

Regulatory Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Hemdean House School

December 2018



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| School | Hemdean Ho | ouse School | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------------------|---------|----|--|
| DfE number | 870/6003 | | | | |
| Registered charity number | 309146 | | | | |
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| Headteacher | Mrs Helen C | Mrs Helen Chalmers | | | |
| Acting chair of governors Mr Tim Beechey Newman | | า | | | |
| Age range | 4 to 11 | | | | |
| Number of pupils on roll | 63 | | | | |
| | Boys | 27 | Girls | 36 | |
| | EYFS | 6 | Juniors | 57 | |
| Inspection dates | 4 to 6 Decen | 4 to 6 December 2018 | | | |
| | | | | | |

School's Details

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Hemdean House School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged from four to eleven years. It was founded in 1859 as a girls' school and became co-educational in 1912. In 1972, it became an educational trust governed by a board of trustees. The school comprises the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children in Reception, the Infant Department for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and the Junior Department for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- 1.2 The current headteacher was appointed in January 2018 and the acting chair of governors took up his position in March 2018.

What the school seeks to do

1.3 The school aims to enable pupils to fulfil their full academic potential by building up their confidence and self-esteem. It seeks to encourage them to consider others within a caring community and a happy family atmosphere, where all are valued.

About the pupils

1.4 Pupils have a range of business and professional backgrounds, from both British and other nationalities living within a 15-mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified 11 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include physical needs, communication needs, dyslexia and dyspraxia. Six of these pupils receive specialist help. One pupil has an education, health and care plan. A total of 17 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and receive support for their English in class. The curriculum is modified for the pupils who have been identified as the most able in the school's population.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

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

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 may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

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

This is a REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as <u>met</u> or as <u>not met</u>. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified.

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

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

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: <u>The Education (Independent School</u> <u>Standards) Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework</u>.

Key findings

2.1 The school does not meet all of the required 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 should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

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

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 Most safeguarding procedures are appropriate and staff are suitably trained. However, recruitment checks, in particular for peripatetic staff on the Children's Barred List, and for prohibition from teaching and checks for proprietors for prohibition from management, are not always carried out before they commence employment at the school, as required by current statutory guidance.
- 2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 6, 9 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, but those in paragraph 7 (safeguarding) are not met.

Action point 1

• the school must ensure that all required checks are made on staff prior to appointment, in particular for peripatetic staff for checks against the Children's Barred List and for prohibitions from teaching and for proprietors for prohibition from management [paragraph 7(a) and (b)].

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of proprietors and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The school does not make all the appropriate checks on medical fitness and identity to ensure the suitability of staff prior to appointment. The school does not always ensure that an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained for contractors, before or as soon as practicable after they commence working at the school.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 19, 20 and 21 are met but the standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 18(2)(d) and 18(3) are not met.

Action point 2

• the school must ensure that an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained for contractors, before or as soon as practicable after they commence working at the school [paragraph 18(2(d)].

Action point 3

• the school must ensure that all required checks for identity and medical fitness are carried out on all staff prior to appointment [paragraph 18(3)].

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 their 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.

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

PART 6 – Provision of information

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

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

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.19 The proprietor does not ensure that the leadership and management of the school 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.
- 2.20 The standards relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 4

• the proprietor must ensure that the leadership and management of the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and actively promote the well-being of children [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

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

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

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

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

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

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

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
 - Pupils have excellent levels of oral communication and writing skills.
 - Across the school, pupils of all abilities make at least good progress, with pupils with SEND and EAL, and those in the EYFS making excellent progress.
 - Pupils have a keen interest and a desire to learn, engaging actively in lessons.
 - Pupils' demonstrate competent skills in information, communication, technology (ICT) in their discrete subject lessons, but not always across the curriculum.
 - Pupils' skills are strongest in literacy and mathematics as a result of highly effective planning and use of assessment data.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
 - Pupils are reflective, and display high levels of confidence and resilience. They are strongly aware of the importance of caring for others.
 - Pupils have a genuine appreciation of the non-material aspects of life.
 - Pupils display high levels of respect and empathy towards all members of the school community.

Recommendations

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
 - Enable pupils to further develop and apply their skills in ICT and art across a wider range of subjects.
 - Ensure that the high levels of progress achieved in the core subjects as a result of planning and monitoring is developed across the whole curriculum.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.3 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.4 The school achieves its aim to foster an enjoyment of work through the curriculum and extra-curricular provision. This is supported by the pupils' interest and engagement through the range of activities observed. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school meets their child's particular individual educational needs, and that teaching enables their child to make progress.
- 3.5 Pupils achieve good standards overall across the curriculum and build knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. This is due to the highly positive and enthusiastic attitude of most pupils and is strongly assisted by the systematic learning support given to individual pupils when needed. Pupils, including the most able, make good progress in academic work when compared with pupils of similar ability. EYFS children make excellent progress against the early learning goals. SEND and EAL pupils make excellent progress. The pupils' success is strongly influenced by the work of staff within the school and the high staff to pupil ratio. Governors are less significantly involved in providing challenge and drive for the achievement of good standards.

- 3.6 Pupils acquire at least good knowledge, skills and understanding in the majority of their lessons and are supported to do so by teachers who know their pupils' individual needs. Children in the EYFS gather knowledge rapidly as they explore and investigate using the many activities provided with confidence and a sense of purpose. Pupils have excellent literacy and mathematical skills which enable them to tackle a range of tasks across the curriculum with confidence. This is as a result of careful planning by teachers in the core subjects and the recently developed monitoring of progress in these areas. However, such planning and monitoring are not consistent across all areas of the curriculum and as a result progress in other subjects is not always as rapid. The pupils' excellent imaginative writing skills are well reflected in their history studies. Pupils enjoy their specialist physical education and linguistic lessons and develop useful skills across a range of activities. For example, whilst participating in a session involving physical circuits, pupils developed their understanding of the importance of being fit for their overall health. Pupils' scientific knowledge encompasses a wide range of topics and develops their understanding. The curriculum serves pupils' needs well and enables the school to successfully fulfil its aim to foster an enjoyment of work. However, time spent on outdoor education, particularly for older pupils, limits the time available to develop skills in some subjects, for example in art and design and technology. Procedures for policies, schemes of work and planning are inconsistent across year groups and subjects and as a result pupils' skills in some subjects are not systematically developed. This had been identified prior to the inspection by leadership and subject co-ordinators have been appointed recently. The impact of these developments, including that of monitoring, has yet to be established.
- 3.7 Pupils across the school have excellent attitudes towards their lessons which they enjoy. They feel that they can express themselves freely. Pupils settle quickly at the start of lessons and are attentive and ready to learn. They clearly enjoy being challenged, such as during a poetry lesson, pupils opted to include rhyme which made the task of deciding upon a structure for their poems far more challenging. Pupils are actively involved in their own learning and, in the questionnaire, almost all agreed that the school gives them the opportunity to learn and make good progress, and that lessons are interesting and use the time well.
- 3.8 Pupils' communication skills, including those of pupils with SEND and EAL, are particularly strong due to the frequent opportunities to talk in a welcoming and accepting environment. In conversations, pupils show that they enjoy speaking and do so articulately, clearly expressing their thoughts and opinions. In conversational French, from the youngest ages, they listen to a story, take turns to contribute and display sophisticated linguistic skill. This is because pupils are actively encouraged to share their ideas with their peers through well planned group and paired activities. Pupils read with confidence and skill, encouraged and supported from the earliest ages enabling a strong understanding of the relationship between letters and sounds. Older pupils have excellent oral communication skills that enable them to both speak with assurance during a school council assembly, as well as discuss with interest the role of slaves in Ancient Greece during a lesson. In the EYFS children listen carefully to each other and discuss a variety of topics as they explore the interesting activities that are carefully designed to further their skills across all areas of learning. Written communication is equally strong for pupils of all abilities. High quality writing skills are used across a range of subjects as a result of the extensive opportunities provided particularly within their English and humanities curriculum.
- 3.9 Pupils display effective ICT skills and use a good range of resources at a competence appropriate to their age in their discrete ICT lessons. Their skills include, for example, coding in Year 4, and utilising databases in Year 6. When given the opportunity these skills are used in other areas of the curriculum, for example using an electronic recording device to record a dramatic performance and then play it to the class. However, these skills are not planned for systematically year on year or applied regularly to enhance and enrich other areas of the curriculum. As a result, pupils' ICT skills do not develop as strongly as possible.

- 3.10 Pupils exhibit excellent numeracy skills from the earliest ages. These skills enable them to tackle a range of tasks confidently. Younger pupils develop their skills systematically and older pupils have very good written strategies for calculation and excellent mental arithmetic skills. In the EYFS, numeracy skills are developed highly effectively through well planned play and exploration. For example, children enjoy using dice and number steps whilst learning subtraction skills, and the most able confidently use a number line displaying excellent understanding. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue to explore and use numbers well, such as when weighing ingredients when making their own Christmas cakes. Older pupils display a good understanding of mathematical language. Pupils across the school are competent at applying their skills to problem solving and working constructively. Most are confident in their ability and build on previous knowledge. Pupils enjoy mathematics as a result of the careful planning and activities that both extend and support their learning.
- 3.11 Pupils demonstrate good study skills across the year groups. They analyse, hypothesise and synthesise, as seen particularly in English and humanities, and they recognise the benefits of learning from making mistakes. The youngest pupils hypothesised about the habitats of minibeasts whilst exploring in the woods using magnifying glasses. Older pupils chose one of Henry VIII's wives and wrote a letter to her as if from the King explaining why she had to die or be divorced. As a result of their learning and enjoyment of their studies, individual pupils seize opportunities to research and develop ideas further using extension homework activities or on their own initiative. As a result of a discussion about health and hygiene, younger pupils carried out individual research and produced a poster about Louis Pasteur. However, opportunities for pupils to extend and further their higher-order skills using ICT and other resources are not consistently planned for across the curriculum and this restricts further development of these skills.
- 3.12 Outside of the classroom, pupils gain valuable skills from a wide range of clubs, such as a book club and setting up a secret garden society to plant sunflowers; the former provides them with opportunities to choose books and develop further their enjoyment of reading. Pupils enjoy performing and this enthusiasm is supported by the many opportunities provided to showcase their talents. Pupils' music and drama skills are well developed and enhanced by the frequent opportunities to showcase their talents to parents and others in the community. The youngest pupils displayed confidence and skill as they sang nativity songs and used their well-developed ballet skills to create routines such as swirling snowflakes. Pupils enjoy sport and take part enthusiastically in the good range of sporting opportunities provided within this small community.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils are reflective and display high levels of confidence. This is strongly supported by the nurturing ethos that exists throughout the school. Whatever their starting point, pupils develop self-esteem and are determined to give their best. Pupils are proud of their achievements and value the teaching strategies used to encourage them, for example the sticker charts that celebrate the achievement of individual targets. They are highly resilient, encouraged by caring staff to persevere when encountering difficulties. For example, younger pupils, supported by careful questioning, concentrated, made mistakes and through time and effort were able to create a cone for a Christmas tree. Pupils across the school feel positive about themselves and their places within the school community. This is aided by the completion of profile sheets which encourage family members to clearly state what they like and admire about each individual. The school successfully meets its aim to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps them to be confident and independent.
- 3.15 Pupils have an excellent appreciation of elements of the non-material aspects of life. They are curious about others and the world around them. For example, children in Reception discussed with much excitement the elf which has started to appear each morning in various places around the school. They explain with care how he leaves each night through a tiny doorway in their classroom to visit Santa to discuss his day at school. Older pupils expressed genuine appreciation of the natural world around them as they talk about listening to the robin that comes to sing to them and becoming aware of the importance of continuing growth by planting bulbs and trees to keep the woods sustainable. They understand the importance of particular events in the lives of others. Because of this, older pupils in the school watched with pleasure as younger pupils preformed their nativity play and celebrated the younger pupils' achievements.
- 3.16 From the earliest age pupils are guided to make their own decisions and to be confident in contributing their own opinions. They make appropriate decisions about their behaviour and learning. This is supported by staff who emphasise that the role of the pupils is central to school life. The recently established school council has enabled pupils to run class meetings, learn to field questions and make decisions regarding school improvement. These have currently centred on the resources available in the playground and on the charities that they have chosen to contribute to and support. In the classroom pupils make decisions about which tasks will challenge them, understanding that mistakes help them to learn. This is particularly well developed in some classes through the use of self-assessment. During their regular outside activities, pupils learn to consider the effect on the environment of their actions. Beyond the classroom pupils' decision-making skills are further developed through opportunities to suggest and lead activities for the future.
- 3.17 Pupils demonstrate a strong knowledge and understanding of right and wrong. For example, during their outdoor curriculum pupils of all ages learn to understand the importance of protecting the environment. From the earliest ages they understand the importance of caring for each other. This is strongly encouraged by the respectful relationships between all members of the school community. Pupils learn, as a result of careful strategies devised for different classes, to explain to one another the importance of good behaviour for the benefit of the class. In their written work, older pupils reflect with understanding on the definitions of both bullying and cyber-bullying, and their actions in school demonstrate behaviour that is kind and considerate towards others. From the EYFS onwards, pupils work and play together with ease, whether in the classroom, at playtime or when undertaking outdoor activities. This strongly enables pupils to work highly effectively to support each other and they value highly the many opportunities to work with different groups, for example as they build dens, make chalk paint and design and build a garden for the Royal Horticultural Society Budding Gardeners competition.

- 3.18 Pupils' contributions to others in the school community are a particular strength. Pupils readily give of their time to help others both in and outside the classroom. They take great pride in the various roles and responsibilities made available to them. Older pupils perform tasks to help in different areas of the school, such as the office and the library, while others help out younger pupils on the playground. The 'Hemdean Times' newspaper enables pupils to report on the various events that have been organised and provide details of their success. All pupils have the opportunity to support or become members of the school council which is elected democratically. Pupils show an appreciation of others less fortunate than themselves, raising money in a variety of ways to support the charities chosen by the school council. They value their local community as seen, for example, when they take part in carol singing, a community sunflower project and raise money for disadvantaged children in the local community. They are strongly aware of the importance of the wider community. As a result, pupils have achieved a gold award for Wildlife in Action, the Woodland Trust Green Tree Schools platinum award and take part in the Royal Horticultural Society schools award.
- 3.19 The school has a diverse intake with a number of pupils of differing nationalities and there is strong encouragement for them to share their view, values and religious knowledge. As a result, pupils across the school demonstrate a strong understanding and respect for different cultures. Relationships between pupils of different nationalities are excellent; they get on well and clearly respect one another. Their knowledge of other countries and their national traditions is deepened by the broad coverage provided in lessons, assemblies and event days. Almost all pupils and all parents in the questionnaires agreed that the school encourages respect and tolerance of other people. They respect each other's differences and are able to celebrate individual talents as well as support those who may need help. In the EYFS, children stopped their own activities to listen to one child count to twenty in Chinese. Across the school pupils speak with pride of their academic achievements and clearly enjoy the range of opportunities the school provides
- 3.20 Pupils of all ages display thorough knowledge and understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and how to look after themselves. Pupils feel safe because of the excellent pastoral care provided by their teachers, strongly supported by leadership and management, which ensures that every person in the school community understands they are valued and that their views and opinions will be heard. The emphasis on the outside environment and the space it provides for reflection as well as a time to learn further the emotional and physical well-being of the whole community. Across the school, pupils understand the need for healthy eating and for exercise. Their knowledge is extended through PSHE and science topics. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that they know how to stay safe online, and many participate in the after-school program which extends their physical skills through sport.

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 governors, 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. 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 Sara Wiggins | Reporting inspector |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Mrs Karen Williams | Accompanying inspector (Reporting inspector) |
| Dr Toby Giles Anderson Griffiths | Compliance team inspector (Head, IAPS school) |
| Mr Robert Nicholas Francis | Team inspector (Head, ISA school) |