



# ISI Inspection 2024

*A glowing report, with a rare accolade, for NULS!*

In April 2024, NULS was inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate, under its new and very rigorous inspection framework.

We are delighted to share that not only did NULS and our pupils and teachers receive a very highly praising and glowing report for their achievements across Nursery, Prep, Seniors and Sixth Form, but also received the most prized of accolades when the inspectorate categorised NULS as one of the few schools in the country to be worthy of holding a '**Significant Strength**'. This is its most elevated award and builds perfectly on our last Inspection, which awarded the school a prestigious '*Double Excellent*'.

We are enormously proud of our pupils across school who the inspectors praised continually for their undeniably impressive achievements, humility and integrity, and, of course, of our highly talented and committed staff.

We do hope you will enjoy reading some of the highlights and headlines we have summarised below, and apologise for this summary's length, as there are simply so many complimentary comments about the school in the report that it is difficult to narrow these down.

Our full report is now accessible on our website via this link: [\*\*NULS Inspection Reports.\*\*](#)

**In addition, a summary of our report's wonderful highlights are continued below:**

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## Report Highlights

### Overarching points:

- Governors have an informed oversight of all areas of school life and ensure that leaders fulfil their responsibilities in meeting the regulatory requirements, including those in the early years setting.
  - The curriculum and co-curricular programmes meet the needs and interests of pupils. The recently introduced topic-centred curriculum in the prep school has effectively enabled pupils to explore their own interests and talents. The senior school curriculum is rich and broad, offering a range of modern foreign languages and media through which to study art.
  - Leaders have decided to emphasise the importance of the school's extensive co-curricular programme in developing pupils' skills and talents. **The extent and impact of the co-curricular programme on pupils is a significant strength of the school.** It involves pupils of all ages, and covers intellectual, physical and creative activities.
  - Teachers integrate the use of both assessment data as well as information about the needs of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) into the planning and delivery of lessons. Lessons are planned in detail and use a variety of approaches. Pupils are well engaged in their learning. Feedback in books and lessons is precise and valued by pupils.
  - Pupils are consistently respectful of those of different faith, national background or gender to their own. Male and female pupils enjoy equal opportunities in all areas of school life, including in sport.
  - Leaders' initiative to include all areas of pastoral support, safeguarding, and personal, health, social and economic (PHSE) under the umbrella of 'We Thrive' has brought a coherent and consistent approach which support pupils as they move through the school.
  - The behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy are understood by staff and pupils and are implanted effectively.
  - Those responsible ensure that risks to pupils are minimised through the systematic detailed checks of health and safety and fire procedures. The security of pupils is prioritised.
  - Senior pupils have key roles in providing support and advice for younger pupils.
  - The curriculum programme provides up-to-date and accurate careers education across the age groups. Pupils value the individualised advice they receive, and in guiding their decisions about university or degree apprenticeship courses.
  - Safeguarding arrangements are effective in promoting the wellbeing of pupils.
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## **Leadership and management, and governance**

- Governors have a range of professional expertise in safeguarding, health and safety, education and hence have an informed overview of the implementation of policies and procedures.
- Leaders have a wide range of relevant skills and knowledge. They have an acute awareness of the impact on all aspects of pupils' wellbeing in the decisions that they make.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum, pastoral care arrangements and opportunities for co-curricular involvement are coherent and consistent across the age ranges.
- The school comprehensively self-evaluates every aspect of school life. The evaluation is rooted in a granular analysis of current approaches, for example to the curriculum or in teaching.
- The governors' compliance group regularly reviews the implementation of policies and procedures to ensure that they are implemented consistently.

## **Quality of education, training and recreation**

- Leaders in the prep and senior school liaise effectively to ensure that pupils experience a curriculum that coherently progresses as they move through the school.
  - Leaders and staff in the early years have an extensive knowledge of the early stages of children's development and adapt activities to individual needs. These are integrated into a rich and varied curriculum for the youngest children.
  - Leaders have introduced the 'Prep Way', which introduces prep-school pupils to curriculum experiences taught at the senior school, for example in science, swimming or modern foreign languages.
  - Teachers manage class time and pupils' behaviour effectively.
  - Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject and the way pupils learn.
  - Leaders and teachers effectively identify pupils who have SEND. Teachers are provided with information about possible effective strategies for each pupil. Pupils who have SEND make progress that is at least in line with other pupils. Teachers make effective adjustments in their planning for pupils who have a physical disability.
  - There is a robust framework for evaluating the standard of pupils' work. Teachers provide appropriate and precise feedback.
  - At GCSE and A level both boys' and girls' results are consistently above average.
  - Leaders have introduced a rich and extensive co-curricular programme that provides opportunities for pupils to develop intellectual, creative, sporting and other physical skills. These include swimming, and survival and confidence skills in a recently developed woodland area.
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### **Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing**

- Leaders have brought the pastoral curriculum under the banner of 'We Thrive', which centres on pupils' wellbeing and personal development.
- Pupils develop resilience and tenacity through a wide choice of pursuits, and many achieve success in the well-supported Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme or recognition in the Combined Cadet Force.
- Leaders have implemented a wide-ranging programme of physical education. Specialist teachers in different sports enable pupils to achieve a high standard. Both boys and girls have opportunities to play a full range of sports. Competitive fixtures are played from Year 3.
- The relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum provides age-appropriate learning and progression between the prep and senior schools. Pupils are consulted regularly about the content and timing of topics.
- Leaders are committed to providing high-quality facilities and resources.
- Pupils are effectively supervised at a level appropriate to pupils' age and possible risk. Access both to and from the sites is strictly controlled.

### **Pupils' social and economic education and contribution to society**

- Pupils access a range of subjects that support pupils' understanding about respect and tolerance for the differences between people.
  - Children in the early years are encouraged to interact socially. Teachers skilfully draw out and extend vocabulary which helps children describe to each other their feelings and ideas.
  - Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are given the knowledge and skills to develop informed viewpoints.
  - Careers education is up to date and accurate. It is threaded through the senior school curriculum and meets nationally respected benchmarks. There are co-curricular societies in medicine, engineering, the creative arts and law which further prepare pupils for post-sixth form courses. As a result, pupils feel well prepared for applications.
  - Pastoral and academic leaders encourage pupils to support others. Senior school pupils support prep school pupils with reading or mathematics. Help in settling to a new school is given to new pupils by current ones. Sixth form pupils with the same relevant experience are used as mentors for younger pupils. These pupils benefit from the additional support and guidance from their older peers.
  - Pupils contribute to their local communities through voluntary work at and fundraising for local communities.
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## **Safeguarding**

- Leaders' approaches to policy, practice and implementation provide an effective approach to safeguarding pupils in their care.
  - Pupils say they feel safe.
  - Safeguarding leaders have an accurate and up-to-date knowledge of statutory guidance or advice and follow it rigorously.
  - Governors are diligent in ensuring that leaders react systematically to any emerging needs in the school.
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