



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

GREENFIELDS SCHOOL

JANUARY 2017



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Greenfields School			
DfE number	845/6017			
Registered charity number	287037			
Address	Greenfields School Priory Road Forest Row East Sussex RH18 5JD			
Telephone number	01342 822189			
Email address	info@greenfieldsschool.com			
Executive Headteacher	Mr Jeff Smith			
Chair of trustees	Mr Peter Hodkin			
Age range	2 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	139			
	Boys	68	Girls	71
	Day pupils	113	Boarders	26
	EYFS	36	Juniors	47
	Seniors	50	Sixth Form	6
Inspection dates	18 to 19 January 2017			

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.

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 following their inspection 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.

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.

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 an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting 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.

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 the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. 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'.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and trustees, and observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period. Inspectors visited the boarding house and the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Graham Sims	Reporting inspector
Mr Paul Bate	Team inspector (Former head, ISA school)
Mrs Susan La Farge	Team inspector (Head, ISA school)
Dr Stephen Wilkinson	Team inspector (Director of studies, HMC school)
Dr Steve Bailey	Team inspector for boarding (Head, IAPS school)

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Greenfields School is an independent day and boarding school for boys and girls aged between 2 and 18 years. It is run as a charitable trust and is administered by a board of governors comprising five trustees, two trust managers and a part-time consultant. Since the previous inspection, the school has constructed a new teaching block for the Junior School and appointed a new executive headteacher in September 2015.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1981 in response to parental demand for a school using the educational methods (known as 'Study Technology') of L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology. Located in 11 acres of woodland near Forest Row, the school welcomes pupils of all faiths. The school is divided into six sections: Pre-school and Reception, for children up to the age of five in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); Infants, for pupils in Years 1 and 2; Juniors, Years 3 to 6; Lower Seniors, Years 7 to 9; Upper Seniors, Years 10 and 11; and Sixth Form, Years 12 and 13. In addition, pupils who join the school speaking little or no English may join a mixed-age group for speakers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) until they have learnt sufficient English to join their normal year group. The school has a boarding house, with separated accommodation for up to 40 boys and girls.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school seeks to arm pupils with essential knowledge and skills, and to develop their ability to apply these skills to new situations so that they are equipped to follow whatever path they choose in life. It also aims to instil in all pupils self-confidence, industriousness, responsibility, tolerance, a moral and ethical compass and the ability to communicate freely. The school acknowledges the uniqueness of every child and seeks to provide tailor-made pastoral and academic programmes of study for each individual and to ensure pupils are happy throughout their time at the school.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. A large minority of pupils are attracted by the school's individual approach, having experienced difficulties in their previous schools. Around one-quarter come from overseas with the express intention of learning English. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils on entry is broadly average. The school has identified three pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provides them with additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.6 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was a standard inspection in March 2011. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Implement the marking policy and monitor its application and effectiveness.
 - Increase the number and variety of the extra-curricular activities.
 - In the EYFS, continue to develop learning opportunities in the outside area.

- In the EYFS, develop systems of self-evaluation to include the monitoring of teaching in all six areas of learning.
- 1.7 The school has partially addressed these recommendations. Further detail is in given in the main text of the report.
- 1.8 The recommendation of the intermediate boarding inspection in March 2013 was:
- provide a greater variety of snacks for the boarders during the evening.
- 1.9 The school has successfully met the recommendation of the previous boarding inspection.

2. KEY FINDINGS

2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is sound.

- The school is particularly successful in helping pupils who have previously experienced social and academic difficulties to develop the confidence to study and to enjoy their time at school.
- The school's EFL provision enables pupils who arrive speaking little or no English to make rapid progress in learning English and to integrate quickly into mainstream classes.
- Pupils' ability to write at length and in different styles is below the expected level in the Junior School; the number of GCSE passes per pupil at grade C or above is below the average for maintained schools.
- The school has introduced a new marking policy and new systems for assessing pupils' progress, but their implementation is not being monitored rigorously enough to identify where and how pupils' progress and the quality of teaching might be improved.
- Pupils acquire positive attitudes to learning and are keen to contribute, but do not have a wide range of opportunities to extend their extra-curricular achievements.

2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.

- The school's pastoral care programme helps pupils to develop self-esteem, discipline and self-confidence and to reflect on their own behaviour and attitudes to work.
- Pupils have a good understanding of moral and ethical issues; they seek to live out 'the golden rule' and collaborate well with each other.
- Pupils show respect for each other and value the diversity of backgrounds and cultures present within the school.
- Pupils enjoy contributing to the life of the school, but have limited opportunities to develop leadership skills which test their ability to make decisions and use their initiative.

Recommendations

2.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Monitor the implementation of the school's assessment systems and marking policy, analyse the information these provide about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, and take steps to improve any identified areas of weakness.
- Improve the quality of pupils' extended writing in the Junior School.
- Improve the range of pupils' academic and extra-curricular achievements.
- Provide greater opportunity for pupils to develop leadership skills which test their ability to make decisions and use their initiative.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is sound.
- 3.2 One of the school's aims is to provide an education which helps pupils who have experienced difficulties, academically or socially, in their previous school to flourish and to achieve results to the level of their potential. The school is particularly successful in fulfilling this aim and helps such pupils to develop the ability and confidence to study, to enjoy their time at school and to gain a sense of achievement. Many of the pupils interviewed during the inspection explained how the supportive atmosphere, the non-judgemental acceptance by other pupils and the individual attention provided by the school staff had helped them to settle and to make progress at school. Some also attributed their academic progress to the application of 'study technology', the school's unique approach to helping staff and pupils to understand barriers to learning as propounded by the philosopher and educator L. Ron Hubbard.
- 3.3 The pupils who arrive, usually in the Senior School, speaking little or no English join a dedicated mixed-age EFL class, where they receive most of their teaching for six months to a year. They quickly gain sufficient fluency in English to join mainstream classes as a result of the support provided by the school. At the time of the inspection, there were only six pupils in this group, but various pupils who spoke to the inspectors and who had previously been in the EFL class demonstrated clearly through their fluent English that this introduction to the language had been highly successful and had equipped them well to participate fully in lessons alongside native speakers of English. As most of these pupils are boarders, the communal experiences of life as a boarder also play a significant role in helping them acquire fluency in the language.
- 3.4 Pupils in the Senior School benefit from the flexible curriculum provided by the school, fulfilling one of the school's key aims of providing a tailor-made academic programme for each pupil. In Years 10 and 11, for example, a flexible timetable allows for wide variation in the number of GCSE courses taken by pupils; in the previous school year, the number ranged from one to ten subjects. Whilst the two most able pupils achieved GCSE passes in more than eight subjects, the large majority of which were at grades A and A*, the other nine pupils in the year group achieved between one and four GCSE passes at grade C and above. An analysis of the school's results for the years 2014 to 2016 indicates that GCSE performance was broadly average in terms of the grades achieved, but that the number of passes achieved by each pupil at grade C and above was below the average for maintained schools. Some pupils stay on into the sixth form while others leave at the end of Year 11 to continue their education at another college or to take up employment. Over the previous three years, each pupil in the sixth form has taken between one and four A levels. Grades achieved vary widely but just under half have been at grades A or B. The number of examinations taken over the last three years is too low to make meaningful comparisons with the national average for maintained schools. Some pupils gain places at university, while others choose to enter employment or pursue other interests.
- 3.5 Pupils make sound progress in the EYFS and in the Infant and Junior Schools. By the end of the EYFS, around two-thirds of children reach the expected level of development for their age. Available evidence shows attainment by the end of Year 6 to be similar to national age-related expectations in core areas of the primary curriculum, but pupils' ability to write at length, creatively and in a different range of styles is below the expected level. The teaching in the Infant and Junior Schools adopts a methodical approach to developing pupils' basic skills, making heavy use of workbooks and worksheets to enable individual pupils to work at their own level. It emphasises the technical aspects of writing, such as grammar and punctuation, but does not allow enough time for pupils to work on their extended writing skills.

- Pupils' written work shows limited range of achievement in technological, human and social sciences.
- 3.6 The Senior School adopts a similarly methodical approach to developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Subjects are broken down into units of work, each of which has its own check-sheets and checkpoints through which pupils have to demonstrate secure understanding before proceeding to the next unit of work. Progress charts are used to record their short-term progress. This systematic approach enables pupils to acquire a solid base of knowledge, particularly in the sciences, and to develop a sense of security as they know what they have to achieve to move on to the next stage and when they have achieved the requisite level of understanding. Pupils generally make good progress in the subjects they choose to study for GCSE. However, the system for choosing which subjects to study and the ability for pupils to drop subjects in which they are not performing well result in many pupils finishing Year 11 with only a narrow range of GCSE qualifications.
- 3.7 Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted a nationally recognised scheme to assess pupils' longer-term progress from Year 3 through to Year 11. Although some assessment points have been missed, the results of these assessments show varying rates of progress in different year groups and different subjects. However, the information from these assessments has not been analysed methodically to pinpoint where teaching or pupils' progress has not been good enough. Similarly, and in response to a recommendation from the previous inspection, the school has introduced a new marking policy to provide more helpful feedback to pupils. This has been implemented effectively in some areas, but the policy has not been followed in others. In the Junior School, for example, much of the pupils' work is left unmarked. The school's leaders have not monitored the implementation of the marking policy rigorously enough to ensure it is having a consistently positive impact on pupils' progress.
- 3.8 Throughout the school, the teachers are effective in establishing an atmosphere of trust which gives pupils the confidence to express doubt or misconceptions and helps them to develop good communication skills. Pupils articulate questions well in lessons and express their views clearly and with conviction. Pupils develop fundamental skills and understanding in mathematics well, but do not have much opportunity to apply their mathematical understanding in project work in other subjects or, in the Junior School, in the more general context of problem solving. They learn basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT) well. Many older pupils have excellent touch-typing skills and are confident to use the internet for research in subjects such as history or business studies. However, pupils' work shows little application of ICT skills, and teachers do not make extensive use of ICT in their teaching.
- 3.9 The school has responded to a recommendation in the previous inspection by increasing the number of extra-curricular activities. However, the range of activities and the number of pupils participating are still limited, a view echoed by a small minority of parents and pupils in response to the pre-inspection questionnaires. As a result, pupils' achievements outside the formal curriculum and their success in competitions, sports, music, arts and drama are not extensive. Pupils in the Infant and Junior Schools have the opportunity to participate in a production at Christmas. Pupils in the Senior School gain a sense of accomplishment through their participation in the Greenfields Theatre Company, which is a well-established tradition, engaging every pupil in a major theatrical production at the end of the summer term. Former pupils have built on these foundations for future careers in the media and performing arts. During the course of the year, there are occasional opportunities for pupils to participate in concerts and dance shows, while pupils in the Senior school may choose to participate in the recently introduced Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

3.10 Through its friendly ethos and the individual attention given to the pupils, the school is successful in helping pupils to acquire positive attitudes towards learning. This is seen throughout the school, such as when pupils in the Junior School settle quickly and concentrate well on their individual learning tasks, or pupils in the Senior School show determination to finish the tasks they have been set or cooperate with a partner to check their understanding of what has been taught. Pupils are well behaved in lessons, and are respectful to their teachers and to each other. The school places great emphasis on teaching 'study technology' with the result that pupils acquire skills which they can apply to learning in any subject. They develop an ability to identify what might be hindering their learning, such as words in a text that they do not fully understand and what might be the root cause of a lack of concentration or disinterest in a piece of work. Although pupils may leave the school with limited achievement in external examinations, they do leave as balanced individuals who have a positive outlook, an awareness of those things they are good at, and a determination to achieve.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 4.2 In discussion, pupils come across as confident and self-assured individuals. Various pupils commented on how the school had helped them to develop greater self-esteem and self-confidence, and to understand what motivates them and what helps them to succeed. A significant factor contributing to their self-understanding is the school's programme for personal, social, health and economic education, which has at its core the study of 'The Way to Happiness', 21 moral precepts propounded by L. Ron Hubbard. Pupils who misbehave or are experiencing difficulties are quick to reform. They spend time with the school's student consultant, revisit these precepts and spend time reflecting on how they might implement them more effectively in their lives. In their response to the questionnaire, parents feel the school's system for pastoral care works well and successfully promotes an environment which supports their children's personal development. In the EYFS, similar principles are taught, but in a way which is accessible to the children, for example, the teacher saying, 'Let's find a better way to do this.' The system works well and additionally helps pupils to become more self-disciplined and resilient which, in turn has a positive impact on their ability to improve their own learning and performance. Pupils develop a good ability to reflect on precepts, most of which are common to most major faiths, and gain factual understanding of different religions through some assemblies and other arranged talks and visits.
- 4.3 Pupils develop the ability to distinguish right from wrong and to accept responsibility for their own behaviour, their developing moral and social understanding being influenced significantly by the teachings of 'The Way to Happiness'. They understand the consequences of wrong actions, and appreciate the benefits to society of living by the 'golden rule' and treating others in the way that they would like to be treated. Pupils who arrive at the school with behavioural difficulties or attitudes which lead them into trouble describe how they are 'educated out of their misbehaviour' and that the school's approach is far more effective than a regime of punishment. The pupils get on well with each other and their teachers. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are helped by those who are more competent in the language. Their ability to collaborate and work effectively with others is seen frequently in lessons. In the Infant and Junior Schools, for example, there are frequent opportunities for pupils to work together cooperatively and they enjoy sharing in the successful completion of a collaborative task. Within boarding, pupils take on responsibility for tasks which are for the benefit of the whole house. The pupils' ability to work together towards a common goal is demonstrated very effectively in the Senior School in the annual theatre production, where the whole school works together in different groups to ensure a high-quality performance. Although there is not much competitive sport, pupils said that they enjoy the teamwork involved in house competitions.
- 4.4 Pupils make a positive contribution to the lives of their peers. Where pupils are given responsibility, they fulfil their tasks effectively. In the Junior School, pupils operate as register monitors and older pupils are sometimes asked to help younger pupils. Within boarding, pupils have duties to perform, including cleaning their own accommodation, wiping tables and sweeping floors in communal areas. In the Senior School, older pupils monitor the lunch queues, help to set up and organise assemblies and provide tours of the school for parents of prospective pupils. Pupils also make a contribution to various charities, both on a small-scale voluntary basis and through whole-school projects. Pupils in the Junior School, for example, completed a sponsored mile run around the tennis court and Senior School pupils have contributed to a shoebox appeal for refugees. However, apart from the end-of-year theatre production, there are few opportunities for pupils to exercise real leadership.

- 4.5 Pupils respect each other and value the diversity which is present within the school community. Sensitivity and tolerance to those from different backgrounds are nurtured from the time pupils start in the EYFS where the children are encouraged to mix and play together. In the Junior School, pupils play happily with a range of friends and also with pupils of different ages. Within the Senior School, and particularly in boarding where there is the greatest preponderance of pupils from different countries and cultures, pupils enjoy the company of others and accept people for who they are. This level of tolerance and mutual respect has been instrumental in making newcomers who have experienced difficulties in their previous school feel welcomed and accepted.
- 4.6 Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, and what they need to do to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils in the infants and juniors are expected to abide by the school's policy for healthy eating, which includes specific foods that may not be brought into school. In the Senior School, pupils have opportunities to discuss issues such as safety in cyberspace and the dangers of drugs. Timetabled sports lessons and a limited range of extra-curricular sporting activities help pupils to stay physically active.
- 4.7 The school fulfils its aims of ensuring that pupils are happy at the school and of instilling self-confidence, industriousness, responsibility, tolerance and a moral and ethical compass. It achieves this by providing a safe environment, clear parameters for pupils' personal development and a methodical and highly structured approach to teaching which give pupils a sense of security. Pupils understand that their success academically and the quality of their relationships depend on the choices they make. However, the school provides little opportunity for pupils to move beyond the safety of the school's structures and to experience situations which call for leadership skills and which test their ability to make decisions and use their initiative.