



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

THE MANOR PREPARATORY SCHOOL

APRIL 2017



CONTENTS

SCHOOL'S DETAILS	1
PREFACE	2
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	3
1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	4
About the school	4
What the school seeks to do	4
About the pupils	4
2. KEY FINDINGS	5
Recommendations	5
3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	6
4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9

SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	The Manor Preparatory School			
DfE number	931/6090			
Registered charity number	900347			
Address	Faringdon Road Shippon Abingdon Oxfordshire OX13 6LN			
Telephone number	01235 858458			
Email address	head@manorprep.org			
Headmaster	Mr Piers Heyworth			
Chair of governors	Mr Shaun Forrestal			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	393			
	Boys	58	Girls	335
	EYFS	106	5-11	287
Inspection dates	26 to 27 April 2017			

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.

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 following their inspection 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.

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.

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 an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting 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.

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 the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. 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'.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, and attended tutor group meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Graham Gorton	Reporting inspector
Mr Luke Harrison	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Miss Penelope Kirk	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Nigel Siddall	Team inspector (Former head of department, IAPS school)

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 The Manor Preparatory School is an independent day school for boys between the ages of 2 and 7, and girls between the ages of 2 and 11 years. The school was established in 1907 as the preparatory school for a local girls' senior school. It moved to its present site in 1947 and in 1970 became independent of the senior school. The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to enthuse pupils with a love of learning and the desire to make the most of their abilities and opportunities by cherishing each as an individual and offering a happy, caring and challenging environment. It strives to encourage a sense of self-worth, an individual responsibility towards others and a positive contribution to the school community within the ethical and moral framework of its Christian foundation.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds including business, professional and rural families, and from a wide geographical area. Nationally standardised tests indicate the ability profile of the school is above average on entry. The school has identified 57 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, all of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 80 pupils, 4 of whom receive additional support. Data used by the school have identified 69 pupils as the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for 98 other pupils due to their special talents in sport, music, drama or art.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. KEY FINDINGS

2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional.
- Throughout the school pupils achieve highly and make excellent progress.
- Pupils demonstrate outstanding communication skills.
- Pupils achieve highly in a wide range of activities.

2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Exceptional social awareness is demonstrated by all pupils.
- Pupils display an excellent understanding of behavioural expectations.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace diversity and cultural traditions.
- Pupils' spiritual understanding is extremely well developed.

Recommendations

2.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- Ensuring that pupils are provided with sufficient opportunities to demonstrate creativity when using information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all areas of learning.
- Ensuring that sufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to demonstrate resilience.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional. They approach tasks with energy and an infectious enthusiasm, concentrate extremely well and demonstrate great application and perseverance in all areas of school life. Staff encourage these positive attitudes by enthusing pupils, actively praising and rewarding their efforts and achievements. Pupils approach every day with an overwhelming passion to learn and develop. They collaborate in their learning in a harmonious and effective manner. Their support for one another comes instinctively. Pupils are confident at working independently and display initiative when developing their ideas. This was demonstrated when younger pupils carried out excellent collaborative work to understand a specific scenario relating to the *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* story. Pupils demonstrated independence and initiative to a most mature level and their creativity was celebrated as they took their own slant on the traditional fairy story.
- 3.3 Pupils throughout the school achieve highly and make excellent progress. Pupils with SEND or EAL and the more able achieve highly due to the excellent quality of support from teachers, who themselves are advised by a dedicated team of specialists within the school. The attainment of all pupils is consistently excellent and considerable progress is made by pupils across the school in all subject areas. This is reflected in pupils' exercise books. Pupils often exceed expectations as teachers have high aspirations that challenge pupils to try their best. The school does not undertake National Curriculum tests, but the available evidence demonstrates attainment to be above average in relation to national age-related expectations. Most children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) reach the level of development typical for their age and a large majority attain higher than typical standards. The excellent achievement and progress of the pupils is supported by thorough planning and a comprehensive assessment programme, ensuring that the recommendations from the previous inspection are fully met. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, most parents agreed that teaching enables their children to make good progress and develop skills for the future, and that their children's educational needs are met effectively by the school. Every pupil who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school provides them the opportunity to learn and make good progress. A small minority of pupils felt that marking does not help them to improve their work and that they do not know how well they are doing in their subjects. Inspection evidence does not support this view; a scrutiny of pupils' work demonstrated that teachers' comments are helpful and supportive, providing excellent examples of the next steps they should take. Continual, informal feedback by staff to support pupils is also a strong feature of the education provision.
- 3.4 The pupils demonstrate exceptional communication skills that they use most effectively in different situations. They are able to articulate their ideas clearly and concisely. Pupils have excellent listening skills and they remain focused and alert. They are inquisitive in their questioning, as was observed when the children in the EYFS asked about the water which had disappeared from the man-made ponds in the outdoor learning areas. They converse most eloquently on a wide range of different topics in which they are interested. Some of the youngest children in the EYFS happily and confidently shared their photograph album using mature and sophisticated language. Pupils answer questions comfortably and with secure knowledge, communicating with enthusiasm and passion. They display excellent ability in writing, demonstrating a strong range of appropriate language for both creative and factual accounts. More able pupils' creative writing is outstanding and demonstrates an excellent understanding of how language can impact on the reader. All pupils' work is extremely well presented. Pupils read with great fluency and expression, and their love of literature is clear. The school's ethos promotes open communication for all ages and the curriculum provides an

abundance of opportunities for pupils to hone their skills successfully. Staff demonstrate consistently high standards of communication and this is a key factor in the development of pupils' skills.

- 3.5 Pupils achieve highly in a wide range of activities both within the school and outside. Their excellent achievements are diverse and reflect the multitude of opportunities afforded to them. The depth and diversity on offer is a source of pride to both pupil and teacher. Pupils excel in sports such as hockey, athletics, netball and swimming, with considerable success at local and national level. In their questionnaire responses, every pupil agreed that they can be involved in a good range of activities and almost all parents concurred that the school provides a good choice of extra-curricular activities. The academic prowess of the pupils is reflected in their success at the point of transfer to the next stage of their education. The boys at age seven are successful at gaining places at other preparatory schools, some of which have a competitive entry requirement. Equally the girls transfer to a wide range of schools, with a good proportion receiving awards and scholarships for academic achievement and for areas such as art, sport, music or drama.
- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate advanced levels of subject knowledge and develop excellent skills that they apply most effectively, ensuring their achievement levels are as high as possible. Their skills base is extensive, ranging from mathematical and linguistic to artistic and physical. Excellent examples are evident throughout the school, including children in the EYFS skilfully manipulating building blocks to make houses, older pupils demonstrating perfect synchronicity in singing games, mastery in art as older pupils paint detailed land and seascapes, or the refined technical skills displayed as pupils measured and designed model birds and butterflies. The knowledge demonstrated by older pupils of topics such as Charles Darwin and evolution is outstanding. Excellent development of skills, knowledge and understanding is supported by skilful and enthusiastic teaching including that by specialist staff and teaching assistants, which inspires the pupils to develop a love of learning. The excellent development of pupils' knowledge is strengthened through the detailed and engaging curriculum. In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents agreed that the range of subjects is suitable for their children.
- 3.7 Pupils demonstrate excellent study skills. They reason carefully and enjoy the challenges offered in their work. In one lesson, older pupils demonstrated the ability to evaluate secondary sources of evidence to consider and articulate the feelings of a soldier in the War of the Roses on the eve of the Battle of Bosworth Field. This reflects the school's ethos which inspires pupils to give of their very best. Staff challenge pupils to employ higher-order thinking skills on a daily basis and this enables pupils to hypothesise and synthesise their ideas effectively. Too few opportunities are available for pupils for self-directed learning as they move through the school, particularly in information and communication technology (ICT). For example, some tasks rely heavily on prepared resources as opposed to a creative thinking process.

- 3.8 Pupils display an excellent understanding of numeracy and have a secure knowledge of key mathematical skills, which they can readily apply to a range of learning opportunities across the curriculum. From the earliest stages in the EYFS, children develop a solid base in working with numbers which is built upon successfully as they progress through the school. Pupils' competencies with ICT are good. They are familiar with the use of digital technology in their homes and in everyday life. In school, they are not afraid to use and experiment with ICT when it is included in their lessons. Pupils employ ICT skills with confidence, although ideas and opportunities for creative digital learning are less well-developed. The strength of pupils' ICT skills is supported by easy access to work stations around the school and by a range of appropriate resources such as tablet computers and programmable devices.
- 3.9 Outstanding leadership and management at all levels underpins the considerable success of the pupils in every area of their achievement, ensuring that the aims of the school are met fully.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' social awareness is exceptional. They take on responsibilities within the school community with pride and enthusiasm, and work very well together to achieve a common aim in class situations as well as when they are at play. For example, younger pupils in a computer lesson worked very well in pairs when practising filming and presenting techniques using a tablet computer, ahead of creating their own television chef-style video on a healthy eating recipe. They displayed excellent co-operation when working in small groups and circles discussing ideas about life in the year 1017. Older pupils displayed excellent collaborative skills in a French lesson when working in pairs for a quiz; they were enthusiastic and focused. Pupils develop excellent social skills which help to create a harmonious and engaging community.
- 4.3 Pupils display an excellent understanding of behavioural expectations from both themselves and others. The environment created at the school embodies the ethos of kindness, inclusivity and respect. Pupils demonstrate an outstanding moral awareness based upon shared values and mutual respect. They know, accept and adhere to the boundaries which are established by the school community, and treat peers as friends and equals. Behaviour inside and outside the classroom is exemplary and demonstrates a clear moral understanding. Members of the school council are proud of their input into devising the school and class rules, which are followed well. Pupils demonstrate excellent choices on moral issues, as reflected in their work on why we need rules and during discussions on why mobile phones should not be allowed on school trips. They display an excellent understanding of the laws of the land and the importance of these to maintain a society in which everyone is cared for and valued. In their questionnaire responses, an overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour. Every pupil who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school encourages them to behave well and that they understand the sanctions for poor behaviour.
- 4.4 Pupils enthusiastically embrace diversity and cultural traditions. They develop a mature approach through experience and exploration of both their own and other cultures. This is promoted through the curriculum; external visits; an extensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme; discussions at circle time; school assemblies and visitors to the school. For example, pupils displayed a strong awareness of other faiths in discussions about Diwali and following a visit from a rabbi. The cultural development of the pupils is strengthened through eye-catching displays around the school celebrating events such as Chinese New Year, a culture day and the rights of the child promoted by an international charity. Respect, tolerance and kindness are pillars of the school's ethos which permeate through all teaching and learning. In their questionnaire responses, almost all pupils and parents agreed that the school encourages tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and an overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school actively promotes values of democracy.
- 4.5 Pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent and they have a strong sense of spirituality that permeates through the school. They exhibit a very clear appreciation of the importance of relationships and care for the wider world through mature discussions and reflection of the deeper issues of life, such as appreciating the differences and uniqueness of everyone. Pupils relish the opportunities to express themselves in art and music, which deepens their spiritual understanding through the appreciation of non-material aspects of life. They are caring of one-another's feelings and beliefs, and appreciative of their environment; they display excellent empathy and concern for one another. Pupils demonstrate spirituality when engaging in prayer and other aspects of the school's Christian foundation, such as services for collective worship.

- 4.6 The pupils display excellent levels of confidence and self-esteem. They develop their self-knowledge and self-discipline in a caring, nurturing and balanced environment. The development of their resilience is at times tempered by some tasks that are too controlled and restricting in opportunity. Pupils know that hard work is the route to success and they demonstrate this in all areas of school life. They are confident in assessing their own development, and by the time they reach Year 6 they have been prepared well for senior education. Pupils are given excellent guidance in how to evaluate their learning and improve, as well as opportunities to develop and grow into self-confident citizens of the future. In interview, pupils spoke passionately about how they had grown in confidence and how the work of the school enables them to succeed.
- 4.7 Pupils are able to make decisions about their work and recognise the importance of taking charge of their learning, success and well-being. Pupils are generally unaware of the high number of decisions they automatically make in the course of their normal routine, but do so with thought, care and consideration. Even the youngest children in the EYFS are excellent at selecting appropriate activities in the independent learning areas. They also make informed choices at lunchtimes through opportunities to develop their independence, thus meeting a recommendation from the previous EYFS intermediate inspection. In house netball competitions for the older pupils, the groups of girls rotated those on court from their available squad to ensure that all had an equal amount of playing time regardless of ability. The pupils embrace these moments of decision-making readily and act with independence and ingenuity.
- 4.8 Pupils are very aware of their social responsibilities in school and in the wider community, and they are active in organising fetes and charity days in support of local, national and international charities. These include a local food bank and earthquake disaster appeals. Pupils engage willingly with the local community such as when the chamber choir sings each year at a local stately home and the Middle School choir performs at an old people's home. Pupils also performed in an Easter Passion Play with other local schools. In an assembly, pupils displayed an excellent understanding of sharing their talents with their peers and how this impacted on the experience of those in the school community. Pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding of working within a community when discussing the election of the school council and their environmental work as 'Grubs' throughout the school. They take their responsibilities seriously and contribute positively to the lives of others in a caring and positive way. Pupils embody mutual respect in all they attempt to do to fulfil their commitment to society.
- 4.9 Pupils display how to stay safe in class and when at play. For instance, children in Reception voluntarily wore eye protection to avoid an accident when investigating the best way to adhere sticks together. Pupils know how to be physically and mentally healthy, particularly in terms of diet, exercise and a balanced lifestyle. They are confident that they know how to stay safe online. The comprehensive PSHEE programme highlights these important issues and provides common-sense approach to personal and community safety. Pupils are very happy at school and feel that the school keeps them safe, encouraging them to maintain a healthy balance between work and play. In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents and pupils agreed that the school does all it can to ensure the school environment is healthy and safe.
- 4.10 Pupils' personal development is strengthened by all staff who set excellent examples as role models to pupils. This begins and permeates down from the outstanding leadership and management. Their meticulous attention to detail and the care they show in their planning for each area of the school's operation ensures that every member of the school community is valued and that the school aims are met successfully. A very large majority of parents agreed that the school promotes an environment which successfully supports their children's personal development.