



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Northcote Lodge School

May 2022

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School's Details

School	Northcote Lodge School
DfE number	212/6395
Address	Northcote Lodge School 26 Bolingbroke Grove London SW11 6EL
Telephone number	020 8682 8888
Email address	northcote@northwoodschoools.com
Headteacher	Mr Clive Smith-Langridge
Proprietor	Dukes Education
Age range	8 to 13
Number of pupils on roll	222
Inspection dates	17 to 20 May 2022

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Northcote Lodge School is an independent day school for male pupils located on the edge of Wandsworth Common in South West London. It was founded in September 1993 as a sister school to Broomwood Hall and is now part of the Northwood Schools group under the proprietorship of Dukes Education.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the school has appointed a new headmaster in January 2019 and became part of Dukes Education in September 2021.
- 1.3 The inspection took into account the circumstances faced by schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed by government guidance at various points of the pandemic.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.4 The school aims to provide an enjoyable, inspiring and well-rounded education, tailored to bring out the best in pupils, that focuses on developing the whole child to prepare them not only for the next stage of their education, but for life beyond the classroom. It seeks to provide all the benefits of a well-rounded prep school whilst enabling pupils to remain living at home as part of their families.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Pupils come from a range of diverse professional family backgrounds from within a 5-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised assessment data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 72 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, such as dyslexia and autism, of whom 24 receive additional specialist support. One pupil has an education and health care (EHC) plan and there are two pupils identified as having English as an additional language (EAL) who receive additional specialist support. The school modifies the curriculum for pupils it identifies as the most able in the school's population in preparation for senior school scholarship examinations.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY. The FOCUSED COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school's 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 in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.5 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'.

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

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Shell	Year 4
Form 2	Year 5
Form 3	Year 6
Remove	Year 7
Form 5	Year 8

Key findings

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

- Pupils attain highly across all areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils have outstanding ICT skills.
- Pupils are extremely articulate and eloquent.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptionally positive.

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

- Pupils have deep self-understanding.
- Pupils' moral understanding is highly developed.
- Pupils have a sophisticated awareness of how to maintain both their physical and mental well-being.
- Pupils contribute significantly to the lives of others within the school.

Recommendations

3.3 The school should make the following improvements.

- Enable pupils to take more leadership in their own learning across more areas of the curriculum.
- Enable pupils to contribute further to the lives of others through opportunities to take the lead in identifying and supporting different charities.

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 achievement of pupils is excellent and represents successful fulfilment of the school's aim to provide an enjoyable, inspiring and well-rounded education. Assessment data provided by the school, lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work confirm that pupils' attainment is well above national expectations with the most able achieving far above that. A high rate of progress is maintained throughout the school, including for those with SEND, who are enabled to achieve to at least national expectations, and often at least in line with their peers as a result of the support and provision made available by the school's leadership and proprietors. Pupils make strong short-term progress in lessons, with Year 6 pupils, for example, rapidly developing their coding skills in an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson to create exciting animations. Significant numbers of pupils gain academic scholarships to independent senior schools each year, with others achieving similar success in gaining awards for sport, music and drama.
- 3.6 Across all ages, pupils are highly proficient in their use of digital technology, using tablet computers with great success throughout the curriculum to support their learning in lessons. They make frequent and confident use of ICT, demonstrating high levels of organisation when undertaking online research and completing written tasks on their devices. Year 6 pupils made excellent use of tablets to accurately complete complex algebraic calculations in a mathematics lesson. Year 8 pupils' highly skilled use of video applications enabled them to effectively record, review and improve their own silent movies in drama. Pupils' sophisticated coding skills enabled Year 5 pupils to successfully design and create exciting and interactive quiz games.
- 3.7 Pupils' communication skills are outstanding. Their standard of writing is excellent, as seen by Year 8 pupils' proficient and effective use of quotations from poems. Pupils across all ages have sophisticated reading skills, honed by their enthusiasm for a range of literature and genres, and further nurtured by the school's use of motivational reward schemes and the proprietors' recent provision of a welcoming, well-stocked and well-organised library. Pupils are highly articulate when speaking in class and speak with clarity and confidence when performing in public, such as when Year 4 pupils spoke in an assembly to parents about what they had learnt during the year. Pupils' excellent listening skills enable them to debate successfully both in lessons and in an extra-curricular club, rarely interrupting each other and responding accurately to the points made by others. They apply their communication skills to other areas of learning with great success, as when Year 8 pupils spoke articulately and with fluency when discussing the different weapons used in the Battle of Hastings.
- 3.8 Pupils have excellent skills in numeracy and demonstrate consistently high levels of fluency in the completion of their work. They apply their understanding and skills with great success, as when Year 4 pupils demonstrated a notably strong understanding for their age of how to convert fractions to decimals. Year 7 pupils gave sophisticated explanations to peers of how to accurately use significant figures in answers to calculations. Pupils apply their knowledge and skills in mathematics across many other areas of learning with great success. Year 5 pupils accurately used the laws of motion to calculate experimental results, successfully plotting these onto well drawn line graphs in science. Year 8 pupils applied the rule of thirds to create beautifully framed and atmospheric photographic portraits and landscapes in art.
- 3.9 Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are excellent in all areas of the curriculum. They have strong investigative skills, such as when Year 4 pupils successfully discovered the relationship between light sources, objects and shadows. They have well-developed physical skills for their age with pupils of all ages displaying high levels of coordination and agility in cricket. Across all areas of learning pupils demonstrate deep and secure knowledge, often well above age expectations. Year 6 pupils demonstrate excellent knowledge of French place names. Pupils use subject specific vocabulary with confidence and accuracy, as when Year 7 pupils discussed, using the correct and appropriate technical terminology, the tactics used in historical battles.

- 3.10 Pupils have highly developed and positive attitudes to learning. They are well-organised in their approach as seen when Year 6 pupils arrived at a mathematics lesson, settled quickly, and then rapidly organised themselves into pairs. They engage enthusiastically in lessons and activities, showing profound interest in the topics being studied. Year 4 pupils willingly offered thoughtful and empathetic observations about the circumstances of Anne Franck's life in theology, philosophy and religion (TPR). Pupils maintain a high rate of work in lessons, as seen in Year 8 pupils' prolific work completed in Latin. They often show notable levels of independence, as when Year 7 pupils were experimenting with different flat edged tools for applying paint to create interesting effects in their art work. Pupils are highly successful when working with others, for example when Year 6 pupils collaborated with enthusiasm when learning to make substitutions in algebra. Pupils are prepared to seek help when needed, often supporting each other to find solutions before seeking assistance from an adult. They are determined learners who set themselves high standards, with Year 4 pupils setting their own challenging targets in mathematics. In lessons where pupils have less structured activities, however, they do not always understand how to take effective leadership to successfully ensure they make further progress in their learning.
- 3.11 Pupils have excellent study skills. Year 4 pupils demonstrated highly developed reasoning and thinking in science while determining the height of a shadow in an investigation. Year 7 pupils used excellent higher order thinking skills in history, debating with sophisticated arguments the reasons why battles in history were won and lost. Pupils have excellent analytical skills, with Year 8 pupils able to determine correctly the products from a chemical reaction they had undertaken. They are highly successful in their use of information from a variety of sources to inform their learning, for example where Year 7 pupils successfully gathered information to collate into interesting and well-informed presentations about rural migration into urban areas.
- 3.12 Pupils achieve considerable success outside of the formal curriculum. Pupils participate with enthusiasm in a wide range of sporting opportunities offered by the school, with some achieving considerable success in activities such as karate. Sports teams in football and rugby are regularly successful in local, regional and national sports tournaments and individual pupils are selected to play cricket at county level each year. A significant proportion of pupils in the school learn a musical instrument and take part in the many ensembles and choirs offered by the school, many achieving considerable success in grade examinations. They demonstrate excellent performance skills in the regular opportunities to play to their peers in concerts and assemblies. Many pupils participate in speech and drama with nearly all of those achieving high levels of success in grade examinations. They are confident when speaking in public and have been successful in reaching the finals of regional debating competitions. Pupils have achieved success in regional competitions for chess, general knowledge and maths and have had pictures selected for exhibition in national art competitions.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils are deeply self-aware. They have high levels of self-esteem for their ages, enabling the Year 4 pupils to perform with confidence and energy when reciting rap-style poems in an assembly. They are resilient and will persevere with those tasks they find challenging. Year 6 years pupils showed excellent levels of resilience and problem-solving skills when learning to code in an ICT lesson to create interesting and exciting animations. Pupils understand the need to be persistent in their repetition of skills to make progress, with pupils of all ages frequently referencing the school's target of having a positive attitude to challenges in learning. Pupils are self-reflective, with Year 7 pupils reflecting carefully on their strengths and weakness to decide which aspects of punctuation to revise for their forthcoming examinations. In discussions, Year 8 pupils were clear that they felt well-prepared and ready for the next stage of their education.

- 3.15 Pupils have an excellent understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet and make sensible, informed food choices at lunch. They actively enjoy exercise on a regular basis, speaking enthusiastically about inter-school sports competitions. Pupils understand how to be mentally healthy and are comfortable seeking assistance from staff should they feel the need, supported by school leaders' provision of readily available listening support and, when necessary, professional counselling. Pupils explained, in discussions with inspectors, that having regular breaks or walking outdoors were important to them as ways of maintaining their wellbeing. Pupils are keenly aware of how to keep safe when online as a result of the school's thorough internet safety teaching. They are knowledgeable about how to stay safe both in school and within the wider world, and understand why certain rules are in place to create a safe environment for them, for example, behaving responsibly and listening to the instructions when crossing the main road to reach the common for their sports lessons.
- 3.16 Pupils' moral understanding is excellent. They can readily espouse both their own and the school's values, making frequent reference in discussions with inspectors to the school's clearly stated values and expectations. Pupils show a notably strong understanding of the importance of fairness, for example, by taking turns in the busy playground when playing in the cricket nets. Pupils are well-behaved, as seen during observations of lessons, lunchtimes and breaktimes. They understand and show respect for the school's rules and most readily accept responsibility for their own behaviour including towards others. Pupils follow instructions exceptionally well, listening carefully and accurately copying demonstrations, for example when learning a new manoeuvre in karate. Pupils respond quickly and appropriately when their behaviour is corrected by staff and they understand the action taken by the school to manage bullying when it occurs.
- 3.17 Pupils make a strong contribution to the lives of others within the school. The school council, with representatives from each class, has successfully brought about changes to the school's arrangements such as the introduction of a meat-free day once a week. Pupils have excellent environmental awareness, with Year 5 pupils passionately discussing in geography the need to preserve the country's national parks. They take on leadership roles within the school with notable pride and enthusiasm, showing high levels of emotional maturity. Older pupils readily support younger pupils at break time and with lunch arrangements. Pupils embrace opportunities to become actively involved in charity work both locally and internationally, enthusiastically helping on a regular basis at a local school for pupils with learning needs and raising significant amounts of money to provide additional resources. However, the extent to which pupils take the lead in choosing the causes they support and the means by which they do so is limited as these decisions are currently largely made by school leaders.
- 3.18 Pupils form productive relationships with each other. They naturally show concern for others, with older pupils readily helping younger pupils around the school. Playground prefects actively help with the organisation of break times and black belt karate pupils help beginners to improve their skills. Pupils are supportive of their peers and enjoy celebrating each other's successes, with Year 6 pupils readily identifying other's strengths as well as their own in discussions with inspectors. Pupils are excellent when working with others, collaborating and supporting those who find learning more challenging than themselves. In Year 7, more able pupils supported less able peers through paired work enabling them to successfully translate Latin phrases into English. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills, and this was confirmed by inspection evidence.
- 3.19 Pupils value diversity within society and within the school and show strong respect and tolerance through their sensitive interactions with others. Pupils understand that everyone is different and, in discussion with inspectors, explained that showing respect is valuing and accepting people regardless of their religion, differences and disabilities. Their nuanced understanding of difference includes appreciation and support for those with SEND and acknowledging neurodiversity within their peers, for example when older pupils act as neurodiversity ambassadors to support and build understanding and tolerance among younger pupils. They appreciate different cultures through, for example, raising money for a partner school in Ethiopia at which a significant number of children's educations are

sponsored by pupils and their families. Pupils engage positively when staff and peers share their own diverse cultures in presentations and lessons. They have a healthy awareness of democracy, recognising its importance to society, as when they engage in elections to choose representatives for the school council.

- 3.20 Pupils are effective and confident decision makers. In discussion, younger pupils showed clear understanding of how the behavioural choices they make can influence their own well-being and that of their peers. Pupils frequently make considerate decisions about how to behave in the playground where they often form supportive relationships. They consider their future thoughtfully and many can explain with clear reasoning the significant factors of importance to them when considering their choice of future senior schools.
- 3.21 Pupils have notably strong values based on clear ethical foundations of fairness and tolerance. They have a mature understanding that materialism does not buy happiness, and that fulfilment may more often be found in non-material experiences. For many of the pupils, happiness and fulfilment is found in their deep engagement with and appreciation for sport. Pupils show good cultural and aesthetic awareness in their appreciation of art and when listening to musical performances given by their peers, although they find it hard to express this in words. Pupils understand well that quiet reflection can at times enable them to come to terms with or indeed resolve difficult problems. They are beginning to understand that philosophical thinking can provide a useful framework for thinking differently about issues with the school's inclusion of philosophy within the curriculum.

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 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 Matthew Lovett	Reporting inspector
Mrs Jane Prescott	Compliance team inspector (Headteacher, GSA school)
Mr Mark Brain	Team inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school)