

School Statement Regarding The ISI Report

This statement is written to accompany the Independent School Inspectorate (ISI) Report of Brockwood Park School and Inwoods Small School. The inspection took place in September 2021, over four days.

Both our schools are unique in their education, set-up, culture, intentions and ethos, and offer an holistic education different from mainstream education. The inspectors identified central elements in the life of the schools and reported these in their Key Findings: “Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning supported by the school’s core intentions based on the teachings of Krishnamurti” and equally, “Pupils have a highly developed sense of self-knowledge, self-discipline and resilience, empowered by the ethos and intentions of the school.”

An essential element of the education offered at Brockwood Park School is a personalised curriculum. It looks at each student as a separate individual with different needs, capacities and interest in learning. Our students participate and make decisions about their education as independent learning is promoted and we have a high ratio of staff to students, with just 70 students. This allows the educators to have one-on-one discussions with each student to assess their needs and create a timetable unique to that student.

A student’s approach to learning is also taken into account, and resistance to, or dislike of, a given subject is challenged in innovative ways. You will note in the Report that the inspectors determined that three students should learn mathematics differently. While we feel that they are learning mathematics in an innovative and engaging way, just not conventionally, we are currently working to find a solution acceptable to the ISI and the Department for Education (DfE).

At Inwoods Small School, an issue relating to the exposure of children to technological education was identified. At Inwoods we integrate technological education through many of our cross curricular projects, co-created by the children and educators, but as a school, parents and educators also see Information Communication Technology for young children (aged 4 to 8) is a delicate matter and must be sensitively handled as it can considerably impact a child’s development. Though we were able to demonstrate ways in which technology is incorporated into the curriculum at Inwoods, especially design technology, the inspection assessed that it was not demonstrated explicitly enough. Again, we are currently working to find an acceptable solution. The above highlight some difficulties in offering an holistic and alternative education within the framework of mainstream education.

There are also administrative and compliance aspects of the schools which the inspectors have assessed as requiring certain changes. We always take this aspect of our work as seriously as we take the provision of education for the students and we intend, with the assistance of advisors, to work with the DfE and the ISI to address their points of concern.

Please be reassured that our schools are set up to be a caring home away from home for our students, so that they can thrive and be intelligent human beings and agents of good in society. The inspectors have seen this and considered it in the educational quality section of the report, which is overwhelmingly positive – the care, affection, challenges and enjoyment of school life on a day-to-day basis shine through.

We have endeavoured to highlight here some of the difficulties we face in running our small schools in a highly regulated educational climate. Our radical and holistic intentions make running our schools complex and difficult, but we are committed to this work and intend to learn from the inspection and Report.

We are grateful to all staff present and past, volunteers, donors and our wonderful students and parents. This work demands collective support from everyone, and we are thankful for your continued support and trust in our endeavour.

*Antonio Autor, Principal
on behalf of Brockwood Park School and Inwoods Small School Staff*