



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

IBSTOCK PLACE SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Ibstock Place School

Full Name of School	Ibstock Place School		
DCSF Number	212/6040		
Registered Charity Number	312930R		
Address	Ibstock Place School Clarence Lane Roehampton London SW15 5PY		
Telephone Number	020 88769991		
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Email Address	office@ibstockplaceschool.co.uk		
Headmistress	Mrs Anna Sylvester-Johnson		
Chairman of Governors	Mr Michael Gibbins		
Age Range	3 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	889		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (496 boys; 393 girls;)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 276
	3-5 (EYFS):	71	11-18: 542
Number of Day Pupils	889		
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Maggie Smith		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection date/EYFS	01 Feb 2010 to 02 Feb 2010		
Final (team) visit	01 Mar 2010 to 03 Mar 2010		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2004.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all pupils in England from birth to 31st August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Pupils, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Ibstock Place School is situated on the edge of Richmond Park in south-west London. The school was founded in 1894 and caters for 889 pupils between the ages of three and eighteen. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes. There are at present 24 pupils attending the Nursery on a part-time basis, and a further 47 pupils attend full-time in the two Reception classes. The school is administered by a board of governors. Since its previous inspection in 2004, the school has built a new sports hall and is currently completing *New School*, a major development which will include six new science laboratories, an ICT suite, a new library and sixteen new classrooms. Since 2004, it has also increased the age range of the Senior School by opening a sixth form in 2005.
- 1.2 The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with the Senior School having a higher ability profile than the Preparatory School. One hundred and eight pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) of whom 54 receive specialist learning support from the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Most pupils come from business and professional families living within the area. A very small number of pupils have home languages other than English.
- 1.3 The school aims to challenge and inspire its pupils, helping them to develop qualities which will lead to successful and fulfilled lives. Through its commitment to celebrating a love of learning in the widest sense, the school seeks to focus on three areas of development for its pupils: intellectual, personal and social. The school promotes the development of inquisitive and imaginative minds, giving pupils the confidence to think for themselves, primarily through the *Dimensions of Learning* and *Habits of Mind* programmes. The aim of the personal development programme is to enable pupils to become healthy and resilient young people with the determination, ambition and self-confidence to pursue excellence in all they do and to develop in pupils honesty, integrity, a genuine sense of tolerance, courtesy and respect.

- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery
Lower Kindergarten	Reception

Preparatory School

School	NC name
Upper Kindergarten	Year 1
Prep 2	Year 2
Prep 3	Year 3
Prep 4	Year 4
Prep 5	Year 5
Prep 6	Year 6

Senior School

School	NC name
Senior 7	Year 7
Senior 8	Year 8
Senior 9	Year 9
Senior 10	Year 10
PVI	Year 11
LVI	Year 12
UVI	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 At the heart of the success of the school is a vision of its purpose which is shared by pupils, staff and governors. Pupils, including the children in the EYFS, achieve significant success in their learning and have excellent personal development, thus meeting the school's intellectual, personal and social goals for its pupils. Academically, pupils are very successful. The good academic standards at the end of the Preparatory School are further developed in the Senior School, resulting in high attainment at GCSE and A Level, supporting the school's strong university entry. In both the Preparatory and Senior schools, pupils make good progress over time in relation to their ability profiles which are above the national average. Strong and enthusiastic teaching underpins this success. Teaching is, in many cases, exciting and stimulates the pupils to research, debate and question. Pupils' success also stems from the wide-ranging and challenging curriculum, which is enhanced by extensive opportunities beyond the classroom.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal qualities are outstanding. Pupils are engaging, curious and committed to striving for the best, happily stating that the school helps pupils to appreciate that success is mainly the result of hard work and commitment. The friendly and welcoming atmosphere of the school is marked. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and their teachers and pupils value the relationships across the years. Excellent pastoral and academic care supports the high level of pupils' personal development. Pastoral care is well structured with staff very aware of the needs, skills and successes of those in their pastoral groups. Personal development is also enhanced by the opportunities which exist for taking responsibility. Although not all will become prefects, pupils learn to lead and contribute to the community through a variety of extra-curricular and charitable roles. Sixth formers are well supported in university applications and opportunities for gap years.
- 2.3 The leadership of the senior management team and the governors contributes significantly to the positive and ambitious spirit which typifies the school. Whilst the last report made no recommendations, it is typical of the leadership of the school that they set themselves a series of targets to enhance the pupils' educational experience. Whilst it is easy to identify the major building programme as a successful achievement, the school has achieved an equally, if not more, important target in the enhancement of the pupils' academic, cultural and sporting life. It has also been committed to improving communication with parents through both personal and technological contact. Parents' replies to the pre-inspection questionnaires were favourable in most areas. Whilst the school's reporting to parents is both regular and personal, the end of year report is lacking in sufficient detail.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school met all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended.
- 2.5 The school's provision for childcare met the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and no action was required.

(ii) Recommended action

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
1. enhance the end of year reports to include for all subjects curriculum coverage and areas for individual pupil development; and
 2. in the Early Years Foundation Stage, record individual children's next steps in short-term planning.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

Preparatory School

- 3.1 Standards of achievement and the quality of pupils' learning, attitudes and skills are good in the Preparatory School. On leaving the Preparatory School, pupils' academic achievement is at least good and sometimes excellent in relation to their ability. Pupils are very well educated in accordance with the school's aims. In lessons pupils display a very positive attitude to learning and this has been enhanced by the *Habits of Mind* personal learning programme which is now very much a part of pupils' academic life. Pupils are very articulate, and listen and respond thoughtfully to the views of others. They clearly enjoy their lessons and are attentive. The school is very successful in its aim for pupils to become resilient, determined learners who can respond positively to constructive feedback. This was shown by the pupils' appreciative and thoughtful responses to teachers' comments and targets. Pupils enjoy independent investigations, for example in Year 6 science, where they were able to consider variables and design a fair test with very little support. Co-operative working is a very strong feature of pupils' achievement. Pupils read and write fluently and take pride in the careful presentation of their work. Pupils are competent in applying information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum. They also have a very good understanding of different writing genres as shown by some excellent journalistic writing following a visit to the Thames at Chiswick.
- 3.2 Pupils have considerable individual achievement in activities such as music, drama, the Primary Mathematics Challenge, the Royal Academy of Arts competition and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) examinations. Recent success on the sporting field includes two teams achieving first and second place in the Independent Schools Association London West cross-country event.

Senior School

- 3.3 Standards of achievement and the quality of pupils' learning, attitudes and skills are good in the senior school. Results in GCSE, in the last three years for which comparative data are available, have been high when compared with the national average for all maintained schools, and similar when compared with the average for maintained selective schools. Results in IGCSE Mathematics in 2008 have been similar when compared with the average for UK schools, where the benchmark is high. At GCSE sixty per cent of the pupils achieved A* or A grades. Pupils' performance in A level in 2007-8 has been high when compared to the average for all maintained schools, and similar when compared with the average for maintained selective schools. At A level almost three quarters of pupils achieved A or B grades. There are no significant differences in levels of attainment reached by boys and girls, nor for pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils make good progress over time in relation to their ability profiles, which are above the national average.

- 3.4 Pupils are very well educated in line with the aims of the school. They have high levels of knowledge, understanding and skill as observed in curricular and in extra-curricular activities. The school is very successful in its aim for pupils to develop inquisitive and imaginative minds and the confidence to think for themselves. In lessons and in written work they show thorough understanding and make excellent progress. They collaborate well with each other and display a keen interest in their work as in the analysis of Cromwell's protectorate in an Upper Sixth history lesson. Year 7 pupils said that they found most of the subjects challenging, and a majority of the pupils confirm that they receive plenty of support in helping them to make progress and to work independently. This was shown by the pupils' challenging questions and their ability to contribute strongly to lessons using, for example, presentations, textual analysis and mathematical investigation. Independent research is enjoyed by pupils and their responses confirm how much this discipline enhances their learning, as in pupils' research for a still life project in Year 11 art. Pupils are fluent in their writing and reading and show clear expression in articulating their arguments. Pupils' ICT skills are also well developed.
- 3.5 The school has had a number of individual and team successes, notably in netball, hockey and football. Pupils have also reached high levels in national and international competitions in music, art, dance, debating, public speaking and mathematics.
- 3.6 The overall success that the pupils achieve throughout the school owes much to the positive attitudes that they have towards work, to their exemplary behaviour and to the very good relationships that exist between pupils and their teachers. Pupils' high achievement is the result of personal commitment, a real desire to learn and the lively dynamic between pupil and teacher.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

Preparatory School

- 3.7 In the Preparatory School the curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent, offering a very broad and well-balanced curriculum which succeeds in providing challenge to pupils across the ability spectrum, enabling all pupils to achieve good standards relative to their abilities. The academic curriculum, which covers all the required areas of learning, is enhanced by an extensive languages programme, including French, Mandarin, Latin and Greek. The school is adopting an increasingly co-curricular approach. Links between subjects are emphasized and additional support of this is given by an extensive programme of trips, including the Houses of Parliament, Hampton Court and Juniper Hall for ecology.
- 3.8 The school caters well for pupils with a range of ability. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and provision is made to meet their needs, for example through the extended languages programme and the Primary Mathematics Challenge. Pupils with LDD are given additional support through individual and small group lessons.
- 3.9 The extra-curricular programme is very well developed with clubs offered in a range of areas including crafts, sport, choir, orchestra, dance, animation, drumming and science. The clubs are popular with pupils and well attended. The carefully designed personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme permeates the whole curriculum and contributes significantly to achieving the school's aim of nurturing pupils' self-confidence, perseverance, integrity and independence of mind.
- 3.10 Pupils' community awareness is benefiting from the developing links with other schools, such as a junior school in Haiti, and by involvement with a number of local and national charities. For example, pupils have raised money for Cancer Research through the "Imagine If..." art competition. Pupils' social development is also enhanced by community links such as making presentations to adult audiences for example at the local poetry festival.
- 3.11 Since the last inspection, curriculum provision has been considerably enhanced through revised schemes of work which focus more on continuity and progression, an increase in the range of language provision, the development of ICT facilities (for example laptops and data projectors) and the introduction of the *Habits of Mind* programme.

Senior School

- 3.12 The well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum and extra-curricular activities are strengths, and enable pupils to reach high standards in a wide range of subjects. The education provided is suitable for pupils of all ages, abilities and needs and it supports the aims of the school. Particularly notable is the excellent provision for both modern and classical languages and the large number of extra-curricular activities. Both parents and pupils confirm that there is so much on offer that, sometimes, it is difficult for the pupils to make their choices. Pupils are able to select their GCSE subjects from a good choice of options, and the availability of twenty-four subjects at A level is a strength for a school of this size. The *Dimensions of Learning* initiative, started two years ago, is led by a specialist co-ordinator. This skill development programme is well integrated into the curriculum and has already made an impact on the quality of pupils' learning.

- 3.13 PSHE is delivered in a full day session each term, a structure enjoyed by the pupils, and covers a range of relevant topics. Work experience for the sixth form is structured in holiday periods and the school also hosts its own annual careers fair. Whilst the school does not claim to be a specialist school for those with learning challenges, it does provide individual and group support for approximately ten per cent of the senior pupils. Notable is the teachers' support of these pupils in mainstream lessons.
- 3.14 Pupils' community involvement includes links with local sporting clubs, Duke of Edinburgh's award community activities, a reading support scheme with a local school, a Year 10 community service day and a pupil-led fund-raising day for a local hospital charity. The school is aware that there is potential to increase the number of links with the community.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

Preparatory School

- 3.15 The quality of teaching throughout the Preparatory School is good and often excellent, and meets the school's intellectual goals for its pupils. The quality of teaching is supported by new schemes of work and associated guidelines and these are major factors in the level of pupils' achievement. One of the aims is for staff to employ a variety of teaching methods and this was demonstrated by pupils whose imagination was fired as they wrote about how life might have been in Ibstock Place when Major Paget and his family occupied the building last century.
- 3.16 Teachers provide, and pupils make excellent use of, a variety of resources. This was very clearly in evidence in a history lesson about mummification in ancient Egypt when pupils made use of written text, accessed a quiz on a website, looked at models of the various heads of the gods usually found on the canopic jars, and were able to see and feel the shape and size of the various organs of the body which were normally removed before the process of mummification began.
- 3.17 Marking is usually thorough, and feedback given to pupils enables them to understand what needs to be done in order for progress to be made. In addition to teacher marking, both peer and self assessment are used. An example of this was in evidence at the end of a Year 5 art lesson where pupils assessed with care their peers' creation of Aztec gods on fabric. Effective use is often made of ICT, as in a Year 6 class, where pupils were researching material for a debate on the value of computer games.

Senior School

- 3.18 The quality of the teaching in the Senior School is at least good and often outstanding. The teaching meets the stated aims to motivate, enthuse, inspire, engage and challenge pupils. Teachers display excellent subject knowledge and teach in a firm, confident manner. Teaching is lively and conducted at a brisk pace. Teachers make high demands of their pupils, which they enable them to meet.
- 3.19 In most classes teachers set tasks in accordance with pupil ability which supports all pupils' progress. This was particularly evident in a Year 10 music lesson on composition. Use of ICT is very much in evidence, as is a wide use of resources including data projection, newspapers, texts and the library. A particular strength of the teaching is the use of a range of stimuli outside the classroom, including lectures, performances, galleries and overseas expeditions.
- 3.20 In a small number of lessons there were some time-management issues. However, this was largely because of the good practice of responding to issues arising. Teaching encourages good behaviour and respect for others. The teaching encourages positive listening and discursive skills. In an Upper Sixth English lesson on racism in *Othello*, pupils were guided to high-level discussion including awareness of the social and historical context. A notable feature of the teaching is the way in which spiritual, moral, social and cultural connections are made in all subjects, thus naturally enhancing pupils' personal development. Teaching in one subject often reinforces other curriculum areas, as in a history of art lesson on Da Vinci linking to that morning's assembly. Marking is thorough, detailed and constructive with helpful suggestions for improvement. Clear assessment criteria are given and pasted in the front of exercise books. Pupils in the upper part of the school value the one-to-one discussions with teachers about their work. Departments use assessment data in the planning of curricula and for targeting individual pupil skill development.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a characteristic of both the Preparatory and Senior schools, thus meeting the school's personal and social goals for its pupils.

Preparatory School

- 4.2 In the Preparatory School, pupils' sense of the spiritual is well developed, with art and music very much part of their lives. In addition they show respect for all living things, for example in a Year 4 science lesson where they investigated diverse habitats around the grounds.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral development is of a high level. Pupils are clearly able to tell right from wrong, and there is a belief amongst them that if something is not right, for example if someone is being unkind to a friend, then the correct thing is to inform an adult. Pupils understand the rules of the school and appreciate their purpose.
- 4.4 Pupils' social development leads them to relate very well with one another, to engage with adults in a natural way and to express themselves clearly. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility. The school takes care to ensure that, at the appropriate level, pupils understand public services and institutions. During the inspection, Year 6 visited the Houses of Parliament.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about other countries, cultures and religions. For example, a Year 4 class were developing research skills in English by finding out about the religions and culture of India.

Senior School

- 4.6 In the Senior School, pupils have a highly developed spiritual awareness. Assemblies have an atmosphere of calm reflection, and musical events and visiting speakers allow exploration of the spiritual dimension. For example, pupils were clearly moved by the account of a visiting Holocaust survivor, as well as by the informative talk about school pupils who lost their lives in their fight against apartheid. Displays around the school, Christian Forum and the *Think* club, where pupils consider moral issues, all contribute to spiritual development.
- 4.7 Pupils have strong moral awareness and are able to discuss ethical issues with knowledge and insight and show a good understanding of moral issues and respect for the law, including the school rules. These are respected by pupils who understand that they exist for the benefit of the school community.
- 4.8 Pupils are extremely well developed socially and they play an active part in the school community. They are on the school and house councils and take roles as prefects and mentors. Pupils have strong charitable awareness including buying an acre of forest in the Amazon to support the Amerindian people. The tutorial programme promotes social harmony and encourages caring personal relationships.

- 4.9 Cultural development is strong. Pupils show excellent understanding of the diversity of their community and the world in which they live. Pupils of different cultural backgrounds are well integrated into the life of the school and make significant cultural contributions. Distinguished visiting speakers, foreign authors and cultural events encourage pupils to be aware of world issues. The wide range of exchanges and tours that extend from China to Boston gives pupils an opportunity to experience diverse cultures. Pupils learn about public institutions through ethics, history and PSHE.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

- 4.10 The school's care and support of pupils is excellent and meets its pastoral aims. Pastoral care is given a very high priority by all staff, but particularly the tutors and class teachers. The high quality of the management of pupils' welfare contributes to the pupils' excellent personal development.
- 4.11 In the Preparatory School, class teachers are always available to support pupils and they keep academic and pastoral records. This practice ensures the monitoring of the 'whole child' and is used in discussions with parents. In the Senior School, pupils feel very well supported in and out of the classroom and report that they are treated fairly. Pupils value their relationships with their tutors, who take their pastoral duties seriously. For instance, twice-termly grades and performance are communicated verbally to pupils as well as to parents on paper. The new vertical house system, overseen by housemasters and a housemistress, has given a further dimension to the quality of pastoral care. Sixth-form pupils support younger members of the school through the house-based peer mentoring scheme. The relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are of a high order, contributing to the positive but natural atmosphere of the school community.
- 4.12 The school's approach to supporting and safeguarding its pupils is encapsulated in its *Promoting the Wellbeing of Pupils* handbooks for both schools, handbooks which are models of good practice. The anti-bullying policies are clear and understood by pupils, parents and staff; notices around the school and in the pupil planners support pupils' awareness of personal issues such as bullying. Pupils report that bullying incidents are rare, but, when they occur, staff deal with them promptly and effectively. The recording of bullying incidents is exemplary, following the process in the policy step by step. The school's aim for behaviour management, that pupils take responsibility for developing high standards of behaviour, is borne out in practice. Pupils are engaging and polite and value the informal and formal commendations which complement the school's graded range of sanctions. In a very small response to the pupil questionnaire, a few pupils felt that some sanctions were unfairly given, but in pupil interviews across all years this was not felt to be so. Serious disciplinary issues are rare.

- 4.13 The safeguarding policy is comprehensive. The designated officer's inter-agency training is up to date and he has trained all staff working in the school. Senior pupils report their awareness of safeguarding issues and the policy is widely publicised. The safe recruitment of staff and governors is rigorous and carefully documented. Fire safety is a priority with regular practices, including practices for "zoned areas" in addition to whole school practices. Health and safety measures are thorough and overseen by the health and safety committee. The access plan for those with learning or physical challenges is up-to-date, and has been carried out in practice in the building of the new Sports Hall and *New School* buildings which are currently being completed. The pupils report that they enjoy the school food and acknowledge its healthy qualities, even though some would prefer some non-healthy content. Pupils enjoy many opportunities for regular exercise. The medical centre is well resourced and the staff provide a high quality of medical and pastoral support. The admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and suitably stored for the past three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The governing body gives strong support to the aims and management of the school, which is reflected in the significant improvements the school has made in both academic performance and physical facilities since the previous inspection. The governors' oversight of welfare and health and safety is effective, and the high quality of staffing and resources is testament to the governors' positive working relationship with the headmistress and senior leaders.
- 5.2 The governors are kept informed about the school through comprehensive reports, the work of its committees and, significantly, through regular presentations to the full governing body by members of the teaching staff. Governors also attend a good number of school events. The chairman of governors takes responsibility for safeguarding and has oversight of the centralised register of staff appointments. The chairman is in the school most weeks in term time and takes a real interest in all aspects of the life of the school. The development plan is a joint venture between governors and senior leaders and both the development planning committee and the estates committee meet monthly. Confirmation of the successful execution of the development plan is seen both in the increase in the academic performance of the pupils and the near completion of *New School*, a very ambitious building of new teaching and research facilities.
- 5.3 The governing body is fully aware of its responsibilities and committed to the welfare of the pupils throughout the school. Individual governors are not linked to individual departments but are currently debating the creation of an academic committee to complement the work of the finance and general purposes committee. The expertise on the governing body is wide-ranging and has, clearly, been of distinct support to the school through a period of development.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 The school enjoys excellent leadership, which supports all the aims of the school, particularly the academic and personal development of pupils. The management structures have been carefully developed to ensure that senior leaders are deployed effectively and that the oversight of each section of the school is in the hands of those with specialist skills. One of the strengths of the school's management is the way the development of pupils across different stages of their school lives is monitored, ensuring that the understanding of different pupils' needs is shared and checked. This, together with curriculum development, is supported by both academic and pastoral middle leaders, whose roles have been strengthened and enhanced since the last inspection to the benefit of pupils. Curriculum links between the Preparatory School co-ordinators and the Senior School heads of department have recently been improved by the introduction of formal meetings.

- 5.5 The effectiveness of the management structures and the staff in management roles is evident in the wide-ranging achievements of the pupils, and in the quality of their personal development. Development planning is detailed, carefully targeted and demonstrates the clear links between the overall plan and the action plans of the departments of the school. The development plan reflects the vision of the school as one entity. This has contributed significantly to the improvement and development of all areas of the school since 2004. Moreover, staff report that their ideas in terms of school development are appreciated and acted upon via subject action plans. The school is very well resourced; heads of department confirm that the departmental budgeting procedure ensures departments are well provided with resources.
- 5.6 The recruitment and retention of high calibre staff is a priority for the senior leaders. New staff have a structured induction programme and benefit from the support and guidance from longer-serving staff. Professional development is supported by a generous budget and teacher development is sustained by an appraisal process which is both encouraging and searching. Regular formal and informal lesson observation by senior staff and by colleagues also adds to the quality of teaching. Whilst the school is rightly proud of the development of *New School* and the physical provision for pupils, it is clear that the school management regards investment in high quality staff to be an equal if not higher priority. Staff are suitably trained for their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The appointment of such staff is carefully managed and all staff working with pupils are subject to rigorous recruitment checks.

5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.7 The school has excellent links with parents, carers and guardians. It takes considerable care to communicate effectively and involve parents in the life of the school. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, most parents indicated that they are very pleased with the teaching, pastoral care and the extra-curricular opportunities offered by the school. The school has several channels for communication with parents, including the school website, which now has a parents' portal through which parents can gain access to their child's timetable, reports and other academic results as well as letters from the school. The website also gives details of current events, the school calendar and a wide range of school policies. The school produces regular newsletters, diaries and other publications such as *School Matters*. Parents are given comprehensive information about forthcoming events and school expeditions. The school holds workshops on topical concerns such as the recently held (and over-subscribed) workshop on social networking and internet safety.
- 5.8 A small minority of parents in the parents' questionnaire said that they were not satisfied with the information given to them about their child's progress. The inspection team found that the school provided parents with regular written and verbal reports on their child's effort, attainment and progress and regular targets were set. Pupils with learning difficulties are closely monitored and their progress is reviewed regularly with parents. End-of-year reports do not set out curriculum coverage or areas for development for individual pupils. Parental concerns are dealt with promptly, and the school maintains detailed records of concerns raised and action taken.

- 5.9 The parent-teacher association (PTA) is very active and supportive of the school. The PTA committee liaises with the two parent representatives from each class throughout the school. Events such as the quiz night, school fairs and the jazz night are very well attended. Parents of pupils in both the preparatory and senior schools receive invitations to a wide range of events, such as sung evensong in Southwark Cathedral, and are encouraged to join school expeditions. Parents of pupils in the Preparatory School enjoy the opportunity to attend regular open mornings in which they can visit the classrooms and observe the work of the school.
- 5.10 The pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that a small minority of parents in the preparatory school felt that did not have sufficient access to staff. However, the inspection team found no evidence to support this view. There is a range of ways in which parents may consult staff, for example by email, via pupil planners and by telephone, in addition to the opportunities for informal personal contact. A small number of parents reported that they do not feel encouraged to be involved in the life of the school and that they consider support for their children's learning difficulties to be insufficient. The inspection findings do not support these views.

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.1 The overall effectiveness of the setting is good, and it is successful in achieving its aim of nurturing children's talents in a supportive and purposeful environment, ensuring that the needs of each child are met well. Children are happy and make good progress in their learning and all-round development. Exemplary behaviour and outstanding personal development are strengths. Developing links with parents and carers help to involve them in children's care and education and they are kept well informed of their children's progress. Staff working in the EYFS have a good capacity to sustain and improve the current good standards.

6.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.2 Leadership and management are good. All relevant policies and recruitment procedures are in place to safeguard each child and ensure equality of opportunity. Staff are appropriately qualified and the correct ratios are maintained at all times. Documentation is comprehensive and shows excellent attention to detail. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, many parents expressed appreciation of their children's good progress and of the care and support their children receive. A small number of parents expressed concern over the lack of opportunities provided for daily interaction with management and staff. Inspection findings show that parents are given ready access to both staff and management. The EYFS management has good understanding of the provision's strengths and weaknesses and sets clear direction for developments within the setting. Useful links with the local authority offer additional and valued support for staff, extending the skills and information available to them. Resources are deployed effectively. They are of good quality, in plentiful supply and age-appropriate.

6.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.3 The quality of the provision is good. Adults have good knowledge of the EYFS framework and are effective in helping children learn appropriately both in and out of doors. Planning makes good use of the EYFS guidance, and through initial and ongoing assessment identifies what children can do and helps adults to match activities to children's needs. The recording of individual children's next steps in learning is not at present included in short-term planning documentation across the setting. The school acknowledges that this is currently an area of weakness. There is good provision for both the early identification of children's special needs and continued support for those needs. Staff are focused on helping children to make good progress in their learning and development and promoting their welfare. Appropriate checks, including those with the Criminal Records Bureau, ensure that all adults are suitable to work with children. Risk assessments are thorough, and medical provision is of a good standard.

6.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 6.4 Outcomes for children are good overall and personal development is outstanding. Attainment is on average above age-related expectations but within that there is a broad spread. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, most children have achieved the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning. Children's outstanding personal development is positively influenced by adults who are admirable role models. Children learn to share, take turns and form happy friendships. They understand that safety is important in and out of school. Children learn to look after themselves; for example, they know why they must wash their hands before eating and why healthy foods are good for them. Children display good literacy and numeracy skills. They converse confidently, and talk about their learning activities with enthusiasm and clarity of expression. They respond well to praise and encouragement and are happy in the setting, deriving pleasure from their learning.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chairman of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Adrian Underwood	Reporting Inspector
Mr Stephen Yeo	Junior Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA)
Mrs Nicola Woodman	Junior Team Inspector (Co-ordinator, IAPS)
Mr Adrian Boyer	Junior Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS)
Miss Eleni Conidaris	Senior Team Inspector (Head of House, HMC)
Mr Paul Bate	Senior Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA)
Mrs Joanne Williams	Senior Team Inspector (Senior Manager, ISA)
Mr Tony Woolstone	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Headmaster, HMC)
Mrs Felicity Lawson	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mrs Tessa Richardson	Early Years Team Inspector (Head of School (Pre-preparatory), IAPS)