



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

The Old School Henstead

October 2019



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School's Details

School	The Old School Henstead			
DfE number	935/6050			
Registered charity number	279265			
Address	The Old School Henstead Toad Row Henstead Nr Beccles Suffolk NR34 7LG			
Telephone number	01502 741150			
Email address	office@theoldschoolhenstead.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Joe McKinney			
Chair of governors	Mr Nicholas Kingsley			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	91			
	EYFS	33	Junior	58
Inspection dates	15 to 17 October 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Old School Henstead is an independent co-educational day school, for pupils aged 2 and a half to 11, situated in the village of Henstead. It was opened by a group of parents in 1979. The school is an educational trust and a registered charity, governed by a board of governors and the headmaster is directly responsible to the board. The school is organised into two sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children aged 2 and a half to 5 years and the junior school for pupils aged 5 to 11 years.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to realise the potential of their pupils by providing a challenging academic curriculum and opportunities for adventure, personal development and investigative experiences in the school's rural environment. It encourages each child to be mindful of the needs of others and to develop a sound moral framework that inspires children to become lifelong and resilient learners and to make their own special contribution to the global environment that awaits them.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a range of professional and farming backgrounds, mostly from white British families living within the Waveney Valley area of north Suffolk. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified one pupil as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who receives additional specialist help. This pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. No pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). Data used by the school have identified 21 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them accordingly.

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 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 **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.

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 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. This 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 well-being 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 good.
- Pupils of all ages demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
 - Pupils are articulate, confident in expressing their views and keen to contribute fully in lessons.
 - Progress in English and mathematics is strong, but inconsistencies in feedback to pupils mean that this is not the case across all subjects.
 - Progress for the most able is slower in some lessons, where extension activities provide insufficient challenge.
 - Pupils work together effectively, and demonstrate good study skills across the curriculum.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-confidence.
 - Pupils' behaviour is excellent throughout the school.
 - Pupils care about one another and collaborate well together.
 - Pupils demonstrate excellent social awareness particularly when older pupils take on responsibilities to care for younger pupils.
 - Pupils understanding of staying safe and keeping healthy is excellent.

Recommendations

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
- Address inconsistencies in pupils' academic progress across subjects, particularly for the more able pupils.
 - Ensure teachers' feedback enables pupils to respond effectively on how to improve their work.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 The small-school ethos enables pupils to thrive because staff with small class sizes know and meet their individual needs well. As a result, pupils progress seamlessly from the Nursery to Year 6 and are always eager to learn. Children in EYFS use shared learning areas effectively in both Nursery and Reception classrooms, fully satisfying a recommendation from the previous inspection in 2011. Similarly, pupils across the school learn well because of improved systems for assessing and analysing their progress which addresses another recommendation from the previous inspection. Throughout the school, most pupils achieve well from their different starting points because of the effective personalised guidance they receive. The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests, but the available evidence shows attainment to be above in relation to national age-related expectations. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that teaching enables their child to make progress. The school is most successful in meeting its aim for pupils to realise their potential through a challenging curriculum. Pupils of different abilities, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, are supported well to make good progress in their learning. However, more able pupils do not always make progress commensurate with their ability because they are not always given higher level work during lessons.
- 3.6 Pupils of all ages demonstrate very good attitudes to learning. In the EYFS they play and learn happily together, take turns and look after their friends. Their achievements and learning at home are shared

effectively with the school via computer programmes. Older pupils participate fully in lessons and contribute willingly. Their high levels of motivation and engagement ensure that they achieve a good degree of success in various tasks across the subjects. Pupils enjoy learning and work diligently. The oldest pupils express their pride in their school. They take part in lessons positively and listen attentively to the ideas of others. The school is successful at helping pupils to gain entry to their senior school of choice, some of which are highly selective. Preparation is well managed and some pupils gain scholarships each year. Pupils leave the school with confidence and self-assurance.

- 3.7 Pupils show that they can evaluate a question fully before reaching a conclusion. They have very good listening skills and consistently show the utmost respect for others' ideas and contributions. Pupils discuss purposefully in a focused way during lessons and they relish opportunities to participate in assemblies or at school events. Nursery pupils effectively use their understanding of letters and the sounds they make, alongside other strategies, to help them read unfamiliar words easily and enjoy reading in different indoor and outdoor areas, such as the pirate ship. Reception pupils are good at using sounds and words when sharing their chosen reading books with teachers and families at home. Older pupils read fluently and with enthusiasm. They articulate their ideas well and understand what they read. Pupils read worthwhile books appropriate for their age and ability as a result of regular checking and encouragement from the school.
- 3.8 In the EYFS pupils confidently use different resources in rice and sand trays to make shapes, moving on smoothly to writing as soon as they are able to hold a pencil. Reception class pupils quickly work their way through the alphabet, while Year 1 and Year 2 pupils apply their knowledge of the alphabet to known and unfamiliar words and practise their handwriting daily. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils select and use homophones and apply these when writing sentences. Older pupils write accurately and neatly for different purposes. For example, they used good persuasive language when producing posters about a missing child who had fallen off a ship near New Guinea as part of their work on *Kensuke's Kingdom*. They show that they can be creative and inquisitive, while making sure that they pay attention to their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills.
- 3.9 Pupils make very good progress in number work purposefully engaging in mathematical activities. Most age groups work at levels above national expectations. EYFS pupils recognise, name and count numbers successfully on a daily basis, identifying digits from zero to twenty on cue cards. They can put numbers into order and use positional language such as on, behind and beside. Year 1 and Year 2 applied their knowledge of mathematics well when using rainfall to explore and measure capacity, using different sized containers. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of mathematical operations, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to solve problems. For example, they successfully round decimals to generate simpler numbers to help them understand place value and provide good explanations about geometrical patterns.
- 3.10 Pupils are competent users of information communication technology (ICT) and apply these skills well to support their learning across other subjects, including research activities for project work. Younger pupils can control programmable robots and on-screen presentations. They confidently use programming skills to make buggies move forwards, backwards and turn in new directions through a set of previously planned instructions. Pupils also used coding effectively to move animated images on screen, including making them larger or smaller. Older pupils effectively use hand-held computers and acknowledged the positive contribution that English, mathematics and language applications make to their learning.
- 3.11 Pupils across the school demonstrate good analysis skills in English. They are able to exchange ideas, identify main themes and come to detailed conclusions on key questions surrounding the main characters of a story. They show good independent learning skills, choosing, for instance, to sit and read a book when their other activities are completed. In science, younger pupils successfully separated a flower into constituent parts, while older pupils demonstrate effective observation skills when dissecting a pig's eye. Some older pupils use informative feedback well to assess their success against planned objectives and personal targets in other subjects as well as English, addressing a

recommendation from the previous inspection in 2011. However, this is not consistent across different year groups in subjects, such as science, humanities and art. For example, older pupils in English and mathematics are able to choose the level of challenge from activities provided and then work effectively using guidance provided by the teacher.

- 3.12 Pupils steadily improve their knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. The school very successfully meets its aim for pupils to engage in adventure and investigative experiences in the school's rural environment. In the EYFS, children climb and balance with confidence. They also picked blackberries and apples from the school's own bushes and the orchard, and used them to make blackberry and apple crumble. Across the school, many pupils respond well to individualised support and make strong progress in their learning to achieve standards that are above average, particularly in English and mathematics. In some subjects, such as science, it has been less consistent and although art has very recently improved, the achievement of pupils in previous years was not as strong as it is now. Similarly, standards in music have not been as high as they could be in recent years. Current work on display and in pupils' sketch books, produced this term demonstrates that they are beginning to use a range of techniques and materials to create better quality work. This was seen in their improved use of line and texture in observational painting of plants.
- 3.13 Pupils achieve well, both academically and in wider pursuits. This is because of high quality teaching coupled with the vision of governance and leadership and management to offer a broad and suitably varied curriculum. The wider curriculum includes good opportunities for outdoor learning and a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. In one such club, pupils clearly enjoyed the chance to acquire skills in archery, and participated with enthusiasm. The number of awards pupils achieve is high in relation to the size of the school. Pupils speak proudly of others' achievements, recognising and celebrating them gladly in assemblies and in form time. Pupils flourish in public-speaking examinations, where a majority of entrants pass with merit or distinction. Both male and female pupils are successful in local schools' sport competitions in football, athletics and cross-country. Some individuals achieve highly in fencing and running events.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.14 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.15 Pupils' self-understanding is excellent, as shown in all areas, including lessons, activities, assemblies and interviews with inspectors. They show a perceptive understanding and appreciation of the school's personal development and academic values. Pupils are motivated to display these values at all times and celebrate one another's success when achieving the weekly class mascot award. For example, class awards were presented during the inspection to those who successfully displayed the two values of the week, creativity and confidence. Pupils are articulate and polite to visitors. They display high levels of self-confidence. Pupils are considerate when moving about the school buildings and thoughtfully wait their turn to play in games lessons and on play equipment.
- 3.16 Pupils' social development and ability to co-operate together and with adults are exemplary. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills. In the EYFS, children work sensibly and effectively in groups, taking it in turns to contribute ideas. This was shown well when they searched for images of the 'Naughty bus', in different areas of the classroom, after the class teacher received an email stating that the bus had visited the classroom. Pupils are able to empathise with others and are keen to contribute to others' development. This enables them to work effectively to support each other when they encounter difficulties. Pupils work well in collaborating with one another and their teachers. They readily share ideas and productively apply their skills to resolve difficult problems together. Older pupils enjoy the extensive opportunities they are given to take on responsibilities within the school.

They develop excellent self-esteem and a wide range of leadership skills when they take up roles such as house captains, librarians and digital leaders.

- 3.17 Pupils are consistently involved in their learning and their views are sought on how they and their classmates can progress further in lessons. Pupils willingly suggest ways to improve their performance, discussing what went well, what did not and what they can do to improve. They focus well on the tasks set, showing a desire to improve their understanding by asking for help as needed. Pupils know that their views are important to others, to teachers and to school leaders. During a school council meeting, pupils showed excellent understanding of decision-making as they chaired and vice-chaired the meeting with the teacher present acting as minute taker. For example, Year 6 pupils gently explained to some younger representatives who were chatting, that it was time to listen and take notice. School council minutes show that pupils have successfully requested a range of improvement, such as play tunnels to be provided in different play areas of the school. Their suggestions for consideration by the school leadership are followed up in subsequent meetings.
- 3.18 Pupils throughout the school understand and embrace the nature and benefits of being in a small school with a strong Christian ethos, as promoted by leadership and governance. From a young age, pupils are taught to value themselves and others. They are considerate and kind. Inspectors saw many examples of pupils choosing to help others in class or in the playground. Pupils care about one another and tell an adult when another child appears not to be coping. They are able to express their thoughts clearly and sensitively on concepts such as beauty, reflection and religion. They respect one another's views, listening carefully during 'sharing' times such as assemblies, and they show great respect for views they do not necessarily agree with. Pupils refer to assembly themes thoughtfully, and sensitively described a topic on empathy and the meaning it had for them. Pupils reflected on how their performance of a tribute to soldiers might affect the audience during their Remembrance Day service. They also showed empathy for those who suffered during the war, such as Anne Frank. Pupils have the confidence to question the deeper issues of life, such as understanding the reasons why trips to London have to be cancelled because of terrorist activities or demonstrations.
- 3.19 Pupils of all ages form outstanding positive relationships with one another and are able to distinguish right from wrong. Pupils deal maturely with the unexpected and make the right choices. They consistently demonstrate an excellent awareness of their role in ensuring the school is a safe place for all. Pupils effectively focus on all that is good about their school, because of regular positive feedback about their behaviour. Pupils walk to and from the dining hall and play areas sensibly. They greet their teachers politely when arriving in assembly and they sit and settle immediately. Classrooms are a hive of activity in which pupils collaborate well. Behaviour at break and lunchtime is excellent. All parents and pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour and expects pupils to behave. Older pupils confidently create games for themselves and encourage others, including younger pupils, to join in and have fun.
- 3.20 Pupils contribution to others, the school and the community is excellent. They speak enthusiastically of their individual and collaborative work within the school environment and in the wider community. They talk enthusiastically about how the school improves the lives of others and how they can support one another in making a difference in society. They understand the impact of the pupils' voice to effect changes within school and to impact positively beyond school. For instance, pupils spoke emphatically about what they had done to help fundraisers support a local charity. Pupils fulfil school duties effectively, laying and clearing tables for younger pupils. They understand the positive impact their own contributions make to the running of the school.
- 3.21 Pupils show a deep appreciation of their own culture, whilst striving to develop their knowledge of other cultures and different backgrounds. For example, they stated clearly how Turkish and Asian cultures differ because they have friends in school from these communities. From a young age, pupils are kind and respectful towards those from all faiths and heritages. Shown by the way children in the EYFS learned about China to celebrate the Chinese New Year. They made paper lanterns and identified that red is a lucky colour for the Chinese. Pupils speak sensitively of differences and are accepting of

others in their day-to-day interactions. They show a strong understanding of diversity and the importance of equality. Pupils enjoy participating in after-school clubs, including football where mixed gender pairs helped each other develop good ball control skills.

- 3.22 Pupils' understanding of staying safe and keeping healthy is excellent. Pupils talked about how they practised 'Stranger danger' before, during and after school trips. Pupils acquire the skills required to keep themselves safe. They say that they are careful when using computers, crossing roads or encountering strangers, and they are confident that they can rely on adults to support them. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the development of their physical and mental well-being through a range of sports activities on the school playing fields. They are totally secure in their understanding of healthy diet and lifestyle. Pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and the effect this has on their bodies. They enjoy spending time in the nearby swimming pool and the leisure centre facilities.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and 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

Mr Desmond Dunne	Reporting inspector
Mr Geoff Marston	Deputy reporting inspector
Mrs Cathy Braithwaite	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Nathalie Roberts	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)