



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Report  
For Schools with Residential Provision**

**Framlingham College Preparatory School**

**October 2022**

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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	Framlingham College Preparatory School			
<b>DfE number</b>	935/6046			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1114383			
<b>Address</b>	Framlingham College Preparatory School Brandeston Hall Brandeston Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 7AH			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01728 685331			
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:prepschooloffice@framlinghamcollege.co.uk">prepschooloffice@framlinghamcollege.co.uk</a>			
<b>Head</b>	Mr Jonathan Egan			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Charles Packshaw			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 13			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	225			
	<b>Day pupils</b>	215	<b>Boarders</b>	10
	<b>Nursery</b>	22	<b>Pre-prep</b>	38
	<b>Lower prep</b>	74	<b>Upper prep</b>	91
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11 to 13 October 2022			

## **1. Background Information**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 Framlingham College Preparatory School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school. It was founded in 1948. The school has its own head and shares a governing body and principal with the linked senior school, Framlingham College, which was inspected concurrently. The school comprises four sections: nursery, for children aged 3 to 4 years, pre-prep, for pupils aged 4 to 7 years, lower prep, for pupils aged 7 to 11 years, and upper prep, for pupils aged 11 to 13 years. Boarders are accommodated in one boarding house situated in the main building.
- 1.2 The current head took up his post in April 2021. The current chair of governors took up his responsibilities in December 2020.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.3 The school aims to provide a high quality, innovative, flexible and holistic education in a secure and inspiring environment, accessible to a broad range of pupils. It seeks to equip each individual with the skills, qualifications and personal qualities required to flourish in the adult world of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.4 The school's own assessment data indicate that the ability of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 24 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and other conditions, all of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for five pupils, one of whom receive additional support for their English. The school has identified 19 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 45 other pupils because of their particular talents in sport, music, art, design and technology (DT), computing and drama.

## 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, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. 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, including the boarding NMS.** 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, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, 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, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, 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. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.
- 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. Boarders' views are actively encouraged, and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.
- 2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are 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 An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.
- 2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996, and NMS 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.**

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

- 2.11 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised and the school's arrangements for guardianship are suitably managed.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 and 22 are met.**

## **PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 2.13 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. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.
- 2.14 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4, 7 and 23 are met.**

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

- 2.15 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. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.
- 2.16 **The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

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

- 2.17 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, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.
- 2.18 **The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.**

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

- 2.19 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. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.
- 2.20 **The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 2 are 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' attainment is high in relation to national end-of-year expectations. Pupils of all ages and abilities make excellent progress.
- Pupils' communication skills are excellent. They communicate their ideas with substantial maturity and careful choices of language for their age.
- Pupils' academic and other achievements are outstanding.
- Pupils consistently demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning.

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

- Pupils' self-assurance and self-understanding are excellent.
- Pupils display considerable moral and spiritual sensibilities. They value kindness and have a strong grasp of the concept of right and wrong.
- Pupils' social interaction is outstanding. They collaborate extremely well and provide each other with mutual support.
- Pupils display an excellent understanding of the importance of staying safe and keeping healthy, both mentally and physically.

#### Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Ensure that pupils always learn as effectively as possible through consistently high expectations and clear instructions.

#### The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

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

3.5 Pupils' books, lesson observations and the school's own assessment data confirm the pupils' attainment and progress are excellent. Pupils' attainment is above, and sometimes well above, national end-of-year expectations. All groups of pupils make high rates of progress across the school, including in the EYFS. Pupils with SEND progress rapidly as a result of effective support tailored to their individual needs. This is because leaders make effective use of data to identify where individual pupils need additional guidance. Almost all parents and pupils who responded to the pre-inspection



questionnaire agreed that teaching enables pupils to make progress and that pupils' skills and knowledge improve in most lessons. Inspection evidence supports this view. Most pupils were observed to make swift progress and learn effectively during lessons seen. However, there are a few times when pupils' learning and progress stall. This happens during the rare moments when teaching does not maintain the typically high expectations of pupils or make it clear what is expected of them.

- 3.6 Pupils' communication skills are outstanding. For example, pre-prep pupils demonstrated excellent use of vocabulary while talking about the uniqueness of each person and specific features of other people, such as 'freckles'. In several lessons seen, pupils presented their findings ably and articulately about subjects ranging from the botanist Carl Linnaeus to first aid procedures. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors communicated their ideas with substantial maturity and careful choice of language. Pupils' written work is of a very high standard for their age. The descriptive writing of pupils in the middle of the school incorporates powerful vocabulary, figurative language, and personification. Older pupils' writing demonstrates the ability to include contrast and build atmosphere extremely effectively. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said how useful they had found the teaching about spelling and grammar in informing their own work.
- 3.7 Pupils' academic and other achievements are outstanding. A high proportion of leavers achieve academic, art, sport, drama, music and other scholarships to their senior schools. Pupils represent the school at county level in cricket, cross country running, netball and tennis. Individual tennis players have been national prep school champions. Female hockey players have achieved consistent success at national level. The upper prep choir represented the school at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, singing with the Commonwealth Schools' Choir on Horse Guards Parade. Pupils achieve well in these areas because of the access provided by leaders and governors to specialist teaching and the linked senior school's resources, such as their theatre and swimming pool. Pupils hone their excellent musical, artistic and sporting abilities through a very wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities and opportunities to play against senior school pupils.
- 3.8 Pupils' attitudes to achievement and learning are excellent. Reception children know the importance of trying and not giving up. For example, EYFS children took the initiative to set up a chute in the outdoor area and persevered until they were successful. In a lesson about letters and sounds, younger pupils remained entirely focused and engaged, making excellent use of the well-chosen resources provided to cement their understanding. In drama, older pupils demonstrated a passion and enthusiasm for the subject and enjoyed performing publicly in front of their peers. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors communicated a substantial love of learning. Boarders said that the school actively encourages them and recognises their own abilities, which boosts their confidence and makes them want to learn and improve.
- 3.9 Pupils demonstrate excellent knowledge, skills and understanding. Nursery children exhibited a range of advanced fine and gross motor skills for their age, such as manipulating scissors well, using sand tools with care and control, building with construction bricks, and balancing across a very low 'obstacle course'. In science, pupils display clear knowledge of classification of animals. In a geography lesson, older pupils demonstrated strong understanding of the sustainability of food production when considering ideas for its future. During an art lesson, pupils discussed and recorded ideas about potential content for pencil drawings on the theme 'about the future'. Their ideas reflected a mature familiarity with some current scientific developments in the news as well as typical elements of science fiction. They were able to skilfully replicate the approaches of the Futurists Christo and Jeanne-Claude in their work. Pupils develop their strong understanding because teachers use highly effective questioning to challenge them to consider the subject at hand carefully and in depth. They communicate high expectations and maintain a calm and purposeful learning atmosphere. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that they appreciate the opportunities given to reinforce their learning and help them grasp key concepts. Pupils' excellent subject knowledge and understanding are informed by the breadth of the curriculum, well-structured lessons and teaching tailored to individual

pupils' needs. The school fully meets its aim to equip each individual with the skills and qualifications required to flourish as they grow into adults.

- 3.10 Pupils' mathematical skills and understanding are advanced for their age. Children in the EYFS demonstrate a very strong interest in mathematics, from using a measuring tape to help with 'building' and joining up construction bricks to make particular patterns. Pupils in the middle of the school showed a reliable understanding when working with factors and multiples to solve an 'escape room' challenge. Older pupils explained to inspectors how they applied their mathematical knowledge to music when exploring different beats, and to science when reading scientific instruments. This was seen during a science lesson when pupils accurately interpreted data about the daylight hours in different seasons and created effective graphs to represent this information. Mathematics teaching often features immersive and practical activities that capture pupils' attention and contextualise the mathematical ideas at hand.
- 3.11 Pupils' electronic work demonstrates fluent use of information and communication technology for research and presentation in a variety of formats. The youngest pupils record ideas clearly and presentably, such as about their families and home life. Pupils in the middle of the school have created effective animations involving different actions, patterns, sounds and background. Older pupils create and program interactive games effectively. The oldest pupils' individual research projects on themes such as gender equality and the dangers of alcohol abuse are well-structured and display a strong ability to select and order key pieces of information to create a convincing and coherent argument.
- 3.12 Pupils' study skills develop strongly as they move through the school. For example, pupils demonstrate a very good ability to distinguish between open and closed questions in order to probe into themes effectively. Pupils are able to critically evaluate their own and each other's work effectively. Work on self-chosen themes such as unhealthy oceans, gender equality, and the history of education demonstrate substantial analytical and research skills for the pupils' age. This work features careful selection of reliable sources, methodical analysis of information, clear presentation of ideas, and logical and well-concluded arguments. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors talked sensibly about the importance of using reliable sources for research and avoiding plagiarism. Staff develop pupils' habits of self-reflection from early in their school career. An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school equips their child with the team working, collaborative and research skills they need in later life. Inspection evidence supports this view.

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

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils' self-assurance and self-understanding are excellent. For example, young EYFS children showed excellent self-confidence and security when engaging with different activities and members of staff. During a lesson about feelings, pupils in the middle of the school expressed a strong understanding of their own feelings in different situations and how their emotions were expressed. During a well-being lesson, the oldest pupils reflected confidently and maturely to make their own well-reasoned predictions about the quality of their own personal attitudes and attainment. Boarders explained to inspectors how they needed to understand themselves and recognise their own strengths and weaknesses. They said that because boarding offers them the opportunity to be independent, they needed to be organised, well-prepared and resilient when things did not go the way they wanted. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire said that the school helps their child to be confident and independent. Inspection evidence supports this view. The school fully meets its aim to equip each individual with the personal qualities required to flourish in the adult world.
- 3.15 Pupils' spiritual sensibilities are outstanding for their age. For example, pupils in the middle of the school successfully identified different religious symbols and created their own symbols to represent their personal values and considerations about life. In discussion with the inspectors, older pupils talked extremely reflectively for their age about arguments for and against the existence of God and

whether they were more convinced by the notions of destiny or free will. The oldest pupils talked in depth and with feeling about how the book *Lord of the Flies* had affected their thoughts about human nature and the extent to which it is savage or civilised. They also demonstrated mature consideration of the way that a person's own experiences of life can affect this viewpoint.

- 3.16 Pupils display substantial moral understanding. They have high behavioural expectations and are swift to act as upstanders when witnessing any behaviour that falls short of their high standards. During a rugby match, pupils played hard and fairly, respecting and accepting the decisions of the referee. Boarders explained that accepting responsibility for one's own behaviour would help themselves and others lead productive lives in the boarding house. Pupils talked passionately about the values that were significant to them personally, such as kindness, respect and integrity. They explained why respecting people's rights was morally good and what could result if there were not respected. Other pupils spoke about the consequences for people of climate change and lack of economic opportunities. In a relationships and sex education (RSE) lesson, older pupils showed a respect for the ground rules for discussion, such as using the correct language for body parts and listening to others effectively. During a philosophy and religious education lesson, the oldest pupils put forward clear and focused views about the rights and wrongs of using the death penalty. They argued that death was irreversible, that there was a human right to life without torture, and that no one has the right to kill someone else. Pupils develop their strong moral sensibilities because leaders, governors and staff consistently and effectively promote the school's values such as those of kindness, integrity and respect. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school expects them to behave well.
- 3.17 Pupils' social skills are excellent. Children in the EYFS played alongside each other very well and showed each other what they were doing very confidently when engaging in self-chosen activities. In a DT lesson, older pupils worked effectively with one another, supporting and collaborating with each other while using a two-dimensional design programme. The same high quality of social interaction and mutual support was witnessed in all lessons observed. Boarders exhibited an understanding that to live with others well they need to compromise, be tolerant and listen to others' point of view. Leaders and staff model very high social expectations well. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helps their child to develop strong teamwork and social skills.
- 3.18 Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of staying safe and keeping healthy. For example, younger pupils' personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) books demonstrate a very good understanding of healthy and unhealthy habits and their potential impact on mental health. Older pupils could differentiate between myths and truths relating to puberty. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors explained sensibly and articulately the ways in which they keep themselves safe online and the strategies they use to reduce any feelings of anxiety or stress in order to maintain good well-being. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that they understand how to stay safe when online.
- 3.19 Pupils contribute to the lives of others very well. For example, in one lesson, young pupils spontaneously helped even younger ones to read the activity sheet when it arrived at the table. Senior pupils support other pupils through taking on a variety of responsibilities, such as subject ambassadors, form captains, peer leads, prefects and playground umpires and buddies. The head boarder represents the views and any concerns of other boarders to senior leaders, and also, along with staff, leads boarding events such as the Halloween party. Pupils co-ordinate and manage events supporting charities chosen by the school council. They promote activities designed to support causes relating to well-being and the environment.
- 3.20 Pupils demonstrate strong decision-making abilities. Children in the EYFS exhibited very long concentration spans in their activities, showing that these had been self-chosen well. Pupils in the middle of the school were able to make well-founded choices about which activities to pursue during art club. Boarders explained how they needed to make decisions on a daily basis, such as about their organisation and social interactions in the confines of the boarding community. Other pupils explained

articulately how they organise their time and resources in order to meet deadlines and be as prepared as possible for learning.

- 3.21 Pupils demonstrate outstanding appreciation of diversity and inclusion. For example, while talking about the uniqueness of people, pre-prep pupils explained with confidence how different people were the same on the inside. The oldest pupils' work demonstrates an excellent understanding of the United Nations declaration of human rights. They could identify accurately why, in their view, human rights had been denied to particular figures in recent world affairs. Older pupils actively promote an appreciation of different cultures and lifestyles in their roles as diversity and inclusion prefects. The oldest pupils' projects on themes such as gender equality demonstrate mature understanding of the theme. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors explained how they would stand up for anyone they saw being subjected to discrimination. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire said that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people. Inspection evidence supports this view.

## 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 chair and other governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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

Mr Steven Popper	Reporting inspector
Mrs Alison Shakespeare	Compliance team inspector (bursar, HMC and IAPS school)
Miss Claire Corkran	Team inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Evans	Team inspector for boarding (Former head, IAPS school)