



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports
For Schools with Residential Provision**

Wellesley House School

May 2019



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School's Details

School	Wellesley House		
DfE number	886/6001		
Registered charity number	307852		
Address	Wellesley House 114 Ramsgate Road Broadstairs Kent CT10 2DG		
Telephone number	01843 862991		
Email address	hmsecretary@wellesleyhouse.net		
Headmaster	Mr G D Franklin		
Chair of governors	Mr P Woodhouse		
Age range	6 to 13		
Number of pupils on roll	97		
	Boys	61	Girls 36
	Day pupils	42	Boarders 55
Inspection dates	14 to 16 May 2019		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Wellesley House School was founded in 1869 at Conyngham House, Ramsgate, as a boys' school. It moved to purpose-built accommodation on its current site in Broadstairs in 1898. In 1964, it became a charitable trust, overseen by a board of governors, and in 1969 it merged with St Peter's Court School. It became co-educational in 1977. As well as day provision, it continues to offer full, weekly and flexi boarding to children aged 6 to 13. The headmaster has been in post since 2017. Girl boarders are accommodated in one house. Since the previous inspection, the boys' boarding accommodation has been rearranged so that all boys are now incorporated into one house, releasing space to provide classrooms for day pupils aged 4 to 6.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to provide a high quality, broad education that opens up 'a world of possibilities' for pupils, in a caring and nurturing environment. The school aims to encourage every pupil to participate in a wide array of extra-curricular activities, creative arts and sports, with an emphasis on building resilience and self-confidence, so that by the time they leave the school they will be well-rounded, motivated young adults who will flourish at their senior schools of choice.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Both boarders and day pupils come mainly from professional families in Kent, East Sussex and London. A small minority of boarders are international pupils; of these, ten are Spanish pupils who join the school for one year in either Year 6, 7 or 8.
- 1.4 Standardised tests show the ability range of pupils is above average. The school has identified 16 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, sight and hearing impairment. One pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 20 pupils. Ten pupils receive additional support and, for the remainder, their needs are supported by their class teachers. Those pupils identified by the school as being the most able in the school's population have their needs met through the school curriculum, scholarship classes and extra-curricular provision.

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. 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.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools ('boarding NMS'). It also comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

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, including the boarding NMS, 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, including the boarding NMS. 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, together with the NMS covering the same areas. 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](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), [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, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 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. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.6 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are 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 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.9 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 2–4, 6–12, 15 and 16 are met.**

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.11 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.13 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 5 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.14 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. These include details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any pupils with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. They also include particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.15 **The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and statement of boarding principles [NMS 1] are met.**

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.17 **The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.19 **The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are 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. Omit the following if the school uses National Curriculum nomenclature. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Block 1	Year 8
Block 2	Year 7
Block 3	Year 6
Block 4	Year 5
Junior House	Year 3 and 4

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- Pupils' outstanding attitudes to learning have a significant impact on the progress and achievements they make.
 - Pupils have communication skills of a high order.
 - Pupils demonstrate excellent skills across the curriculum, particularly in the aesthetic and creative subjects.
 - Older pupils have sophisticated levels of analytical and critical thinking skills.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils fully embody the values of the school in demonstrating tolerance, respect and kindness in the way they live their day to day lives.
 - Pupils are very socially aware, supporting one another for mutual success.
 - Pupils demonstrate high degrees of self-confidence and resilience ready to meet the challenges they will face.
 - Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of the importance of self-reflection both in terms of governing their own behaviour and in making appropriate and wise choices.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:
- Furthering the development of knowledge and skills for the younger pupils by improving the tracking and monitoring system, so that teaching is fully matched to their individual needs.

The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Older pupils demonstrate outstandingly positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to engage with the tasks set, initiate questions during discussion and carry out research, producing work showing high levels of independence. Pupils demonstrate real enthusiasm for improving their work, seen in the positive responses they give to comments in teachers' marking. They also clearly enjoy the opportunities they are given to study collaboratively, for example in creating their own musical compositions. Pupils take real leadership in their own learning, when given the opportunity. This was seen in some outstanding art work, where pupils followed their own interests and skills in developing their understanding of surrealism, through the use of a variety of different techniques in printing. Pupils seek advice when required, from their peers or their teachers, and discuss errors openly in class. This is because teachers encourage pupils to take risks, and they support developing thought processes by asking appropriate open-ended questions; as a result, pupils can work things out for themselves in a relaxed but purposeful learning environment. The boarding experience further helps pupils in acquiring excellent attitudes to learning. Boarders show high levels of aptitude for independent study, seen in their beautifully drawn up revision timetables. This is because they are given appropriate boundaries and space to work on their own initiative, whilst also being closely monitored and appropriately supported.

- 3.6 Pupils have excellent communication skills; they speak with considerable confidence in lessons, reading fluently and with expression. By the time they leave, the oldest pupils have developed sophisticated writing styles, and are able to justify their opinions in essays and write creatively. Older pupils can identify the requirements for persuasive writing in journalism, or identify language structures such as alliteration and imagery that will entice the reader into their story. Younger pupils read their compositions expressively, showing understanding of poetic style and structure. This is because of the enthusiasm, encouragement and, in most cases, the challenge offered by the teaching, so that the pupils strive to do their best without fear of failure. They are engaged by well-chosen tasks with topics that interest them. Pupils articulate their thoughts when discussing ethical issues, such as their choice of different types of diet; they also demonstrated the ability to listen carefully to others and value different opinions. Pupils develop their high levels of competence in reading because of the many opportunities outside the classroom, including in chapel and in school competitions such as poetry recitation.
- 3.7 By the time they leave, pupils have highly developed study skills. For example, they use a wide variety of sources to carry out independent research, such as when exploring the reign of Queen Mary 1. They offer hypotheses to suggest why there may be differences in the angle of incline for different kinds of beaches. They synthesised information from texts to explain the metaphorical language of poetry, and they summarised information from texts when writing about ospreys. Pupils demonstrated excellent analytical and logical thinking skills when identifying parts of a Latin sentence to translate correctly. This is because in most lessons they are given appropriately challenging tasks by their teachers who support them in testing out their emerging ideas with gentle praise and encouragement. This occurs because of the emphasis by the school leadership on pupil participation. Pupils also have access to a variety of resources and environments to support independent study such as libraries, local beaches and the school weather station.
- 3.8 The older pupils have excellent basic skills in most of the areas of learning, and these are particularly high in creative, aesthetic and linguistic subjects. In Latin, pupils demonstrated strong knowledge of appropriate vocabulary and a good understanding of grammatical structure to translate passages accurately. Younger pupils demonstrated their ability to quickly acquire new vocabulary and work out the roots of this vocabulary, during a history lesson, by comparing both Latin and French words with which they were familiar. This is because of the excellent knowledge of subject specialists who plan well. The younger pupils have secure skills in all of their areas of learning. On a very few occasions, pupils had less opportunity to respond to tasks independently and, as a result, pupils consolidated their learning rather than developing it further, as the tasks they were set were not always well matched to their age and ability.
- 3.9 The school does not participate in National Curriculum tests but observations from lessons, scrutiny of books and the schools' own tracking and assessment data, shows that pupils' attainment is well above average, by the time they leave the school. Pupils of all abilities make rapid progress across all areas of learning from their starting points. Pupils with SEND make equally rapid progress because of the support they are given targeted to their individual needs. Those with EAL make rapid progress so that they can achieve in line with their peers. This was seen in lessons where short-term progress was excellent because of appropriate support and interventions, such as use of subject-specific dictionaries and glossaries in science. Very occasionally, progress for the younger pupils, within individual lessons, was not as great when teaching did not focus fully on their individual needs. Pupils consistently gain places at their first-choice selective senior schools and some obtain scholarships. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire before the inspection felt that teaching supported progress, including their boarding experience.

- 3.10 Pupils have excellent information, communication and technology (ICT) skills. They use a wide variety of techniques including spread sheets, word processing and publishing programs as well as being able to code to a high level. Pupils use their skills to enhance their learning in other subjects, for example using coding in French to create a quiz. Other ICT skills support geography and history projects. This is because of the specialist teaching and the promotion in the school of ICT as a subject in itself and as a tool to enhance learning.
- 3.11 Pupils have excellent mathematical skills. Younger pupils are confident in the four methods of computation and fractions. The older pupils are successfully tackling advanced algebra. Pupils are able to skilfully apply their basic mathematical skills in other subjects, such as in humanities, to allow them to complete complex analysis of data. For example, pupils collected weather readings to analyse the effect of pressure on rainfall. Pupils deepen their understanding of number and how it is applied in real-life situations because they are given many opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum. They are also given experience of a number of mathematical competitions which challenge them further.
- 3.12 Pupils achieve highly in activities outside the school curriculum, both in teams or as individuals; this supports the school's aims to provide a broad education that opens up a world of possibilities for all. A number of pupils have achieved notable individual success in academic and all-round scholarships or in sport, music and art. Individuals and teams have won local and national competitions in sport, art, mathematics and science. Pupils benefit from the extensive range of clubs and other opportunities, the support they receive and the facilities available to them, including to boarders in the evenings, when they can enjoy art, music and some sports facilities. The vast majority of pupils felt that the school offered an excellent range of extra curricula activities.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils very capably and sensitively enact one of the fundamental school values in their highly developed sense of respect for all others within their school. They appreciate that others may hold different personal beliefs and values. They enjoy sharing in celebrations of their friends' different cultural backgrounds. This is because of the opportunities their own school community gives them to experience diversity, and through lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious studies. Pupils have a clear understanding of their role in being responsible members of a community. On their own initiative they seek to spread kindness by raising funds which benefit the lives of others in the wider school society. The oldest pupils all have positions of responsibility, which they take seriously. The vast majority of parents of boarding pupils felt that boarding had contributed positively to their child's personal development. Almost all pupils felt the school helped them to develop tolerance and respect for others.
- 3.15 Pupils demonstrate high levels of social confidence and competence, developed through the current leadership's emphasis on the importance of being a team and on the sense of being a strong family community. Pupils spoke about how they were encouraged not just to develop sports skills but to work with others, 'winning is nice but competing together is more important.' Pupils were seen to have collaborated effectively in a French lesson, to produce a rap celebrating the 'present tense'. The oldest pupils are delighted to practise their understanding of manners and social discourse, in weekly suppers with the headmaster and his wife. Team work is further promoted through weekly celebrations for the 'team of the week'. This can be for any team whether that be the 'maths' teams, as seen during the inspection, or for sports teams. During the inspection, pupils were observed responding to the sports captains, recognising and respecting their leadership. Boarding pupils are very aware of the different needs of their friends and extremely encouraging of them, supporting one another in music practice and examination preparation; they are a vibrant community. The strong social relationships pupils have with one another are echoed in the positive relationships they have with their teachers.
- 3.16 Pupils articulated a clear understanding of their own strengths and interests, demonstrating high levels of self-confidence. They are self-reflective and acquire an excellent level of self-knowledge of themselves as learners. In science, in an extension activity, pupils were asked to reflect on the science equipment which they used and consider which was the most difficult for them to use. Pupils have a detailed understanding of ways to improve their learning because of the consistent feedback to them through 'industry grades'. They develop self-discipline because of the extremely broad range of experiences and opportunities offered through activities and in the co-curricular programme ranging, for example, from cookery to shooting, and horse riding to art clubs. These opportunities allow pupils to test their own personal limits, discover their passions and build resilience. They are well prepared for the next steps in their 'journey to the stars' – in line with the school motto – as well-rounded and motivated young people.
- 3.17 Pupils show a strong grasp of the implications of their choices. They know that poor choices have consequences because of their use of self-reflection as part of the sanction system. Older pupils quoted from the Robert Frost poem, *The Road Not Taken*, when explaining how they were influenced in making wise choices, about the methods and time they give to private study, and about preparation for examination success. This is underpinned by a school culture which balances opportunities for independence with supportive guidance on study skills. Pupils reviewed how much outstanding work they had to do, compared to the time in which they had to catch up. Pupils understand the importance of listening to a variety of views about healthy lifestyles and ethical issues before making their own decisions.

- 3.18 Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of a physically and mentally healthy life style. They make positive choices to be active or creative, and see them as opportunities to relax away from work. They make appropriate choices about a balanced healthy diet because of the sign-posted menus in the dining hall. They know how to be safe in their wider environment through initiatives such as beach safety courses and swimming safety week. Boarders live particularly active lives away from the influence of modern technology, with much encouragement to use the school facilities and grounds in the evenings.
- 3.19 Pupils have a deep spiritual understanding nurtured by their immersion in the natural world, whether this be through their experiences when they visit the beach, just taking time to lie in the orchard appreciating the flowers or building camps, and being in an imaginary world with their friends at break on mud hill. Some outstanding examples of their strong appreciation of the non-material were seen in the pupils' imaginative artistic responses to tasks, or their articulation of the fact that poetry can be just to enjoy language and not to discover a deeper meaning. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the opportunities for reflection given by chapel assemblies, whether this be on matters of personal faith or an individual response to the theme.
- 3.20 Pupils have an outstanding grasp of the importance of a strong personal moral code of conduct. This is because of their keen sense of ownership of the school's values which are embedded in the practices introduced by the current leadership which guide much of the pupils' behaviour. Pupils carry out random acts of kindness, not for reward but for the intrinsic value of contributing to their strong community. Pupils have highly developed personal value systems and a sense of justice because they are encouraged to reflect on the ethical questions and dilemmas both in the religious studies programme, school and chapel assemblies. The vast majority of pupils and parents thought that the school actively promotes good behaviour.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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 Vivien Sergeant	Reporting inspector
Mrs Sarah Skevington	Compliance team inspector (Head, GSA school)
Miss Nicola Cornish	Team inspector (Academic deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr Timothy Cannell	Team inspector for boarding (Headmaster, IAPS school)