



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

OAKWOOD SCHOOL, CHICHESTER

JANUARY 2017



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Oakwood School			
DfE number	938/6005			
Registered charity number	1105033			
Address	Oakwood School Chichester West Sussex PO18 9AN			
Telephone number	01243 575209			
Email address	office@oakwoodschoo.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Clare Bradbury			
Chair of governors	Mrs Jennie Peel			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	251			
	Boys	139	Girls	112
	EYFS	87	Prep / Pre-Prep	164
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 a number of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended 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

Mrs Jane Chesterfield

Reporting inspector

Mr Richard Follett

Team inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)

Mrs Hannah Phillips

Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)

CONTENTS

	Page
1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION	1
About the school	1
What the school seeks to do	1
About the pupils	1
Recommendations from previous inspections	2
2 KEY FINDINGS	3
Recommendations	3
3 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	6

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Oakwood School is a day school for boys and girls aged from two-and-a-half to eleven, situated in the countryside to the west of Chichester. It was founded in 1912 as a boarding school for boys up to the age of 13, and moved to its current site in 1946. It became a charitable trust in 2004 and is administered by a board of trustees and a governors' committee.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and a new bursar have been appointed and the senior leadership team has been restructured to promote a whole-school approach to academic and pastoral matters. The chair and a number of other governors are also newly appointed. The role of the individual needs co-ordinator is now full-time rather than part-time and covers all types of needs. The school no longer offers any boarding, but has extended its before and after school care, and holiday care for pupils of all ages.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to create a family environment and develop happy, confident children by providing an all-round education of the highest quality, to enable children to have the best start in life and be able to achieve their potential.
- 1.4 It aims to inspire a lifelong love of learning through a broad, creative curriculum that challenges and engages, and by making the most of the outstanding outdoor environment to extend the boundaries of learning. Specialist teaching that begins in Nursery is intended to bring education alive and help prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

About the pupils

- 1.5 Of the 251 pupils on roll at the time of the inspection, 87 were in the EYFS, 42 in Years 1 and 2, and 122 in Years 3 to 6. Pupils come from families with a range of professional and managerial backgrounds, mostly from white British families living within a ten-mile radius of the school. The school does not enter pupils for national curriculum tests at age seven or eleven. However, standardised assessments indicate that the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified 39 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and speech and language difficulties. Of these, 29 receive additional specialist support. One pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHC). English is an additional language for seven pupils, two of whom receive additional help for this. The school has identified 38 pupils as being the more able in school's population across specific academic areas; these pupils have access to a modified and extended curriculum. The school has also identified 32 pupils as having talents in the performing arts, creative arts and sport. Additional opportunities are available to all pupils through the school's able, talented and interested programme.
- 1.6 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>
Nursery	Nursery (aged under three)

Kindergarten	Nursery (aged three to four)
--------------	------------------------------

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.7 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was a standard inspection in October and November 2010. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Ensure that the best practice in rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is operated consistently across all subject areas.
 - Extend assessment procedures to ensure more consistent monitoring of and support for the pupils' progress.
 - Improve further the knowledge and understanding of the EYFS staff through training and development.
- 1.8 The school has successfully met all the recommendations of the previous inspection.
- 1.9 The recommendation of the intermediate EYFS inspection in November 2013 was:
- Extend opportunities for spontaneous self-expression through free exploration of creative materials.
- 1.10 The school has successfully met the recommendation of the previous inspection. 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.

- From a wide range of starting points, pupils reach above-average standards of attainment, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Across the school, pupils gain a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding in the different subjects of the curriculum.
- Pupils of all ages are enthusiastic and focused learners who are able to work independently and think for themselves.
- Pupils are highly successful in their extra-curricular pursuits, especially sport, music and art.

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

- Pupils of all ages enjoy being at school and are confident and settled.
- Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is excellent in class and around the site.
- Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school community and are happy to take on responsibility.
- Pupils value the opportunities offered by the outdoor environment and make the most of it.

Recommendations

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

- Extend existing good practice to ensure that pupils always know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils of all ages achieve highly in their all-round development and benefit from an excellent education, in line with the school's aim of providing an all-round education of the highest quality, to enable them to have the best start in life and be able to achieve their potential. The school does not enter pupils for national curriculum tests, but evidence from school data, pupils' books and lesson observations shows that attainment across the school is above national age-related expectations. This is as a result of the school's consistently high expectations for what pupils can achieve, the focus on developing pupils' key skills and the systematic building up of knowledge. Pupils with SEND, who are learning English as an additional language, or who have been identified as more able, achieve as well as their classmates. This is because pupils of all abilities enjoy individual attention from teachers and teaching assistants in sets and small groups where tasks can be matched precisely to their needs. Pupils across the school make rapid progress. They have a wide range of starting points, as the school does not select pupils by academic ability. Parents are highly satisfied with the school. An overwhelming majority of those who responded to the inspection questionnaire were pleased with all aspects of the school's work. All pupils who responded felt that the school gave them the opportunity to learn and make good progress.
- 3.3 In all subjects of the curriculum, pupils are developing the skills they need to build up their knowledge and apply their understanding in a variety of contexts. In the EYFS, children show curiosity, a desire to experiment and a determination to be independent and creative, thanks to the quality of the support they receive from adults and the many exciting opportunities and resources made available to them. The recommendation from the previous EYFS intermediate inspection to increase opportunities for self-expression and creativity has been thoroughly addressed by the school. Throughout the school, pupils show that they remember what they have previously learnt and use that knowledge to help them learn more. In art, for example, pupils demonstrated their understanding of mixing colour and creating texture in their dog pictures to portray smooth or fluffy coats, making their animals more realistic. Younger swimmers, meanwhile, showed that they remembered and were able to repeat the strokes they had learned in their previous lesson, propelling themselves through the water more quickly as a result. Pupils' confidence and success result from the excellent, interesting and carefully planned curriculum which makes links between subjects and encourages pupils to learn actively, supported by clear, engaging explanations and skilful demonstrations from staff. A few older pupils who responded to the inspection questionnaire did not agree that most lessons were interesting. Inspection evidence from planning and observations found that the school was highly successful in fulfilling its aim of offering a broad, creative curriculum that challenges and engages.
- 3.4 Pupils of all ages have strong communication skills and are articulate and thoughtful speakers. They listen to others and respond appropriately. EYFS children in Reception, for example, know that they must put their hands up to take their turn to speak. In a personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson, meanwhile, pupils offered reasoned arguments as to which jobs made the most important contribution to society, knowing that there was no right or wrong answer. Pupils read at levels above those expected for their age, and spoke of how much they enjoy 'DEAR' (drop everything and read) time. They recognise that it helps them practise and improve their reading ability. Pupils write fluently and coherently in English and in other subjects, and match their writing styles to different situations. Older pupils, for example, attempted to produce a journalist's report on the rainforest in geography. Pupils' development of skills results from the consistently strong reinforcement

of language from the EYFS onwards, and from co-ordinated and systematic planning by staff. Excellent use of questioning keeps all pupils alert, attentive and ready to respond.

- 3.5 Pupils are similarly successful in developing their numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, thanks to the high quality of planning and support from staff. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the basic skills in both areas and are able to apply them in other subjects. Older pupils told inspectors how they use their mathematical skills in science to draw and read graphs, for example, and used their ICT skills extensively to research and present their history projects on the Second World War. Pupils work at a good pace and are confident about solving problems. A lower ability set, for example, persevered with complex subtractions, using different strategies to reach the right answers. The youngest children in the school in the Nursery class, meanwhile, showed considerable powers of concentration as they programmed floor robots.
- 3.6 Across the school, pupils show excellent attitudes to learning and study skills. From the EYFS onwards, they settle to their tasks without fuss and know that they need to apply themselves to complete their activities. EYFS children are outward-looking, eager to explore and happy to work alongside others. Older pupils collaborate readily with others and discuss how best to tackle tasks. This was evident in mathematics lesson where pupils were challenged to measure without using tape measures. They used their analytical skills to think through the best approach to take, finally agreeing that a length of wool would be the best option. Pupils also have the inner resources to work alone on tasks and reach solutions without help. Their books show that they take a pride in the presentation of their work and try hard to do their best. The high expectations and enthusiasm of staff, teachers' understanding of the needs of the different age groups, and the quality of relationships in the classroom all help to inspire in pupils a love of learning, in line with the school's aims.
- 3.7 Pupils achieve highly in their extra-curricular pursuits, thanks to the support they receive from staff and the excellent range of opportunities open to them. All pupils who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that the school gave them the chance to be involved in a good range of activities. Pupils have been successful in art competitions, a language challenge event and in sport at local, county, regional and national level, including rugby, football and netball. Pupils perform well in national independent schools' tournaments, particularly in athletics and swimming. They pass a range of music and drama examinations, and learn a wide variety of instruments, including piano, strings, brass and woodwind. Artwork around the school is of a high standard. A significant number of pupils gain scholarships in academic work, music or sport, and almost all are offered places at their first choice of senior school.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils begin to develop as well-rounded individuals from the time they start at the school. The children in the EYFS show from their behaviour that they feel settled and secure, and are happy to separate from their families to spend the day with trusted adults in the school. Pupils of all ages demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and resilience. They are able to think for themselves and have the confidence to offer their ideas in surroundings where they are not afraid to make mistakes. This is because teachers create a supportive ethos where pupils feel encouraged and realise that their contributions are valued. Pupils told inspectors, for example, that they like the use of 'talk partners', or paired discussion, because it makes them feel confident and helps them come to decisions. A few older pupils who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that they did not always know how well they were doing or that the marking in their books did not always help them improve. In discussion, pupils said that they were pleased with the positive comments that were made and the corrections of what they had done wrong. Inspection evidence found marking was usually helpful and detailed, but there was some inconsistency across the school, particularly in the setting of next steps for improvement.
- 4.3 Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils have a thorough knowledge of the school's code of conduct, the 'Oakwood Way', and put it into practice in their daily life. All parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that the school actively promoted good behaviour. Older pupils move around the site unsupervised in a sensible and orderly way, while younger ones remember to follow the rules and do as they are told. In class, pupils follow instructions and make sure that everyone has a chance to learn. They accept the school's system of sanctions and understand that repeated unkindness constitutes bullying, which will not be tolerated. Older pupils say that they realise that the decisions they make affect their own well-being, and that making the right choices helps prepare them for senior school. The pupils' high standards of behaviour reflect both the ethos of the school laid down by the school's leadership and the aim of the school to create a family environment and happy, confident children. Excellent relationships and pastoral care from staff at all levels underpin this.
- 4.4 Pupils have a great sense of community; they are proud of their school and of their role in it. They are positive about working with their peers as well as with those of other ages. Pupils enjoy acting as peer mentors, librarians, eco-monitors, office assistants and choir leaders, thanks to the excellent range of opportunities created by the school for leadership and collaboration. They lead the school houses and the school councils in both the prep and pre-prep schools very competently, and understand the importance of making the voice of their fellow pupils heard. They relish the chance for team working on the annual residential trips which all pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 can experience, and do so with great enthusiasm and co-operation. Pupils spoke of how they value the school's 'Golden Leaves' award for unprompted acts of kindness as the highest accolade they could attain. Older pupils highlighted the feeling of growing responsibility they experience as they move up the school. Year 4, for example, told how they support games for younger pupils on the school field at break, while Year 6 were looking forward to their summer term programme of community action in school or in the locality, such as painting fences on the site. Pupils spoke, too, of their enthusiasm for supporting charities, choosing a local and a national charity each year and suggesting ways of raising money. Imaginative ideas have included a fun run dressed as dogs to collect funds for a charity training assistance dogs for the disabled.

- 4.5 Pupils from different cultures are well integrated and show genuine interest in each other's backgrounds and experiences, making the school a calm and unified community. All pupils and all parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that the school actively promotes the values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Pupils say that they feel their PSHE lessons actively encourage reflection and celebration of differences, and that they learn about different religions and ways of life in their religious education lessons. In a PSHE lesson, for example, pupils recognised that some cultures place less value on material wealth than our own, while in a Year 1 presentation on Tai Chi, to celebrate the Chinese New Year, pupils were mesmerised by the movement and the music, and entered wholeheartedly into the atmosphere of calm and relaxation. The school's welcoming and inclusive ethos is the key to this aspect of pupils' development.
- 4.6 Pupils of all ages make the most of the many opportunities they have for outdoor activities and pursuits. They say they feel lucky to have so much space for sport and exploration and that they love their surroundings and the beauty of the natural world. Pupils understand the impact and value of exercise, evidenced in the prep school assembly where they explained the benefits to be gained from regular activity. They take every opportunity to be active and play games in their break times and sports lessons. They know how to stay safe and look after their physical health, explaining what to do if they hear the fire alarm, for example, or if they need first aid. They also understand the importance of mental health and well-being, taking part in mindfulness exercises in PSHE with the aim of calming their breathing and focusing their minds. Pupils recognise the importance of a balanced diet and are helped by staff to make healthy choices. The school councils value the opportunity to be involved in the discussion and planning of school lunches and are pleased that the school takes notice of their opinions. The excellent quality of the school's pastoral support for pupils ensures that they are actively involved in matters such as this that are important to them.