



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Collingham College

January 2023

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	6
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	6
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
Recommendations	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

School	Collingham College		
DfE number	207/6362		
Address	Collingham College 23 Collingham Gardens London SW5 0HL		
Telephone number	020 7244 7414		
Email address	london@collingham.co.uk		
Principal	Dr Sally Powell		
Chair of proprietors	Mr Robert Marsden		
Proprietors	Mr Nicholas Browne and Mr Robert Marsden		
Age range	13 to 19		
Number of pupils on roll	167		
	Seniors	45	Sixth Form 122
Inspection dates	17 to 19 January 2023		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Collingham College is an independent, co-educational GCSE and sixth-form school, founded in 1975. The GCSE and A level departments are on separate sites. A considerable proportion of pupils each September, are new to the school, many just taking a one-year course in re-taking or fast-tracking public examinations.
- 1.2 The school is owned by two proprietors with two directors and a group of 'visitors' having a role in monitoring the school's activities.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced a Year 9 cohort and started to provide an online learning facility for pupils.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to create a secure, happy and active learning environment which celebrates every individual. It seeks to ensure that each student has an academic programme best suited to their strengths and supportive of their academic needs: to provide outstanding pastoral care which develops fulfilled and successful young people, confident in their own abilities: to be a community of learners contributing to the wider field of education, and to provide enrichment programmes appropriate to each student's academic stage and maturity.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils travel to the school from all over London. On entry for GCSE, pupils' ability is average compared to those taking the same test nationally. Entrants for A level have a range of prior achievement at GCSE, a third on one-year courses. The school has identified 99 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of whom 21 receive additional support. Nine pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Many have difficulties with their mental health. There are 18 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), of whom 2 receive additional support. The school identifies 13 pupils as being more able and provides individualised curriculum opportunities for these. The vast majority of Year 13 leavers go onto university.

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. 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. 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](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 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.
- 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.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is 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 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

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

- 2.10 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.12 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.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 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.

2.15 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is 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.

2.17 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is 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 wellbeing of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY** inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

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 are confident communicators of their ideas and listen to each other carefully.
- Pupils display excellent levels of knowledge and understanding in their work.
- Pupils have an excellent attitude towards their learning and fully participate in their lessons.
- Pupils achieve excellent results in the context of their differing starting points.

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

- Pupils have an excellent level of self-understanding and are very resilient in the way they tackle the challenges of their work.
- Pupils are very respectful of each other and fully appreciate and value the diversity of their community.
- Pupils display a strong sense of right and wrong and take responsibility for their own actions in relation to others.
- Pupils are conscious of the reasons they are at the school and understand that they are in control of their learning decisions.
- Pupils have limited opportunities for involvement with the local and wider communities.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Enable pupils to gain a wider learning experience by developing further the opportunities for extra-curricular activities.
- Promote further, pupils' broader social skills and awareness, by creating more opportunities for pupils to engage in community activities, including more links between the two sites.

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 achieve excellent results given the context of where they are starting from. Many have joined, following unsuccessful experiences in previous schools and are often taking examination courses in just one year. At A Level the results in 2019 were above the national average with two-fifths of grades

achieved at A*/A. In 2022 over a third of grades were at A*/A, so in keeping with the last year of externally examined assessment. At GCSE in 2022, two-fifths of grades achieved were at 9–7 with over three-quarters at 9–4. This is also above the national average. Pupils with SEND achieve results at GCSE and A level, in line with the main cohort and well above the national average for SEND pupils. In general, female pupils have tended to achieve higher grades than male pupils, though this is not always the case. Given the context of the varying learning backgrounds of the examination cohorts and that many pupils are only in the school for a year or even less, these results are excellent and a testament to the individualised nature of the curriculum, a key objective of the college. A large majority of pupils choose to move onto university, some after a gap year, and over two-thirds gain their first-choice place, many at competitive institutions. Parents in the questionnaires comment positively on the ‘truly individual and bespoke’ curriculum and teaching approach.

- 3.6 Pupils have an excellent level of knowledge across the year groups and subjects. In a number of lessons, pupils displayed a thorough understanding of their work and could use their prior knowledge effectively. They applied this understanding to new situations effectively. Excellent work was demonstrated by pupils in the GCSE department, where they showed tenacity and a real desire to master their subjects. Pupils asked pertinent questions in lessons and then later returned to tease out further explanations, so that they were sure they had understood and could retain their knowledge. Pupils in a Year 11 biology lesson developed a full understanding of the terminology and methods of genetic engineering, building up a vocabulary list for use in future revision. In a media studies lesson in the sixth form, pupils displayed a strong knowledge of different film techniques to express the point of a drama, such as bringing out the significance of the washing machine in the scene being studied and highlighting the often, sinister image of basements in films.
- 3.7 Pupils are confident communicators and feel comfortable discussing their ideas in the small classes, where they feel there is less pressure upon them. They listen carefully to each other’s opinions and then develop their own viewpoints further. This was seen in a sixth-form philosophy lesson where pupils were discussing thoughtfully the advantages and disadvantages of logical behaviourism. Also, in a French lesson, sixth-form pupils were very fluent and confident in their range of vocabulary and sentence construction. Their work was excellent, not just in their speaking abilities but in the research that had gone into preparing these discussions. Pupils’ written work, as seen in the work scrutiny, showed considerable skills of construction and use of language. The essays produced in the school’s *Electus* programme, extending the curriculum opportunities for the more able, were of high quality.
- 3.8 Pupils have an excellent attitude towards their learning and participate positively with their tasks in lessons. They work successfully with other pupils but equally are effective in their own studies. Pupils pursue their goals with hard work, detailed note taking, careful questioning and collaborative learning, in their small groups. They each have clear individual goals and help each other as they lead their own learning. Year 11 pupils in an English lesson displayed a very positive approach throughout the lesson. They were clearly keen to learn and ensure their full understanding and they worked well both individually and in groups, discussing the viewpoints on social media and online criticisms of people. Year 12 pupils in their personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, called *Selfhood* by the school, were fully focused throughout the lesson and took a full part in the discussion. They were able to work effectively from each other’s opinions and then share their ideas and move forward with their views. In a GCSE chemistry lesson, pupils were fully focused on their task on halogens throughout the lesson, working equally well on their own and then in pairs.
- 3.9 Pupils’ study skills are excellent. They ask tenacious questions and make reasoned judgements, motivated to achieve their best, as part of their examination preparation. Pupils are directly involved in their work, encouraged by the open-ended nature of the teaching, especially true of the sixth-form department. In turn, this promotes the development of the pupils’ critical thinking, analysing ideas and developing their conclusions. This was apparent in a Year 11 biology lesson where pupils actively posed questions to build up their understanding of how enzymes cut plasma. In a sixth-form English lesson, pupils were analysing the reasons for Fitzgerald’s motives in writing *The Great Gatsby*,

hypothesising that it was linked to his desire for status and the enhancement of his own personal image, searching for approval. Pupils in a sixth-form philosophy lesson showed strong skills of analysis in their study of logical behaviourism, developing their ideas, arguing with each other and then reaching a conclusion that it was linked to the use of physical terms to explain mental behaviour.

- 3.10 Pupils show good numerical skills both in their mathematics lessons and in other subjects requiring use of numeracy. Those with weaker skills work hard to learn and apply the correct methods to enable them to succeed in their subjects. Practical examples are used to explain concepts to those who need a more visual means of demonstration and pupils clearly learn from this. This was seen in a Year 9 mathematics lesson where pupils effectively used both substitution and elimination methods to solve simultaneous equations. Also, in a Year 11 chemistry lesson, pupils confidently applied their numeracy skills to perform calculations during their designing of an experiment to create copper oxide. In a computer studies lesson, Year 10 pupils showed good understanding of the numerical concepts behind the binary system when creating truth tables.
- 3.11 Pupils are very competent in their use of information and communication technology (ICT) and see it very much as a useful tool to enhance their learning. They mostly complete their homework online, which is then marked and returned electronically, thus speeding up the process of assessment. They use ICT effectively in a variety of subject areas, to record their work, produce information in different forms and as a research aid. This was seen in a piece of business studies work, where pupils were explaining the idea of 'trade-offs', using different types of software to express their points. Pupils also used ICT in a creative context, as seen in a film produced by sixth formers, where they were shown discussing quite sensitive areas that were very personal to them.
- 3.12 Largely due to the size and nature of the school, pupils do not have a significant role in extra-curricular activities, limiting the opportunities for broadening their learning experience. However, pupils said in interview that they are often involved in activities outside of the school. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their football team and compete with some success against other similar institutions. Pupils study for the LAMDA examinations and regularly achieve awards at all three levels, including gold. Pupils have had their artwork displayed in the Royal College of Art's annual Young Art competition and have achieved the top prizes in recent years. Pupils have competed in the English Speaking Union competitions. The school has had national representation in the International Mathematical Olympiad squad. A number of pupils are involved in football academies within London and benefit from a timetable that accommodates their training commitments.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.14 Pupils arrive at the school, many with specific individual needs, and they successfully adapt to their new learning environment, helped by the strong level of pastoral care from the school. Parents endorse this view in the questionnaires where they comment appreciatively on the nurturing environment in the school. Pupils develop strong levels of resilience in dealing with the challenges of adapting to their new courses in what needs to be a short amount of time. In this they are very successful and quickly make progress with their work, reflecting their excellent self-understanding. Pupils from the GCSE department expressed the view that from the moment they arrive at the school, they grow in self-esteem and self-confidence, developing a real desire to achieve the very best of which they are capable. Pupils in a sixth-form media studies lesson, related themes and ideas from the drama to their own experiences as individuals, showing a strong understanding of their own characters and how people think and react to situations. Pupils' confidence in expressing their own feelings was reflected in some excellent work seen both in English and art folders. This strength of understanding is promoted by the commitment of the teaching and the vision of the school's leaders.
- 3.15 Pupils join the school with clear objectives in terms of what they need to achieve and understand the importance of taking the right decisions with regard to their learning. They say they have individually

made the decisions about their choice of school and the vast majority realise that just by being here they have made a positive decision that they hope has given them a brighter future. They often negotiate how their curriculum is going to be planned and work with their tutors to ensure that they are able to make the most of their potential. Those looking ahead to their futures beyond school are confident that they understand the options available to them. They benefit from the support they receive from the school in terms of choosing the right type of future institution for them individually, as well as practical advice on personal statements and other elements involved in applications.

- 3.16 Pupils are very aware of the diversity of their community and show sincere respect for each other. They do not see their differences as anything significant and take for granted that they will get on with each other perfectly well. Cultural differences are accepted as the norm, and everyone is valued as an individual. In lessons, they are able to draw comparisons between the topic they are studying and broader issues of diversity and discrimination. This was seen in a *Selfhood* lesson on body image, where the pupils were able to appreciate that different people and societies react to situations differently and have diverse views on how they should behave. A sixth-form essay on the art of Jean-Michel Basquiat made a number of perceptive comments on the discrimination the artist faced in his early career and how he had to struggle to get the art world to accept diversity.
- 3.17 Pupils take their responsibilities towards each other seriously and ensure that their actions do not cause problems for their peers. They accept responsibility for their own behaviour and are mindful of others. In interview, pupils showed that they have a clear understanding of the expectations society has of them. There is a very calm and ordered atmosphere throughout the school, pupils sitting in open spaces talking, playing chess and other games. They talk about seeing school as a place where they need to work and so therefore, that they should just get on with their lives in harmony with each other. In their words, they could not see the point of falling out with each other when they have such limited time to ensure their future success.
- 3.18 Pupils have a genuine sense of spiritual understanding. They think beyond the practicalities of daily life, encouraged by the ethos of the school and the teaching and enrichment programme, which broadens their perspectives. Pupils appreciate the range of cultural trips they are able to participate in and in discussion it was clear that they have an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. In a Year 9 humanities lesson pupils showed a perceptive reaction to the Renaissance painting *The Garden of Eden*, identifying the striking feature of the apples and the calm and peace depicted before Adam took the apple from Eve. Sixth formers in their discussion of Nella Larsen's book *Passing* with its overtones of racism, brought out the differing philosophical attitudes of the people involved. They discussed thoughtfully how people of different colour might relate to each other and why wider society might choose to act in the way depicted.
- 3.19 In the context of the school community with its unusually high number of newcomers each year, there is less opportunity for pupils to involve themselves in teamwork activities beyond the classroom. Many individuals would not feel confident in such activities and have chosen the school because there will not be a strong requirement for this aspect of life. Nevertheless, it is apparent in the way they interact within the school buildings, that pupils are aware of each other's needs and can work together effectively, when necessary. Pupils in the GCSE department were observed working effectively in small groups or pairs to achieve common goals or to solve problems. For some pupils, this was more challenging and social development is more problematic, but they are supported effectively by their teachers, who know their pupils very well and can help them to find solutions to any difficulty. Pupils have set up a school council which sees itself as a valuable part of the college and does organise events such as an annual concert and bake sales.
- 3.20 Pupils involve themselves in the local community and this can often require a particular strength of character because for many, this is not an activity where they feel naturally comfortable. This involvement is limited by the nature of the long teaching day with its flexible curriculum and the academic focus on students prioritizing exam success, particularly those on one-year courses, meaning that the opportunities for significant community action are reduced. Pupils support the local church

and its charitable events, as well as running bake sales and clothes collections, helping to broaden their perspective on the needs of the wider community.

- 3.21 Pupils state that they have a clear understanding of how to keep safe online and gave good examples of how they do this. They are very conscious of the importance of their emotional health, supporting each other in coping with the demands of their work. In this they are helped by the strong pastoral care provided by the school. This is something pupils comment on in the questionnaires, seeing this support as one of the best features of the school, significantly helping their personal development. They indicated in interview that they were fully aware of the need to be physically active and follow a sensible diet. Many of them participate in sporting activities outside of school, recognising that it is not easy for the school to offer a wide programme within the confines of their long teaching day. In this awareness of leading a healthy life, pupils live up to the school's aim of creating a secure, happy and active learning environment so that they leave Collingham as young adults, confident in their ability to deal with the challenges of the future.

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 the proprietors. Inspectors visited 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

Mr Gareth Price	Reporting inspector
Mr Peter Sharp	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, HMC school)
Mrs Jane Huntington	Team inspector (Former head, ISA school)