



ISI

Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

St Crispin's School

October 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		6
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
Recommendations		8
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements		9
The quality of the pupils' personal development		10
4. Inspection Evidence		13

School's Details

School	St Crispin's School		
DfE number	856/6000		
Address	St Crispin's School 6 St Mary's Road Leicester Leicestershire LE2 1XA		
Telephone number	0116 2707648		
Email address	enquiries@stcrispins.co.uk		
Headmaster	Mr Andrew Atkin		
Proprietors	Mr Chris Lofthouse and Mrs Catherine Lofthouse		
Age range	3 to 16		
Number of pupils on roll	96		
	EYFS	11	Prep 31
	Seniors	54	
Inspection dates	4 to 6 October 2022		

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 St Crispin's School is a co-educational day school located in the Stoneygate area of Leicester. Founded in 1945, it merged with a nearby school in 1990. The present proprietors acquired the school in December 2015. They are joint directors of the Company and have leadership and teaching roles in the school. The school has three sections: The Early Years Foundation Stage for children aged from three to five years; the prep school for pupils in Years 1 to 6; and the senior school for pupils in Years 7 to 11.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to encourage curiosity, independence, and instil a passion for learning in all its pupils. It seeks to develop the full potential of every pupil within a unique family environment, helping them become happy and well-rounded. It endeavours to ensure pupils leave well-prepared for their life ahead, inspired and interested in the world in which they have learnt how to thrive and succeed.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils are drawn from professional families in Leicester and its vicinity, reflecting the cultural diversity of the area. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average compared with pupils taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 23 pupils as having special needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia and additional specialist help is provided when appropriate. A small number of pupils at the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or have English as an additional language (EAL). The needs of the most able pupils are met within the curriculum and extra-curricular activities provided by the school.

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. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. 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](#), [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, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the prep school, the school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 At GCSE in the years 2021 to 2022, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, 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.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 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 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.
- 2.12 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

2.13 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.

2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] 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.

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

2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is 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.

2.20 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'.

Key findings

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

- Pupils' physical development thrives through the range of challenges they are given to keep fit and healthy.
- Pupils acquire a wide general knowledge due to the expertise and passion of specialist teachers.
- Pupils' progress is sometimes restricted by a lack of regular and informative marking of their work.
- More able pupils are not consistently challenged through being given tasks that broaden and extend their learning.
- Pupils do not routinely extend their learning within lessons by collaborating, discussing, challenging and questioning.
- Pupils' listening skills are insufficiently developed in some age groups due to the inconsistent expectations of staff.

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

- Pupils develop a strong sense of belonging and are proud of their school.
- Pupils develop well socially and relationships between one another and with staff are warm and positive.
- Pupils demonstrate an empathetic understanding of and respect for other cultures.
- Pupils have a strong moral code and clearly articulate the need for rules at school and in society.
- Pupils' contribution to others is limited by insufficient involvement in the wider community.

Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Ensure pupils' progress is not restricted by marking which is insufficiently regular and informative.
- Ensure more able pupils are challenged consistently, so that their learning is broadened and extended.
- Ensure all pupils extend their learning by collaborating, discussing, challenging and questioning more routinely during lessons.
- Ensure pupils' contribution to others is increased within the wider community.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is sound.
- 3.5 Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with SEND or EAL, develop good knowledge in many areas of learning and acquire skills that help them to apply their understanding, thus meeting the school's aims. Children in the EYFS develop good emerging literacy and numeracy skills, and prep pupils eagerly and successfully absorb new information about topics that interest them. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the vast majority of pupils felt teachers knew their subjects well. Where challenge is robust, excellent progress was made by pupils of all abilities. However, progress is too often limited in some subjects for all pupils due to inconsistent marking. In this respect, the school has not yet met a recommendation from the previous inspection. Pupils benefit from the proprietors' commitment to provide tuition in non-standard subjects such as Japanese, Spanish and statistics. All pupils participate whole-heartedly in the daily programme of sporting activities led by enthusiastic, energetic staff. Pupils' skills in creative subjects such as art, music and drama, however, are under-developed. In the pre-inspection questionnaire parents commented that the school did not offer a good level of music and drama activities.
- 3.6 Pupils have a positive attitude towards school and their learning due to the unstinting support they receive from the dedicated staff. EYFS children bubble with enthusiasm: they concentrate well and show great determination. Older pupils show a willingness to work collaboratively but opportunities for them to do so are limited. Where such opportunities do exist, pupils are highly motivated. In these situations, they listen carefully to each other's ideas and negotiate well in order to extend their learning. Where pupils have less productive attitudes to learning, are passive and disengaged, this is usually a result of inadequate challenge which leads to some low-level disruptive behaviour. Pupils generally have high regard for their teachers and know that the head and proprietors will give their time unconditionally to make sure they do their best.
- 3.7 Pupils of all ages demonstrate good communication skills. Most listen intently, but not all pupils demonstrate good listening skills which impacts on their progress. In discussion, pupils talked animatedly about the opportunities they are given to share their thoughts and feelings in debates, presentations and assemblies. Less able pupils are more reluctant to contribute verbally but listen keenly to the teachers who provide gentle encouragement to contribute their thoughts. Pupils of all ages and abilities delight in reading. The youngest children were confident in sounding out simple three-letter words and retelling stories in their own words. Pupils were confident when reading aloud, using expression and excellent intonation to create the atmosphere and tension. This was seen when prep school pupils read from the script of *The Hare and the Tortoise*. Older pupils effectively used a range of strategies, such as rhetorical questions and persuasive techniques in various genres of writing, as seen in their work on Gothic literature and Shakespeare plays.
- 3.8 Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve good levels of attainment in numeracy and effectively apply their knowledge and skills to other areas of learning. This is due to the strong subject knowledge of teachers and the individual support that is freely given. However, progress was often limited for the more able pupils as tasks were not matched closely enough to their abilities. Children in the EYFS can order numbers up to 20 and identify two-dimensional shapes. Year 2 pupils can do simple addition and subtraction calculations, partition two-digit numbers and know the properties of simple two-dimensional shapes. Prep pupils acquire good levels of computational skills, understand place value and showed progress in a lesson on rounding numbers. Senior pupils applied mathematical concepts accurately across their studies, for example using formulae to calculate how much fuel is required to fly to the Falklands and how much tax was paid by Normans using evidence from the Domesday book.
- 3.9 Senior pupils demonstrate a good level of skill in information and communication technology (ICT) in some areas of the curriculum. Year 7 pupils were able to log on efficiently during an ICT lesson and independently find the relevant part of the virtual learning environment for a lesson on wired and wireless devices. Senior pupils use this platform competently at home to access their timetables,

complete homework and undertake research. In discussion, pupils said they used presentation and publishing software, searched websites in some subjects, but did not use computers as a regular resource for learning as they were not able to access computers freely. Little use of ICT by pupils lower down the school and in the EYFS was observed.

- 3.10 Overall, pupils develop effective study skills, but not all pupils demonstrate sufficiently advanced study skills in some subjects. This is due to lack of opportunity to collaborate with peers, an over-dominance of work sheets and insufficient challenging extension activities. Where inspiring lessons involved strong collaboration, such as in year 7 ICT, pupils were absorbed in their learning. Most more able pupils are able to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise in some subjects. This was seen in English when pupils meticulously analysed a challenging extract from the novel *Sun of York* to synthesise their understanding of word meaning and hypothesise as to why the lead character was upset. In a French lesson pupils prepared for a speaking task by creating a mind map with prompts and compiling flash cards to enable independent practice. In discussion pupils expressed a desire for more opportunities to collaborate with their peers, and the pleasure they felt when intellectually challenged. Senior pupils particularly enthused about the whole school science project where they had to create a three-dimensional model, with entries including models of DNA, a hydraulic hand and the solar system. They felt inspired when creating entries for the summer art exhibition on 'reimagining'.
- 3.11 Pupils are successful in gaining entry to further education establishments of choice to study A levels, vocational courses or to undertake apprenticeships. This is largely due to the professional attitude of senior management who support and guide choices carefully. Within the school, pupils broaden their learning through the limited range of internal competitions including chess, poetry writing and Dragon's Den. They proudly represent the school in a range of inter-school sports fixtures in which they are often successful. Pupils enthusiastically take part in annual school plays and sing in the choir at Christmas.
- 3.12 The attainment of most pupils, including those with SEND or EAL is good, and for those who are more able is sound. Sensitive teaching in the EYFS ensures that individual needs are catered for and enables all children to make appropriate progress. Most achieve the expected learning outcomes by the time they finish Reception. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses, but the needs of the most able pupils are not fully taken into account in teacher planning so progress for them is limited. Some pupils of all abilities explained that teachers were always willing to give them extra support if they found a topic difficult, but some lessons were often too advanced for them or difficult to follow in the first place. All pupils achieved six good GCSE passes in the previous year, many marginally exceeding their predicted grades demonstrating the extra value the school had given them, but a small number did not meet their predicted targets.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.14 Pupils of all ages and abilities have good levels of self-knowledge, self-discipline and resilience. As they progress through the school, they become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. They demonstrate positive learning habits which are reinforced by the school's rewards system and motivational displays around the school. In most cases, less able pupils and those with EAL appreciate the warm, caring support they are given. Sensitive, focused teaching ensures that all pupils know what they are good at and where they need to improve. In some subjects, however, tasks are not matched to individual abilities which impacts negatively on pupils' self-esteem. The proprietors were quick to identify how periods of lockdown impacted adversely on the pupils' learning and introduced effective strategies to help pupils re-focus and develop their self-understanding. In discussion, pupils were confident and self-assured, open in sharing their feelings and attitudes. They confidently expressed the view that it was acceptable to make mistakes as this was the first step to learning. This, coupled

with the confidence gained through the varied leadership roles they undertake, ensures that pupils feel extremely well equipped for the next stage of their education.

- 3.15 Pupils of all ages and abilities show a mature understanding that decisions they make will impact on their lives. They are aware that a conscious decision to work hard will impact positively on their future success. Open-ended questioning by skilled staff in the early years carefully guides and encourages children to think about the choices they make. Prep pupils think seriously about decision-making in the world and understand the impact of their actions on others, as seen in a discussion about human rights. Older pupils said that the school provides them with the full range of information and resources required to make good decisions about their future. Where pupils are given the opportunity to make decisions for themselves, such as in subject choices at GCSE and participation in clubs, knowledgeable staff ensure they are well informed so that good choices are invariably made. Pupils feel their views are well represented by their school council representatives and therefore they have positive influence on decisions that are made at school.
- 3.16 Pupils of all ages develop a good awareness of spirituality. They understand the need for tolerance in a multi-faith society and are interested to find out about other religions, particularly those of their peers. Older pupils appreciated the opportunities the school gave to pupils of different backgrounds to pray at certain times of the day. Prep pupils develop an awareness of the non-material aspects of life through art. They explained how study of Van Gogh's 'Starry Night' painting made them reflect on the existence of the universe. Study of Victorian Britain allowed them to empathise with children who were forced to undertake gruelling employment.
- 3.17 Pupils of all ages are polite, respectful and courteous towards staff and their peers. They have a strong understanding of rules and laws and can articulate why society needs these in order to work harmoniously. EYFS children quickly develop a strong awareness of right and wrong and know why they should take turns. Gentle guidance is calmly delivered by patient, kind-hearted staff so that the need for making good choices is embedded at an early age. In the questionnaire, all pupils felt that the school expects them to behave well. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how the reward system is effective in encouraging them to try hard to be their 'best self'. They appreciate the 'no blame' approach to discipline which empowers pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Pupils understand and adhere to the classroom code of conduct, but some comment that too much chatting in some lessons can frustrate them, which was observed in some lessons.
- 3.18 Pupils see the school as a large extended family where everyone is respected and all are treated as equals. Staff foster warm personal relationships with pupils of all ages, which results in pupils developing strong social skills that enable them to work effectively together, thus meeting the school's aims. Older pupils recounted how they greeted each other with hugs 'like sisters and brothers' when they returned to school after the summer. They are polite when encountered walking around the school buildings and grounds, and their pride in the school is clearly evident to visitors. EYFS children talked freely of how they liked working with their friends so they could share ideas. Older pupils are mindful of the needs of younger pupils and automatically adopt a helpful, sensitive attitude when they encounter them. This was seen when an older pupil patiently taught a younger one to do up his shoelaces; a small group of older pupils oversaw a game of Pokeman and joined in at the Lego table at breakfast club. Excellent teamwork was visible in break time sport where pupils shouted enthusiastically to encourage each other to complete the running challenge. The strong bonds that unite pupils are warmly celebrated in collaborative art work: prep pupils created a piece of art with decorated cut-outs of their hands to accompany the mantra, 'Individually unique, together a masterpiece', and the whole school contributed to a display to illustrate the school's motto '*respice finem*' meaning 'consider the end'.
- 3.19 Older pupils value the opportunities they have to demonstrate leadership skills within the school community, and especially appreciate the democratic process by which they are selected to positions of responsibility. They thrive on the formal leadership positions such as school council representatives, class monitors and head pupils. Equally important to all pupils are informal roles such as showing

visitors round the school in which they show great pride, being a 'buddy' for a new pupil, and just being able to help and support younger pupils. Pupils were firmly of the view that suggestions made to the schools council often bore fruit, citing the creation of a football club and mirrors in the toilets as examples. Pupils' awareness of social issues and sense of responsibility is heightened through raising money and providing equipment for a small number of charities throughout the year, and pupils themselves expressed a desire to be more involved in the local community.

- 3.20 Pupils see no difference between themselves and those of other beliefs and cultures. They appreciate the diversity of their school community and show sensitivity, understanding and tolerance towards each other regardless of background, culture or ability. They fully respect the rights of people to hold differing views to themselves. A group of senior pupils clearly articulated that different cultural backgrounds presented no barrier in relationships. They felt it was a unique learning opportunity to see other faiths through the eyes of their peers and observation of festivals and religious observances such as fasting. In the questionnaire, parents unanimously felt that the school treats all pupils fairly and promotes values of democracy, responsibility and tolerance. Through the well-structured programme of personal, social, health and economic education, relationships education and citizenship supported in assemblies, pupils have good opportunities to explore social diversity with their peers. Prep pupils have a good awareness of different types of relationships and families. Older pupils are aware of problems that arise from lack of tolerance in the adult world and are beginning to see how such attitudes will directly affect the world they are going to be living in as adults.
- 3.21 Pupils of all ages know how to stay safe and keep healthy. The youngest children could explain why it is necessary to regularly wash their hands, clean their teeth and have a good night's sleep. Prep pupils are able to explain how to stay safe in a number of contexts at home, at school and on line. They have especially positive attitudes to keeping physically and mentally fit and healthy. This is due to the frequent opportunities given for physical exercise including swimming and running challenges, and the excellent role models presented by staff who display great care and pay close attention to their wellbeing. Prep pupils are able to explain what constitutes a healthy packed lunch and appreciate the diligence of staff who make sure that they eat a well-balanced meal at lunchtime. Older pupils appreciate the attention given to their mental health, and state how comforting it is to know that they can log a concern on the virtual learning platform if they do not want to talk to someone directly at that point in time.

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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with 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

Dr Wendy Bowring	Reporting inspector
Mrs Melanie Pople	Compliance team inspector (Former deputy head, GSA school)
Mrs Marina Gardiner Legge	Team inspector (Head, GSA school)
Ms Rachel Pairman	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)