



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report

Clarendon Cottage School

June 2023

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School's Details

School	Clarendon Cottage School			
DfE number	355/6023			
Address	Clarendon Cottage School Ivy Bank House Half Edge Lane Eccles Manchester M30 9BJ			
Telephone number	0161 950 7868			
Email address	admin@clarendoncottage-school.co.uk			
Headteacher	Miss Emily Bagnall			
Chair of proprietors	Mr Jeffrey Bagnall			
Proprietor	Clarendon Cottage School Limited			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	125			
	EYFS	61	Infants	36
	Juniors	28		
Inspection dates	20 to 22 June 2023			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Clarendon Cottage School is an independent co-educational day school. It was founded in 1989 and moved to its current premises in 1994. It is a limited company which is run by a board of directors and assisted by an advisory body. Since the previous inspection, the Early Years foundation Stage (EYFS) setting has been refurbished and an artificial grass area has been established for sport. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2019.
- 1.2 The school comprises three sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which includes both Nursery and Reception; an infant school for pupils in Years 1 and 2; and a junior school for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Before and after school care and a holiday club are an integral part of the education offered.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide an environment that fosters a love of lifelong learning and enquiry, through a broad, exciting curriculum with a firm academic foundation. The school seeks to build self-confidence and a strong community spirit, where pupils show respect, courtesy and kindness to all.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The majority of pupils come from professional families living within a 20-mile radius of the school. Standardised data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is above average compared to those taking similar tests nationally. The school has identified 18 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive support for a range of needs including dyslexia and autism. Three pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 18 pupils, none of whom require additional support for their English. The curriculum is modified for those pupils who are identified as being 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. 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. 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: [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 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:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Prep 1	Nursery
Prep 2	Reception
Prep 3	Year 1
Prep 4	Year 2
Prep 5	Year 3
Prep 6	Year 4
Prep 7	Year 5
Prep 8	Year 6

Key findings

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

- Pupils are articulate, have strong communication skills and achieve good levels of attainment in all areas of literacy.
- Pupils throughout the school are strong mathematicians; they calculate confidently and apply their knowledge effectively when solving problems in all subjects.
- Pupils display extremely positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' progress is restricted where teaching does not challenge them to take initiative or think independently.

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

- Pupils mix with ease across all age groups and show care and consideration for each other.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the difference between right and wrong and a mature appreciation of the importance of kindness.
- Pupils show genuine appreciation of and respect for the cultural diversity that is naturally embedded within the school community.
- From the earliest age, pupils actively support each other in a highly collaborative atmosphere, displayed in the high quality of their friendships and their behaviour around the school.

Recommendations

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
- Enable pupils to develop the ability to use their own initiative and become more independent by providing more open-ended and self-directed learning tasks.
 - Strengthen pupils' ability to make their views known in the school council, enabling them to initiate their own charity and community projects.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.5 Pupils are skilled communicators, articulate and confident. Children in the EYFS have a good understanding of the sounds letters make, and their writing and speaking skills develop steadily as they grow in confidence and maturity. Reception children during a science lesson showed excellent writing and listening skills to spell out the names of their group on a seasonal poster. Older pupils in an English lesson used a high level of vocabulary to create vivid imagery, such as 'like as pearlescent parrot, soaring through the green trees'. Pupils throughout the school listen extremely well to one another and eagerly volunteer their opinions, showing ability to convey different viewpoints. Pupils demonstrated an ability to work out their ideas as a result of careful and judicious questioning by skilled teachers. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils write at length and redraft with care, displaying good use of creative language and stylistic devices such as metaphor and simile in their writing. This was evidenced by the oldest pupils' work, based on *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell, where they used phrases such as 'the plane powered through the offshore breezes of the river'.
- 3.6 Pupils achieve at levels which are good in relation to their abilities, as confirmed by their results in national and standardised tests. Children in the EYFS work diligently on tasks, motivated by the encouragement of staff and regular praise. As a result, EYFS children achieve expected levels of development by the end of Reception. The school's tracking system confirms that pupils continue to make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. In response to the inspection questionnaire, all pupils and most parents agree that teaching enables them to learn and make progress. Inspection evidence supports this. In lessons observed during the inspection, there were examples of rapid progress, but this was not consistent in all observations. Pupils make less progress when they are presented with fewer choices or opportunities to expand their learning beyond set tasks and worksheets. Pupils who are less able and those with SEND and EAL achieve well in relation to their abilities due to small classes, support which is tailored to their needs and the systems in place to monitor such pupils by skilled professionals.
- 3.7 Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are good, successfully developed through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, and the pursuit of the school's aim to foster a love of lifelong learning and enquiry. Nursery children exhibited a range of strong fine and gross motor skills for their age, such as manipulating scissors well, and painting carefully. Pupils demonstrate rapidly developing co-ordination skills as observed during an upper junior cricket lesson. Pupils are successful the acquisition of age-appropriate linguistic skills. Pupils in a Year 1 French lesson skilfully recited the days of the week in the target language, including naming days before and after. Pupils are effective in applying their knowledge across the curriculum. For example, the oldest pupils demonstrated good logical and scientific skills when identifying pertinent features of botanical flower drawings, labelling the flower parts accurately with specific terminology. Pupils' learning is greatly enhanced when the teaching engages them to think for themselves. This was seen in art club where pupils were using water colours and displayed excellent knowledge of how to start their painting with the lightest shade to skilfully produce effective pictures in the style of Debbie Nowra.
- 3.8 Pupils' mathematical competency develops steadily as they progress through the school, supported by a curriculum that is well planned and assessed. Pupils of all ages are enthusiastic about

mathematics and enjoy the challenges presented. Children in Nursery could count and recognise numbers to ten with confidence and were able to articulate what shapes they were printing through a fun activity using potatoes. In an upper junior mathematics lesson, pupils demonstrated a detailed grasp of methodology as they enthusiastically created a formula, based on the relationship between number of spiders and corresponding legs. In discussions, pupils described how they apply mathematical knowledge and skills across the curriculum, for example to plot coordinates in geography and to produce graphical results in science. Pupils can apply mathematical knowledge to real life situations, as seen by younger pupils confidently using number whilst undertaking an individualised activity making animals and sticking and gluing two eyes or four legs whilst discussing how many more legs the giraffe had than the owl.

- 3.9 Pupils achieve success in a range of academic and other achievements throughout their time at school, encouraged by the celebration of their successes through a plethora of different avenues, such as house points, stickers, and certificates. Pupils regularly gain places at their chosen senior school, with some pupils successfully attaining scholarships. Pupils' creative talents and expertise were evidenced through high quality displays, including highly attractive cross-stitched squares using the acronym SCARF as part of personal, social and health education (PSHE) work. In the questionnaire, a very small minority of parents felt the school did not provide a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors found that those on offer enabled pupils to develop their skills and achieve in the areas which their talents and interests lie, such as success in an ISA singing and STEM competitions. Pupils interviewed stated that they enjoy the clubs available and believed the offer to be good.
- 3.10 Pupils are competent in the use of information and communication technology (ICT). The school takes a measured approach to ICT with pupils growing in confidence so that, by the upper years, they are able to code, demonstrate good keyboard skills and use these for research and computation. Pupils are able to manipulate data and to present their research to an audience, as evidenced by the oldest pupils who used their ICT skills to produce excellent leaflets about healthy living. Pupils use these skills effectively in some areas of the wider curriculum. Research in an upper junior topic lesson on dinosaurs, highlighted pupils' ability to gather information using technology. During a Reception lesson pupils' interest was heightened when technology was used to good effect, using musical stimuli from the *Carnival of the Animals* book to enable all pupils to imagine the animals more vividly. They were then able to use a paint programme to produce some highly effective pictures.
- 3.11 Pupils' study skills are well developed, and they respond positively to the opportunities they are given across the curriculum. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school equips their children with the teamworking, collaborative, and research skill they need in later life. Pupils draw knowledge effectively from sources to which they have been directed, though in some cases they show little initiative in determining which information they will use. Where more open-ended tasks are presented to pupils, they relish the intellectual freedom this affords and develop their thinking and learning to a higher level. This was seen in a science lesson, where pupils displayed considerable skills of analysis and hypothesis, as they worked together to rank different statements regarding plants. Year 4 pupils successfully synthesised the pertinent points from a film clip of the *BFG* by Roald Dahl and were able to independently extrapolate the key features to write excellent diary entries.
- 3.12 Throughout the school pupils display positive attitudes and an enthusiasm for learning, as evidenced by their endeavours in lessons and activities observed during the inspection. They are productive when working individually, with a partner or in a group. This is due to the excellent rapport between the staff and the pupils, where there is clear mutual respect. In the questionnaire all pupils stated that their teachers know their subjects well and are supportive. Pupils explained that they enjoy collaborative working as it enables them to work as a team, but that it is also valuable to learn to work independently. Younger pupils were just as productive when mark making on their own as they were joining others in role play. Year 2 pupils in mathematics demonstrated clear enjoyment working on a task weighing different objects, with a keen desire to share their findings. Pupils' enthusiasm is

encouraged by committed staff reinforcing a productive work ethic and positive can-do approach. The school's implicit culture and sense of family that is promoted by the strong leadership team and supported by all the directors, underpins the pupils' desire to do their best.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils across all ages have the confidence to share ideas and exhibit high levels of esteem, humility and respect. Children in the EYFS demonstrated excellent self-confidence while speaking to the rest of their group about a recent school trip. Pupils in lower junior showed excellent reflective thinking and self-awareness in a creative PSHE lesson as they considered the important relationships they build, using a tree metaphor with attributes as leaves and strong foundation roots. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors did so with much self-assurance and were very confident to talk about their own experiences. They expressed how they felt comfortable in making mistakes in order to learn and appreciate the school's focus on growth mindset. Children in the EYFS settle in and become at ease because of the very encouraging and cheerful manner of staff and effective use of humour that relaxes children. Across the school, teachers treat pupils with courtesy at all times, and this encourages the pupils to feel free and express themselves. All parents who responded to the questionnaire said that the school helps their child to be confident and independent. School leaders and directors successfully promote self-confidence and a strong community spirit where pupils show respect, courtesy and kindness to all.
- 3.15 Pupils show an excellent aptitude for decision-making; they are confident and enjoy opportunities to make decisions about their own learning and wellbeing. For example, during outdoor play, pupils advised each other to take care on the climbing equipment. Children in the EYFS exhibited long concentration spans in their activities, demonstrating their ability to choose well. Pupils throughout the school exhibit high levels of self-discipline, moving around the school and entering lessons in a safe manner, ready to learn. The youngest children showed a mature ability to bounce back after difficulties sharing toys and went on to seek a new challenge and take appropriate risks. Pupils can make their own judgements whilst appreciating differing opinions. During a lunchtime discussion regarding school values, older pupils cited mutual respect as being essential for effective decision-making. A mature discussion revealed that they understand that the decision-making process can be a delicate one, as each person has their own opinions and that everyone is unique.
- 3.16 Pupils show a keen awareness and strong appreciation of non-material aspects of life such as learning, friendship, and family. For example, when asked what they value most in life, older pupils suggested positivity, treating others how you would like to be treated and being safe and happy. They articulated an excellent appreciation of how kindness makes for a better family-based community. Wall displays show pupil engagement with RSPB birdwatch and an awareness of nature was evident in older pupils' science work as they prepared a plant for dissection. Pupils exhibit strong spiritual values and show a keen interest in the faith and beliefs of others. Year 1 pupils explained how there were many similarities between places of worship, explaining that they are places to go to be quiet, calm and pray. The high quality of pupils' spiritual understanding and development is evident in their ability to empathise with others.
- 3.17 Pupils show advanced moral development for their age and distinguish clearly between right and wrong behaviours. Nursery children readily followed staff prompts and instructions, including lining up efficiently and with much consideration for each other. During break, pupils demonstrated entirely positive and inclusive behaviour in the playground. Pupils made it clear in discussions that they understand their role within the humanity of the world, as they maturely reflected the plight of refugees and debated the senselessness of war. Throughout the school, pupils behave with courtesy and consideration for others. Pupils were observed holding doors open for each other without being asked, offering others daily greetings, and showing genuine interest in each other's feelings. Pupils

spoke highly about the quality of staff-pupil relationships, and a palpable culture of respect and tolerance pervades all aspects of school life. Pupils spoke confidently about their PSHE lessons and assemblies serving as a foundation for their moral understanding and intentions, stating that they are happy and indeed encouraged to challenge any contrary views.

- 3.18 Pupils demonstrate excellent social development. They supported each other well in discussions, with pupils listening to each other carefully and ensuring that everyone had the chance to speak. Pupils were seen collaborating effectively, engaging in discussion, and enjoying successfully completing shared tasks. Children in nursery exhibited kindness and empathy for each other during a 'people who help us' role play session, identifying that skin spots could be chicken pox and calling for a vet to heal a sick animal. The oldest pupil in a reasoning session supported and encouraged each other as they solved complex problems. Leaders and staff model high social expectations well. All parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills.
- 3.19 From the earliest age, pupils show a keen awareness of the needs of others. Pupils' contributions to the wellbeing of all, both inside and outside the classroom are obvious, positive and highly effective. For instance, a younger pupil on realising that a classmate was without a partner during play invited them to join their group; a Year 4 pupil stopped an activity, without hesitation, to help a peer who was struggling to understand the instructions. The oldest pupils described with great pride their roles as leaders, such as prefects or eco-council representatives. Furthermore, Year 2 pupils expressed pride at their fulfilment when acting as a playground buddy for younger pupils. Pupils are keen to make a positive contribution to the school community by taking their positions of responsibility seriously and really want to develop the school council to 'make the school an even better place'. Through discussions it was clear that pupils understand the importance of global responsibility and contributing to charitable causes, and they enjoy helping the wider community, such as when they go to sing in a care home. However, currently the pupils have limited opportunities to take ideas further as the school council rarely meets and adults tend to take the lead in initiating charity and community projects.
- 3.20 Pupils engage naturally and without hesitation with those of backgrounds and cultures other than their own, in response to the school's ethos of kindness and mutual respect. Pupils are tolerant and inclusive. In a mixed age interview the respect and tolerance showed to the younger pupils was excellent and the pupils themselves attributed this to their PSHE lessons. Pupils remarked that all are nurtured, celebrated, and feel secure and included within the school community that embraces their individuality, articulating that, 'we all have a voice'. In the questionnaire, all parents and almost all pupils agree that the school encourages them to respect and tolerate other people. During lunch pupils displayed a clear understanding that racism is a form of prejudice, and explained how important it is to respect people's rights and how not doing so could lead to much hurt, harm and inequity.
- 3.21 Pupils are not just physically healthy; they radiate cheerfulness and care for each other, in large part because of the priority attached by the leadership of the school to the fostering of their emotional wellbeing. Pupils fully understand the importance of staying safe and healthy in different activities, such as when surfing the internet or going on a school trip. Reception pupils reported it is important to hold a handrail when climbing onto a coach, so you don't fall over. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that they understand how to stay safe online, and in discussions said that they appreciated the regular focus on online safety in ICT lessons. Younger pupils during lunch intelligently discussed what constitutes a balanced meal, including the importance of eating vegetables. The oldest pupils understand the importance of being physically healthy and how this links to positive mental health, with a mature discussion about how you die once, but you live every day so 'make the best of it, appreciate life, be happy and success will follow'.

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 some of the proprietors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. 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 Ruth Loveman	Reporting inspector
Mrs Rebecca Robertson	Compliance team inspector (Former deputy head, IAPS school)
Mrs Lynne Horner	Team inspector (Former head, SoH school)