



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Bassett House School

November 2019



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School's Details

School	Bassett House School			
DfE number	207/6095			
Address	Bassett House School 60 Bassett Road North Kensington London W10 6JP			
Telephone number	020 8960 0313			
Email address	info@bassetths.org.uk			
Headmistress	Mrs Philippa Cawthorne			
Proprietor	Bassett House School			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	166			
	EYFS	34	Lower School	54
	Upper School	78		
Inspection dates	19 to 21 November 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Bassett House School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of three to eleven years. Located in North Kensington, it was founded in 1947 and continues to be owned and administered by the founder's family, as one of three schools in the House Schools Group. Since the previous inspection, the EYFS setting has moved to a new building close to both the other two school sites.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to enable all pupils to reach their potential through the provision of supportive teaching and challenging work across a broad-based curriculum including extra-curricular activities. It seeks to promote teamwork and cooperation, creative and independent thinking as well as developing moral values. The objective is to foster close relationships between school and home.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils live within a three-mile radius of the school. Families come from a variety of countries and a range of professional and business backgrounds. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified 18 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include a range of difficulties including autistic spectrum disorder and dyslexia, all of whom receive additional specialist help. Three pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 44 pupils, three of whom receive additional support. The curriculum is modified for pupils identified by the school as being more able, together with extra-curricular activities and events for pupils who have special talents.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports 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. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was 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 report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. 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 regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; 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 full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [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, 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 uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 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.
- 2.4 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

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

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 **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 are met.**

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

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously 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.

2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 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.

2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 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.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is 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.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include 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. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Den	Nursery
Lower 1	Reception
Form 1	Year 1
Form 2	Year 2
Form 3	Year 3
Form 4	Year 4
Form 5	Year 5
Form 6	Year 6

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve high standards across a broad curriculum.
 - Pupils make successful links in their learning, applying their knowledge and skills to enhance their understanding across subjects.
 - Pupils successfully develop their abilities and interests outside of the academic curriculum, such as in art, music, drama and sport.
 - Pupils demonstrate exceptionally positive and determined commitment to their learning.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils have outstanding self-awareness and demonstrate quiet confidence and resilience.
 - Pupils are exceptionally well behaved; they are kind, sensitive and respectful.
 - Pupils show great care and consideration for one another within a community where relationships are warm and collaboration highly effective.
 - Pupils have a deep appreciation and respect for their school community and make a significant contribution to school life.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school may wish to consider the following improvement:
- Enhance pupils' achievement still further by ensuring that established strategies to develop their higher order thinking skills and independent learning are even more deeply embedded across the school.

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 demonstrate excellent communication skills. Throughout the school they are highly articulate and keen to listen to one another's ideas and opinions. They are encouraged to talk about their learning, and in response to teachers' questioning they cogently explain their reasoning. They enjoy books and read well in relation to their age, developing strong comprehension skills because, from the early stages, they are encouraged to read broadly to ensure their understanding as well as vocabulary recognition. As they mature, their writing in a variety of genres shows considerable breadth of vocabulary and creativity. For example, younger pupils in literacy used adjectives such as phenomenal and extraordinary when describing characters in fables. Pupils develop highly competent technical skills of spelling and punctuation and use sophisticated language forms, since these are taught systematically. They take pride in the presentation of their work and write in a neat cursive script. Focused provision for pupils who require either greater challenge or support with EAL or SEND contributes to their good progress. This is underpinned by confident, well-planned teaching which not only proceeds at a brisk pace, but incorporates a variety of independent and collaborative learning activities which fully engage the pupils. All pupils develop considerable confidence in public performance as seen on the inspection when younger pupils presented their future aspirations to the whole school in assembly with great enjoyment and commitment.

- 3.6 Pupils achieve high standards in mathematics since priority is given to ensuring their understanding before moving on. The implementation of a mastery approach to teaching over recent years, which provides challenge through exploration at greater depth, and ensures targeted support for pupils encountering difficulties, has allowed all pupils to develop more secure mathematical foundations which support their longer-term progress. For example, children in the EYFS establish a strong concept and facility with numbers to ten using a range of practical resources before moving to larger numerals. The leadership has identified that attainment has increased for pupils who have now used this approach for several years. Pupils confidently use calculation skills in problem-solving and apply these successfully in other subjects such as when using coordinates and interpreting data in geography and measuring and data-handling in science. They display a strong capacity to explain how they achieve an answer and use correct terminology. Pupils enjoy mathematics and many relish the challenges they are offered within this subject.
- 3.7 Pupils enthusiastically embrace information and communication technology (ICT) and demonstrate competence in their understanding of computing and use of digital devices. Governance and leadership ensure that this area is well-resourced and that pupils build their computing skills progressively. Children in the EYFS use tablet computers confidently to access software which develops their skills across the various areas of learning such as sounds and letters. Older pupils use their own tablets to transfer and continue their learning between home and school. As they grow older, pupils confidently use the internet for research and develop capability with skills such as word processing, manipulating images, filming and musical composition, using a range of software to present and record their work. Those with a particular interest further develop their skills in clubs such as animation and when producing the school newspaper.
- 3.8 Pupils develop high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills through the provision of a broad curriculum. This is enriched by interesting visits and teaching which utilise cross-curricular themes, notably in a science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM) week, but are also embedded in curricular planning throughout the year. Pupils demonstrate excellent recall of their previous learning due to the inclusion in every lesson of a variety of teaching activities and interesting resources. For example, in history, they deepened their understanding of ancient Egyptian culture using drama, which was then reinforced and extended in music through activities which fully engaged and excited them. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, all the parents and pupils agreed that the school provides a suitable range of subjects and almost all were pleased with the range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils of all ages demonstrate strong physical and creative development supported by specialist teaching. For example, pupils' work in art and design technology is of a high standard, uses a variety of media and creatively interprets the techniques and styles of artists, such as Kandinsky's style by pupils in Reception. Pupils often show a capacity for deeper thought because teaching is characterised by ambitious expectations and the creation of a collegial learning environment where pupils' ideas are shared and respected but developed through focused questioning. All the parents agreed in the questionnaire that the school is governed, led and managed effectively. The leadership is highly successful, through accurate self-evaluation, in achieving a cohesive and well-managed learning environment and in gaining consensus amongst staff so that the pupils receive consistent messages and approaches to their learning.
- 3.9 Pupils' attainment is above average in relation to national age-related expectations, as confirmed by evidence from lesson observations, interviews with pupils and scrutiny of their work, together with the results of standardised assessments. Allowing for differences between cohorts, a gradual rise in attainment as pupils move through the school confirms that the school is successfully fulfilling its aim to ensure good progress is made. Each pupil's progress is tracked assiduously so that should it unaccountably lapse, interventions are promptly set-up and closely monitored. By the time they leave Reception, most children in the EYFS meet and some exceed national expectations due to careful planning of next steps following effective observational assessment. Pupils with EAL make good progress as they develop their English capability. Those with SEND also make progress in line with their peers, taking into account the nature of their difficulties, due to the implementation of inclusive

teaching and targeted strategies mainly within class, which offer an appropriate blend of support and encouragement to work independently. All pupils are given opportunities for additional and demanding challenge within class and as a result more able pupils attain greater depth and breadth within topics. In the questionnaire, all the parents agreed that teaching helps their child make progress and develop skills for the future and that their child's particular educational needs are met effectively. This positivity was reflected by their children who all agreed that teachers help them learn and make progress, that most lessons have interesting activities and use the time well, and that teachers give them help if they have problems with their work.

- 3.10 Pupils develop strong skills for learning. They are prepared to take the initiative in independent learning tasks and many older pupils show the capability to organise their work well. Pupils of all ages can critique their own and others' work constructively and are particularly successful when working collaboratively. They are confident that mistakes are a vehicle for learning. Pupils develop the ability to read critically, analyse text and evaluate source material. In science, older pupils can make a hypothesis and devise an investigation to test it, such as when looking at the impact of air resistance on parachutes in a topic on forces. Pupils analyse what makes up a good presentation in ICT, developing an appreciation of the need for appropriate depth and detail. The leadership's focus on developing growth mindset together with an understanding of differing learning styles is beginning to bear fruit and provide a significant contribution towards pupils' confidence as independent learners.
- 3.11 Pupils achieve well according to their abilities and are well prepared for the next stages of their education so that they regularly gain scholarships and awards to their senior schools. They are successful in sports tournaments, such as in netball and football, particularly since all are given the opportunity to represent the school. Pupils discover and follow their interests and abilities within the broad curricular and extra-curricular programme. All discover their inner thespian in regular productions across the school and some are successful in external ballet and music examinations. Others achieve well in a range of pursuits in line with their interests including chess, gaining the eco-schools silver award, producing weekly radio broadcasts and a weekly newsletter. Pupils are motivated to try their best since all their successes are celebrated, whether as artist or scientist of the week, or winner of the weekly mathematics challenge.
- 3.12 Pupils' progress and achievements are underpinned by their exceptionally positive attitudes to learning which manifest in their enthusiasm for school, keenness to participate and diligence. They respond to teachers' high expectations by settling to work quickly and demonstrate a notable willingness to have a go, confident that help is available should it be required. They particularly enjoy working together and offer advice to one another readily.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 Pupils develop a strong sense of self and a quiet confidence in their growing independence. They are friendly and open, showing a self-effacing pride in their work. In conversation they demonstrate that they are able to place themselves in someone else's shoes, in order to understand how they might be feeling. This capacity is enhanced by opportunities both in lessons and more generally, to act as buddies and talking partners. Pupils are willing to persevere with tasks they find difficult and enjoy challenging themselves, confident that teachers will provide support should it be necessary. Their perceptive understanding of their strengths and areas for development is enhanced through teachers' consistent use of success criteria where targets and next steps are clearly shared. Positive relationships across the whole school community, strongly supported by excellent pastoral systems, enable pupils to strengthen their resilience, encouraging their uninhibited 'have a go' attitude. All the pupils and parents in the questionnaire agreed that the school helps the pupils to be confident and independent. Pupils who are in their final year asserted that whilst their happiness at the school makes

them sad to contemplate leaving, they are also confident and are being well-prepared for the opportunities of senior school.

- 3.15 Pupils have a mature appreciation of the deeper questions of life, shown in their conclusion that there are different explanations for how the world was created and the reasons for their existence, or when defining what they understand by love. In their committed attitude towards issues concerning the environment they show a responsible understanding of human interaction with the natural world. They show empathy, for example in explaining acts of selflessness and courage, and older pupils understand and explain how art and music can evoke an aesthetic response. Pupils display a sense of gratitude for what they have and an understanding of their consequent responsibility to help others. Study of major world faiths and visits to places of worship along with celebrations of religious and cultural festivals ensure they develop an age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of belief systems. Pupils readily articulate their ideas and are interested in those of their peers; in this way they are beginning to develop their own beliefs.
- 3.16 Pupils become confident in making decisions. In the EYFS they choose resources and activities with growing independence. Older pupils make decisions about how to present their project work and told inspectors that they regularly make a conscious choice to undertake a task which carries additional challenge. As they mature, pupils develop a strong awareness of the impact of their decisions in relation to others and their own learning and happiness, through the many opportunities given for teamwork and personal reflection. A major focus by the leadership on the wellbeing of pupils has led to a strong awareness within the community of reducing stress. This has been developed using initiatives such as pastoral support booklets which enable pupils to regularly indicate their feelings about school, and staff can take action where necessary. Pupils perceive teachers as caring, saying that 'teachers are always by your side'.
- 3.17 Pupils have clear perceptions of right and wrong and behave with significant consideration towards others. Their well-developed moral code is applied in their daily lives and an exceptionally strong family atmosphere prevails. Behaviour is exemplary; pupils are courteous and sensitive. They are aware that they choose how to behave and that actions have consequences. Teaching, such as on impulse control, deepens their understanding of how to manage their feelings and behaviour. This results in growing self-discipline as evident in music, when pupils showed clear awareness of the need to keep together when playing instruments. Pupils all assert that the Bassett House values, arrived at after discussion in the citizenship council, are a strong basis for their behavioural choices. As they grow older, they develop their own moral code based on these core values through opportunities to debate current affairs and to learn about democracy, both in the citizenship and eco-councils and within class.
- 3.18 Pupils' social development is highly developed and they collaborate with great enthusiasm and effectiveness. In accordance with its aims, the school places great importance upon this area and ensures many everyday opportunities are provided for pupils to look after and work with others; in the classroom, where collaborative work is built into nearly all lessons, in extra-curricular activities, within their houses and amongst the wider community. From the EYFS, where pupils are encouraged to play cooperatively through effective modelling by staff and focused praise, pupils are capable of working purposefully together towards a common aim. Pupils who find social communication more difficult are supported through regular *Communication Station* sessions which support them with emotional and friendship issues. Pupils develop the skills necessary for team work and leadership as they challenge themselves and solve problems during residential trips. As a result, older pupils are readily able to describe the necessary attributes for successful team working, realising that compromise and listening to one another is key. In the questionnaire, all the parents and pupils agreed that the school helps to develop strong teamwork and social skills.
- 3.19 Children in the EYFS respond positively to being given responsibility such as snack monitor together with encouragement to develop self-help skills. Older pupils take their duties seriously and recognise their importance both for their own positive personal development and for the opportunities afforded to actively support others. They readily interact with younger children and are exceptional role

models. A deep co-operative spirit and buddy systems support a kind and compassionate community. As they progress through the school, pupils are consistently encouraged to think of others; formally through assemblies and charity events and informally within the curriculum. They therefore demonstrate a strong awareness of the needs of others and willingly engage in charitable efforts such as a hot water bottle appeal for the local homeless, participating in community projects and preparing Christmas boxes for disadvantaged children. Pupils who are elected to the citizenship and eco-councils fulfil their responsibilities with pride, and feel their contribution is valued and listened to by staff. For example, they suggested holding an International Day which both staff and pupils say successfully enabled greater understanding of one another's cultures. The leadership ensures that pupils' interactions with the wider community are measured and considerate, not only through pupils' behaviour as they walk between sites, but when engaged in community projects such as litter picking organised by the eco-council.

- 3.20 From an early age pupils display an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lives due to teaching in personal, social and health education (PSHE), PE and science lessons. They readily describe foods which are good for them and those to be reserved as treats. A healthy attitude towards food is promoted by the calm and unhurried snack time in Nursery which enables children to eat mindfully, and food offered at lunchtime which encourages healthy eating yet recognises the positives of all things in moderation. Pupils not only understand the value of exercise but speak enthusiastically about the many opportunities for physical exercise including those afforded by extra-curricular activities. They conduct themselves sensibly as they walk between sites and are able to look after themselves and each other. Pupils develop a good understanding of personal safety due to pedestrian skills training in Year 2 and cycling training in Year 6. They know how to keep themselves safe on the internet through teaching in PSHE and computing and are confident that staff are always available to listen to any concerns. All the parents and almost all the pupils in the questionnaire agreed that the school encourages their child to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
- 3.21 Pupils demonstrate a natural acceptance of the various backgrounds and countries that they represent and see in the local community. They accept difference as part of being unique and are genuinely interested in learning about one another's countries, languages and religions. This is because the leadership's approach is of encouragement to celebrate diversity and to ensure pupils learn about a range of religious and cultural practices. As a result, pupils know each other well and consideration and sensitivity for others abounds. All the parents in the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of other people, a view with which all the pupils concurred.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended an assembly. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Jan Preece	Reporting inspector
Mrs Paula Talman	Compliance team inspector (Director of compliance, health and welfare, IAPS school)
Mr Neil Price	Team inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)