



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

## **Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports**

**Herne Hill School**

**March 2020**



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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	Herne Hill School			
<b>DfE number</b>	210/6375			
<b>Address</b>	127 Herne Hill Herne Hill London SE24 9LY			
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 72746336			
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@hernehillschool.co.uk			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Ngaire Telford			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Dominik Magyar			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 7			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	281			
	<b>EYFS</b>	196	<b>Juniors</b>	85
<b>Inspection dates</b>	03 to 05 March 2020			

## **1. Background Information**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 Herne Hill School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils between two and seven years. The school began as a private nursery in 1976 and became an independent co-educational day school for pupils in 1986.
- 1.2 Since 2002, the school has been owned and overseen by a single director. The present premises are a former vicarage in the London borough of Southwark, with purpose-built additions.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the school has purchased a woodland.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.4 The school aims for excellence by providing a broad and balanced curriculum within a nurturing environment. It seeks to develop its pupils into good citizens of the world by fostering an awareness of other cultures and caring for the environment.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.5 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds many of whom are local to the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school has identified two pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include ADHD and Hearing Impairment. Eight pupils receive additional specialist speech and language therapy. English is an additional language (EAL) for 47 pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers and EAL Intervention teacher. Data used by the school have identified 73 pupils as being the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 37 other pupils because of their special talents in sport, art and music.

## 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) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these 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 statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range 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 FOCUSED 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 **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 regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; 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 full regulations 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 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 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.
- 2.8 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**

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 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**

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

2.13 A range of information is variously 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.

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

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.15 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.

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

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.17 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 wellbeing of the pupils.

**2.18 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.

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 excellent.
- Pupils of all abilities make rapid progress from their varied starting points due to the high expectations of staff, self-discipline and active engagement in self-improvement.
  - Pupils display outstanding communication skills both orally and in their written work and exhibit excellent listening skills.
  - Pupils have a genuine love of learning and demonstrate independence and creativity in their thinking and approach to lessons, supported by teaching that nurtures individual interests.
  - Pupils' high level of achievement is fostered and promoted by strong leadership and management, through excellent resources and individual support.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils exhibit high levels of self-discipline and perseverance and are motivated by intellectual challenge, and they relish opportunity for decision making.
  - Pupils have a well-established sense of right and wrong, supported by a clear framework of school values.
  - Pupils form strong relationships. They are caring, courteous and respectful of each other and all members of the school community.
  - Pupils develop excellent social and collaborative skills from a young age in an atmosphere of mutual support and teaching strategies that succeed in providing a positive model of learning attitudes

## Recommendations

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
- Ensure that the oldest pupils have opportunities to further develop their understanding of responsibility, and recognise the importance of themselves as role models within the school community for younger pupils.

## 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 achieve highly and make excellent progress across all ages. Evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' books and the school's own assessment data show the pupils' attainment to be above average in relation to national age-related expectations. In the EYFS, children make an excellent start to their education. They make rapid progress from their different starting points so that all children, including those with SEND or EAL, reach or exceed expected levels of development for their age. Pupils continue to make strong progress at all stages due to the high expectations of staff, their self-discipline and active engagement in self-improvement. Staff successfully adapt the curriculum and the learning environment as required to respond to the individual pupil's needs, strengths and interests. At the end of Year 2, pupils have an excellent record of gaining places at independent and maintained schools with highly competitive entry requirements throughout London.

- 3.6 Pupils of all abilities, including those identified as EAL, SEND or more able, make excellent progress both academically and socially, compared to that typically expected for their ages. Pupils with SEND respond well to the high levels of individualised support provided in the classroom and to the strategies developed to enhance their learning by a highly effective learning support department. Those pupils identified as more able are supported in exceeding expectations because of high quality teaching and also by the wide range of extra-curricular activities designed to extend and enrich their learning. Pupils are clear about the next steps in their learning, either from the consistent use of the whole school approach to target setting or effective feedback from teachers, and they are keen to improve their work. Older pupils were observed to reflect on both the learning objective and their personal target to improve their writing by using more exciting adjectives and conjunctions to explain the feelings of an evacuee in the Second World War when first away from home. In an art club for the more able pupils, they focussed with intensity when they made a first draft of the drawing of an apple before seeking to improve it. They were confident in asking higher level questions of each other and the teacher such as, 'How am I going to make it more 3D?' Pupils show strong knowledge and understanding across the range of subjects and are highly effective in applying their skills across the different overarching curriculum topics. Pupils' creative and artistic abilities are extremely well-developed. This was observed through the highly stimulating topic-based approach to learning which allows pupils to explore their own interests. In the EYFS, children develop their creative thinking, mathematical, scientific and physical skills using a wide range of construction resources imaginatively including extensive opportunities for woodwork. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the vast majority of parents agreed that teaching enabled their child to make progress.
- 3.7 Pupils display outstanding communication skills both orally and in their written work, and they exhibit excellent listening skills. They are confident and articulate speakers, able to communicate with each other and their teachers at a high level. This is enabled by the high expectations and modelling of teachers. The youngest children in the EYFS, wove an intriguing story of pirates stranded on a desert island, searching for treasure which was enabled by well-planned use of resources and the supportive intervention of adults. Older pupils exchanged their letters to a 1940 evacuee, read each other's work and gave oral feedback confidently expressing what they really liked about the letters. Pupils' written communication is highly developed across the curriculum. Their writing is accurate, fluent and often vibrant with sophisticated language being used to good effect by all age groups. Younger pupils' work demonstrates a confident use of speech marks, exclamation marks and use of capital letter sentences. Older pupils were enthusiastic in discussion about the opportunity to use 'golden sentences' in which they accurately used capital letters and full stops, and included the use of adjectives, conjunctions and fronted adverbials such as 'suddenly' and 'terrifying' when they were learning about the characters in a novel.
- 3.8 Pupils of all ages have excellent numeracy skills and understanding, and demonstrate a strong grasp of mathematical concepts. In the EYFS, children are provided with firm foundations in numeracy and quickly develop confidence to use skills in a variety of circumstances. The youngest children in the EYFS confidently developed their counting when identifying the number of logs needed to feed the sharks in the shark infested waters during learning in the outdoors. Older pupils relish the individual challenge during the morning mathematics sessions. In discussions, the older pupils enthusiastically recounted the enjoyment they had in working collaboratively on word problems during the daily mathematics meetings. Pupils' mathematical success is underpinned by a challenging and well-structured curriculum which promotes mastery and enjoyment linked to the wider curriculum. This was observed when EYFS children developed a strong understanding of tens up to one hundred whilst playing pirate games using a wide range of resources carefully created by the teacher.

- 3.9 Pupils from the EYFS onwards are highly confident in their use of information, communication and technology (ICT). From evidence seen around the school and from discussions with staff and pupils, they use ICT effectively to support their learning across all areas of the curriculum, due to the availability of excellent resources. In the EYFS, children independently and enthusiastically used a creative programme on a tablet to design their own planet choosing from a range of available features. Using this as a starting point, the children confidently likened their planet to a real planet, and maturely discussed the reasons why they were similar. Older pupils use technology effectively to ask questions of the teacher at any time through the recording function of a tablet, as a method of encouraging inquiry and questioning. Additionally, technology is used to effectively share voice recordings for displaying greetings and phrases in pupils' home languages.
- 3.10 Pupils have significant success for their age in a wide range of activities, including dance, singing, construction, drama and sport. This high level of achievement is fostered and promoted by strong leadership and management, strongly encouraged through the extensive extra-curricular and through an exceptional range of resources and individual support. A strong emphasis is placed on the promotion of wellbeing and creativity throughout the school.
- 3.11 Pupils have a genuine love of learning and demonstrate independence and creativity in their thinking and approach to lessons supported by teaching that nurtures individual interests. In discussions, pupils all spoke enthusiastically about their learning in school and how the teachers make it fun. Their enthusiasm for learning was apparent because of the creative approach to topic-based planning, the frequent opportunity for exploring their own interests and the stimulating introduction to each whole school topic. Pupils' enormous enthusiasm towards learning was demonstrated in a themed assembly in which they actively imagined being in a chocolate factory, enquiring and empathising about how they can travel through books to imagination. Pupils were spurred on by a specially prepared chocolate themed lunch and the enthusiasm and commitment of teachers, leadership and management.

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

- 3.12 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.13 Pupils exhibit high levels of self-discipline, resilience and perseverance and are motivated by intellectual challenge. Children in the EYFS are confident in their environment, working together, discussing ideas and developing perseverance. Self-esteem is built and reinforced by the frequent praise given by staff. Pupils' excellent character and personality, reflected in their confident yet respectful and courteous manner, is a result of the emphasis put on personal development by leadership and management. Pupils form strong relationships with each other and the adults who work with them. Pupils in all areas of the school are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to be involved, as far as possible, in reviewing their work. They reflect on how they learn and identify what helps them to learn. Teachers regularly discuss work with pupils and further encourage them to evaluate their own learning needs through approaches to self-evaluation that are embedded across the school. As a result, pupils feel a strong sense of ownership of their own targets for improvement. Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 3.14 Pupils display conviction in their decision-making ability. Across the school, pupils make appropriate choices about their learning, use of resources and behaviour. In the EYFS, children independently chose from a range of stimulating activities to further develop their confidence in recognising numbers in tens up to 100. Some children chose to play a game to find the blocks with a number between ten and 100 and then accurately order the numbers. Others delighted in choosing to work together in a push the marble activity, hoping to roll their marble into the highest value of tens pot.

- 3.15 Pupils develop a strong appreciation of the non-materialistic aspects of life. They have a high regard for the benefits of the outdoors and the natural world. This is important to the younger pupils who enjoy the woodland areas at the school, and are delighted when they see wildlife visiting their space. The youngest pupils enthusiastically recounted the joy they felt in seeing a parrot that came to sit on the trees, and were in awe when they listened to the story about parrots retold by the author on World Book Day. Older pupils understand the importance of the beauty of the natural environment, and were highly engaged in the protests they were able to organise within school to help them express their concerns about the human impact on the earth. Pupils of all ages engage fully in mindfulness including yoga activities, origami and a 'Wandering and Wittering Club'. This is an opportunity to spend time with adults and engage in conversation over the things they observe or feel which allows them to focus on their own mental wellbeing and the immediate world around them.
- 3.16 Pupils have a well-established moral understanding including a strong sense of right and wrong, developed through a consistently implemented programme of rewards and on the rare occasions when needed, sanctions. Staff all use the same language when reflecting on behaviour, using the school's Golden Rules, which are widely recognised and respected by the pupils as the framework for discussion. In the EYFS, children understand how to resolve conflict successfully by being fair and taking turns. Pupils are aware of the difficulties that the children in a school in South Africa face, and actively support them through learning and fundraising. EYFS children showed knowledge and understanding of the challenges for these pupils in a pirate themed literacy topic, when they sent supportive messages in a bottle to them. Older pupils enjoy some opportunity for responsibility within the school including the opportunity to act as playground buddies and be involved in the school council. However, in discussions pupils were limited in their understanding of how they should accept responsibility and the importance of themselves as role models for younger pupils. All parents in the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour.
- 3.17 Pupils develop excellent social and collaborative skills in an atmosphere of mutual support that succeeds in providing a positive model of learning attitudes from a young age. This was reflected in the agreement of all parents in the questionnaire that the school helps their children to develop strong teamwork and social skills. In the EYFS, children work together successfully through highly effective collaboration activities. This was seen when all of the children worked together to find enough hidden green parrot feathers for every child to have their own, and their well-developed listening skills help them build on one another's ideas. Older pupils engaged positively together to establish a book club as a way of means of promoting reading and supporting wellbeing. Pupils have an awareness of the needs of others and contribute to the local community. They work together to fundraise by singing at the local station, visit a retirement home and donate produce to the foodbank from their harvest festival. Throughout the inspection pupils were highly courteous, and their enthusiastic cooperation with staff, each other and inspectors was excellent.
- 3.18 Pupils have a strong appreciation of different backgrounds and respect for diversity. They enjoy sharing experiences from their faith, language and culture with others in their class. In pupil interviews, they readily shared their own and their family backgrounds. They discussed how parents came into school to share information about their own languages and cultural traditions, including the sharing of stories in their home language. Visiting speakers, parents, trips, personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and assemblies enable pupils to develop a strong appreciation of diversity within their community.

3.19 Pupils exhibit a strong sense of consideration for their own personal safety and wellbeing. They understand the need for a healthy lifestyle and make active choices in their daily life. They understand the need for a balanced healthy diet and select healthy food options from the exceptional lunch menu which regularly includes theme and taster days to introduce new foods and tastes. Older pupils have a clear understanding of the need for physical exercise to stay healthy. They enjoy the opportunity to participate in physical education, a range of clubs and enjoy the chance for quick physical exertion breaks in lessons. Pupils were enthusiastic about the benefits of the regular 'runner bean' activity in lessons which allows them to quickly jog on the spot to improve their wellbeing. Pupils explain confidently how to stay safe both online and in the real world. The coding club is extremely popular, and with the extensive focus through PSHE, provides an effective opportunity for pupils to learn about keeping themselves safe online. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school encourages pupils to have a healthy lifestyle.

## 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 proprietor, 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. 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 Tracy Handford

Reporting inspector

Mrs Nicola McAvoy

Compliance team inspector (Bursar, IAPS school)

Mr William McKinney

Team inspector (Headmaster, IAPS and ISA school)