



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**KING'S HOUSE SCHOOL**

**INTERIM INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## King's House School

Full Name of School	<b>King's House School</b>		
DCSF Number	<b>318/6001</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>312669</b>		
Address	<b>King's House School 68 King's Road Richmond Surrey TW10 6ES</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>020 8940 1878</b>		
Fax Number	<b>020 8939 2501</b>		
Email Address	<b>piper.s@kingshouseschool.org</b>		
Head	<b>Mrs Stephanie C Piper</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Simon Readhead QC</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 13</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>423</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>0</b>	5-11: <b>263</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>71</b>	11-13: <b>89</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>423</b>		
Heads of EYFS Setting	Nursery: <b>Mrs Sally Crawley</b> Reception: <b>Mrs Helen Lowe</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection Dates	<b>15 March to 16 March 2010</b>		

## PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)* schedule for INTERIM inspections. The inspection is a two day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in May 2006.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to 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 children in England from birth to 31<sup>st</sup> 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 Children, 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 Founded In 1947 as a boys' preparatory day school, King's House has grown over the years to accommodate over 420 pupils with buildings now on three sites. The first, which has been added since the last inspection, is a purpose-designed, co-educational facility for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Nursery pupils. From Reception onwards the school educates boys only and they move to the junior department. This consists of two large, joined, Victorian properties accommodating Reception to Year 3. Years 4 to 8 are in the senior department, a short walk from the juniors. It has increased its size by one class in each of Years 4, 5 and 6 since the last inspection with the result that older boys now have slightly smaller numbers in their classes.
- 1.2 EYFS pupils total 82. Years 1 to 6 have 263 boys and Years 7 and 8 have 89. The school aims to nurture all pupils and, through a high quality curriculum enhanced with art, music, PE and performing arts, encourage the highest possible academic achievements for individual pupils according to their age and ability. This aim is coupled with the determination successfully to promote strong, balanced personal development and co-operative relationships. Entry often occurs in the EYFS where there is no entrance test. Boys who may wish to enter at Year 4 undertake a competitive test in maths and English. National curriculum tests are not used but ability is monitored using a range of assessments including verbal reasoning and cognitive ability tests. These indicate that pupils' ability profile is above the national average.
- 1.3 Pupils come from local business and professional families and represent local ethnic and aspirational diversity. Most boys leave after Year 8 having successfully gained entry to a wide variety of senior independent day and boarding schools. The school has identified over 100 pupils as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and 81 of these are receiving specialist support from school staff. Very small numbers have statements of special educational need and/or receive support for English as an additional language (EAL). Sixty-one pupils receive some form of government funding.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## 2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

### **The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills**

- 2.1 Pupils' academic achievements are excellent. There are many examples of outstanding individual achievement, as shown by the school's frequent, annual success in scholarship examinations. Scholarships are gained by pupils across the ability spectrum in areas from art and music, through sporting and academic excellence, to 'all rounder' scholarships. They represent the top of the success pyramid, entering a wide variety of well-known boarding and day schools, but this should not hide the successful non-scholarship entry achieved by all other Year 8 leavers to a similarly wide range of schools. This strongly exemplifies the school's primary aim and is supported by pupils' considerable successes in a broad spread of individual and team activities including music, drama and many sports.
- 2.2 The curriculum is broad, well balanced and carefully planned, linking well with good diversity of extra-curricular opportunities. It strongly supports pupils' development and progress enabling them to acquire good attitudes and considerable interest in their education. Examples include a mathematics lesson in which Year 5 pupils used data handling skills well and followed the investigation by evaluating their work through applying a range of success criteria. The judo activity, by contrast, gave boys the helpful opportunity of developing their skills in mastering ways of escape.
- 2.3 Teaching seen was good overall with some outstanding examples of classroom practice. It was not consistent across subjects and year groups. As a result pupils did not receive consistently good challenge within lessons so that, in a few areas, pupils' progress was more limited. However, pupils were well supported in the majority of lessons, with individual needs being appropriately recognised and addressed in stimulating ways which meet the school's aims well; pupils developed good skills to enable independent learning. In the junior department, highly able boys were able to choose extension work from a 'challenge box' of cerebral activities as appropriate. Senior boys were also well challenged in appropriate ability sets for most subjects. Staff were particularly aware of pupils' aspirations, often adapting their teaching so that individuals became familiar with the requirements of particular schools. Pupils with specific difficulties were well identified; each has a comprehensive individual educational plan (IEP) and this was used well by some staff to address the concerns.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development.**

- 2.4 Pupils' enjoy strong personal development as they mature through the school and, by the time they leave, their personal characteristics and qualities are outstanding.
- 2.5 Spiritual development amongst pupils is good. Boys are well aware of the wonders of nature and have a good understanding of the biblical base of Christianity, together with a comprehension of other religions. Opportunities exist for prayer and reflection and these help to set an appropriate spiritual tone for the school community.
- 2.6 Moral development is strong and all pupils, in both junior and senior departments, are well aware of right and wrong. They understand and respect the school rules and the occasional need for the application of sanctions, judging them to be fair.

- 2.7 Pupils have an equally strong understanding of social issues, this being especially reinforced by the school's eco awareness and outstanding charitable giving. In particular, the longstanding, supportive relationship with a Rwandan school gives a great insight into poor educational conditions in Africa, whilst incidents such as the Haitian earthquake generate substantial 'one off' giving. Such events ensure pupils understand well, and empathise with, a wide variety of social need.
- 2.8 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. Their individual backgrounds and personal experience, as well as the school's arrangements to access London's cultural diversity, underpin the school's wide provision for cultural breadth. In music, art and drama pupils achieve high standards, and this individual competence reflects strongly throughout the school community. As a result pupils are strongly aware of cultural matters, benefiting accordingly.
- 2.9 Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent. Comprehensive policies give staff clear guidance to ensure that their practices are safe. As a result pupils are exceptionally well cared for and risks suitably minimised. Robust risk assessments are assiduously completed. Should a potential weakness be identified, the school's rapid response corrects the matter and adapts the policy.

### **The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management**

- 2.10 Governance is outstanding. Governors' balance of appropriate skills and experience gives exceptional strength to the support given to the senior management team. One governor has specific responsibility for child protection matters, a role which is taken most seriously; policies and procedures receive regular review.
- 2.11 Leadership and management are good, with some particularly strong features. Leaders set a most clear educational direction. They have outstanding knowledge of individual pupils and potential senior schools. As a result they are able to guide pupils towards a suitable range of schools to match their abilities, as pupils' consistent success testifies. Since the previous inspection much work has been done to address the recommendations. The school's assessment and marking policies have been reviewed, although managers have yet to ensure that these are consistently applied by all teachers. This means that pupils, day by day, are sometimes unsure of their achievements and how to make further progress. Nevertheless good subject plans and schemes of work are in place. Staff have individual planning files, which managers regularly monitor, and the appraisal system enables managers to support staff well in their work for the pupils.
- 2.12 All adults associated with the school, including volunteers, are appropriately checked. New staff are recruited securely and receive a comprehensive induction into the school's procedures. This enables them immediately to commence their academic and pastoral support for the pupils. All teaching and non-teaching staff receive child protection training and this is consistently and properly updated. All these matters are properly recorded.

- 2.13 Premises and accommodation are good, being well designed and maintained and thus giving good support to pupils' education. Imaginative use of space ensures that, within the urban confines of the school's three sites, pupils are able to enjoy the majority of the activities on offer. Specialist games fields and swimming are provided a short coach ride away. These highly popular opportunities strongly enhance the boys' experiences.
- 2.14 From the EYFS onwards parents are well informed of pupils' progress and development. Parents of pupils in the junior and senior departments receive full reports with staff comments and targets for pupils, at the end of autumn and summer terms. These are supplemented by half-termly grading sheets. Such documents, coupled with regular formal meetings with staff and the frequent opportunities for informal discussions, enable parents to understand well the progress their children make and to give appropriate support. The school goes to great lengths to keep families abreast of activities and events. An electronic mobile phone paging system is well used to help ensure none may feel uninformed. Many policies are available from the school's website and all are available from the school office. These enable parents to be fully aware of the school's arrangements and give appropriate support to their children.
- 2.15 An inspection questionnaire elicited too few parental responses to give weight to any statistical analysis. The school's comprehensive complaints procedure is well-publicised, although parents, carers and guardians rarely find its use necessary. As a result the complaints record contains few entries and, in the last academic year, no formal complaints were made.

### **3. ACTION POINTS**

#### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- 3.1 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended.
- 3.2 The school's provision for childcare met the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage [and the Childcare Act 2006] and no action was required.

#### **(ii) Recommended action**

- 3.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
  - 1. Reconsider marking procedures to improve consistency so that pupils understand their progress with greater clarity.
  - 2. Share best practice in teaching throughout the senior and junior departments.
  - 3. Ensure that all Early Years policies are maintained in a consistent and accessible format.
  - 4. Implement the proposed relocation of the first floor EYFS reception class.

#### **4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

##### **(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

4.1 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS in meeting the needs of the children is good, with some outstanding features, and fulfils the school's aim of 'introducing children to the exciting world of learning in a safe, secure and interactive environment'. Commitment to the children's welfare is a great strength of the school. Staff recognise, and provide for, the individual needs of each child through a key worker system. Partnerships with parents and the wider community are well developed, contributing greatly to the overall effectiveness of the provision. There is an excellent sense of teamwork. Capacity for development is very good, and strongly supported by senior management. One of the Reception classes is on the first floor, which does not allow full, free flow access to the outside. However, the proposed relocation of this class to the ground floor will further enhance the quality of the provision.

##### **(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

4.2 The effectiveness of leadership and management is good, with some outstanding features. All necessary policies are in place but these are not maintained in a consistent and accessible format. The safeguarding of children is excellent. Staff ensure that all children are safe and well cared for. Safe recruitment procedures are rigorously followed to ensure the suitability of all staff. Detailed risk assessments are updated regularly, with appropriate checks being carried out on a daily basis. Excellent management and provision of resources provide children with a challenging and dynamic environment. The welfare and learning needs of every child are recognised and provided for through the active promotion of equal opportunities and inclusion. A strong commitment to staff training and development further ensures the excellent professional practice of all staff. Through careful and regular monitoring of provision the management team have identified clear and ambitious targets for improvement, which are clearly laid out in the Early Years Development Plan. Links with parents are excellent. Ongoing dialogue is facilitated through an open door policy, questionnaires, parent evenings and regular reports on children's progress. Feedback from parents is extremely positive with many commenting on the level of parental involvement, the quality of staff and the stimulating environment. A small number of parents have asked for more guidance on supporting reading at home. Links to other agencies, particularly the Local Authority Early Years Team are very strong.

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

4.3 The quality of the provision in the nursery and reception classes is excellent. Adults have a very good understanding of the EYFS and are strongly committed to its implementation. Stimulating and safe environments, both indoors and outside, enhance learning across all areas of the curriculum. A good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities ensures that children enjoy learning, are well motivated and challenged at appropriate levels. Planning is based on detailed information gathered prior to admission and ongoing observations. Children's progress is recorded and shared with parents through individual portfolios that present each child's learning journey in an informative and accessible format. Excellent provision is made for supporting specific needs, for example EAL, resulting in children integrating fully into the setting and making very good progress. Preparation for transition from nursery to reception is excellent. The children's health, safety and well-being are well supported. Clear routines are quickly established and children follow these confidently. The quality of after school care is good.

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

4.4 Outcomes for children in the EYFS are outstanding. Children are happy, enthusiastic and self-motivated. They play together happily and listen to one another's ideas. Children work independently, but appropriate support is given to ensure they make very good progress across all areas of learning and development regardless of their starting points and capabilities. The wide range of activities available encourages active learning and creative thinking, often leading to original and spontaneous opportunities which are expertly supported by staff. Clear safety rules are understood by the children and are reinforced consistently by staff. Equipment is used with care and children are confident in their understanding of how to stay safe. Hygiene practices throughout the provision are very good, with children understanding the importance of washing hands before meals. Healthy snacks are available at break times, although the choice of food at lunchtime is limited for Reception children. Children develop excellent communication and literacy skills. Numeracy skills are very good, with staff taking every opportunity to incorporate number experiences into children's play. Children are confident in the use of ICT, which they are able to use independently.

**What the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve is given in section 3.**

## 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 chair 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 Robin Lewis

Mrs Marilyn Fenn

Mr Chris Manville

Mrs Cheryl McNair

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head of Juniors IAPS school)

Early Years Lead Inspector

Early Years Team Inspector (Deputy Head and Head of Early Years ISA school)