



COLSTON'S

INDEPENDENT CO-EDUCATION

FROM NURSERY TO SIXTH FORM

'EXCELLENT'

IN ALL AREAS

ISI INSPECTION 2019
HIGHLIGHTS



WELCOME TO COLSTON'S



We would like to invite you to read about our school. Not, for once, in the words of the overly-keen Headmaster or the hard-working marketing department but, reassuringly I hope, in the words of the Independent Schools' Inspectorate. What? "Sounds boring"? Yes, you might think that but they have actually done a really good job of summing up our excellent school and we think you will enjoy reading their comments. (And, anyway, we've taken most of the boring bits out!) The team of experienced and independent Inspectors have understood our simple philosophy; that happy students work hard and play hard, and that those students will achieve all sorts of amazing things and, really importantly, will develop into wonderful young adults and it is brilliant for us to have it confirmed that this approach is having excellent results.

I talk a lot about how a school "feels" and I hope that these comments will give you a good insight into what it might feel like to attend Colston's. It is a wonderful place to work and to study and I hope you will come and visit us soon.

Mr Jeremy McCullough
Headmaster

KEY FINDINGS

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



Pupils make strong progress throughout the school and reach a level of achievement that reflects fully their potential.

Pupils display an excellent attitude to their learning.
Pupils are excellent communicators, both orally and in their written work.

Pupils are strong independent learners and show excellent determination in improving their work.



Pupils collaborate very effectively with their learning and help each other in and beyond the classroom.

The quality of the pupils' personal development is **EXCELLENT**

Pupils are very positive and confident individuals, enjoying an excellent relationship with peers and adults alike.



Pupils display excellent levels of self-awareness, taking full responsibility for their own development in preparation for the outside world.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and show exemplary behaviour around the school.

Pupils are very supportive of each other and have an excellent sense of service to the community.





Dr Paul Hill, Deputy Headmaster

The Inspectors captured the true essence of Colston's in their report, highlighting the unique culture of the school as well as the less easy to measure elements which combine to make a Colston's education so special. The statistics have long shown that Colston's pupils achieve outstanding exam results and make excellent progress. However, it is the strong values our pupils develop; their self-confidence and well-developed communication skills; the resilience they show when things get tough – within the school we call this the Colston's Character.

I'm extremely proud of our talented staff who work so hard to provide our students with the broad range of experiences that help develop this Colston's Character. This report is a real celebration of the hard work our staff and pupils put in every day to ensure that each student is able to achieve and exceed their own expectations.



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

Pupils make very good progress across the full range of subjects in the curriculum and show a strong level of achievement, that reflects successfully the school's aim of developing all pupils' potential.

Pupils are supported in their learning by excellent procedures for assessment and monitoring, which are driven by the school's leaders and governors and used effectively in the teaching.

Pupils show an excellent level of knowledge of their subjects and use this very effectively in their learning, reflecting their skilful understanding of the work they are doing.

Sixth-form pupils displayed an excellent grasp of concepts. Pupils make excellent progress in developing their understanding, prompted by the valuable emphasis on how the lessons are leading to specific outcomes for learning, often linked in the upper school to the requirements of examination technique and assessments. This excellent understanding was seen also in the mature manner in which pupils completed their own self-assessments on pieces of work, reflecting their sense of responsibility for learning. Pupils are very good, creative workers not just in those lessons within the creative faculty but also in the way they use such skills in other subjects. In all their work, pupils across the school are supported very effectively in their learning by the commitment and enterprise of the teaching, as it seeks to challenge pupils and develop their understanding to its full individual potential.

Pupils are very strong and confident communicators both in discussion and in the way they write. Excellent pieces of written work were in evidence across the whole school. The work scrutiny showed strong, consistent evidence of extended writing of high quality. A group of pupils with SEND spoke of how much more confident they were in discussion and in their written work, as a result of the helpful guidance from their teachers. Overall, the approach of teaching is one of engaging pupils fully in their lessons, so that they develop these communication skills successfully.

Pupils display very strong numeracy skills all through the school and apply this level of understanding in other subjects.

Pupils are highly enthusiastic and very positive in their approach to learning. They are excellent independent learners, but they also work very successfully in groups, encouraged by a teaching approach which seeks to give them a high level of responsibility.

Pupils display excellent study skills across the school. They have high aspirations and are eager to develop their learning. They research well and use the knowledge gained to put forward their own ideas, listen to alternatives and then reach conclusions based on all that has been discussed and learnt. Pupils are confident in developing their work and look consistently for further ways to improve their learning. These excellent study skills are encouraged by a style of teaching which has a strong focus on pupils working for and by themselves.

Pupils participate fully and gain new skills in the school's co-curricular programme. They achieve strongly both as individuals and together with others, in a range of activities, ranging from sport to public speaking. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about all they had learned from their participation in last year's musical and were currently enjoying the challenges of The Lion King, bringing out their different qualities and helping them to become more confident as individuals. This programme is supported fully by the commitment of staff and the resources provided by the school's leaders and governors.

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Mr David Edwards, Head of the Lower School

The inspection team were clear that the excellent academic achievement was observed right from the youngest pupils in the EYFS right through to the students taking A Levels in the Upper School. The breadth of the curriculum within the Lower School and fantastic foundations created in our EYFS all combined to receive this outstanding result.

I am often asked by parents about the extra features which make an independent primary education so valuable. This report highlights the many opportunities our pupils receive on a daily basis to nurture intellectual curiosity and inspire a love of learning which lay the foundations for a successful transition to Senior School. It was wonderful to see our pupils' behaviour and manners being recognised in the report. Our staff work extremely hard to help each pupil understand the world around them and to develop strong values and respect for those around them.



The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent

Pupils display very high levels of self-confidence both with their work in lessons and also in their lives beyond the classroom, fully in keeping with the school's aims. This quality is promoted by the school's strong emphasis on the development of pupils as rounded and well-balanced individuals, ready to leave school and enter the outside world as effective citizens.

They are very conscious of their own qualities and how they can improve themselves in all aspects of their lives. They are strong, resilient individuals who thrive in the positive atmosphere created by the school's leaders and teachers across all parts of the school. They set themselves challenging targets and then persevere until these are achieved. Sixth-form pupils are very successful in producing individual projects, some of which were of outstanding quality and which rely very much on their own independent work and determination to complete. In this, the school's provision is excellent in the way that it forges links with local employers to create these 'professional' projects, leading to the greater employability of the leavers.



The senior pupils spoke warmly of how they are supported by the school's excellent 'Future Leaders' programme, preparing them for higher education and employment, which enabled them to make the right choices for the future.

Pupils show an excellent awareness of the importance of helping others both within school and in the wider community. This is in keeping with the school's aim of promoting a strong sense of service in its pupils.

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Pupils understand the real importance of making decisions and taking responsibility for their lives, and they involve themselves fully in doing so. The senior pupils spoke warmly of how they are supported by the school's excellent 'Future Leaders' programme, preparing them for higher education and employment, which enabled them to make the right choices for the future. Pupils gain excellent experience in taking decisions through the many opportunities for this, not only in specific groups such as the school council but also very much in the school's fundamental approach of seeking pupils' opinions and valuing their contributions. Sixth-form pupils in their role as reading mentors had continually to make decisions on how best to support the junior pupil they were helping, coming up with the best strategies for improvement.

Pupils show a good appreciation of non-material elements of life, and this strengthens their self-understanding. Senior pupils discussed very thoughtfully the relationship between economics and morality and whether they could co-exist, appreciating that personal perspective will often distort views. Pupils feel very supported by the school's PSHE programme and the strong pastoral network which strengthens their sense of well-being and, in turn, their ability to deal effectively with all the challenges that come along. They feel able to step back and reflect on all that is going on around them.

Pupils have an excellent grasp of right and wrong. The level of behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding, pupils in the senior school confidently speaking to inspectors and going out of their way to help when needed. The youngest pupils in the lower school had a lovely manner with each other, always wanting to help. The prefects in the upper school talked in very positive terms about how the school's ethos promoted a clear understanding of moral choices, making them stronger as individuals and of more use as citizens for the future.

Pupils work very effectively in teams and have a number of opportunities for this. Activities, such as the combined cadet force (CCF) and the DoE award scheme, promote the skill of working together in a variety of ways, as well as tasks that are set in lessons. The house system promotes the opportunity for different age-groups to mix and collaborate, pupils developing valuable skills of cooperation through their link to a house.

The gains in social development are seen in the many house competitions. The current musical production is an example of excellent teamwork with contributions from many departments and individuals across the school.

Pupils show an excellent awareness of the importance of helping others both within school and in the wider community. This is in keeping with the school's aim of promoting a strong sense of service in its pupils. There is a strong commitment to fund-raising for charity within the school. Pupils choose the charities they want to support and come up with ideas to raise money, teaching them the value of appreciating their own good fortune. Pupils also show considerable commitment to helping the wider community in practical ways, through the various service opportunities offered through the school, again furthering their perspective of the needs of others. Senior pupils displayed excellent maturity in their understanding of the world and how they could influence it as citizens. The school council works effectively for the school community

Pupils show a genuine respect for each other and are fully appreciative of the rights of all individuals. The atmosphere in school is very open and relaxed with everyone seeming at ease with each other. Pupils grow in strength as a result of this culture, supported by the excellent rapport between pupils and teachers. In the lower school at breaktimes, pupils played together imaginatively, ensuring that nobody was left out, so that all could enjoy relaxing in a happy and positive environment.

Pupils know how to lead healthy lives and talked positively about all they had learned. They appreciated the food on offer in the dining hall and the many sporting opportunities both in lessons and in clubs, enabling them to become healthier individuals. Pupils also commented positively on the support they received for their emotional health, seen in a personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson where stress and anxiety were discussed sensibly and thoughtfully. Pupils feel confident that they could talk to the pastoral team if they had any concerns, reflecting the excellent relationship that exists between all parts of the school, a real achievement for the school's teachers, leaders and governors.

'EXCELLENT' IN ALL AREAS

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Pupils are very good, creative workers not just in those lessons within the creative faculty but also in the way they use such skills in other subjects. In all their work, pupils across the school are supported very effectively in their learning by the commitment and enterprise of the teaching, as it seeks to challenge pupils and develop their understanding to its full individual potential.



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