



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

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

**The Falcons School for Girls**

**March 2020**



## Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>School's Details</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Background Information</b>	<b>4</b>
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
<b>2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection</b>	<b>5</b>
Preface	5
Key findings	6
PART 1 – Quality of education provided	6
PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	6
PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils	6
PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors	6
PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools	6
PART 6 – Provision of information	7
PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled	7
PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools	7
<b>3. Educational Quality Inspection</b>	<b>8</b>
Preface	8
Key findings	9
Recommendation	9
The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements	9
The quality of the pupils' personal development	11
<b>4. Inspection Evidence</b>	<b>14</b>

## School's Details

<b>School</b>	The Falcons School for Girls		
<b>DfE number</b>	212/6051		
<b>Address</b>	The Falcons School for Girls 7, 11, 22 and 24 Woodborough Road Putney London SW15 6PY		
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8992 5189		
<b>Email address</b>	admin@falcons girls.co.uk		
<b>Headmistress</b>	Mrs Sara Williams-Ryan		
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Alpha Plus Group		
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 11		
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	94		
	<b>EYFS (Peregrines Nursery)</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>EYFS (Prep School)</b> <b>5</b>
	<b>Prep School (Years 1 to 6)</b>	<b>81</b>	
<b>Inspection dates</b>	03 to 05 March 2020		

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Falcons School for Girls is an independent day school for pupils aged 4 to 11. It is a single sex school for female pupils. It incorporates Peregrines Nursery School, a co-educational setting for children aged 3 to 4. The nursery and school are owned and governed by the Alpha Plus Group. The school relocated from Ealing to its current premises in September 2014 and comprises four separate buildings on the same road. Since the previous inspection, there has been a change of headmistress and a small number of boys have joined the nursery.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school acknowledges the close links between emotional well-being and academic achievement. They encourage children to be ambitious with their learning, fostering children's natural curiosity, positivity and resilience. They aim to engage children about their role as citizens in our fast-changing world and recognise the importance of leading by example.

### About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from families with a range of professional backgrounds, mostly living within a 2-mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified 18 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, most of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 18 pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers and through additional support where required. Data used by the school have identified 22 pupils as being the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them accordingly.

## 2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

### Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records 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, the inspection reports 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. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

**This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The 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 regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; 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 full regulations 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 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

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

### **PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 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**

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 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**

- 2.11 Suitable toilet and changing facilities 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.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

## **PART 6 – Provision of information**

2.13 A range of information is variously 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.

**2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.**

## **PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled**

2.15 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.

**2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.**

## **PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

2.17 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.

**2.18 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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

**The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.**

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

## Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- Pupils are highly proficient communicators for their age.
  - Pupils display exceptional attitudes towards learning.
  - The attainment of pupils is excellent.
  - Pupils demonstrate strong knowledge skills and understanding across the areas of learning.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils display high levels of self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience.
  - The pupils' moral compass is exemplary.
  - Throughout the school, pupils contribute positively to the lives of others.
  - Pupils demonstrate significant emotional intelligence and empathy.

## Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:
- Explore ways to provide pupils with access to a greater number of independent learning opportunities in the lower school.

## 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 are highly proficient communicators. Even the youngest pupils are confident and articulate in both the spoken and written word, with pupils making excellent use of relevant and intelligent vocabulary. This was seen when children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) described the character 'Evil Pea' in the book *Supertato*. The pupils' love for reading stories is apparent and embedded in the culture of the school. This was particularly evidenced in the keen engagement of pupils in activities linked to World Book Day at the time of the inspection, such as when lower school pupils researched facts about the author Roald Dahl. Pupils maturely justify and rationalise their choices, and coherently share their creative ideas or opinions in debates and presentations. For example, upper school pupils spoke about an animated debate concerning criminal records and whether or not these were justified for those under the age of eighteen.
- 3.6 Pupils display exemplary attitudes to learning and are ambitious to achieve and succeed in a wide variety of areas. From the EYFS upwards, they are developing independence of thought due in part to the introduction of activities linked to the creative thinking initiative that the leadership has recently introduced to the school. Engagement in lessons is high, with opportunities for independent learning embraced when they arise. For example upper school pupils worked enthusiastically in drama, developing mood and showing intentions using scenes in *World and Underworld*. Pupils are encouraged to be aspirational in their learning and strive high. They are keen to take their learning further, inspired by their teachers who act as positive role models in line with the school aims to instil the importance of leading by example. This was apparent when lower school pupils proudly shared their detailed independent research on topic work that was inspired by their work in class. Pupil collaborations are excellent, facilitated by a multitude of learning activities designed to encourage engagement with others.

- 3.7 Pupils' attainment is excellent overall. The range of ability of the pupils on entry varies considerably and pupils across the age range are seen to progress extremely well from their starting points. Evidence gathered from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils work and the school's own assessment data shows how attainment is above average in relation to national age-related expectations. Overall children in the EYFS achieve above national age-related expectations by the end of Reception. During discussions and lessons, pupils were seen to be ambitious with their learning, successfully fulfilling one of the school's aims. They are seen to progress well because staff know them individually. As a result, their needs are identified and any required support is tailored accordingly. This includes support for pupils with SEND or EAL who are seen to make significant progress. Equally pupils identified as more able, gifted or talented are presented with appropriately challenging work that enables them to progress successfully in line with their ability. The proprietorial body maintains an excellent oversight of achievement evidenced in the comprehensive achievement and performance reports produced by school staff for the board. This evaluative tool helps improve experiences for pupils, such as by shaping the curriculum or future staff training at the regular forum meetings. Pupils are successful in obtaining places at senior schools of their choice, with some pupils being awarded scholarships or exhibitions.
- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate strong knowledge skills and understanding across the areas of learning. This is further reinforced through opportunities for cross-curricular learning, such as engaging in independent projects. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all pupils agreed that teachers help them to learn and make progress. Inspection evidence supports this unanimous view. For example, lower school pupils applied their knowledge of Egyptian history whilst mummifying tomatoes, and upper school pupils showed a secure understanding of inference skills when studying the character of 'Auggie' in the book *Wonder*. Children in the EYFS confidently apply their mathematical, creative and linguistic skills in activities such as when designing and making three-dimensional junk model super-heroes. These youngest pupils also embrace outdoor learning as a consistent part of their curriculum, for instance when learning in the woodland learning environment. This addresses the recommendation from the previous full inspection.
- 3.9 Pupils' numeracy skills are well developed. They are highly competent in using and applying numeracy across a variety of contexts. For example, children in the EYFS use counting skills in a range of activities, such as whilst measuring a giant's foot. These skills are built upon throughout their educational journey, with clear progress seen, for instance lower school pupils' quickly grasped how to sequence complex periods of time. Upper school pupils effectively apply mathematical concepts and vocabulary to further their learning such as when calculating stock for the tuck shop or creating their own word problems.
- 3.10 Pupils are extremely competent in their use of information and communication technology (ICT) and make excellent use of their ICT skills and resources. This is in part due to the proprietors' focus on digital learning and the provision of ample resources and training for staff in this area. As a result, ICT is used superbly across the subject areas; for instance, in a music lesson, upper school pupils composed pop songs and, in English, they created presentations about words which have been removed from the Oxford dictionary. Pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of the importance that this will play in their working lives. Lower school pupils are adept at sending emails and using file management skills. In the EYFS, children use ICT across the curriculum, for example when reinforcing their understanding of letter sounds and words.

- 3.11 Pupils achieve well in competitions and there have been many successes in music and sport. For example, pupils achieved relative success in sporting competitions and matches. Pupils with talents in the performing arts achieve particularly well. Pupils achieve highly in external drama and music examinations and pupils in Years 4 and 5 reached the semi-final of a chamber music festival for the under 12s. Academic scholarships have been achieved by pupils as well as awards for the arts and sport. The range of extra-curricular provision is suitably diverse and extensive, and it is enjoyed by a large population of the school. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. The inspection team found the range of extra-curricular clubs to be appropriate for the size of the school, meeting a recommendation made in the previous inspection report.
- 3.12 Across the age range, pupils are curious and have enquiring minds. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents agreed that the school helped their child be independent and confident, and almost all pupils agreed that they are encouraged to think and learn for themselves. Inspection evidence supports their view. Pupils are capable of analysing information as seen in numerous lessons where independent research took place. For example, children in the EYFS organised themselves effectively whilst completing independent work, and lower school pupils use ICT to research facts to enable them to answer questions. In an upper school science lesson, pupils hypothesised well, providing very clear reasons for their thought processes whilst planning a fair test. In the majority of lessons, pupils demonstrate high levels of independence in their learning, conducting extensive research and projects. In a small number of lessons in the lower school, where opportunities to work independently are constrained or teaching is didactic, pupils' progress was limited.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils display outstanding levels of self-confidence and self-esteem, characteristics which are prioritised across the school through marking and feedback, celebration of successes for all and ongoing reflection. Great emphasis placed on the one of the school's aim to foster children's natural curiosity, positivity and resilience. Consequently, pupils exude self-confidence, as evidenced in discussions held with children across the age range during the inspection. Pupils display high levels of self-awareness. This starts in the EYFS, where children comfortably engage with their peers in a range of activities. Lower school pupils' self-confidence is enhanced through opportunities such as whole class drama lessons. Pupils' resilience and self-understanding are excellent. For example, older pupils are able to capably reflect on many aspects of their own and others' learning and well-being within an environment that they clearly deem to be supportive and nurturing. Pupils from the EYFS upwards fully understand the importance of 'having a go' and learning from mistakes. These are valuable skills instilled by the school leadership that help prepare them for the next stage of their lives.
- 3.15 Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate an exemplary moral compass and they understand right from wrong, abiding by the school's 'Falcon rules' as well as the fundamental values of society. Pupils show an excellent understanding of acceptable behaviours, both locally and nationally, and debate the impact of British Law through provocative topics such as the ethics of criminal records. The effects of this are apparent; pupils across the age range behave impeccably and are seen to treat each other with respect. Children in EYFS value one another during their play, while lower school pupils maturely debate scenarios and how they could best resolve arguments. Pupils instinctively support each other, for example by stopping to talk to someone on the buddy bench. The school oath is successful in uniting the community and ensuring that all are valued and accepted. This concurs with the views of parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire, where all agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour.

- 3.16 Pupils' social awareness is a significant strength. All parents and most pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school helps pupils develop strong teamwork and social skills. In the EYFS, children play extremely well in groups, acknowledging the need to take turns with toys as "sharing is caring". Pupils are confident to contribute ideas to enhance their school and wider community by writing their thoughts and ideas down and posting them in the pupil voice boxes. These are regularly checked and acted upon by the leadership of the school. There is a real thirst for teamwork and a desire to do good across the school. This results in pupils working together to organise events such as an Eco fashion show and carefully thinking through the responsibilities that come with owning and caring for a class pet. Pupils work collaboratively with others towards common goals, for example through their fundraising for a charity supporting local elderly residents. Lower school pupils demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence and empathy, for example when writing scripts about bullying for young celebrities who have experienced unkindness online.
- 3.17 Pupils understand the importance of being responsible world citizens. They display high levels of empathy for those less fortunate than themselves and engage in a range of charitable projects in the wider world. From an early age, they contribute positively to the lives of others in the school, for example through the school and eco councils. Pupils enrich the life experiences of members of their local community through active participation in activities such as music workshops with other schools. They are very much aware of their role as citizens in a fast-changing world, one of the school's aims. Pupils proactively seek opportunities to organise fund raising events, such as the school sleepover, towards these worthy causes. School leaders are seen to be fully supportive of their ideas.
- 3.18 Pupils understand the importance of making the right decisions in life, with pupils displaying high levels of maturity for their age; they understand that actions often have consequences. Children in the EYFS are competent when making decisions in their learning, such as whilst independently choosing activities and resources from the range on offer to them. Lower school pupils are able to make quality decisions about which examples to use when considering the cause and effect of an argument. Older pupils fully embrace the opportunities provided in the curriculum to make their own decisions, such as when deciding whether to order popular snack products or switch to healthier options whilst ordering stock for the school tuck shop.
- 3.19 Pupils are extremely respectful of others and embrace their differences. They are curious and have a desire to learn about the backgrounds of others. They develop a secure understanding of cultures through the religious, personal and social curriculum, and through assemblies and visiting speakers. Upper school pupils show excellent levels of respect and tolerance for different cultures and are sensitive to the traditions and backgrounds of others. They embrace individuality and appreciate the characteristics and qualities individuals display. For example, in a personal, social, health and economics (PSHE) lesson, upper school pupils demonstrated great respect for the range of protected characteristics that some sports personalities have. All parents and pupils who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes the values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people.

- 3.20 Pupils have a secure understanding of how to maintain positive physical and mental health and the benefits of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. This is because the leadership of the school prioritise their welfare as a core contributor to happiness, in line with one of their aims to recognise the importance of emotional well-being and the effect that this has on pupils' academic achievement. Physical and mental health awareness is promoted effectively through the PSHE curriculum, assemblies and participation in recently introduced initiatives such as a 'Well-being Week', where pupils and staff engaged in activities such as yoga. This helps pupils fully appreciate the need to stay healthy on the inside as well as the outside. Pupils learn a wide variety of strategies such as participating in extensive exercise and engaging in mindfulness sessions. Lower school pupils demonstrated their understanding by composing their own well-being rap, promoting the importance of mental health. The importance of choosing to eat a healthy diet is equally understood. For example, younger pupils understand the importance of a balanced diet and are able to explain the consequences for not adopting a healthy lifestyle' for example, they understand that by eating too many sweets your teeth may rot.
- 3.21 Pupils appreciate the non-material aspects of life and are developing a strong spiritual awareness. In the EYFS, children engage with the natural world through woodland learning. Lower and upper school pupils take great pleasure in expressing themselves creatively through performance in musical ensembles and street dance. Pupils have a growing understanding of key issues facing our world. They show an awareness of the impact of human behaviour on the natural environment, value their families and philosophise about the concept of miracles. This has been enhanced by recent democratic and political initiatives instigated by the leadership team. Pupils of all ages gain an understanding of different religious denominations and cultures, as well as philosophy, through the school curriculum. This is enriched by speakers and visits.

## 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 governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period. 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

Miss Jacqueline Scotney	Reporting inspector
Mrs Samantha Ransom	Compliance team inspector (Assistant bursar, HMC school)
Mrs Alexia Bolton	Team inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)