Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Annemount School

November 2022

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School's Details

School	Annemount School			
DfE number	302/6051			
Address	18 Holne Chase Hampstead Garden Suburb London N2 0QN			
Telephone number	020 8455 2132			
Email address	headteacher@annemount.co.uk			
Headmistress	Mrs Geraldine Maidment			
Proprietor	Mrs Geraldine Maidment			
Age range	3 to 7			
Number of pupils on roll	75			
	EYFS	47	**Juniors**	28
Inspection dates	22 to 24 November 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 Annemount School is a co-educational independent day school. It was established in 1936 and is located in Hampstead Garden Suburb in north-west London. The role of governance and the financial management of the school are undertaken by the proprietor, who is also the headmistress.

What the school seeks to do

1.2 The school aims to bring out the individuality of each child so that they can realise their potential with self-discipline and respect. Its philosophy is to encourage good character and citizenship, so that each individual can be a valued member of the community.

About the pupils

1.3 Pupils are drawn from the local area and come predominantly from business and professional families. Tracking data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified one pupil with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) who receives additional support. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care plan. There are 19 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The curriculum is modified for those pupils identified as the most able in the school's population.

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 **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key standards have been inspected in detail. These are the standards on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety; arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management.

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

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

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

Key findings

2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 The school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).

2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.

2.4 Pupils receive relationships education. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.

2.5 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

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

2.6 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.

2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2.8 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.

2.9 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

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

2.11 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.12 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are

appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.

2.13 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.14 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.16 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

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

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.18 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.19 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

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

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' achievement is excellent; they make rapid progress and achieve high levels of attainment for their age.
- Pupils are articulate communicators and performers, displaying highly developed reading, writing and listening skills.
- Pupils are highly numerate for their age.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes and thoroughly enjoying learning.

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

- Pupils demonstrate excellent self-confidence and self-awareness and are highly resilient, learning from their mistakes.
- Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and willingly accept responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Pupils are very kind to one another and show high levels of respect to all in their school.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of, and value the diversity in, their own community.

Recommendation

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Ensure that the pupils can respond to tasks with even more independence by enabling them to apply their ICT skills more widely across the curriculum.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 By the time pupils leave the school, all have made excellent progress in line with their starting points. This was confirmed by observations of pupils' work in books and in lessons. It was also confirmed by analysis of the school's own tracking data. Early identification of those with specific needs or at an early stage of learning English ensures that effective individual interventions can be put in place by their teachers so that these pupils make excellent progress in line with their peers. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire stated that their teachers help them learn. School leaders use the tracking data effectively to identify the needs of individual pupils and give suitable guidance to staff.

Pupils are academically well prepared for entry to their future schools with most gaining places at their first choice independent schools, most of which have high standards of entry.

3.6 Pupils of all ages have excellent communication skills because of a focus on the development of early reading and speaking skills and the strong home-school partnership in this area. In Nursery, the children listened avidly to a story and with levels of concentration beyond their age. Reception children know their basic sounds and use these effectively to write independently. They blend sounds successfully to describe the toys they have chosen, with the most able writing in accurate sentences with full stops. Older pupils write very successfully and accurately for a variety of purposes. Year 1 pupils accurately recounted the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood' and then successfully adapted the story to include their own characters, setting and dilemma. Year 2 pupils make excellent vocabulary choices when writing a diary from the point of view of Beatrix Potter's Mr McGregor, enabling the reader to feel Mr McGregor's frustration with the mischievous rabbit. They use a wide variety of punctuation successfully such as exclamation and question marks, to add impact to their writing showing attainment well above that expected for their age. Year 2 pupils of all abilities understand and describe what a suffix is. They made considerable progress during a lesson in using comparative suffixes accurately, to describe which object was light, lighter, and lightest. Pupils of all ages listen attentively to one another and their teachers and speak with clarity and expression. Older pupils have acquired excellent comprehension skills in being able to answer simple questions based on a text but also infer information from the author's choice of vocabulary. They can give reasons for their answers. Pupils apply their communication skills effectively across a range of subjects.

3.7 Pupils are highly competent mathematicians. EYFS children can accurately sequence numbers to twenty and confidently follow a pattern of colours by matching 'compare bears' with a pattern on a card or accurately match a number with the corresponding number of dinosaurs. Pupils make rapid progress in their understanding, in response to the encouragement shown by their teachers and through exploring number practically, with a variety of well-chosen resources. Older pupils have an excellent understanding of subtraction. The most able successfully apply their skills to calculate the amount of change they would get from £20, using column methods accurately at a level well above that expected for the age. Less able successfully use a variety of strategies to achieve a similar goal. This success is because of targeted teaching to meet the needs of the child, and the availability and use of concrete materials to support learning at an appropriate level. Pupils apply their mathematical skills effectively in other subjects, for example to measure the impact of different surfaces on the movement of cars down a ramp.

3.8 Pupils of all ages and abilities have outstanding knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. Almost all pupils feel their skills and knowledge improve in most lessons. Nursery children were very proud of a long string of beads they threaded onto a rope, exhibiting excellent fine-motor control. Reception children demonstrated their strong creative skills, carefully representing Cézanne's *Still Life with Fruit dish* using coloured pastels to great effect and accurately representing the different shapes. Older pupils showed their excellent understanding of shape and colour when printing to make their own effective patterns. Pupils are very able musicians with children in EYFS confidently performing violin solos, playing all the open strings with excellent clarity of tone. Older pupils perform in harmony with their teacher using correct fingering to play notes on the different strings to a high degree of accuracy for their age. This is because of the access to specialist teaching. Older pupils have excellent scientific knowledge and skills. They confidently describe how, as metal is a conductor, a complete metal circuit is needed to make a light bulb light. Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary with great accuracy. Year 2 children demonstrated their excellent understanding of historical facts when talking about Julius Caesar and life as Roman soldiers. They apply geographical skills effectively when identifying different Roman towns on a map. This high level of understanding is developed through the excellent supportive relationships established by their teachers so that pupils are highly engaged and willing to be involved in their learning. High subject knowledge and skills are embedded through the variety of extra-curricular trips and the breadth of after-school activities, which enrich the curriculum.

3.9 Pupils are competent users of ICT. EYFS children can make accurate observations about how their programmable toy moves, depending on the instructions they give it when pressing buttons. They understand how coding can use repeat patterns. They select different drawing tools when using programs to make pictures in different colours; 'I have made a blue chicken'. Reception children reinforce their early writing skills using the interactive board to trace letters. Older pupils use computer tablets successfully to take pictures of their environment and things that interest them or for research on their local area. They successfully use more advanced coding programs to give instructions to characters in a story. Pupils have simple word-processing skills taught through their specialist lessons but do not have enough opportunities to use and develop these and other computer skills by applying them independently in their learning across the curriculum.

3.10 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are extremely keen to be active participants as individuals but also willing to work well in pairs or small groups to achieve success together. Reception children wrote independently about the toys they had chosen. Older pupils demonstrate initiative in making some choices in lessons, for example selecting the tasks they want to complete at different levels of challenge in mathematics, but these choices are still within controlled boundaries. Pupils are less able to take leadership in their learning, through independent creative responses to tasks, because of the limited opportunities to do so. Year 2 pupils worked with considerable focus and cooperation in a drama lesson where they had to concentrate extremely hard when working in pairs on a complicated clapping game.

3.11 Pupils have good study skills for their age. All the parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that the school equip pupils with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life. Year 1 pupils synthesised their knowledge of the properties of materials to explain why shadows can be seen when the sun shines, as some light is blocked. Older pupils use a variety of sources of information when researching for their independently chosen topics. Year 2 pupils successfully use higher-order thinking skills to infer information from texts about the time a poem is set because of the authors use of the word 'night'. They make predictions during science experiments and then test their hypotheses to see if different objects are magnetic. They then synthesise this knowledge to make further predictions about the materials the objects are made from. This is because of the emphasis on discovery and thinking for yourself as a teaching style implemented by the school leadership.

3.12 Pupils achieve high levels of individual and group success particularly in the performing arts for which they have recently achieved national winner in the ISA category for excellence and innovation. Pupils have been successful, winning first prize in the North London Music festival. Individuals have achieved considerable success for their age in graded music exams, achieving distinction. This is because of the focus performing arts is given by the proprietor, in school time and within the curriculum, as she recognises the impact on learning and development these skills can have. Others achieve individual success in swimming, and a few children have been recognised for their football talents by national football teams. The school football team has had success in various ISA tournaments in recent years. Pupils have achieved success in national handwriting and poetry competitions, and the school is recognised for its achievements in supporting sustainable travel.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

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

3.14 Pupils of all ages exhibit excellent levels of self-confidence and resilience and are well prepared for the next stage in their lives. This is because of the expectation that, from the moment the pupils arrive at the school gate, they will take responsibility for themselves and believe that 'they can'. All the parents who responded to the questionnaire felt the school helps pupils to be confident and independent. In discussion, older pupils described themselves as highly confident because of the very many opportunities to perform in different situations. They said this gives them the self-belief needed to keep trying even when they find it hard. This high level of resilience and self-esteem is

demonstrated in the excellent speeches each child gives at graduation reflecting on what they have achieved at Annemount, which allows them to feel confidence in facing the change to a new school after Year 2. This meets the school's aim to bring out the individuality of each child so they can realise their potential with self-discipline and respect.

3.15 Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and demonstrate clear respect for their school and class rules. Almost all pupils who responded to the questionnaire felt that pupils are kind and respect one another. They are quick to make genuine apology and suggest consequences for any breaches in their conduct. This is because of the clear modelling of expected responses and behaviour in social situations. Children in the EYFS have an excellent understanding of the way they should sit and eat their lunch, showing excellent manners. Older pupils were quick to explain that they know how to behave well, because of the guidance in the school song emphasising kindness, and because of the consistent use of behaviour management strategies by all teachers across the school. Year 2 pupils could clearly explain right and wrong actions when writing about different choices in moral dilemmas. Older pupils show high levels of self-regulation. This is because of the focus on teaching children how to recognise and express their emotions and feelings.

3.16 Pupils have excellent social skills; they work and play effectively with their peers. All the parents and staff who responded to the questionnaire felt that pupils readily help and support others. EYFS children worked collaboratively building a very tall tower and were proud of what they had achieved together sharing the construction equipment. Older pupils designed and successfully worked in groups to build their own mini battery-operated cars. They explained how they work well in teams because of the opportunities to do so during after school clubs, such as football club, choir or adventure club which is all about teamwork. Year 2 pupils co-operated successfully in pairs when playing drama games designed to encourage focus.

3.17 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding and appreciation of the cultural diversity in their own and the wider community. Pupils explained how they enjoyed learning about other cultures from their friends. They followed the instructions given by an older child to make paper models of a lulav and etrog, part of the Jewish celebration of Sukkot. A child in the EYFS explained to the whole school how he had made a thali to celebrate Diwali. Nursery children identify what makes them individual and special, recognising the differences in their own class. Reception children enjoy exploring the colour in a rangoli pattern and designing and writing what they will need to make a diya lamp. Pupils appreciate the role of food in different cultures, through observing the variety in their friends' lunch boxes. This high level of understanding of different cultural traditions is developed through the many opportunities given in assemblies and class to share cultural experiences and because of the wide variety of resources and books in the school which reflects the diversity in British culture.

3.18 Pupils demonstrate a deep spiritual awareness particularly in their appreciation of the different major world faiths. This is because of the opportunities in the religious education curriculum to compare what is common to faiths, to visit many different places of worship and because of the many opportunities to share the faiths of those in their diverse community. Pupils, their families and staff lead whole-school assemblies celebrating religious festivals including, Eid, Hanukkah and Diwali. Older pupils reflected that their appreciation of the teaching of Buddhism, about the importance of being content, taught to them to think about ways to be calm, by going for a walk or painting a picture. Year 2 pupils showed a keen interest in their Cézanne style paintings, talking with confidence about how the colours made them feel. In response to a talk from a visiting minister, older pupils reflected with empathy on the importance of valuing memories about those who have died, when considering the impact of the death of Queen Elizabeth II. They reflected philosophically on the concept of heaven.

3.19 Pupils have strong decision-making skills, understanding what impact choices have on how they learn and their enjoyment of learning. EYFS children choose from a carousel of activities, which sometimes they have asked to be provided, based on their previous experiences. They can make choices on how to resolve discussions, using timers and stop watches to help take turns and share, so all enjoy playtime. Year 2 pupils choose themes for their individual projects, knowing that it is better to choose

something that interests them if they are going to work on it for a while. Children understand the consequences of poor choices and explain in apology letters how they can improve behaviour to develop successful relationships with their peers. This is underpinned by the behaviour policy which is clearly understood by all. Older children show how the choices they make can affect success, they choose to write letters to the head to ask for roles of responsibility based on their interests, for example to become library monitors. This is because they know their opinions and ideas are valued and supported by their teachers and the school leadership.

3.20 Pupils of all ages have an acute understanding of how they fit together as a community and how their positive contribution is important. This is because all are given the chance to take responsibility for small jobs to help staff and each other. EYFS children make it easy for all in the class to get ready to go home by being water-bottle monitors or giving out the coats and bags. Eco warriors make sure lights are turned off and garden rangers work to make the playground clear. Year 2 pupils take it in turns to be head boy or head girl and give out awards to their peers in performance assembly. Pupils also contribute to improve the lives of those in their local community. On 'Wednesday Walks' round the neighbourhood, which coincide with bin day, the litter pickers take bin bags to clear any mess in the area around the school. The pupils sing in local retirement homes. They collect food for the local food bank, which is a continuation of a child-initiated request to help others less fortunate in the area. The school raises money for local and national charities and some individual children raise money for charities of their choice by organising activities such as a skipping challenge. Pupils contribute by being ambassadors for the community of Barnet and part of the Transport for London travel plan. Their involvement in activities such as bringing your bike to school have been recognised by a Gold award. In this way the pupils' contributions live up to the school philosophy of encouraging good character and citizenship, so that each individual can be a valued member of the community.

3.21 Pupils demonstrate high levels of understanding of the importance of being healthy in body, mind and spirit. The vast majority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire felt the school encourages them to be healthy. They all know who they can go to, to discuss any worries, recognising some in the staff have 'special jobs' relating to this. Pre-Reception children understand how feelings sometimes make them feel confused and mixed up, recognise what might cause these feelings and what they can do to help them feel calm. Older pupils explained how all pupils know about road safety because they all go walking in the neighbourhood. They know how to keep safe online because of the clear guidance given in lessons. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating because of the school's clear 'healthy lunch box policy'. All pupils understand the importance of being physically active and the role this can have in helping them to maintain focus because of the opportunities given to take exercise breaks as well as being very physically active at play time, through the PE curriculum and extra-school activity programme.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor, 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

Mrs Vivien Sergeant	Reporting inspector
Mrs Emma Patel	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Amanda Childs	Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)