



# TAUNTON

— SCHOOL —

## INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE (ISI) REPORT ON TAUNTON SCHOOL, JUNE 2024

Summary of findings relating to the Senior School.

A CULTURE OF  
AMBITION

A MINDSET  
FOR LIFE

A SENSE OF  
BELONGING

A GLOBAL  
COMMUNITY

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**Dear parents,**

As you may remember, in the second week of this term we were visited by a team of inspectors from the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). Many thanks to those of you who promptly completed the parent survey for the ISI, which was very much appreciated.

After a rather longer wait than expected, due to delays with ISI's quality assurance process, we have now received the full report from the inspectors. I am delighted to let you know that it is extremely positive. You may or may not be aware that the language of school inspection reports now avoids single word judgements such as 'excellent' or 'good' and instead makes a series of evidence-based statements to describe the school's provision. This new framework for inspection can produce some rather bland reports and this has been noted by many Heads in various schools already inspected under this regime.

This said, you will see from the highlights in the attached document, and in reading the full commentary, that Taunton School's report, encompassing TS, TSI and TSIMS, is very complimentary about several key areas of the education we provide: the academic progress our students make and our **ambition** for them; the personalised and tailored curriculum for Sixth Form students; the mutual respect evident between students and their celebration of cultural diversity within our **global community**; the development of close bonds between students who feel valued and that they **belong**; our strong emphasis on skills for leadership and independent living, ensuring the right **mindset for life**. It is really pleasing to see such positive commentary on each of our four key strategic pillars highlighted in bold.

We are delighted to have been praised in particular for the extraordinary breadth of opportunity provided for all. Inspectors highlighted our leading co-curricular programme as a '**significant strength**'.

This is the highest accolade available to schools under the new inspection regime and we understand that only a small percentage of schools will be awarded a 'significant strength'. We are delighted to have external validation for what we know to be true of Taunton School, where, in the words of the report, we '**show a deep understanding of how to unearth the potential of each child.**' In short, we enable children to find their version of 'exceptional'. On that note, we are extremely excited about the imminent launch of our new school film which brings this concept to life. Please look out for further details.

However positive a report, it is mandatory for all ISI inspections to make recommendations for improvement. We know there is always further work to be done and have welcomed the recommendation to be more public about the quality of the careers advice available to students and ensure they benefit from this. In addition, we will return to work immediately next academic year with an even greater focus on ensuring all teaching staff mirror the excellent practice seen in so many lessons for pupils with both SEND and EAL.

I am very proud indeed of the whole school community - students, teachers and operations staff - who all made such a positive impression on the inspectors. I am delighted that the ISI team recognised what a special community we are part of. I hope it is reassuring for you all to know, in a challenging economic climate for all fee-paying parents, that we really do add value both in and out of the classroom.

You can read the full report here: [Click here](#)

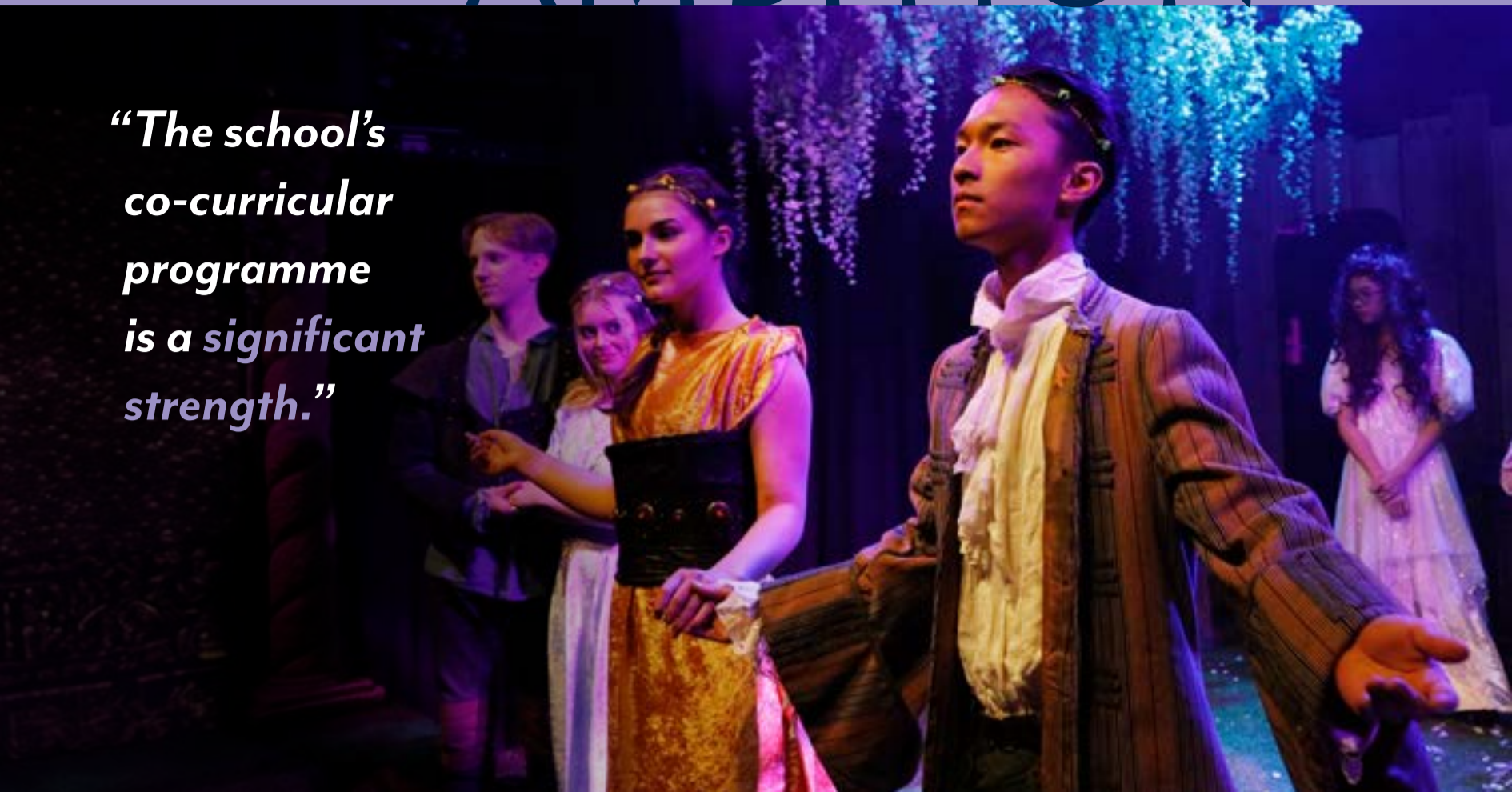
Best wishes,  
**James Johnson**, Headmaster





# A CULTURE OF AMBITION

*“The school’s co-curricular programme is a significant strength.”*



*‘The school’s leaders, show a deep understanding of how to **unearth the potential of each pupil.**’*

*‘Leaders’ self-evaluation has resulted in the setting of ambitious academic targets.’*

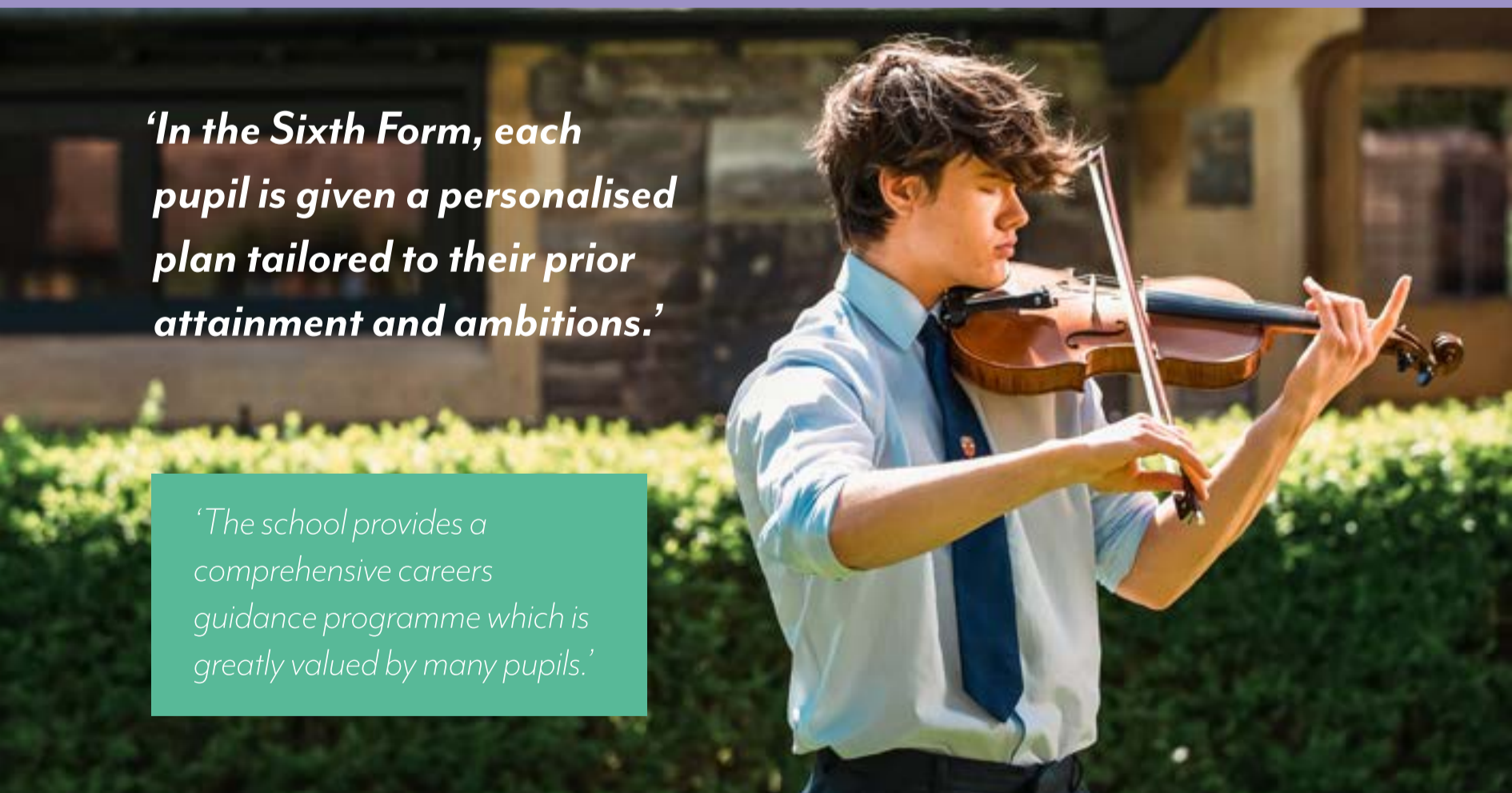
*‘Pupils show interest in their work, are self-motivated and apply themselves well.’*



*‘The school provides a broad curriculum which is flexible and tailored to the needs, aspirations and interests of pupils.’*

*‘In the Sixth Form, each pupil is given a personalised plan tailored to their prior attainment and ambitions.’*

*‘The school provides a comprehensive careers guidance programme which is greatly valued by many pupils.’*



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# A MINDSET FOR LIFE



*'There is a strong emphasis on independent living, and leadership skills are developed in many areas such as the Combined Cadet Force.'*

*'The school prepares pupils well for life.'*



*'A comprehensive, up-to-date and impartial careers guidance programme is in place which enables pupils to make informed choices about a broad range of career options.'*

*The school offers 'a rich variety of trips and tours' and a 'wide-reaching scholarship programme which is open to all pupils.'*

*'Pupils understand their social responsibility to help others.'*



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# A SENSE OF BELONGING



*'The co-curricular programme makes a major contribution to the development of pupils' emotional, social, creative and physical skills.'*

*'Staff encourage mutual **trust and respect** for all members of the school community.'*

*'Pupils learn how to manage stress and how to nurture close bonds and healthy relationships.'*



*'Older pupils support younger pupils to develop positive relationships with their peers.'*



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# A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

*‘Leaders foster mutual respect in all aspects of school life and emphasise the importance of cherishing diversity.’*



*“Diversity is celebrated and pupils are respectful of each other.”*

*‘Pupils are proud to celebrate a range of cultures... they learn from each other by sharing traditions and customs of their own cultures.’*



*‘The close bonds which develop within the boarding environment foster pupils’ social and cultural understanding.’*



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Thank you to the whole school community of students, teachers and operations staff, who all made such a positive impression on the inspectors. We are proud and delighted that the ISI team recognised what a special community we are part of.

[Click to view the full Senior School report](#)

[Click to view the full Pre-Prep and Preparatory School report](#)

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