



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

WINDLESHAM HOUSE SCHOOL

JANUARY 2017



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Windlesham House School			
DfE number	938/6028			
Registered charity number	307046			
Address	London Road Washington Pulborough West Sussex RH20 4AY			
Telephone number	01903 874700			
Email address	whsoffice@windlesham.com			
Headmaster	Mr Richard Foster			
Chairman of governors	Mr Adam Perry			
Age range	4 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	354			
	Boys	201	Girls	153
	Day pupils	156	Boarders	198
	EYFS	11	Juniors	190
	Seniors	153		
Inspection dates	25 to 26 January 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 the chairman of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended chapel. Inspectors visited the boarding accommodation and 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 Paul Spillane	Reporting inspector
Mrs Mary Allen	Team inspector (Head, HMC international middle school)
Mrs Anne Farnish	Team inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mr Thomas Mylne	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Emma Stanhope	Team inspector (Director of Lower School, GSA school)

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Windlesham House School is an independent boarding and day school for boys and girls aged between 4 and 13 years. The school was founded on the Isle of Wight under a different name in 1837, and, following various moves, it was established on its present site in West Sussex in 1934. Throughout the first 157 years of its existence, Windlesham remained in the hands of five generations of the same family. Since 1994, the school has been a charitable trust, with a board of ten governors.
- 1.2 Of the 354 pupils in the school at the time of the inspection, 11 are in the Reception class of the EYFS, aged between 4 and 5 years. The school refers to Reception and Years 1 and 2 as the Pre-prep. There are 198 boarders, of whom 114 are boys and 84 are girls.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school encourages the pupils to climb trees and enjoy their rural surroundings, to succeed academically and to become responsible and thoughtful people so that they leave Windlesham well-rounded and prepared for senior school. The school wants every pupil to flourish in his or her own way, building confidence and forging friendships that will last into their adult lives.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The majority of pupils come from the south-east of England and the London area, from families with professional or business backgrounds. A minority are either foreign nationals or the children of British expatriates. The school does not use standardised tests. However, its own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is above the national average, with very few pupils shown to have ability below the national average. Data provided by the school have identified 60 pupils as being the most able in the school's population. They are setted in the top age groups and given programmes of extra activities. The school has also identified 110 pupils as having special talents in art, design and technology, drama, information and communication technology (ICT), music and sport. Additional activities are provided to nurture those talents. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school has identified 88 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mainly dyslexia and dyspraxia, and of these 64 receive additional specialist help. Of the 46 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), 12 receive additional support.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Reception	Reception
Year 1	Year 1
Year 2	Year 2
Transition	Year 3
5s	Year 4

4s	Year 5
3s	Year 6
2s	Year 7
1s	Year 8

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.6 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was a Standard inspection in March 2011. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Review the arrangements for the teaching of personal, social and health education (PSHE) for the older pupils.
 - Improve the monitoring of pupils' work to ensure consistency and adherence to the school's marking policy.
 - In the EYFS, adopt the recommendation to use e-profiles to monitor progress.
 - In the EYFS, use the assessment scales to monitor the achievement of pupils in the end-of-year reports.
- 1.7 The school has fully met the recommendations concerning PSHE and the EYFS and partially addressed the recommendation to improve the consistency of marking. Further detail is given in the main text of the report.
- 1.8 The recommendation of the Intermediate (Boarding) inspection in February 2014 was:
- Extend the risk assessments to cover infrequent but potentially serious key events.
- 1.9 The school has successfully met this recommendation. Further detail is in given in the main text of the report.

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- The school successfully meets its stated aims.
- Pupils achieve high levels of achievement in other fields, according to their individual aptitudes and abilities.
- Pupils are confident, highly articulate communicators.
- Pupils do not benefit from guidance in those cases where the marking of their work is perfunctory.

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

- The pupils enjoy being members of a vibrant, happy community which is full of fun and laughter.
- Pupils are confident because they feel safe and valued.
- Pupils benefit from being given considerable freedom within defined boundaries.
- The boarding provision is of high quality.

Recommendations

2.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Bring the standard of all marking up to that of the best.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 The pupils' levels of achievement are high across a wide range of academic and other disciplines: this is a busy, purposeful school with a strong sense of 'family', in which pupils willingly collaborate and support one another in their common endeavours. Something of the essential spirit of the school was seen in a whole-school chapel service, mostly led by pupils, in which the choir gave an accomplished rendition of an anthem and exceptional congregational singing reinforced the impression of a united community.
- 3.3 Among the school's stated aims is that pupils should succeed academically, and here, as elsewhere, the school fulfils its intention. Nearly all of those leaving from Year 8 gain places to senior schools with demanding entrance requirements, with a consistently substantial proportion being awarded entrance scholarships. The school does not enter pupils for National Curriculum tests. Consequently, the pupils' academic attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence from observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils confirms this judgement.
- 3.4 In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), most children meet or exceed their early learning goals. As they move up the school, pupils make good academic progress, acquiring increasingly secure work habits and study skills. In the upper age groups, pupils are focused on their academic ambitions and progress is rapid. They understand how to improve their own learning and show initiative and independence in advancing their mastery of academic disciplines. Less able pupils, and those with EAL and those with SEND, make excellent progress because they are extremely well supported both in class and also by the specialist help which they receive. Those with SEND and EAL gain confidence through well-planned written assignments and encouragement to express themselves orally. Individually tailored learning programs, regularly reviewed, help pupils with SEND to achieve academic success. Those foreign pupils who join the school with relatively little English rapidly achieve fluency of speech and a wide working vocabulary, having been immersed in school life and integrated into mainstream classes, as well as receiving specialist language teaching. More able pupils and those with particular talents are challenged in lessons through enrichment and extension tasks, so enabling them to achieve in line with their potential. They benefit from the setting arrangements whereby they can all work at an accelerated pace. The efforts and achievement of every pupil are rigorously monitored at three-weekly intervals, with remedial action taken where necessary, thus ensuring that progress is maintained. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that they were pleased with their child's academic progress.
- 3.5 Starting in the EYFS and continuing throughout the school, pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of the broad and balanced academic curriculum. Excellent, enthusiastic teaching, which employs many varied approaches, ensures that they are interested and engaged in their lessons. Exceptionally articulate, they are keen to share opinions and offer ideas, in conversation as well as in class, with the confidence to take a contradictory view: pupils respond positively to the expectation that they will contribute in class. Older pupils display higher-order skills in developing themes, questioning assumptions and using material they are given as a springboard for further exploration, such as developing logical scientific hypotheses. Other advanced study skills observed include the ability to work from primary and secondary sources in history and, in English, becoming adept at applying to a new context skills previously learnt in a different situation. Much of the pupils' artwork

demonstrates not only skilful technique but also a high level of aesthetic appreciation. In modern foreign languages pupils make very good progress, an important contributory factor being that they feel comfortable speaking in front of their peers. The many opportunities to perform, in music and on stage as well as activities such as debating, further contribute to pupils' outstanding articulacy and presentational skills.

- 3.6 In this well-resourced school, pupils are proficient in the use of information and communication technology (ICT), both as a discipline in itself and as a support for learning in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils greatly enjoy working with the newly-acquired tablet computers. In a mathematics class, for instance, they enhanced their facility with numbers by challenging themselves to beat their previous score in tackling as many problems as they could against the clock. At all levels, pupils display a high standard of numeracy, and they are able to apply their mathematical knowledge to advantage in other subjects, such as science and design and technology. The older pupils value and are particularly proud of their 'maths bibles', in which they keep definitions and helpful examples as they prepare for their senior school entrance examinations.
- 3.7 Pupils improve their academic performance when given guidance, and most of their written work is marked regularly and helpfully, but they lack guidance when marking in some subjects is perfunctory. The recommendation to improve the monitoring of EYFS children's progress and achievement has been met, but a similar recommendation for the rest of the school has not been met fully.
- 3.8 The pupils' attitudes to learning mature from good to excellent as they move up the school. They are keen to do well and eager to be challenged. In pairs or groups, they co-operate extremely well, conscious of the value of working together towards common goals. They contribute enthusiastically in class, willing to answer questions and offer opinions; they debate animatedly and tackle practical assignments busily. Pupils participate in extra-curricular activities in a similarly spirited way.
- 3.9 Pupils achieve success at county, district, regional and national levels in a wide range of sports and other activities. A large proportion of the pupils learn a musical instrument and there are many successes in music, speech and drama examinations. During the inspection a great deal of vibrant activity in the creative arts was observed, and lively artwork of high quality adorns the school. Leadership and management, supported by the teaching and non-teaching staff, provide extensive opportunities for pupils to find and develop their aptitudes and talents, thus helping to meet the school's aim that every pupil should flourish in his or her own way. This is further supported by the governing body's commitment to the development of recreational facilities, as demonstrated by the construction of the new sports centre and swimming pool. All of the parents and the overwhelming majority of the pupils who responded to the questionnaire praised the range of extra-curricular activities.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils develop high levels of self-confidence, given constant encouragement and opportunities to speak in public, whether in the company of a few contemporaries in class or before the whole school in chapel. The school successfully nurtures their sense of self-esteem and self-worth. They develop mature reflective qualities, promoted in particular through mindfulness and yoga. At all levels, pupils develop an increasingly deep spiritual understanding and an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. They are excited by the creative and performing arts, by poetry and drama, art and music. They also laugh a great deal. They clearly enjoy being at this school where life is fun. They enjoy the friendly and collaborative relationships they have with staff, which enhance the spirit of 'family' and makes for a sense of common purpose. In all aspects of school life, pupils are able to express the best of themselves because they are given a great amount of freedom within clearly defined boundaries.
- 4.3 As they progress through the school, the pupils become increasingly self-aware, developing a clear appreciation of the qualities required to improve their own learning and performance, and recognising the importance of personal values and codes of behaviour. In the EYFS, the children clearly understood the rules of the classroom and they were successfully able to make appropriate choices as to which level of activity they should undertake. The older pupils are given responsibility to decide how their study periods are to be used and they make their own decisions about which subject 'clinics', and which parts of the enrichment programme, to attend. In this and in other spheres, they are helped to make the right choices by the excellent teaching in which they explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues and develop values which are systematically threaded through the broad academic curriculum.
- 4.4 Boarders flourish in this warm, caring environment. With the majority of pupils being boarders, boarding is central to the life and character of the school. Parents responding to the questionnaire are unanimous in their satisfaction with almost every aspect of the boarding provision. In expressing the hope that "Windlesham is more like home, whilst home is never like school", leadership and management intend the sense of 'family' to permeate boarding life, and the boarders confirm that this is successfully achieved. From the warmth of the log fire in the front hall to the homely, brightly decorated bedrooms, the school generates a welcoming atmosphere. The boarders interviewed were full of praise for the boarding provision, saying that while it promotes independence and resilience, they greatly enjoy the friendships made, the sense of community and the many activities which they undertake in their free time. Boarders are very well looked after: they feel safe and valued.
- 4.5 The pupils' very good behaviour successfully reflects leadership and management's active promotion of high social standards. Pupils conduct themselves sensibly and courteously – and spiritedly – around the school. Personable and self-assured in the company of adults, they are excellent ambassadors for their school. There are three 'golden rules': be kind, be kind and be kind. Pupils successfully learn to co-operate and to work effectively as team members. In class, on the games field, in clubs and around the school generally, they demonstrate thoughtfulness and respect in the high quality of their collaboration. They value awards such as 'citizen of the week' or a commendation from leadership for showing care and consideration. From an early age, pupils see the importance of fair play and obeying rules, and they develop a strong moral sense of right and wrong; pupils come to understand and respect the system of laws. Underpinning pupils' conformity to a code of behaviour is their clear understanding of the system of rewards and sanctions. In academic subjects and the personal, social, health and

economic education (PSHEE) programme are themes which make pupils aware of topics such as human rights and world faiths.

- 4.6 In this school, where there are those of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, the pupils co-exist entirely harmoniously. The school successfully promotes values of democracy, respect and acceptance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Cultural diversity is welcomed and celebrated. Although only a very small minority of pupils are foreign nationals, nonetheless 20 nationalities are represented, and coincidentally, when seven pupils were observed playing a geographically-based table game, it turned out that they all came from different countries. While pupils feel comfortable about expressing their views and opinions at any time, the boarding, food and school councils provide formal opportunities for their voices to be heard: proposals put forward have led to changes and improvements in menus and amenities.
- 4.7 Pupils treat one another very well. Bullying is extremely rare, and dealt with promptly and effectively; the fluidity of friendships does lead to pupils falling out with one another from time to time. When this occurs, senior staff are swift to mediate, and pupils report that friendships tend to be quickly repaired. All the pupils interviewed spoke warmly of a happy and friendly community in which pupils get on very well with one another. They speak highly of the system of peer listeners, which is helpful in bringing to light and dealing with instances when a pupil may feel concerned or unhappy.
- 4.8 Pupils benefit from the opportunities for leadership and service. As well as peer listening, all pupils in Year 8 benefit from the chance to have some position of responsibility and all parties profit from the 'hosting' of new pupils. Pupils known as 'digital leaders' assist in ICT instruction. Charitable ventures, such as the Christmas shoe box appeal, awaken pupils to issues in the wider world and develop their understanding of and compassion for people much less fortunate than themselves. In helping disabled children from a local special needs school, pupils learn about themselves and about the importance of sympathetic co-operation.
- 4.9 Pupils' overall social development is of a high order. They collaborate supportively and effectively with others: for example, EYFS children working helpfully together to make a snack and groups of older pupils grappling with challenges in the Windlesham award, as a potential introduction to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Amusement is enjoyed and shared, whether it be in lessons or in a communal activity such as singing. Willing to have a go and secure that they are standing on firm ground, pupils are prepared to put themselves forward in discussion and in taking initiatives.
- 4.10 Almost all of those pupils who responded to the questionnaire stated that they understand how to keep safe on-line. At interview, pupils confirmed that they had been regularly educated in the dangers of social media. Pupils said that they know what to do if they need help or advice, or if one of their fellows is in difficulty or distress. The pupils, including the children in the EYFS, understand the importance of healthy eating and they benefit from the substantial and nutritious meals, which offer plenty of choice and where fresh fruit is always available. They also benefit from the many opportunities to take healthy exercise, in physical education lessons and games sessions as well as recreationally. They enjoy climbing suitably marked trees in accordance with the school's aims and in accordance with the best traditions of active, adventurous childhood.
- 4.11 When they leave the school, the pupils are properly prepared for the responsibilities, opportunities and experiences of the next chapter in their lives.