includes accurate citations of sources used in research and shows that they have a strong understanding of intellectual ownership. Pupils are reflective learners. They analyse, hypothesise and use their understanding to improve their work very well as seen in older pupils' science books. Pupils draw upon a wide range of sources of information, including those presented by staff and discovered by themselves. Pupils' capacity to self-review their work is very strong for their age. The school provides age-appropriate opportunities for pupils to apply their study skills across the curriculum and in their 'Skills for Life' projects.
- 3.12 Pupils demonstrate very strong academic and other achievements. There is substantial success in LAMDA assessments, with all entrants achieving distinctions and merits. Similarly, 66% entrants passed ABRSM musical examinations with merits or distinctions and several pupils perform in the National Children's Orchestra workshops and the National Children's Choir. The oldest pupils have competed in hockey, netball and swimming at regional and national levels. There has been individual success in writing competitions, skiing, art, football and karate. The previous year's leavers achieved 23 academic, music, sport, art and drama scholarships and awards. Leavers are successful in achieving places at competitive senior schools. Pupils' achievements are supported by leaders' and governors' provision of specialist teachers and the many extra-curricular clubs available to pupils. Academic challenges include primary Maths Challenge and entering poetry competitions.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils' self-awareness and self-esteem are excellent, confirming the school's successful fulfilment of its aim to develop resilience and confidence. For example, Reception children were extremely confident to experiment, choose and try out different activities on offer in the woodland learning environment and engage with mud and the tools and resources available. In art and religious education, younger pupils sensitively peer-reviewed each other's work and gave constructive feedback. Pupils showed high levels of confidence while independently creating diary entries. The oldest pupils spoke to the inspectors about how they picked themselves up again when things did not go as they planned. Pupils said that their confidence has increased because staff are very supportive, and lesson observations confirmed that staff encourage children and pupils constantly. Leaders promote pupils' belief that they will be able to succeed in what they attempt, even if they have not

succeeded yet. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to be confident and independent. Inspection evidence supports this view.

- 3.15 Pupils display a very strong spiritual awareness and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. In assembly, Year 4 pupils presented thoughtful prayers that they had written, demonstrating strong reflection on the importance of looking after the world around us. Other pupils listened very respectfully to these. Pupils demonstrated very thoughtful reflection on what is important in life, citing friends, family, kindness and honesty. The youngest pupils' work on how Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* made them feel is very expressive. Older pupils working on a composition based on a piece by Debussy talked about how they represented their understanding of beauty in the natural world through music. Older pupils demonstrated excellent spiritual sensibilities and appreciation of the way that music can express feelings when creating musical interpretations of extracts from Psalms.
- 3.16 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of right and wrong and are extremely respectful of school rules as well as each other. Older pupils talked with much confidence about their class rules and the importance of doing the right thing. The oldest pupils explained articulately why certain values such as honesty and trust were important, and how people needed to be able to put themselves in other people's shoes. Pupils said that they appreciate the school's rewards for good behaviour and were aware of the sanctions that are in place for doing the wrong thing. Leaders and staff make highly effective use of 'fair rules' and 'skills for life' to communicate moral values and expectations. Almost all pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that pupils are kind and respect each other. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate excellent social development across the school. For instance, Nursery children worked very comfortably together while planning and sharing farm drawings. Younger pupils worked together eagerly during a science lesson to measure the elasticity of bands, swapping roles spontaneously to help the experiment. Inspectors saw many examples of pupils naturally praising each other, such as, younger pupils spontaneously applauding each other's suggestions about how animals fly in an English lesson. In a DT lesson, the oldest pupils showed excellent teamwork, encouraging and listening to each other in a *Bake Off*-style cookery task. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors explained that the 'Skills for life' programme was integral in helping them work together well as a team during a recent residential trip. An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- 3.18 Pupils exhibit a very strong awareness of how to stay safe and keep healthy. In a physical education (PE) lesson, the youngest pupils undertook a range of challenges with a ball to develop their body control and strength, exhibiting much care to move safely. Pupils engaged in yoga expressed their mature understanding of the importance of warming up before exercising and the use of breathing techniques to cut out any distractions. Pupils across the school talked with considerable understanding about how they make healthy choices at lunchtime, including about the portion size. The oldest pupils' personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) books contain very thoughtful reflection on pupils' personal 'early warning signs' of stress and anxiety and identification of who pupils feel are key trusted adults that they can talk to. The digital leaders' websites about gaming, designed to support other pupils, demonstrate an excellent understanding of potential risks such as addiction, common types of scams, people who are unkind online, and requests for personal or financial information. The school fully meets its aim to provide a safe and supportive school environment, where each pupil can feel inspired, challenged and valued.
- 3.19 Pupils confidently make decisions about their own learning. The youngest pupils chose which shapes to use to demonstrate their understanding of halving and which art materials and process to use. Pupils focus extremely well on their work as soon as they enter the classroom, clearly understanding that this is important for them to succeed in their lessons. Pupils play extremely well with each other in the playground, understanding that they needed to consider others to ensure the safety of all. The oldest pupils talked very thoughtfully about their own strategies for organising homework and music

practice. The 'Skills for Life' projects enable pupils to independently organise their time to complete the projects, make appointments with their learning mentors themselves and email work on time.

- 3.20 Pupils' contribution to others is outstanding. Those who talked to the inspectors conveyed a highly developed sense of the importance of supporting others less fortunate than themselves and showed deep empathy for people affected by the current aggression in Ukraine. Pupils engage in much charity work, such as supporting a local food bank, a hospice and a national children's charity. The oldest pupils take pride in their support for younger ones, explaining how it made them feel happy. Leaders enable pupils to carry out leadership roles, such as play leaders, digital leaders, librarians and house captains. Pupils work to benefit others through the food, school and class councils.
- 3.21 Pupils exhibit an extremely strong appreciation of diversity and equality. They enjoy learning about the religions of their peers as well as sharing their own religious beliefs. The oldest pupils talked knowledgeably about the importance of gender rights and explained how these had developed over time, saying there was still some way to go. They spoke eloquently about the importance of everybody having rights and what would happen if these were not respected. Pupils' books include very thoughtful reflections on children's rights and about racism and the harm this can do to people. PSHE work often invites pupils to consider rights and consequences of different types of behaviour on others. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. Inspection evidence supports this view.

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 the chair of governors and safeguarding governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited 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 Steven Popper	Reporting inspector
Mr James Mundell	Compliance team inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Ian Griffin	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Sarah Hollis	Team inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school)