



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

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

Wycliffe College (Senior School)

September 2022

Contents

School's Details		3
1. Background Information		4
About the school		4
What the school seeks to do		4
About the pupils		4
2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection		5
Preface		5
Key findings		6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided		6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils		6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors		7
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools		7
PART 6 – Provision of information		7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled		7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools		7
3. Educational Quality Inspection		8
Preface		8
Key findings		8
Recommendation		8
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements		8
The quality of the pupils' personal development		10
4. Inspection Evidence		13

School's Details

College	Wycliffe College			
DfE number	916/6018			
Registered charity number	311714			
Address	Wycliffe College Bath Road Stonehouse England GL10 2JQ			
Telephone number	01453 822432			
Email address	senior@wycliffe.co.uk			
Head	Mr Nick Gregory			
Chair of governors	Mr Simon Lloyd			
Age range	13 to 19			
Number of pupils on roll	395			
	Day pupils	208	Boarders	187
	Seniors	232	Sixth Form	163
Inspection dates	21 to 23 September 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The senior school at Wycliffe College is an independent co-educational day and boarding school originally founded in 1882. The college occupies a 54-acre site, which includes the preparatory school. Pupils belong to one of eight houses, comprising three for male pupils, three for female pupils, a co-educational sixth form house and a co-educational day house. The school is an educational charity, governed by trustees. A new chair of governors was appointed in 2021. An inspection of the preparatory school was carried out at the same time.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 Wycliffe's vision is for pupils to fulfil their potential. It aims for them to be happy and secure, to become good communicators and to be creative, innovative and independent. Pupils are encouraged to have a social and environmental conscience, to show self-belief, to take responsibility, to be generous of spirit and respectful of others.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Day pupils mainly come from professional and business families living within 30 miles of the school; boarders come from a wide variety of countries. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability profile of the senior school is above average and that the ability profile of the sixth form is slightly below average.
- 1.4 Five pupils have an education, health and care plan. The school has identified 135 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, of whom 39 receive specialist individual learning support for a variety of learning disabilities, the majority of which relate to mild to moderate dyslexia. There are 98 pupils who speak English as an additional language, 60 of whom receive specialist support. Data used by the school have identified 34 pupils as being the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 15 other pupils because of their special talents in sport.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Additionally, inspections report 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. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are 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 FOCUSED 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 standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

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

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

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#).

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 2022 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's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2019 to 2022 confirm that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 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. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 2.4 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.6 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. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 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. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 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, and NMS 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.**

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

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 and 22 are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for 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.
- 2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4, 7 and 23 are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

- 2.17 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.18 The standards relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.**

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 2.19 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.
- 2.20 The standards relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 2 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.

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

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

Key findings

3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptionally positive.
- Pupils' study skills are a significant strength.
- Pupils' strong communication skills play a key role in their levels of achievement.
- Pupils are confident and creative users of information and communications technology (ICT) which greatly aids their learning across many areas.

3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils demonstrate excellent self-knowledge, self-discipline, self-esteem and resilience.
- Pupils develop excellent social and collaborative skills through all aspects of school life.
- Pupils have highly developed moral understanding and take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Pupils develop very strong decision-making skills.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Enable pupils to further their understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion by ensuring they receive opportunities to contribute their views as the school embeds its initiatives in this area.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

3.5 Pupils' attitudes to learning are decidedly positive; they are highly productive in individual and collaborative work, showing a strong ability to sustain their focus and application. This was evident in many lessons, including A-Level mathematicians asking probing questions to further develop their algebraic skills and in work seen from a GCSE English pupil who had rewritten paragraphs based on teacher feedback, thus demonstrating commitment and determination to develop. Pupils express appreciation of the school encouraging them to set challenging targets for themselves and giving them a framework for improvement through the use of the school's published criteria for learning engagement. They also value the high quality of pastoral and academic support available to them, whether from the Learning Support or EAL departments, from teachers encouraging involvement in

challenging academic or creative endeavours or assistance with applications to a wide range of further education courses. Positive pupil-teacher relationships are evident both in the classroom and in boarding houses; this promotes an environment where pupils can thrive in their academic development and personal growth.

- 3.6 Pupils plan and organise their work effectively; they read critically and reflect on knowledge acquired. They embrace opportunities to develop their thinking and reasoning skills and enjoy applying these skills to new areas of learning including in co-curricular clubs. Of particular note is the development of independent learning and time management through the Year 9 project which lays a secure foundation for pupils' studies at GCSE and beyond. Examples include a visual presentation on how fungi can be used to fight climate change and a study of how art has changed in Europe since the 1400s. These skills are also evident in the high quality of pupils' Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) submissions including those on the impact of the COVID pandemic on professional football, equine veterinary medicine and photo-realism in video games. Pupils embrace opportunities to develop their thinking and reasoning skills and enjoy applying these skills to new areas of learning including in co-curricular clubs.
- 3.7 Pupils' strong communication skills play a key role in their levels of achievement. This is aided by the school's literacy and oracy strategies which include extensive use of discussion in lessons and many opportunities in the wider life of the school to make presentations. This includes house and extra-curricular activities and pupil-led presentations in chapel. Pupils' excellent oral communication skills were a feature in many lessons observed and also in discussions with inspectors where they expressed their thoughts and opinions with assurance. In a lesson on the use of persuasive writing, Year 9 pupils used a range of vocabulary to articulate their ideas confidently and with maturity. Year 10 business studies pupils debated the key characteristics of entrepreneurs, leading to an in-depth consideration of what it takes to be a risk-taker in business. Pupils are able to articulate their understanding clearly, making effective use of subject specific vocabulary. They listen sensitively and carefully, reflecting on the contributions of others and allowing this to inform their own thinking.
- 3.8 Pupils are confident and creative users of information and communications technology (ICT) which greatly aids their learning across many areas. This arises from the choices made by the school's leadership and management to invest heavily in ICT infrastructure and training. Pupils benefit from a range of technologies that supplement and enhance aspects of the school's teaching philosophy. This allows staff to use various applications to share resources, assess work and provide detailed feedback online to pupils, including verbal feedback. The pupils are encouraged to reflect on their online work and were seen responding thoughtfully to teachers' assessments in order to improve their individual assignments further. Pupils are clearly comfortable in the digital world, and move seamlessly across different learning platforms.
- 3.9 Pupils apply their well-developed numeracy skills across the curriculum and in their wider lives. A high level of mathematical skills was evident from scrutiny of pupils' work, including their own notes and summaries. In a Year 10 biology lesson pupils confidently and quickly calculated mean averages without support from the class teacher whilst conducting a double-blind trial. The development of strong numeracy skills is supported by the school's careful screening of new pupils to identify any gaps in their knowledge and by the provision of targeted support. Pupils attend a range of co-curricular opportunities offering mathematics related activities as seen in those engaged with enthusiasm in the green power racing club. This reflects the school's view of numeracy as 'how maths is used in the real world'.
- 3.10 Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of the curriculum. They demonstrate secure retrieval skills to deploy relevant knowledge in response to questions. Their essay skills and writing techniques develop to a high standard over time as seen in A-Level history essays and in Year 9 projects and (EPQ) essays. These demonstrate a well-honed ability to analyse, synthesise and hypothesise and to support arguments with relevant evidence. Pupils' practical and creative skills are excellent, as shown in stunning artwork around the school and in their

film studies projects. These were also evident in a Year 12 drama lesson where pupils displayed a high level of understanding of different internal and external techniques that can be used in scripting a performance. In their questionnaire responses almost all parents agreed that teaching enables their child to make progress. In discussion, pupils agreed with this, expressing appreciation for the support and encouragement offered by their teachers.

- 3.11 Pupils' levels of attainment, as indicated by the evidence from lesson observations, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work, together with standardised measures of progress, show that they make excellent progress over time. This is in line with the school's aim to encourage individuals to flourish. Results at GCSE, A-Level and in BTEC examinations and assessments in 2019 and the teacher and centre-assessed grades in 2020 and 2021 show that pupils achieve above the national average for maintained schools. There are no significant differences between defined groups of pupils or areas of learning. Across the school the achievement of pupils with SEND is strong and at least in line with that of their peers because of the care taken to identify their particular needs and the provision of high levels of support. A significant factor in these high levels of achievement is the school's robust systems for monitoring progress, a recommendation from the previous inspection, together with a curriculum providing a range of subjects suited to the needs and aspirations of all pupils. The school's unified teaching philosophy and integrated academic and pastoral systems also play a key role in these outcomes.
- 3.12 Pupils' achievement across the curriculum and in a range of sporting, creative and co-curricular activities is excellent. Individuals achieve well academically, for instance in national maths, physics, chemistry, and art, design and technology competitions. High levels of success have been achieved individually at national, regional and county level in a range of sports including netball, hockey, rugby, swimming, rowing and squash. This is aided by the school's excellent provision of sports facilities and coaching resources. Pupils achieve notable success in the performing and creative arts, including selection to regional and national ensembles and considerable success in national drama and music examinations. This is facilitated by the school's strong commitment to offering an outstanding range of activities beyond the classroom which not only provide opportunities for pupils to excel in areas of particular strength but which also reinforce and develop learning skills and attitudes that support their academic and personal development. Pupils are successful in gaining places on a wide range of competitive degree courses including in Europe and North America.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils develop an excellent understanding of how to improve their learning and performance, so that they are well-prepared for the next stage of their lives and face it with a calm assuredness. They acknowledged that the school offers them many opportunities to try new activities and to engage in sporting and collaborative creative pursuits. They say that this enables them to get to know themselves, develop a sense of how they fit into the world and discover where their interests and talents lie. They expressed the view that the school values commitment and expects pupils to show determination and feel that this, along with being supported and trusted, prepares them well for their future.
- 3.15 Pupils develop excellent social and collaborative skills through all aspects of school life whether in lessons, co-curricular activities or when engaged in house activities. This was seen in preparations for 'House Song' which took place during the course of the inspection, presenting opportunities for new members of the house to become integrated and involved. These skills are also facilitated by the centrality of house life which encourages teamwork through responsibilities such as chapel presentations, deciding on which charity the house should support or on bids for funding to take to the parents' association. Collaborative working is a significant feature of lessons and pupils engage readily with this as seen in a Year 13 biology lesson where pupils worked together through practice

exam questions applying a recently introduced equation. Pupils also embrace the many opportunities for collaboration and team working presented through co-curricular activities, as seen for example in during guitar club where highly effective pupil leadership could be seen in them organising and leading a group performance.

- 3.16 Pupils have a strong moral understanding. They take responsibility for their own behaviour, appreciating that this contributes to the quality of relationships within the school community. This was evident from the exemplary behaviour inspectors observed throughout the school. Pupils are aware of their role in making the right decisions and the importance of knowing what is right and wrong, as demonstrated by their punctuality to lessons and activities without adult prompting. They spoke appreciatively about how the older boarders mentor the younger ones in houses and naturally coach them in choosing wisely when faced with difficult decisions. Pupils have the confidence to challenge any inappropriate behaviour and appreciate how the school sanctions such incidents, whilst making sure that the individuals in question are educated to make the right choices in the future. In their questionnaire responses, most parents agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour. Most pupils agreed that the school expects pupils to behave well. Inspectors found that the school monitors behaviour effectively and uses an appropriate range of sanctions where required.
- 3.17 Pupils understand that making good decisions is instrumental to their own success and well-being. They demonstrate an awareness that hard choices can be more beneficial than easy ones and acknowledge that they can influence their own destiny. Pupils are supported in making choices to maximise their learning and development through the synergy between academic and pastoral structures in the school, the sense of belonging to their house, whether as a boarder or day pupil, and through the carefully planned tutorial programme. Pupils appreciate opportunities to make their own decisions from an early stage in their career in the school, for instance in selecting from the wide range of co-curricular options available. Older pupils demonstrate excellent awareness of the need to look ahead to life after school and show a determination to put themselves in the most positive position to achieve their aspirations. They feel fully supported in this by the school and are aware of the importance of developing self-management skills.
- 3.18 Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on responsibilities and to contribute to the lives of others both within the school and in the local and wider community and they express a sense of satisfaction in doing so. In school this has included initiating new clubs for the co-curricular programme, being part of the School Council or becoming a peer mentor. In the local and wider community pupils enjoy raising funds for their chosen house charity, being part of the gardening club, spending time in local nursing homes and taking part in the annual 'Make a Difference Day'. Pupils relish opportunities to take on leadership roles as team captains in a range of sports or within their houses. Staff report that they take these very seriously, making a genuine contribution to the well-being of others in the house. The school clearly places significant emphasis on the benefits of volunteering and on the moral purpose of giving back to the community.
- 3.19 Pupils value and respect cultural diversity, which they experience on a daily basis given the school's international community. Almost all parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. In discussion, pupils from diverse cultural backgrounds said that they felt wholly welcomed and integrated. Pupils are also aware of and understand the concept of neurodiversity, commenting that people are not judged on the basis of their differences. Boarders enjoy house theme nights when food or activities from other cultures are shared. A significant event in the life of the school is the annual international fair and more recently further opportunities have been created for pupil involvement in initiatives being developed through the bid to become a Round Square school. In discussion, pupils felt that the school would not tolerate discrimination and stated that rare examples of intolerance are challenged appropriately by the school. Inspectors found that overall pupils are highly respectful towards each other. They are ready to contribute to the school's initiatives on equality, diversity and inclusion which are aimed at engaging pupils, parents and staff to work collaboratively for the benefits of the community.

- 3.20 Pupils' spiritual development is evident from the way in which they spoke of reflecting on themes addressed in chapel services which are clearly central to life at Wycliffe and involve groups of students from each house contributing weekly presentations on themes such as doing good and thinking globally but acting locally. Pupils suggested that being spiritual is not necessarily the same as being religious, stating that spirituality can include mindfulness, seeing other viewpoints, being at peace with yourself and your beliefs and growing in self-understanding. They felt that happiness, close relationships and leaving something of value to the next generation all give meaning to life. Their appreciation of the non-material aspects of life is also reflected in their enjoyment of congregational singing in chapel and some also choose to attend a weekly eucharist there.
- 3.21 Pupils of all ages have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Most parents agreed that the school encourages their child to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are taught through the life skills course about how to keep safe online and all successfully undertake a certificated online safety course. The school's active promotion of physical and mental health and its advocacy of a sleep, diet and exercise regime is seen by pupils as something that also enhances their academic achievement. The school provides pupils with abundant information on healthy lifestyles through extensive opportunities for physical activity within and beyond the curriculum, the content of the life skills course and reinforcement of this through house and tutorial advice as was confirmed by many pupils in discussion with inspectors. It also provides many additional sources of support including the peer mentor system, mental health first aid training, the health centre and school counselling service. Although a very small minority of pupils did not agree that the school encourages them to be healthy, inspectors found that opportunities for an active lifestyle and the provision of healthy food choices are abundant.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended chapel. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Elizabeth Thomas	Reporting inspector
Mr Timothy Cannell	Compliance team inspector (Former headmaster, IAPS school)
Mr Jason Lewis	Team inspector (Principal, Society of Heads school)
Mrs Ruth Coomber	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mr Adam Reid	Team inspector for boarding (Deputy head, association school)