

INSPECTION REPORT SUMMARY

OCTOBER 2022

"AN
EXCELLENT
EDUCATION"



NOTES

From the Head

In October 2022, Dolphin School Trust (inc. Noah's Ark Nurseries) was inspected by ISI and received the highest accolade of **Excellent**. Here is why I think Dolphin deserves this stamp of approval.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate triangulates evidence from the school's leadership team and governors, from parents, pupils and staff, paperwork, lessons observations and children's books and their outcomes. They form a picture of a school over the course of three days from a forensic analysis of all of the above, and much more.

This inspection at Dolphin School Trust was no exception. What they found was a school that is functioning as a whole - no constituent part is weaker in the community than the other, between pupils, parents, staff, leadership and governance. This is a school that shares and celebrates its ethos and way of life and is proud of relationships within.

The last line of the report summarises us wonderfully: "In an open and affirming environment, pupils care for each other at times of vulnerability and show kindness and friendship in abundance. Pupils know where to seek help and embrace a resilient approach to challenges that they may face. They have a robust sense of well-being and positive attitude to life."

The Dolphin School community has high expectations of each other - in learning, tolerance and respect, friendships, and in time. We have the expectation to spend quality time with each other, offering support and guidance, a critical voice or a moment of compassion to become articulate in our emotions and ideas. This is a safe environment for our pupils to learn, to make mistakes and to thrive. They aren't competing against one another, but are outwardly ambitious for each other and themselves. We give our pupils the security to learn at their own pace, to nurture and then hone their skills and interests to become highly motivated and adept in their work.

Pupils' sense of self-purpose and independence is frequently commented on by heads of Senior Schools, who recognise the Dolphin pupil from afar. We send children to many of the best schools in the UK and importantly for us, it is the right school for the individual child.

KEY FINDINGS

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

- Pupils display excellent levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in their learning.
- Pupils of all ages progress well and attain beyond national age-related expectations.
- Pupils across the school demonstrate an exemplary attitude to their learning.
- Pupils are highly articulate and accomplished listeners from a very young age.

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

- Pupils are enormously considerate, caring, courteous and respectful of each other and all members of the school community.
- Pupils have an extremely well-developed sense of self-belief and self-confidence whilst showing mindfulness towards others.
- The behaviour of all pupils is excellent.
- Pupils display outstanding compassion and understanding of the needs of others outside their own community.



ABOUT DOLPHIN

The foundations of Dolphin School Trust that make it **Excellent**.

- 2 Noah's Ark Nurseries, providing transition and continuity from nursery to prep school (2-11 years old)(.
- Prep school class sizes average 14-16 pupils.
- Specialist teaching from Nursery upwards in many subjects including languages, sport, music, art & drama.
- Our Life Education programme and 'way of life' has been creating strong relationships and bonds, emotional resilience and positive well-being since 1986.
- A strong, non-competitive community where everyone knows each other's names, from parents to pupils and staff.
- A Christian ethos that strengthens core values of tolerance, belief, respect and reflection - whilst respecting individual faiths and cultures.
- A robust academic culture which develops young minds to think independently and connect their knowledge of the world around them.





“Early literacy skills develop quickly in the EYFS due to the well-structured phonics programme, enabling children to develop secure pre-reading and writing skills.”

"High expectations of staff and pupils' own self-discipline enable pupils to make positive transitions within their school and are successful in attaining places in senior schools."



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"Without a hint of self-importance, pupils develop confidence in their own abilities. They appreciate that whilst their teachers will support and challenge them as they develop and grow, so will their peers."



“In the EYFS children make excellent progress due to the rigorous assessment process that highlights areas of strength and weakness and identifies children’s next steps.”



A group of five diverse school children, three boys and two girls, are running and laughing joyfully outdoors. They are wearing blue school uniforms with a crest on the pocket. The background is a soft-focus green landscape with trees. A dark blue semi-transparent box with white text is overlaid on the top right of the image.

“Pupils have an excellent and positive understanding of the similarities and differences between people of diverse faiths and cultures. They constantly refer to the school family. Leaders’ and staff’s promotion of the values of the school is extremely effective in enabling the pupils to recognise and develop their understanding of the diversity within their own community and the world generally.”

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The Parent Perspective

100% of parents believe that teaching & learning enables their pupils to make progress.

100% of parents believe that the school helps their children develop strong teamwork and social skills.

100% of parents believed that the school promotes good behaviour.

100% of parents believed that the school listens to the views of the pupils.

99% of parents felt that the individual needs of their children are met effectively.

100% of parents believed that the school provided a suitable range of co-curricular activities.

100% parents felt that the school equips their child with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life.

100% of parents felt the school is governed, led and managed effectively.



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