



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

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

**Chase Grammar School International Study Centre School**

**November 2022**

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## School's Details

<b>School</b>	Chase Grammar School International Study Centre			
<b>DfE number</b>	860/6023			
<b>Address</b>	Chase Grammar School International Study Centre Convent Close Cannock Staffordshire WS11 0UR			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 501800			
<b>Email address</b>	info@chasegrammar.com			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Hartland			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Achieve Education			
<b>Age range</b>	10 to 19			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	49			
	<b>Boarders</b>	49		
	<b>Seniors</b>	15	<b>Sixth Form</b>	34
<b>Inspection dates</b>	01 to 03 November 2022			

## 1. Background Information

### About the school

- 1.1 Chase Grammar School International Study Centre is an independent day and boarding school for male and female pupils aged between 10 and 19 years. All pupils are boarders. They are taught alongside, and live on site with, Chase Grammar School pupils. Chase Grammar School International Study Centre is inspected separately from Chase Grammar School.
- 1.2 Founded on its present site in Cannock in 1879, the school was bought by the current owner, Achieve Education, in 2014. There is an advisory board which supports the running of the school.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school's aim is to prepare pupils for entry into higher education institutions. The objective is that pupils will learn to think, discover and thrive by developing nine key character qualities: collaboration, creativity, decision-making, empathy, global citizenship, integrity, leadership, problem solving and resilience.

### About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come predominantly from the Far East including Hong Kong, China and Kazakhstan and have diverse backgrounds. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is average. The school has identified two pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) both of whom have support. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for all pupils whose needs are supported by their classroom and specialist language teachers. Data used by the school have identified 12 pupils as being the most able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them because of their special talents in a range of subjects including performing arts, languages, sciences, mathematics and humanities.

## 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. 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.

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](#).

## 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 associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

### **PART 1 – Quality of education provided**

- 2.2 At GCSE in the years 2021 to 2022, performance has confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2021 to 2022 have confirmed that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, 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.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, and 17 are met.**

### **PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 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, and NMS 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.**

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

- 2.12 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.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 are met.**

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

- 2.14 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.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4 and 7 are met.**

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

- 2.16 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.
- 2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.**

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

- 2.18 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.
- 2.19 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**

- 2.20 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.
- 2.21 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'.**

#### Key findings

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

- Pupils develop good knowledge, skills and understanding over time and are increasingly able to reflect on their learning and apply it to new situations.
- Pupils have highly positive attitudes and are eager to learn with a real willingness to participate when given the opportunities.
- Pupils develop good listening and reading skills but are not always allowed sufficient opportunity in lessons to express their ideas and opinions through further discussion and debate.
- Pupils work well independently as a result of the supportive assessment and tracking system that helps them identify areas to improve in their work.

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

- Pupils develop good levels of resilience and independence by being part of their boarding community.
- Pupils respect and appreciation of the diversity of their boarding community is excellent.
- Pupils have few occasions to leave the boarding houses at weekends and in the evenings for visits and trips and feel these are missed opportunities to extend their horizons.
- Pupils do not always have the confidence to share concerns with boarding staff, despite the encouragement and opportunities to do so.

#### Recommendations

3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

- Ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities in lessons to discuss and debate to support their developing fluency in English and their ongoing learning.
- Ensure that pupils take advantage of the extra-curricular activities on offer and extend their horizons through visits and trips organised by the school.
- Ensure that boarders develop the confidence to talk to staff.

#### 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 develop good knowledge, skills and understanding across a wide range of subjects. This is supported by effective teaching that includes planning for EAL pupils with varying levels of English.



Most pupils demonstrate increasing improvements in their literacy skills over time and work conscientiously and productively to access the curriculum and make good progress as they move through the school. Their written work is well presented and demonstrates improvements in their knowledge of language structures and subject specific vocabulary. Pupils with a higher level of English productively discuss their ideas in most subjects with a clear understanding. For example, in psychology, Year 12 pupils discussed Pavlov's learned behaviours and the development of taste in infants and in history the impact of apartheid in South Africa, and in geography Year 10 pupils discussed ecological issues relating to climate change. In science, pupils can postulate hypothesis and analyse data with some success, as observed in a biology practical on cellular structures and bond enthalpy. Pupils demonstrate great skill and imagination in their photography and art portfolios. Pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning and are focused and attentive. Most are determined to succeed in their learning to move to the next stage of their education as they have planned. A small number of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires, but all agreed that the range of subjects provided is suitable for their children and agreed that the teaching enables their children to make good progress which pupils also confirmed.

- 3.6 Examination results at GCSE for 2017 to 2019 were above the national average for maintained schools. Centre-assessed grades from 2020 and 2021 show results consistent with this attainment. GCSE international pupils achieve well in the school, supported by careful tracking and assessment of their work which supports effective learning. The small number of examination results taken by A-level pupils prevents reliable comparisons with national averages, but an analysis of results shows that many sixth formers outperform expectations against their predicted grades, indicating good progress. Scrutiny of pupils' work at GCSE level and in lessons, demonstrates that most pupils make good progress from their starting points. In discussions, almost all pupils confirmed that they feel well prepared academically and are confident about moving forward to the next stage in their education. They confirmed that the careers programme supports them well for their chosen path and university entrance.
- 3.7 Pupils develop good communication skills and gradually gain the confidence to switch confidently between their native language and English. Pupils are supportive of each other in lessons and in boarding and particularly supportive when new pupils arrive in the school, helping them through translation. Prior learning of subject specific vocabulary and effective support from the EAL department for subject teachers, ensures that most pupils work effectively and are enabled to build on prior knowledge. Pupils listen attentively and respectfully to teachers, increasing their knowledge and understanding and respond well when the opportunity arises. For example, in discussing the topics, Year 13 biologists came to a clearer understanding of hormones and the release of oxytocin in positive feedback loops, and Year 12 economists were able to provide concrete examples of the concept of elasticity of demand. However, pupils rarely work in pairs or groups, which prevents opportunities to improve their fluency in English and their understanding of subject content. Conscientious pupils note vocabulary and new expressions in lessons which supports the effective development of their written work.
- 3.8 Pupils' numeracy and information, communication, and technology skills, (ICT) are well developed and applied successfully across subjects. They are highly adept in the use of electronic resources for independent research and study. Senior pupils use numerical skills in a wide variety of lessons. For example, Year 10 mathematicians explored the word 'estimate' and came to a clear understanding of how to express this in terms of examination conditions. Year 12 mathematicians successfully solved complex quadratic equations relating to intersections between lines and circles. Pupils are almost always suitably challenged by their teachers and well supported in lessons when experiencing any difficulties and as a result are encouraged to persevere in their learning. Pupils complete a good range and volume of work and teacher assessments provide ongoing progress statements that allow pupils to focus independently on areas for improvement.

- 3.9 Pupils demonstrate good study skills. Most plan and organise their own work effectively and establish good working routines and habits. Scrutiny of their work and observation of lessons, demonstrates that almost all pupils conscientiously complete the tasks set for them in lessons. Pupils ask questions when the opportunities arise but are not always allowed sufficient opportunity in lessons to express their ideas and opinions through further discussion and debate. Most are highly focused in note taking for revision work, aided by effective and regular use of online learning platforms. Pupils with SEND use ICT to good effect, well supported by staff, to enhance their knowledge and understanding to organise their learning with a positive impact on their academic outcomes. More able sixth formers research effectively and draw on a wide range of sources for in depth study for a project or higher-level essay. This was evident from the scrutiny of their work and reflects their efforts to achieve their best.
- 3.10 Pupils engage in extra-curricular activities and competitions when they have a keen interest in the subject. Pupils have some success in mathematics and science Olympiads at the relevant level for their age. Pupils interested in the arts participate in the debating society and take part in school debates which builds their confidence in public speaking and for interviews. With an interest in art or photography, a small number of pupils enter for local and national competitions which promotes their focus even more keenly on their work. A small number of pupils play instruments to a high level and international pupils take part in music ensembles and in school choirs with day pupils. All pupils take part in a range of sports and games in school, extending their experience of participating and learning to be a team player. A small number who play sports to a high level, train and participate in local sports competitions and in fixtures for the school when the opportunity arises.

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

- 3.11 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good.
- 3.12 Pupils develop a strong sense of personal confidence and self-esteem over time. This is as a result of their boarding experience where they support each other extremely well and gradually learn to be independent and resilient in their learning and in their living. In their questionnaires, a small minority of pupils disagreed that the school listens to what they have to say about the school. Pupils did confirm that there is always a member of staff on duty but not all boarders feel able to go and talk. Pupils learn to reflect on their learning and most show high levels of engagement in their efforts to do their best. They persevere in their academic work through independent study helping each other with language difficulties and coming to the realisation that only they can improve in their own learning. Most respond well to the half-termly assessments and strive to reach or improve beyond the targets set which provides a real sense of satisfaction and willingness to persevere. They demonstrate strength of character and self-discipline in their studies and with time are well prepared for the next stage of their education as independent learners and thinkers.
- 3.13 Pupils have a strong sense of the importance of decision-making, not least to have already made the decision to travel across the world to complete their secondary education. Most understand that the decisions regarding their GCSE and A level choices play a significant role in determining their future choices. As boarders, away from their home countries, they confirmed that this provides new opportunities and as such they want to be successful. They understand that this requires determination on their part and confirmed that they work hard to achieve their best and to balance their free time and work. A small number of older pupils reported that they would like to have more free time out of school but acknowledged that they have to respect the school rules for their safety and well-being.
- 3.14 Pupils understand that there are people of different faiths and no faith. They found it difficult to express an understanding of the word spiritual but appreciate that peoples from around the world have differing customs faiths and traditions. In a religious studies lessons pupils were observed fully engaged in discussing omnipresent, omni-benevolent, and omniscient challenging them to think at a

high level. In discussions with inspectors, pupils said they had discussed good and evil in the context of suffering, encouraging them to think deeply about life and human suffering. Pupils acknowledged that friendship is important and expressed an appreciation of others' cultures and faiths and that difference does not limit acceptance of others. They appreciate the human values of life such as kindness and helping others in a selfless manner. Many acknowledged that they see beauty in art and music and enjoy when opportunities are provided for reflection and for visits to parts of the UK they have not seen before. They learn more about others when there is celebration of different cultures in school assemblies and when they visit the local church for Easter and Christmas celebrations. Pupils have opportunity for prayer if they so request and are provided with an appropriate space.

- 3.15 Pupils have a clear understanding and ability to distinguish right from wrong and respect the rules of the school and the laws of the land. They demonstrate a mature response and attitude to behaviour because they understand that to behave well is to show respect for others in their class and boarding house. They accept responsibility for their own behaviour and for any misdemeanours and sanctions imposed by the school that support the school community so that harmony prevails. Pupils' behaviour towards their peers, staff and those with protected characteristics is very respectful and inclusive. They commented in discussions that racial, misogynist or homophobic comments are rare and that any such behaviour is strongly discouraged throughout the school and boarding community. Records of interventions by staff confirm this. In their questionnaires, almost all pupils agree that they treat each other with respect and that teachers are supportive of them and most agree that the school teaches them how to build positive relationships and friendships.
- 3.16 Pupils' social development is good. They support each other well in lessons and in the boarding community. Older pupils show concern and support for younger pupils or those new to the school. Older pupils have been involved in helping younger pupils by reading to them and listening to them read. Pupils collaborate well in joint ventures to support those who are less fortunate. For example, recent cake sales and other fund raising events in joint ventures with day pupils have been organised to donate funds to local charities and from the recent harvest celebrations, funds were donated to local foodbanks. Involvement in local community events have been restricted in recent months but music groups and choirs look forward to singing in local care homes at Christmas and expanding their charity efforts more widely.
- 3.17 Pupils understanding and acceptance of diversity is excellent. They highly respect and value the diversity of cultural backgrounds within their boarding community. Pupils explained that a real strength of their boarding experience is that they learn to live with others and as such this broadens their horizons and teaches them to be tolerant and accepting of others. Pupils have a clear understanding of democracy and the rule of law from their well-being and cultural affairs lessons and have covered topics such as resolving issues, personal beliefs, living in the wider world and what it means to be an adult which have been valuable and supportive of their wider learning for living. They confirmed that these lessons support their wider understanding of themselves and others. However, recently they have had fewer opportunities to be outside their boarding community for trips and visits. In their questionnaires, a small minority disagreed that the school listen to what pupils have to say about the school. In discussions, leaders explained that pupils have made requests which they cannot permit for safety reason. However, inspectors agreed that international pupils need more time and opportunities with the adults in their boarding houses for discussions.
- 3.18 Pupils show a good understanding of how to be physically and mentally well, in terms of a balanced lifestyle that includes a focus on diet and exercise. Some take opportunity to play sport in the school gym and to go to a local gym when the opportunity arises to support their physical well-being. All pupils take part in sport each week which provides opportunities for team games new to them. Pupils recognise that a healthy diet is an important factor in their well-being. A small minority disagreed that school meals are healthy and that they are always served the same choices for breakfast. Inspectors considered the food provided included healthy choices particularly at lunch times with salad choices but agreed that some dishes served were over salty. Inspectors found adequate choice at breakfast

including noodles for boarders and confirmed that they have cooked food at each meal. Pupils confirmed that the school is a safe place to be and most say they know how to stay safe online. In school pupil surveys showed that there is a comprehensive programme of study for PSHE and relationships and sex education. A few pupils said in their responses that they had missed out on some aspects and the school responded by providing those aspects of the programme for pupils again.

#### 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 representatives for the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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 Flora Bean	Reporting inspector
Mr Paul Vicars	Compliance team inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Pamela Hutley	Team inspector (Former headmistress, GSA school)
Mr Stephen Yeo	Team inspector for boarding (Former headmaster SoH school)