



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Crescent School

September 2021

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School's Details

School	Crescent School			
DfE number	937/6041			
Registered charity number	1087124			
Address	Crescent School Bawnmore Road Bilton Rugby Warwickshire CV22 7QH			
Telephone number	01788 521595			
Email address	post@crescentschool.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mr Joe Thackway			
Chair of governors	Mrs Liz Griffin			
Age range	4 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	176			
	EYFS	35	Juniors	141
Inspection dates	28 September to 1 October 2021			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Crescent School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged between 4 and 11. It is part of the Princethorpe Foundation, a charitable trust with a board of trustees that oversees three schools within its foundation.
- 1.2 During the period March to August 2020, the whole school remained open only for children of key workers. During this period of closure the school provided remote learning materials for all pupils.
- 1.3 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.4 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.5 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, all pupils other than the children of key workers or vulnerable pupils received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.6 Since 2020, EYFS profiles have not been externally moderated.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.7 Crescent School aims to provide an outstanding all-round education for its pupils within a caring and nurturing environment that supports the needs and interests of every child. Within a broadly Christian ethos that welcomes pupils of all faith backgrounds, the school seeks to develop the pupils' awareness of their place within the wider community.

About the pupils

- 1.8 The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is above average. The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is 20 of whom 14 receive additional support. They require support with a range of specific learning difficulties including dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, autism, hearing loss, speech and language issues, attentional deficit disorder, and mental health needs. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. No pupils have English as an additional language (EAL).

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.

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](#).

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

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 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 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 education. 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 well-being 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'.

Key findings

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

- Pupils have excellent knowledge skills and understanding.
- Pupils are highly motivated and willing learners.
- Pupils have fluent communication skills.
- Pupils make significant progress from their starting points, especially in lessons where active contribution is encouraged.

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

- Pupils maintain high standards of behaviour and self-regulation.
- Pupils are deeply kind and mutually supportive.
- Pupils are community minded and willing to shoulder significant responsibility.
- Pupils have high levels of resilience, humility and self-confidence.

Recommendation

3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider how all pupils' progress could be further enhanced by increasing pupils' opportunities to respond in open ways during lessons across more areas of the curriculum.

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, including those with SEND make significant progress over time, as demonstrated through lesson observations, scrutiny of their work and the school's own assessment data. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) attain well above national age-related expectations by the end of their reception year. Older pupils consistently exceed well above expectations for their age and abilities with some of the most able achieving far above that. Those with SEND attain at least in line with their peers and often well above the expectations for their age and needs, as a consequence of the effective support they receive. Annually, nearly all pupils, including those with SEND, leaving at the end of Year 6 gain places to their first choice of senior school of which many set rigorous academic selection criteria. Responses to questionnaires by parents confirm that pupils make strong progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

3.6 Pupils' excellent knowledge, skills and understanding are reflected in their achievements across the curriculum supported by a broad and effectively taught educational programme. Throughout the

school pupils' understanding and engagement with environmental concerns, such as the need to protect endangered species, are highly developed and reflect an overriding pupil culture of interest, compassion and concern embedded within all aspects of school life. EYFS children's rapid development of fine motor skills enabled many in a literacy lesson to demonstrate excellent pencil control when writing simple words in response to a story. Younger prep pupils successfully gave clear and well-argued reasons in a humanities task for where they would like to go on holiday and why. Pupils with SEND achieved in line with peers as a result of suitably structured support, while the most able pupils' excellent and more extensive responses reflected the frequent opportunities provided by teaching in many lessons for further challenge and extension. In sporting activities pupils demonstrated high levels of skill for their age and across the ability ranges. Younger prep pupils made excellent progress in football when learning to pass, dribble and shoot at a goal. All participants demonstrated balance, co-ordination, and confident ball control and the most able far exceeded the expectations for their age. In music, older pupils showed excellent progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of tempo and dynamics and how these vary. In interviews with inspectors, pupils explained that feedback in lessons from marking, target setting and in tests has enabled them to identify how to make further progress, reflecting successful fulfilment of the recommendation from the previous inspection to ensure a consistent approach to assessment. Pupils' progress was, on some occasions however, restrained because of the prescribed nature of the tasks they were given. In lessons where they were enabled to respond to tasks in open ways, all pupils made more rapid progress. In a mathematics lesson, older pupils of all abilities made excellent progress when solving two-step linear equations, by setting problems for each other and then assessing their own success.

- 3.7 Pupils' communication skills are excellent. They listen intently and are able to follow instructions, prompts and guidance effectively and accurately. They readily and with self-confidence seek clarification from staff when they are not clear on what to do next. Pupils' high standard of reading and comprehension are acquired from an early age as a result of carefully planned teaching about the sounds letters make and regular practice. Younger pre-prep pupils demonstrated very strong progress for their age by accurately reading out simple sentences to complete a story. Pupils of all ages affirm a love of reading, making astute and challenging book choices from the accessible and well-resourced school library. Their writing skills develop rapidly and reach a level well above the expectations for their age. Younger prep pupils during an English lesson on fable writing judiciously chose adjectives to enrich their writing, working independently and successfully making use of appropriate resources such as dictionaries to check spelling. SEND pupils were able to make progress in line with their peers as a result of the provision of writing frames and well-focused adult support. Older pupils demonstrated excellent writing skills across all areas of the curriculum including in science, history and geography and those with SEND explained how the school's provision of a laptop for writing to overcome dysgraphia and the use of overlay filters to assist with reading enabled them to achieve to their own ability and at least in line with their peers. Pupils demonstrate confident language learning skills. In French, for example, older pupils achieved good standards for their age in speaking, listening and writing.
- 3.8 Pupils of all ages demonstrate high levels of numerical competence, successfully utilising their excellent calculation skills both in mathematics and across the curriculum. Older pupils explained how they enjoy the challenge of solving problems. Younger prep pupils all made rapid progress in open number-line work by selecting extension activities appropriate to their level. Scrutiny of work demonstrates pupils' confident application of numeracy skills and knowledge in other subjects. In science lessons younger prep pupils successfully created their own methods for recording the mass of balloons, while older pupils confidently applied their mathematical knowledge of angles to accurately make periscopes.
- 3.9 Pupils, including those with SEND, are confident and highly effective users of information and communication technology (ICT), using a range of applications across the curriculum. Older pre-prep pupils successfully completed a geography themed treasure hunt by scanning codes with tablet

computers to reveal clues in the form of recorded messages. Younger prep pupils in an ICT lesson made rapid progress in applying new knowledge to successfully move animated characters around a screen. Pupils' proficient and skilled use of technology across the curriculum, for example when using tablet computers to undertake research in history and religious education, has been facilitated by the recent significant investment by trustees in facilities and resources.

- 3.10 Pupils have highly developed study skills which they apply successfully across the curriculum. They have a very positive work ethic in lessons especially when undertaking practical activities and working collaboratively. Younger pre-prep pupils successfully predicted the outcome of a story they were being told, describing in clear, well-formed sentences what they thought would happen next. Younger prep pupils in an ICT lesson demonstrated excellent higher order thinking skills for their age when they realised that by changing a value from positive to negative in a coding instruction they could reverse the effect in an application. Older prep pupils showed sophisticated analytical skills in a drama lesson when assessing their own performances of a poem, successfully identifying what went well and also how they could improve. Others demonstrated an advanced ability to hypothesise when formulating and solving their own problems in mathematics.
- 3.11 Pupils are consistently successful in entrance examinations to their first choice school. Many pupils win scholarships for music, drama, art, sport and academic achievement. Pupils are highly successful and confident performers, demonstrating their skills in a wide range of concerts and performances arranged by the school across the year. A high proportion of pupils receive individual instrumental lessons and many succeed to a high standard in external grade examinations. Many pupils participate in public speaking classes, achieving success in external examinations. In recent years school teams have been county or regional champions in netball and hockey.
- 3.12 Pupils have excellent and positive attitudes to learning. They are highly curious, resilient learners willing to learn from mistakes, understanding that feedback enables them to improve. Younger pupils in maths when working on a number-line task independently chose suitable challenges appropriate to their individual needs. High levels of collaboration were evident at all stages of the school, with pupils showing an eager willingness to support each other with their learning. Older prep pupils in music successfully collaborated to improvise pieces to describe fireworks, making appropriate choices of instruments and evaluating their ideas through discussion for further improvement. Others in an ICT lesson showed highly effective collaborative skills when starting to draft ideas for a video, by quickly and independently forming themselves into effective and productive groups.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Resilient and quietly confident of their own abilities, pupils of all ages demonstrate high levels of self-understanding. Enthusiastic and willing to take responsibility for their own learning, they are instrumental in setting their own targets to improve, showing perseverance and determination in meeting them. Pre-prep pupils in literacy were able to maintain their concentration on a writing task at the end of a school day, achieving a high standard of work. Younger prep pupils' excellent evaluations of their own work in an English lesson enabled them to successfully improve their use of vocabulary and plot. Others were able to sustain high levels of energy and activity during a very rainy sporting session, demonstrating excellent stamina and determination. The oldest pupils confirmed in interviews that they felt very well prepared for the move into secondary education and parental questionnaire comments praised the school's preparation of former pupils who had successfully and easily transitioned into their new senior schools.
- 3.15 Pupils of all ages are excellent decision makers, often showing consideration and generosity to others. One pupils' initiative to write to care home residents in response to media reports during the pandemic was quickly emulated by class peers. Other pupils decided to show their love for isolated relatives by sending 'virtual hugs' in the form of paper cut-outs of themselves. In a maths lesson,

younger prep pupils successfully chose appropriately challenging extension tasks enabling them all to make strong progress. Through the school council, pupils collectively agreed new rules for an area of the school where behaviour very occasionally failed to meet the expectations of the school promise.

- 3.16 Pupils are able to reflect on spiritual ideas giving individual age-appropriate responses, particularly in relation to the importance of the environment and the need to conserve wildlife. They have a deep appreciation for the miraculous nature of the world around them, showing care for the environment through conservation initiatives and outdoor activities. While watching a butterfly emerge from its chrysalis EYFS pupils expressed their delight by welcoming the butterfly to the world. During an interview with inspectors older pupils explained that chocolate is simply too wonderful to just be the result of evolution. Pupils respectfully hold moments of silence for reflection during assemblies and lessons, focusing on questions such as the smallest thing that made them happy. They recognise that not all questions have definitive answers and understand that much in life is beyond explanation and resides within a spiritual dimension that is as unique to each of them as they themselves are unique.
- 3.17 Pupils' willingness to take responsibility not just for their own behaviour but collectively for the whole school community is reflected and sustained by the school promise, written collaboratively by the pupils. Their self-regulation ensures that behaviour is excellent and appropriate to the different contexts of school life. They behave with empathy and care towards one another, exemplified in the care shown by older pupils to younger pupils at all stages of the school. The pupils are very clear that unkindness is rare and that when it does happen it is dealt with swiftly and appropriately: often explained as 'not meeting the school promise'. Though relatively new to the school at the time of the inspection EYFS pupils responded rapidly to their teacher's instructions to tidy up at the end of a session. During an assembly pupils participated with high levels of respect towards staff and peers. In a science lesson pupils showed deep respect for one another by taking turns when listening to one another's ideas.
- 3.18 Pupils' social awareness and ability to work together in lessons and around the school are impressive. Their recognition of the strong mutual benefits of working together reflects both their own mature approach to school and the strong, deeply embedded culture to be kind to one another, encapsulated within the school promise. Teaching that encourages pupils to take an active part in directing their own learning enables achievement well above expectations for their age and ability. EYFS pupils' successful cooperation to complete a task of re-telling a story in pictures, giving each other helpful guidance as they worked, was excellent for their age. Older pupils showed good leadership skills when rehearsing for a performance in music, while others successfully worked in collaboration to create films and posters to promote online safety. Pupils from across the school successfully make music together in a variety of choirs and ensembles, for example when the brass band played a fanfare for the mayor's arrival at the opening of a new facility for the performing arts that took place during the inspection.
- 3.19 Pupils' excellent commitment to the school tradition of service and their enthusiastic willingness to embrace responsibility has ensured consistent benefits and improvements for the school community. Through the active work of the school council to nominate a range of local, national and international charities, pupils have raised substantial amounts of money from activities and events which they have also organised and run. For example, in 2018, pupils chose to raise money for a local guide dog charity and, by undertaking a sponsored walk, raised over £2000 for the purchase and training of a dog. Pupils successfully fulfil many roles of responsibility within the school including as house captains and school council reps. In interviews with inspectors, however, older pupils explained that they were most proud of supporting the EYFS children at lunchtime as their reception buddies, a role they fulfilled with enthusiasm, compassion and gentleness. This strong awareness of their place and responsibilities both within the school and the wider community reflect successful fulfilment of the school's aims.
- 3.20 Pupils' deep respect for the diversity that surrounds them both at school and within their local communities is a fundamental aspect of the strong and supportive school culture promulgated by school leaders and trustees. They celebrate the range of cultures from which they come, feeling able

to share their own unique experiences with high levels of confidence in the mature acceptance of peers. For example, in celebrating World Culture Day, pupils felt comfortable wearing their own national dress to share with peers. Pupils demonstrate high levels of tolerance and empathy for those whose experiences at previous schools have left them feeling excluded. Responses to questionnaires by parents and pupils' own accounts in interviews confirmed that many on joining the school community quickly settle and flourish despite their challenging experiences at previous schools. The open and embedded culture of kindness underpinned by deep mutual respect ensures successful outcomes for all regardless of background.

- 3.21 Pupils' understanding of how to stay safe is excellent and well-established within the culture of the school community. They make sensible food choices demonstrating their appropriate understanding of how to maintain a balanced lifestyle. In interviews, pupils gave clear explanations of the steps they take to stay safe, particularly when online. They explained how creating videos and posters in ICT about online safety had deepened their understanding significantly. They maintain high levels of activity both within sporting and classroom activities. Older pupils explained the importance of socialising with friends and having fun outside as a way to maintain their own well-being, recognising the strong link between mental health, well-being and physical fitness.

4. Inspection Evidence

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

Inspectors

Mr Matthew Lovett

Reporting inspector

Mrs Helen Andrews

Compliance and team inspector (Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS School)