



part of Independent Schools Inspectorate

British Schools Overseas

Inspection Report

King William's College

November 2024

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School's Details

College	King William's College and The Buchan School			
Address	Castletown Isle of Man IM9 1TB			
Telephone number	+44 1624 820400			
Email address	reception@kwc.im			
Headteacher	Mr Damian Henderson			
Chair of governors	Mr Peter Clucas			
Proprietor	King William's College			
Age range	2 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	434			
	Day pupils	386	Boarders	48
	EYFS	19	Juniors	126
	Seniors	206	Sixth Form	83
Inspection dates	12 to 14 November 2024			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 King William's College is a co-educational independent day and boarding school, overseen by a governing body. Boarders are accommodated in two single-sex boarding houses on the main school building. The college was founded in 1833 and has admitted female pupils since 1983. The Buchan, the college's co-educational day junior school for pupils aged 3 to 11, is on a separate site a mile away from the senior school. The junior school was originally founded as a school for female pupils in 1878, and merged with the college in 1990.
- 1.2 The Nursery became part of King William's College in September 2020. The Nursery is inspected on an annual basis by Isle of Man Manx Care Social Care Registration and Inspection Unit and did not form part of this inspection.
- 1.3 The senior school science wing was refurbished in 2022. The male pupils' boarding house moved into refurbished premises in August 2024. The Years 7 and 8 centre relocated to refurbished premises in November 2024.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school seeks to provide a first class, distinctive independent education and to prepare pupils for their future lives on and off the Isle of Man. It aims for its pupils to learn that working hard will lead to success and that they leave the school confident in their own identity, proud of their school, and eager to embark on further study, employment and service around the world.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Nationally standardised data indicates that the ability of the pupils in both sections of the school is above average compared to those taking the same tests. Most of the local pupils come from families with professional backgrounds. Most international boarders come from families with professional backgrounds in a wide range of countries. The school has identified 113 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) including dyslexia, dyspraxia and other behavioural and learning difficulties, of whom 71 receive additional support. There are 32 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 10 receive additional support. The school offers academic enrichment to all pupils, including those identified as more able.

2. Inspection of Standards for British Schools Overseas

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas (BSO). It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements. Schools may opt for an inspection of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

This is a 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 for British Schools Overseas. The standards represent minimum requirements, and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. In order to gain BSO accreditation, a school is 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. If a school does not meet all of the standards, it may elect to be re-inspected once it has taken the required actions in order to gain BSO accreditation.

Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.

Accreditation as a British School Overseas lasts for three years. The school's previous inspection was in March 2018.

Key findings

- 2.1 **The school meets all the Standards for British Schools Overseas and the Minimum Standards for Boarding (MSB) and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

Part 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**
- 2.3 The curriculum policy, plans and schemes of work meet the needs of the ages and aptitudes of pupils. Almost all parents and pupils in pre-inspection questionnaires felt the range of subjects was suitable. This curriculum equips students with diverse skills. It incorporates personal, social, health, and economic (PSHE) education, age-appropriate relationships and sex education (RSE), career guidance, and a well-rounded selection of extracurricular programmes. The curriculum is planned effectively to ensure that pupils have ample opportunities to learn, progress, and are prepared for future responsibilities and experiences in modern society. It fosters an appreciation of fundamental British values such as those of tolerance of others and mutual respect.
- 2.4 Across all age groups and abilities, pupils gain in-depth knowledge, skills, and understanding in various subjects, supported by teaching that meets the curriculum requirements of the British Schools Overseas (BSO) Standards. Children in pre-school and reception follow the seven areas of learning outlined by the English statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS). The curriculum in the junior school and in Years 7 to 9 in the upper school is based on the English national curriculum (NC). Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are prepared for IGCSE and GCSE examinations, and those in Years 12 and 13 work towards the International Baccalaureate qualifications.
- 2.5 Throughout the school, teaching typically features well-organised lessons and a secure understanding of pupils and their needs. Teachers have good subject knowledge but there is some variance in teaching methods and progress in lessons is not always uniform across subjects. Teachers use resources effectively and apply successful strategies for behaviour management. Additional support is offered to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Teaching encourages pupils to acquire new knowledge and, at its best, fosters self-motivation, engagement, and curiosity. It respects fundamental British values and ensures equality of provision for all pupils including with regard to their protected characteristics, such as their age, sex or religion.
- 2.6 Careers guidance begins in the junior school through PSHE lessons. In the senior school, pupils preparing to apply for university entrance receive effective advice. However, information on about other possible career paths is less well developed.
- 2.7 The school has a structured framework to assess pupil performance and uses standardised testing to determine pupils' academic achievement. This data informs teaching plans which support pupils' progress.
- 2.8 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' learning and achievements and the contribution that the curriculum and teaching make to these outcomes.

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

- 2.9 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and MSB 13, 17 and 21 are met.**
- 2.10 The school fosters fundamental British values, including those of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, respect, and tolerance. This contributes highly to pupils' personal growth and the positive culture of the school. The school instils principles that help pupils their build confidence and encourages pupils to make positive contributions within the school and to the local community. It

encourages respect for public institutions in the Isle of Man and England, and those countries represented by the boarding pupils. The school promotes an understanding of pupils' responsibilities as citizens of the Isle of Man and the global community.

- 2.11 Through its core values, the school helps pupils harmony between different cultural traditions, and respect for others, particularly regarding the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. A respect for democracy and the democratic process is also promoted, with political issues presented in a balanced manner, ensuring that partisan views are excluded. Responses to the parent and pupil questionnaires strongly affirm the school's commitment to its core values.
- 2.12 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' personal development and the factors which contribute to their development.

Part 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.13 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], and MSB 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.**
- 2.14 The school has effective systems in place to support the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Safeguarding procedures follow child protection policies aligned with UK statutory guidance. All staff receive comprehensive safeguarding training on joining the school, with additional sessions at the beginning of each school year and frequent updates throughout. In the questionnaire responses and interviews, staff report confidence both in the safeguarding procedures and the training provided. Safeguarding responsibilities are managed by a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) in both the junior and senior schools, each supported by a team of deputy DSLs. The governing body, in particular through a designated safeguarding governor, liaise regularly with the DSLs to review the safeguarding policy and procedures to ensure their suitability and effective implementation.
- 2.15 Confidential safeguarding records are meticulously maintained using an online management information system, with referrals to appropriate external agencies made as needed. A local charity works in partnership with the school providing a listening service and counselling. This service is valued by the many pupils, including boarders, who use it and by the safeguarding team who see it as an important safety-net for pupils who may be feeling anxious. Pupils report feeling well-informed about how to maintain their personal safety, including when online. Boarders receive additional support from boarding staff in the safe and appropriate use of social media.
- 2.16 The school ensures its relevant policies support good behaviour and actively discourage bullying by promoting core values of kindness, honesty and politeness. Rewards and disciplinary actions are appropriate, well-documented, and routinely monitored. Instances of poor behaviour are rare. Anti-bullying education initiatives are evident throughout the school and, in both the senior and junior schools, the PSHE programme educates pupils about how to respond to bullying and the harm that it can do. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of anti-bullying guidance and will often warn peers if they feel they are being unkind. Measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, and the school's response to incidents are carefully documented.
- 2.17 The school adheres to local health and safety laws and fire safety standards. A health and safety committee, which includes governors meets regularly. Records are assiduously maintained and easily accessed when required. Any remedial work required following risk assessments by external professionals is planned and checked by school leaders. An internal risk assessment policy is reviewed annually as are the associated assessments connected with, areas such as the swimming pool, science department and the use of sports facilities in the evening by boarders. In the questionnaires, a large majority of parents and pupils expressed confidence that the school provides a safe and healthy environment.

- 2.18 The school implements suitable first aid procedures that ensure adequate support for pupils who are ill or injured on school premises. A high number of staff are trained in first aid, including specific paediatric first aid training for those working with children. All first aid treatments are properly recorded, and parents are promptly informed. Medications are stored securely, and first aid kits are accessible throughout the school and available during sports events and field trips. Boarders report that they have good access to qualified personnel outside of normal school hours.
- 2.19 Staff duty rotas ensure effective supervision of pupils during breaks, lunchtimes, and other parts of the day, with staff readily available before and after school. Pupils, including boarders, confirm that staff are always accessible when needed.
- 2.20 The school maintains admission and attendance registers in accordance with local and UK requirements. These registers are backed up electronically each day and retained for the required period.

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

- 2.21 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and MSB 19 are met.**
- 2.22 Leaders ensure that all personnel working with pupils are subject to thorough safer recruitment checks in line with those required by current UK requirements. Safer recruitment training is undertaken by those responsible for employing staff. Appropriate risk assessments are put in place if a criminal record check information is delayed until after staff join the school. All checks are recorded accurately on a single central register of appointments, which is reviewed regularly by a governor who has received appropriate training.

Part 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.23 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and MSB 4, 7, 9 and 23 are met.**
- 2.24 The premises are well maintained and secure. Accommodation is well lit and the acoustics suitable. Toilet and washing facilities are appropriate for the different age groups. Suitable drinking water is supplied. The accommodation to cater for the short-term medical needs of pupils is appropriate. Pupils at both the senior school and junior school enjoy easy access to well-maintained large outdoor spaces for physical education and play. Boarding facilities offer a good standard of accommodation. Boarders either have their own room or share with one other. Bedrooms have recently been redecorated and provide suitable facilities. Social and kitchen areas are well-resourced. In the pre-inspection survey, a minority of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the boarding accommodation. The school were aware of this concern and had actioned effective remedial work which was completed before the inspection.

Part 6 – Provision of information

- 2.25 **The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and MSB 1 are met.**
- 2.26 All required information is readily available on the school's website, including contact details for the school, the principal, and the chair of governors, as well as a statement outlining the school's ethos. The school provides access to a large number of policies, including those required by the Standards. Parents or carers receive formal and informal updates on their child's progress in addition to an annual full report. Regular informative newsletters are also sent to parents.

Part 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.27 **The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and MSB 14 are met.**
- 2.28 The school implements a suitable complaints procedure which is available to parents of current pupils through its website or from the school. It provides an opportunity for concerns to be addressed informally at first, with a formal process available if issues remain unresolved. Should further action be needed, the procedure allows for a hearing before a panel to which parents may bring a friend or family member with them if they choose. The panel, which will include a person independent of the school's leadership and management, has the authority to make findings and recommendations. Confidential records of complaints are kept, documenting the actions taken by the school regardless of the outcome. The school's records show that concerns are almost always resolved informally.

Part 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.29 **The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and MSB 2 are met.**
- 2.30 The leadership and management, including governance, demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfilment of their responsibilities so that the standards for British Schools Overseas are met consistently, and the well-being of pupils is actively promoted.
- 2.31 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the impact of leadership and management on the pupils' learning, achievement and personal development.

Part 9 – Minimum Standards for Boarding

- 2.32 **The Minimum Standards for Boarding [standards 1 – 20] are met.**
- 2.33 Boarding at the school is available to secondary-age pupils. School leaders and governors collaboratively oversee boarding arrangements and ensure the welfare of boarders. A dedicated head of boarding leads the residential team, providing effective management. The school has a clear statement of its boarding principles and practices, which is well implemented and accessible to pupils, parents, and staff.
- 2.34 Boarders are provided with an effective induction process. They have access to various adults for support, including a school nurse, and are able to communicate privately with their families, with the school facilitating this when necessary. Boarders' belongings can be securely stored. Behaviour in the boarding community is good, promoted by the school's rules and culture. The boarding community makes a significant contribution to the wider school community.
- 2.35 For individuals over 16 who are not employed by the school but occasionally live on the premises, a written agreement is in place. This outlines the terms of their accommodation, expectations regarding pupil interactions, and the necessity of understanding the school's safeguarding protocols.
- 2.36 Boarders' health and wellbeing are prioritised. They have access to independent listeners and counselling services and suitable arrangements are made for boarders who become unwell. The school adheres to the required boarding standards for health and safety. Staff recruited for boarding undergo the necessary checks and supervision levels, including overnight, are appropriate.
- 2.37 The boarding facilities, many of which have been recently upgraded, provide comfortable living and sleeping arrangements. Boarders enjoy access to a variety of recreational facilities within the secure boarding area. Additionally, a diverse range of activities is available outside lesson times, including on weekends. There are well-resourced kitchens which boarders may use under guidance. Prefects receive proper training to assist with supervisory and other responsibilities and, in discussion, boarders praised the support given to them by pupil leaders.

- 2.38 Boarders can voice their opinions through a boarding committee. Most boarders reported feeling comfortable discussing concerns directly with their house parents, thanks to the warm and supportive relationships they share.
- 2.39 The boarding staff team expressed confidence in the organisation of boarding facilities and care programmes, emphasising their effectiveness in supporting boarders' welfare. Inspection findings support this view, noting that boarding plays an important role in the school's success, particularly by enriching its international community.

3. Inspection of Educational Quality

Preface

In addition to evaluating whether or not the school met all of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, this inspection evaluated the **quality** of the school's work, focusing on the two key outcomes for pupils:

- the quality of the pupils' learning and achievement;
- the quality of the pupils' personal development;

Headline judgements of educational quality include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'. In addition, the text identifies clearly the impact of the curriculum, teaching, pastoral care, leadership and management and boarding on outcomes for pupils.

As ISI inspections of British schools overseas are for the benefit of the pupils, inspections aim to:

- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain;
- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education.

The report refers to year groups in accordance with the system most commonly used in England. Where the school's own names differ from those used in England, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
P1	Reception
P2	Year 1
P3	Year 2
F1	Year 3
F2	Year 4
F3	Year 5
F4	Year 6
Lower 4	Year 7
Upper 4	Year 8
Lower 5	Year 9
Middle 5	Year 10
Upper 5	Year 11
Lower 6	Year 12
Upper 6	Year 13

Key findings

- 3.1 **The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is good.**
- 3.2 **The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.**

Recommendations

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
 - Ensure that teaching and learning strategies are consistently implemented to effectively engage pupils and promote their learning, attainment and progress.
 - Ensure that lesson planning always includes appropriate levels of challenge to give all pupils, including those with high prior attainment, the opportunity to make rapid progress in their studies.

The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement

- 3.4 **The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is good.**
- 3.5 Pupils attain well across the school, and this is reflected in the public examination results achieved by pupils. In 2024, at IGCSE and GCSE level, almost half of entries were graded A*-A/9-7, with 89% grades 9-4, comparing favourably with the national average for maintained schools in England. At IB, the average points score was 31.3, which is a little higher than the worldwide average. Fourteen percent of candidates scored 40 points or more, compared with 8.9% worldwide.
- 3.6 The majority of leavers progress to undergraduate courses at UK universities including those with challenging entry requirements. In 2024, most of Year 13 leavers went on to university, with many of those obtaining places at their first-choice institution. The remaining went to international universities or into employment, including the military. Whilst pupils are provided with extensive guidance for university applications, the information on a wider range of career options is not as well developed.
- 3.7 Pupils, including children in the early years, make very good progress at the junior school, demonstrated by the development of their skills in numeracy and literacy and their results in standardised tests. Pupils' progress remains positive overall through the senior school and, as a result, the pupils leave school well prepared to take on the challenges of further education, the opportunities of apprenticeships or the world of work.
- 3.8 The development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is good. The curriculum is suitable and broad, enhanced for younger pupils with the 'Buchan badge' lessons, a range of modern foreign language options at the senior school, and a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities for pupils of all ages. Staff use assessment data to provide older pupils with effective support when they are not making progress in line with expectations. In many lessons, pupils make good progress because teachers plan effectively to meet their needs through engaging learning activities which are adapted to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged and stretched. For example, in a Year 5 drama lesson, pupils rapidly developed their understanding of stage skills as a result of careful explanation. In a Year 12 economics lesson, pupils developed their understanding of indirect costs and benefits by considering practical applications to the real world.
- 3.9 However, in a small number of lessons, planning and teaching are less effective, sometimes because of an over-reliance on resources which are not adapted to meet pupils' needs effectively. At other times, teachers do not consider how to address misconceptions pupils might have. In some lessons, there are insufficient levels of challenge, including for those pupils with high prior attainment, to enable them to learn and progress as well as possible. In pre-inspection questionnaires, a minority of pupils felt that lessons were not always interesting. Also, in the questionnaire, a minority of boarders reported that they could not get help for their academic work during the evening. In discussion with

boarders and staff during the inspection it was evident that basic support is given but more subject-specific help with IB courses is not available unless a subject specialist is on duty.

- 3.10 Pupils who have SEND make good progress from their starting points in line with their peers because leaders plan for their needs and support is tailored to maximise the benefit to each individual pupil. Pupils who speak EAL achieve well in this aspect of their learning, due to effective recognition and support for their needs. Pupils with higher prior attainment also achieve well and make good progress, although there are variations in the extension and challenge provide for them.
- 3.11 Pupils' communication skills are excellent at all ages and stages of education. Pupils' verbal communication is notably excellent, supported by a number of planned activities. These include dramatic performances and London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) examinations, additional drama lessons, and the opportunity to present in chapel services. Pupils develop oracy skills in a range of subjects where debate is used to enhance learning. They write fluently, cogently and expressively in a range of styles. For example, in an English lesson for Year 11, pupils constructed effective newspaper articles and legal arguments in relation to their study of *Macbeth*. Pupils demonstrate excellent skills of reading and listening throughout the curriculum.
- 3.12 Pupils develop strong numeracy skills in mathematics and other subjects such as science and information and communication technology (ICT). They are confident manipulating numbers, from counting in early years to achieving success in solving increasingly sophisticated calculations at the junior school. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were challenged by undertaking various, graded number exercises, ending with a game involving physical actions finding chalk additions and subtraction in the playground. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils gathered data during an insulation experiment and then created a graph of results. Older pupils in the senior school can interpret and present data in a range of contexts, for example in a Year 7 mathematics lesson pupils made effective use of a software package to develop their understanding of the characteristics of different shapes. Pupils use and develop their mathematical knowledge with increasing confidence to the end of their school career, with all pupils continuing to study the subject for as part of their IB course.
- 3.13 Pupils' development of their competence in ICT and application to other areas of learning is good. Pupils can use software for word processing, spreadsheet analysis and to create presentations. For example, in a Year 10 biology lesson, pupils created a slideshow on the uses of diagnostic equipment in cancer detection presentations. In a Year 7 ICT lesson, pupils confidently created a chat box and enjoyed adapting it to develop their skills. In a sixth-form visual arts lesson, pupils were able to capture images of their artwork at different times to produce a time lapse portfolio of their key pieces. In the junior school, pupils have secure ICT skills which they use effectively in their lessons. They use software to draw graphs after inputting data and are tasked with quick research projects in lessons. During discussions, pupils displayed an awareness of e-safety considerations and spoke knowledgeably about the existence of false information online.
- 3.14 Pupils have good study skills. They are encouraged to take detailed notes and can analyse and synthesise well. Where pupils understand the task and have the maturity to draw conclusions or to bring together their learning from different but associated topics they do so to good effect. For example, GCSE and IB pupils studying literature were able to break down a text into parts, discuss the meaning and then compare and contrast the different literary features of the text. Sixth-form pupils studying art analysed the distinctive style of an artist through study of their works, found how their style was related to past experiences and expressed why that experience was important to the development of their techniques.
- 3.15 Pupils throughout the school are given the opportunity in each subject to develop their independent learning skills and work as part of a team. For example, in a mathematics lesson where pupils learned quicker ways to solve problems by working collaboratively. Hypothesis and analysis were seen in science where pupils were predicting the outcome of an experiment based on modelling.

- 3.16 In a number of the IB lessons, pupils demonstrated effective reasoning skills. In an economics lesson, pupils were able to consider the impacts of excess consumption and production on society. Careful reasoning of the impacts was discussed and judgements reached. In a theory of knowledge lesson, Year 13 pupils effectively analysed essay questions including 'Does acquiring knowledge destroy our sense of wonder?'; a vibrant discussion ensued about the ethics of the cultural perpetuation of the Santa Claus mythology.
- 3.17 Pupils' achievements in external competitions are strong, gaining external intellectual distinctions alongside success in sport and the arts. Leaders provide a wide range of extracurricular opportunities, and these allow for enrichment of their education and personal development. Pupils achieve a good level of achievements beyond the classroom. In the senior school, sporting success on and off the Isle of Man has been gained in rugby, netball, basketball, hockey, cross country and cricket. Prizes have been gained in mathematics Olympiads, senior and junior mathematics challenges, Model United Nations, writing and poetry competitions, and chemistry Olympiads. Strong results in LAMDA, The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) and Trinity College London music examinations combined with local drama, music and public speaking competitions are regular events. Pupils often appear in performances at the Manx theatre.
- 3.18 In the junior school, art, music and drama are also strong. For example, school choirs came first and second in the 2024 Manx music festival. Teams achieve success in netball, football, tag rugby, athletics and cross country. Achievement in writing competitions and primary mathematics challenges illustrate the whole school is gains much from its extra-curricular provision. Leaders' breadth of provision allows pupils to excel in a wide range of different activities.
- 3.19 Pupils' attitudes towards learning are excellent. In discussions with inspectors about their work, pupils spoke about how they enjoy learning new skills and increasing their knowledge. In class, they confidently raise questions, both of the teacher and their peers and are willing to change their opinion if they feel an argument is strong. When given the opportunity, their ability to demonstrate initiative and independence and their willingness to work collaboratively support the progress that they make. Pupils start and finish each lesson in a positive manner and behaviour in class is usually exemplary.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.20 **The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.**
- 3.21 Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-confidence and self-knowledge in lessons and around the school. Leaders provide them with encouragement and reassurance so that they develop strong personal resilience and understanding that they can learn from difficulties. They know how to improve in their work and are confident in expressing their opinions. They are willing to participate in the opportunities that are presented to them. Through the culture of the school, they appreciate the encouragement that is given to them by teachers to experiment, explore and suggest, and are not afraid to take appropriate risks. Boarders appreciate the role that boarding plays in developing their confidence and self-discipline through the opportunities that it provides for them to express ideas and feelings about their and other's cultures.
- 3.22 In the junior school, pupils develop self-esteem and self-confidence as they progress through the school. Pupils know how to improve their work through targets given by their teachers. They develop excellent levels of independence from an early age, as seen in outdoor learning activities, where pupils explore the natural world and experiment with such elements as fire-making in a controlled manner. Teachers are careful not to facilitate too much, so that pupils can learn how to face challenge and adversity, acquiring the skills and the resilience to keep trying.
- 3.23 Pupils are supported and enabled to make thoughtful decisions from a very early age, such as in their choice of activities during outdoor learning and in the early years. Teachers actively encourage pupils to make and consider choices and decisions. Older pupils understand that the choices they make can

have consequences for themselves and others. In a junior school PSHE lesson, pupils took part in a discussion about money and how best to use it. Pupils are effectively coached to ensure that they understand the importance of key decisions and they make informed choices about which subjects to study. They demonstrate sensible judgement and are confident that they know where they can obtain additional support to assist with their decision making. As a result, pupils develop an excellent understanding of how the decisions they make could affect their future studies and lives. Boarders make sensible choices about how to use their free time and utilise available support such as the option for extended academic study at the weekends.

- 3.24 Leaders ensure that pupils have a high level of spiritual understanding. Many pupils understand the benefits of quiet reflective time afforded by chapel services, some of which are led by pupils. Pupils understand the importance of the non-material aspects of life. They appreciate the enjoyment that an art exhibition or drama performance can bring as well as the inherent pleasure that physical exercise can give. Many have the opportunity through school trips to visit cultural sites in different parts of the world which enhances their understanding of the impact of non-material aspects of life on feeling and emotions. Pupils study the religions of the world and the school celebrates the festivals of different cultures. Charity days promote empathy for those in need. Junior school pupils are provided with excellent opportunities for spiritual reflection through the school garden with its beehives, an outdoor learning environment and the Buchan Badge extracurricular programme.
- 3.25 Pupils display excellent levels of moral understanding and are willing to take responsibility for their actions and behaviour. Pupils respect the need to live and work by a common code for the good of all. Pupils can effectively distinguish right from wrong, supported by the school's code of kindness and respect, and by PSHE lessons. For example, in anti-bullying week, pupils gave presentations about the importance of speaking out against intimidation. The behaviour of pupils during the inspection was excellent, both in lessons and the many informal gatherings around school. This is because teachers take time to discuss any friendship problems and to help pupils understand the effects of their behaviour on themselves and others.
- 3.26 Pupils show an excellent sense of social awareness. In the junior years, children develop an awareness of others and make friendships, guided by leaders' 'Buchan Charter' which encourages an ethos of kindness, helpfulness and tolerance. Opportunities to help others, such as by supporting charities, are promoted throughout the school year. For example, pupils engage in collecting toys for children in Ukraine or raising money for Children in Need. The PSHE programme encourages children and pupils to work together towards common goals.
- 3.27 In the senior school, boarders are responsible for carrying out duties that are of benefit to the boarding community such as tidying the kitchen or collecting the food. They appreciate how much this helps the houses to run smoothly. Both day and boarding senior pupils lead or help junior pupils whether it be in homework, sport or other co-curricular activities. They understand that the core values of the school are for the benefit of all and therefore conduct themselves accordingly. They take great pride in working effectively together, as in the presentation of class and house services in chapel and overcoming challenges set by The Duke of Edinburgh Award or the Combined Cadet Force (CCF).
- 3.28 Pupils make excellent contributions to the lives of others within and outside of school. Opportunities to help others, such as by supporting charities, are promoted throughout the school year, such as supporting food banks and animal sanctuaries. At the junior school, children in Year 6 help Year 3 'buddies' to settle in. Children in Year 2 operate a buddy bench and look out for anyone who may look unhappy or sad. Pupils can volunteer for roles of responsibility such as prefect, house captain and digital leader. In the senior school, pupils serve as 'buddies' to those new to the school and many become peer mentors. Pupils assume responsibilities in their boarding houses and in such organisations as the CCF, and some assume whole school responsibilities such as those of prefects or school council members.

- 3.29 Pupils willingly give up time to help others. For example, some senior pupils volunteer in charity shops and animal sanctuaries. They participate in beach cleaning initiatives and other activities as part of their Duke of Edinburgh and IB service. From an early age, pupils at the junior school develop an excellent sense of kindness, helpfulness and tolerance, which is reinforced by the staff and by the Buchan Charter. Leaders promote tolerance of all through RE and PSHE lessons, where pupils learn about other religions, cultures and festivals. The school community genuinely embraces difference and equality. In the senior school, pupils appreciate the close relationships that are formed as part of being a small community. They also learn to appreciate other cultures and respect those of different faiths or none. Boarding pupils are confident that they can discuss sensitive issues with boarding staff and, in the diverse boarding community, they learn to be mutually respectful, accepting one another as equals.
- 3.30 The international nature of the school does much to ensure that pupils gain experience of cultures other than their own. Studies in subjects such as history and PSHE deepen pupils' understanding of issues such as discrimination, prejudice, equality and rights. Because of this, pupils leave the school knowing the importance of listening to others' views and respecting cultural differences. Cultural events are celebrated throughout the year, many of which are pupil led. Such events range from local opportunities, such as making willow lanterns for the Manx torchlight processions, to international events, such as Diwali. The catering staff support this by organising themed meals to celebrate international events.
- 3.31 Pupils in both schools can choose from a wide range of nutritious food. They develop a clear understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and exercise towards keeping fit and healthy, including through the physical education (PE) and sport programme. Boarders contribute, through the boarding council, to ideas for new menus and meet with the catering staff to discuss them. Boarders have the opportunity to cook their own food at appropriate times and there is an active sharing of recipes and ideas about nutrition.
- 3.32 In the junior school, pupils are taught to stay safe in a number of ways including online safety, cyber security and road safety. The PSHE programme covers health and wellbeing and this is complemented by a wellbeing club. In the senior school, pupils learn about keeping safe through the PSHE programme and through house activities. As a result, pupils understand how to stay safe when online. They also develop a clear understanding of the importance of a healthy diet towards keeping fit and healthy. Prefects follow a rigorous training programme as to what their responsibilities are as pupil leaders. There are always members of staff to whom pupils can turn if they have problems. In the boarding houses pupils have easy access to staff in the evenings and during the night. Boarders know the systems for signing out and in as necessary. They also know the policies and procedures should they encounter problems when they are off the school campus.

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 and a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings, chapel and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick and injured pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, pupils and staff to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Gregg Davies	Reporting inspector
Mr Alex Osiatynski	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mrs Jeanette Adams	Team inspector (former deputy head, IAPS school, UK)
Mr Stephen Challoner	Team inspector (former headmaster, FOBISIA school, Thailand)
Mr Clive Thorpe	Team inspector (former assistant head, HMC school, UK)