

# **Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report**

**Kingscourt School** 

April 2023

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# **School's Details**

School	Kingscourt Schoo	ol		
DfE number	850/6034			
Address	Kingscourt Schoo	ol		
	182 Five Heads Road			
	Catherington			
	Waterlooville			
	Hampshire			
	PO8 9NJ			
Telephone number	number 02392 593251			
Email address	office@kingscou	rt.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Kerrie Daun	ter		
Chair of governors	Mr Simon Rudlaı	nd		
Proprietor	Cognita Schools	Ltd		
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	140			
	Nursery	17	Pre-prep	40
	Prep	83		
Inspection dates	ction dates 25 to 27 April 2023			

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## 1. Background Information

#### About the school

1.1 Kingscourt is an independent co-educational day school. The school was opened in 1995 and became a part of Cognita Schools Ltd in 2015. The school comprises three sections: nursery for children aged three to four years; pre-prep, for pupils aged four to seven years; and prep, for pupils aged seven to eleven years.

1.2 Since the previous inspection there has been significant change to the leadership and governance, including a new headteacher who started in January 2023 and a new chair of governors who was appointed in September 2022. The school has a new purpose-built nursery and has refurbished other specialist teaching areas.

#### What the school seeks to do

1.3 The school aims to inspire each child to strive for excellence in all aspects of school life and to create a caring, encouraging and purposeful community within a safe rural environment. It seeks to combine the best in modern teaching and learning with an emphasis on good manners, self-discipline and respect for others, in order to enable pupils to be happy, self-confident and resilient.

## About the pupils

1.4 Pupils are drawn mainly from professional families in the predominantly rural catchment area. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is average compared to those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified 26 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, of whom 18 receive additional specialist help. Two pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 15 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), two of whom receive specialist support. The school modifies the curriculum for pupils identified as being the most able, or who are talented in a particular area.

## 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 (EYFS) 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 <u>met</u> or as <u>not met</u>. 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: <u>The Education (Independent School Standards)</u> Regulations 2014, <u>Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework</u>.

## **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 school

- 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. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

School name	National Curriculum name
Caterpillar and Butterfly	Nursery

## **Key findings**

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
  - Pupils of all ages, including in the EYFS, are excellent communicators. They express themselves with great expression and fluency.
  - Pupils make extremely effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) in their learning. They are adept at choosing the most appropriate technology for the task in hand.
  - Pupils' attitudes to learning are notably positive. They show great pride in their achievements.
  - Pupils of all ages have excellent numeracy skills and apply these seamlessly across other areas of the curriculum.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
  - Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy.
  - Pupils' behaviour is excellent, and they are considerate and courteous to each other as well as adults around them.
  - Pupils' respect and cultural understanding are highly developed for their age and stage of development.
  - Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of self-esteem and self-confidence due to the school's nurturing ethos.

#### Recommendations

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
  - Enable younger pupils to engage more fully in their learning through increased opportunities to take responsibility for their learning.
  - Enable pupils to contribute further to the lives of others through the improvement of opportunities to make a contribution to the local community.

## The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The overall attainment of pupils is high and, in some cases, very high, with the very large majority of pupils achieving expected or higher levels in standardised tests for both English and mathematics. Progress in English for younger pupils is slightly less marked than for older pupils. The large majority of pupils identified by the school as having SEND and the very few pupils with EAL achieve expected or better levels of progress in English and mathematics. They are well supported in class and by specialist help. During discussions, pupils with SEND stated that they highly value the support they receive. There is no significant difference in overall attainment between female and male pupils. At the end of the EYFS, analysis of data provided by the school shows that in 2022 most children achieved a good level of development in the early learning goals. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching, including any online provision, enables their child to make progress and most parents agreed that their child's individual needs are met effectively. This is fully in line with the school's aim for each child to fulfil their potential and feel supported at each stage of their academic journey, and the emphasis that senior leaders, including at governance level, place on trying to ensure that each pupil's needs are met.
- 3.6 Pupils are excellent communicators. They are articulate and express themselves clearly using a highly developed range of vocabulary and appropriate subject-specific language. They are extremely confident when talking both to each other and to adults. These high-level outcomes are a result of the school's family atmosphere and its ethos of valuing what pupils have to say. The youngest children display high levels of articulacy, sharing their work with enthusiasm and excitement. In a Year 2 English lesson, pupils spoke knowledgably and eloquently about different types of nouns. Year 6 pupils spoke with confidence and accuracy in mathematics, explaining their reasoning during problem-solving. Pupils' excellent listening skills enable them to share their ideas successfully, such as in an assembly where they listened intently to their partner during paired discussions. Reading is of a high standard throughout the school and during discussions, pupils commented on how much they enjoy reading and using the library. Pupils write fluently and coherently in English and other subjects and match their writing styles to different situations. For example, Year 4's written work demonstrates pupils' ability to adeptly apply a variety of linguistic techniques to draw the reader in when creating their own myth.
- 3.7 Pupils have excellent ICT skills and make strong use of technology to enhance their learning. In the lessons observed, pupils demonstrated highly developed computing skills along with the ability to work independently. For example, pupils in Year 2 demonstrated excellent skills in creating different styles of graphs to display their data, seeking support often successfully and independently from online tutorials. The use of technology is embedded within the curriculum so that pupils apply it highly effectively in a variety of ways appropriate to the needs of the task, whether recording results, events or undertaking research. For example, reception children demonstrated their mastery of digital devices by teaching nursery children how to use them appropriately to record images of the natural world. Work in Year 5 geography demonstrated pupils' ability to overlay maps highly effectively to investigate how land use in the local area has changed over time. Pupils use devices naturally and engage with complex tasks and applications. For example, Year 6 pupils use their ICT skills expertly in English, including using immersive reading if required, to improve their writing technique. Ageappropriate software applications, high-quality teaching and an embedded culture of using ICT within the classroom due to the senior leadership providing prep-school pupils with laptops, combine to produce excellent outcomes for pupils.
- 3.8 Pupils develop good, and often excellent knowledge, understanding and skills across all areas of the curriculum and in a variety of contexts, in line with the school's aim to create an environment to ensure they thrive in the opportunities provided. This is supported by the pupils' response to the questionnaire where they all agreed that their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons, and that most lessons are interesting. Throughout the school, pupils draw upon what they have previously been taught to further develop their learning. This begins in the EYFS where the foundations for later

learning and development are securely embedded as children play and explore with activities and resources carefully prepared to meet their needs and interests. Pupils in Year 4 were observed building on their strong knowledge of musical language and developing a strong understanding of pentatonic scales. Year 6 sketch books demonstrate pupils' excellent knowledge and understanding of dimension and shade in creating still life pictures. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with SEND, increase their knowledge across a broad and well-balanced curriculum due to teaching that projects high expectations. However, on the few occasions where teaching is less successful for younger pupils, work is either too closely directed by the teacher or pupils have less opportunity to take an active part in lessons. This restricts pupils' ability to make rapid short-term progress in the development of their knowledge, skills and understanding.

- 3.9 Pupils make excellent progress in numeracy and achieve at notably high levels in relation to age expectations. For example, pupils in Year 1 demonstrate high levels of understanding of halves and quarters, explaining accurately to inspectors how they are connected. Pupils in Year 5 display an excellent understanding of place value, applying their knowledge consummately to related algorithms. The school's leadership has ensured that effective cross-curricular planning enables pupils' mathematical development to be continuous. As a result, pupils apply their mathematics seamlessly to other subjects. For example, Year 4's work in geography shows how they proficiently apply their knowledge of graphs to display data on monthly rainfall. Work undertaken by Year 6 demonstrates pupils' ability to apply their knowledge adeptly across a range of subjects such as in science, where they use Venn diagrams highly effectively to compare conifers and angiosperms.
- 3.10 Pupils throughout the school have highly developed study skills relative to their age due to their being encouraged to express their opinions, discuss and question with confidence. Pupils enjoy being challenged to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise and ably draw on a wide range of sources to reach conclusions. Older pupils display notably strong higher-order thinking skills. For example, Year 6 pupils were observed synthesising information expertly from a variety of sources to produce their own sophisticated pieces of writing in English. Year 2's work in history demonstrates high-level study skills showing they adeptly draw upon a range of sources, including both written and visual evidence. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrate excellent research and analysis skills in science, applying these highly effectively to understand the characteristics of sound. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school equips their children with the team-working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life.
- 3.11 Pupils enjoy notable success in a wide range of academic, sporting and cultural activities. They are successful at gaining places to a variety of highly competitive senior schools with many achieving academic and other scholarship awards. Teams and individuals flourish in many sports and have been highly successful at local, regional and district level, including in cricket, sailing and lacrosse. This is supported by a *Sports Around the World* curriculum which encourages pupils to participate in a multitude of sports. Many pupils play a musical instrument and some play in ensembles. A number of pupils opt to take music and LAMDA examinations, with a majority gaining merits and distinctions. The school's leadership has ensured that pupils have many opportunities both to expand and excel in their personal interests, fulfilling the school's aim of creating a friendly and supportive atmosphere in which everyone's individual abilities and potential are fully appreciated and nurtured.
- 3.12 Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning, encouraged by committed staff who reinforce a productive work ethos and positive can-do approach. At all ages, pupils are hardworking and willing to learn. They are well-behaved and responsive, often displaying an enquiring mind. When younger pupils arrive at school they display excellent collaborative skills, sharing games and activities, welcoming those arriving later to join in. Pupils are keen to learn and display a thirst for knowledge. They make the most of the opportunities available to them to work both independently and collaboratively. For example, in a Year 3 English lesson pupils showed high levels of respect for the views of others and shared their ideas effectively to predict how a class story may develop. Scrutiny of their work reveals a real pride

in their presentation and productive engagement with self- and teacher-led next steps for improvement.

## The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils develop notably high levels of self-confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline and resilience. This is apparent from an early age and is demonstrated in their confidence in the adults around them and acceptance of each other. This is because the school's ethos, centred on kindness, resilience and mutual respect, is lived out daily in the school community. Children in the EYFS are positive and confident, spontaneously initiating conversations with visitors. Pupils of all ages have high levels of self-confidence and are prepared to speak and perform musically in front of an audience because they are given many opportunities to do so in assemblies and plays. Pupils are resilient and display perseverance to improve. For example, in a Year 5 games lesson pupils used peer feedback adroitly to refine their sprinting technique. Pupils of all ages are self-reflective, using the traffic light system effectively to self-assess against their learning objectives. In discussions with inspectors, pupils stated that they highly value residential trips as they significantly help them to develop greater independence and resilience. In the questionnaire, most parents agreed that the school helps their children to be confident and independent.
- 3.15 Pupils are confident and highly effective decision-makers, understanding the importance of this skill. They respond enthusiastically to being given opportunities to decide how they will tackle a task. For instance, at the start of the day, children in the EYFS are eager to make their own choice of activities, whether to work in small groups, on their own or with adults. During discussions, pupils understand that decisions they make have a direct bearing on their own success and wellbeing. For example, in ICT, Year 5 pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding of the consequences of decisions they make to stay safe online. Work in Year 6 science showed that pupils are able to decide on the topic they wished to research for a shared digital information book. Pupils of all ages make well-informed decisions and are encouraged to do so through a variety of initiatives, such as choosing their own activities, art projects and internal competitions for pupils to participate in.
- 3.16 Pupils have an excellent awareness of the non-material aspects of life. They show high levels of appreciation for the natural world and engage enthusiastically in opportunities for spiritual reflection and discussion. Pupils of all ages were regularly seen being inspired by their natural surroundings. For example, during outdoor learning, children in the EYFS showed great wonderment at how the garden changes over the seasons. During discussions, pupils expressed how much they enjoy musical assemblies as they fill them with joy and emotion, while others shared how running the *Daily Mile* after lunch is a special time. Pupils are supported in their spiritual development by a well-structured curriculum, regular assemblies and a pastoral care system that encourage openness of thought and debate. Work scrutiny shows pupils develop a good understanding of other faiths along with the ability to consider philosophical questions. For example, work in Year 4 demonstrated that pupils have a very strong understanding of world religions. Older pupils' work shows that when considering ethical questions, such as the theme of justice, they display both a mature and significant depth of understanding for their age.
- 3.17 Pupils' moral understanding is excellent. Throughout the school pupils are kind, courteous and extremely well behaved, as observed in lessons, lunch and break times. In response to the questionnaire, all pupils and parents agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour. Pupils understand and respect the school rules and readily accept responsibility for their own behaviour. During discussions, they commented on how they discuss and act out various dilemmas, explaining how this enables them to appreciate that their actions can make a real difference. Pupils show a keen sense of wanting to do the right thing. They take pride in their good behaviour and respect one another, taking responsibility for their part in maintaining a friendly and safe space to learn. For

- example, in an EYFS assembly children were seen filling up each other's buckets with real-life examples of kindness, good behaviour and the following of school rules. Pupils in Year 5 demonstrate excellent reasoning skills in their geography work, such as when considering moral questions, for example whether it is right that everyone pays for sea defences to stop houses falling into the sea due to erosion.
- 3.18 Pupils have excellent social awareness, working highly effectively together across the school. This is because senior leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to work together to solve problems and achieve common goals such as through school competitions, sports fixtures and class discussions. The school's core values of kindness, inclusivity, understanding and respect are clearly evident in the pupils' daily interactions, as observed when pupils of different ages played happily and purposefully together at break time. Pupils are adept at collaboration and are confident to share ideas. For example, in Year 4 science pupils worked effectively together to investigate whether electricity could be created from potatoes and whether the quantity of potatoes affected the voltage produced. In the questionnaire, all parents agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills.
- 3.19 Pupils are highly aware of the important role they play in the lives of others, both within their school community and beyond. Throughout the school, they make a tangible effort to contribute positively to the lives of others. For example, Year 6 pupils were seen working extremely well with the youngest children, either playing or reading with them as they arrived at school. Older pupils develop strong leadership skills through their positions of responsibility, such as team captain, librarian or wellbeing leader. In discussion they articulated their understanding that each position comes with responsibility to look after others and to set an example. They understand the roles need to be undertaken seriously and fulfilled effectively. Pupils of all ages actively participate in school improvement through seeking election by their peers to be a representative on the school council. This committee offers all pupils a forum to express their views and ideas and helps them understand how they can influence positive developments in school life. As a result, the school council organised a recycling battery box to be installed and were involved with interviewing the recently appointed headteacher. Pupils contribute regularly to charity fundraising and giving. These ventures further consolidate their understanding of how their individual efforts make a difference to the lives of those less fortunate than themselves. However, the strength and range of pupils' contributions to the local community beyond the school is limited as compared to their contributions within school.
- 3.20 Throughout the school, pupils have a notably strong understanding of issues relating to tolerance, respect and acceptance of others. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance. Pupils have an excellent understanding of cultural diversity and awareness of individual differences. They explained with earnest insight that they are all the same because they are all different. In a Year 6 relationships and sex education (RSE) lesson pupils showed great maturity, respect and tolerance as they considered protected characteristics and different types of relationships. Pupils display a strong appreciation of other cultures through the many opportunities offered by the school to celebrate these, such as International Languages Week. Pupils of all ages develop an excellent understanding of different religions and their customs. Year 6 pupils' work in religious education demonstrated high levels of empathy when they reflected on what it would feel like to be an adherent of a different faith. Pupils understand the role they play in ensuring everyone is treated equally regardless of their background, race or culture.
- 3.21 Pupils show an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy body and mind and are full of energy and positivity. They are highly aware of the need to stay safe and have a clear understanding of how to do so. For example, during registration Year 5 pupils demonstrated excellent skills in identifying and mitigating risk for a trip they were about to embark on. Pupils understand the importance of staying safe online, explaining in detail, for example, how to keep personal details and passwords secure and how to check the veracity of information found online. All pupils who

responded to the questionnaire said the school is a safe place to be. They know what constitutes a healthy diet, as well as the importance of taking regular exercise. Pupils recognise the importance of the RSE curriculum, stating it helps them to learn safe and healthy life practices and prepares them for their next stage of education. The school's leadership and governance have ensured pupil safety has the highest priority. This fulfils the school's aim to create an environment where children feel safe and secure, to ensure they thrive in the opportunities provided.

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## 4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended assemblies. 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

Mr Timothy Cannell Reporting inspector

Mrs Carrie Askew Compliance team inspector (Head of operations, ISA and IAPS group of

schools)

Mr Mark Hammond Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)