

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL
(ISC)**

INSPECTION OF

FALKNER HOUSE SCHOOL

by the

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE
(ISI)**

on

September 26th to 30th 2005

MAIN REPORT

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

Falkner House School

Full Name of the School	Falkner House School		
DfES Number	207/6193		
Address	19 Brechin Place, London, SW7 4QB		
Telephone Number	020 7373 4501		
Fax Number	020 7835 0073		
E-mail Address	falknerhs@aol.com		
Name of Head	Mrs Anita Griggs		
Proprietors	Mrs Anita Griggs and Mrs Flavia Nunes		
Age Range	3 to 11 years	Gender	Girls. Boys in Nursery
Number of Pupils	182	Number of Boarders	n/a
Inspection Dates	26th to 30th September 2005		

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 163(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

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. MAIN FINDINGS

Overall Summary

- 1.1 Falkner House School is a school with a family environment in which pupils achieve high standards and progress well through very good quality teaching. The strong, yet caring leadership of the head, and the excellent pastoral and welfare systems enable pupils to feel confident and as a result they are extremely friendly and highly motivated. Excellent relationships exist throughout the school community.

What the School Does Well

- 1.2 The school has many strengths, the most significant of which are as follows:
- The head exercises approachable, strong, yet caring leadership and has a clear vision of what she wishes to achieve for her pupils. She is ably supported by all her committed staff, both teaching and non-teaching.
 - Pupils achieve high standards as a result of very good teaching and the support of the excellent pastoral and welfare systems.
 - Pupils work hard and have very positive attitudes to learning. They are extremely friendly and courteous towards others.
 - Excellent relationships exist between all members of the school community, and the family environment enables pupils to feel confident and to enjoy their education.

What the School Should Do Better

- 1.3 Although the school has no significant weaknesses, the following should be considered to enhance the existing very good provision it already provides:
- ICT is not yet used as an effective tool for learning consistently across the school.
 - The library is not used consistently to support the curriculum or as a source for independent learning across the school.
 - Information on pupils' individual achievements is not yet accessible centrally.

Standards of Attainment and Progress in Subjects

- 1.4 Pupils achieve high standards throughout the school and make rapid progress. The majority of pupils gain places in highly competitive entry to academic independent senior schools. Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education. A significant proportion gain academic and music awards. English, mathematics, science, physical education (PE), pupils' cultural development and the Foundation Stage, are strengths of the school.

The Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and their Behaviour

- 1.5 The quality of pupils' attitudes to learning and of their personal development and behaviour is very good and makes a major contribution to the quality of their learning. Pupils are well-motivated, highly competent learners. Pupils' excellent behaviour around the school reflects the caring ethos, which is based on an atmosphere of strong mutual respect.

The Quality of Teaching

- 1.6 The quality of teaching is very good and promotes pupils' progress and attainment. In all the lessons observed, teaching was at least good, and in nearly half it was very good with examples of excellence.

Other Aspects of the School

Attendance

- 1.7 Pupils' levels of attendance are excellent, enabling them to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the school. Pupils are punctual when arriving at school. Lessons do not always start punctually. Admission and attendance registers comply with statutory regulations.

Assessment and Recording

- 1.8 The methods used for assessing and recording pupils' achievements, progress and needs are very good. The systems are accurate, consistent and effective and, in particular, appropriate to the ages of the pupils, their particular needs and their stages of development. However, although pupils' strengths and weaknesses are well understood by their teachers, no system exists for assessment information to be held and monitored centrally where it would be easily accessible by all teachers.

Curriculum

- 1.9 The curriculum provided by the school is very good. It is a broad and generally balanced curriculum suited to all pupils across the full age and ability range. In addition to the full range of National Curriculum subjects, French is taught at all levels, history of art is introduced in Reception, followed by classical studies from Year 3 and Latin from Year 5 upwards. Personal, health and social education (PHSE) is also timetabled for all pupils. Support for those who need additional help and more challenging tasks for high achievers are provided ensuring that all pupils progress well.

Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

- 1.10 The quality of teaching and non-teaching staff is very good. Teachers are well qualified and experienced and they contribute well to the quality of education provided. All staff are highly committed to supporting and encouraging pupils' development. Very good support is provided by non-teaching staff who contribute to the school's family ethos. Effective procedures are in place for staff appraisal. The school complies with its statutory requirements in undertaking necessary checks before appointments are made.

Resources for Learning

- 1.11 The quality of resources is good. ICT resources are very good, but not yet used consistently across the school. Books, materials and equipment are well used to support teaching, learning, study and the recreation of pupils across the age range. They make a good contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. Resources are generally organised efficiently.

Libraries

- 1.12 Library facilities in the school are sound. They provide some useful support for the curriculum, but are not always used effectively. The junior library meets the needs and interests of pupils, although its location on a staircase as space is limited, whilst good for access, makes it a poor reading area. The main library includes a good selection of fiction and a satisfactory range of reference books. The use of the library for independent study or recreational reading is restricted at present, and the library itself is not always used effectively as a teaching resource for research and project work.

Premises and Accommodation

- 1.13 The building, accommodation and other facilities are satisfactory for the numbers, abilities, ages and gender of the pupils. Extremely good and imaginative use is made of all areas.

Links with Parents and the Community

- 1.14 The school has developed a very good partnership with parents and worthwhile links with the community. Overwhelming support in the pre-inspection parental questionnaire, to which over three-quarters of families responded, and from a meeting with parents, indicated that they were very satisfied with almost all areas of school life. Parents were particularly strong in their appreciation of the enthusiasm and approachability of the head. A few parents had concerns about the information received from the school and opportunities to discuss their children's work. Inspectors found that parents are provided with good information about the school and their children's progress.

Pupils' Personal Development

- 1.15 The school provides a very good range of opportunities through which its pupils can develop spiritual beliefs and a moral code. Pupils also develop very well culturally and socially.

Pastoral Care

- 1.16 The school's provision for pastoral care, support and guidance is excellent. It greatly enhances pupils' personal and academic development and makes the school a happy place. This view was confirmed in the strong response to the parental questionnaire and by parents who attended a meeting with the inspectors.

Governance and Management

- 1.17 Leadership and management are very good ensuring that the school's aims are well met, and a suitable quality of education is provided. Planning is efficient in securing resources for teaching and learning. The head exercises approachable, strong yet caring leadership, and she has a clear vision for the development of the school and the education that she wishes to provide for her pupils. This vision is shared and supported by all her committed staff, both teaching and non-teaching. The very good quality of the teaching and the excellent welfare and pastoral systems ensure that pupils are happy, extremely confident and caring. They are secure in the family atmosphere, well known as individuals, and prepared extremely well for the next stage of their education.

Achievement and Quality in Activities

- 1.18 Achievement and quality in the activities provided is very good for the ages and abilities of the pupils. The quality of provision contributes very positively towards the personal

development of the pupils. The school offers a very wide range of activities. Many pupils achieve high standards in sporting and musical activities.

Progress Made by the School since its Last Inspection

- 1.19 The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. Departmental planning is now good. The curriculum is broad and generally well balanced. A library has been developed. Subject leaders have clear job specifications and in-service training is appropriate. Disposal of waste is efficient.

Compliance with the Regulations for Registration

DfES Standard		Does the school meet the regulatory requirements?
1. Quality of education:	1.(2) Curriculum	Yes
	1.(3)-(5) Teaching	Yes
2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		Yes
3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils		Yes
4. Suitability of proprietors and staff		Yes
5. Premises and accommodation		It meets almost all of the requirements
6. Provision of information		Yes
7. Manner in which complaints are to be handled		Yes

Actions Required for Compliance with the Regulatory Requirements

- 1.20 In order to meet all the requirements, the school must:
- (1) Provide an additional washbasin for pupil use. [Regulation 5.(k)]
- 1.21 In addition to the actions set out above, the school is asked to address any issues highlighted in *What the School Should Do Better*. These are set out as recommendations for the school in Section 2 of the report.

2. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The actions needed to comply fully with the regulatory requirements are specified in paragraph 1.20. The school has no significant weaknesses, but to enhance the existing very good provision it should:

- R1 Continue to develop ICT across the curriculum as an effective tool for learning. (Paragraphs 1.1, 1.3, 5.31, 8.28, 8.37, 8.39-8.46)
- R2 Review the use of the library facilities to ensure that they provide fully effective support for the curriculum and that they are used as a resource for pupils' independent learning. (Paragraphs 1.1, 1.3, 1.12, 5.36, 5.41)
- R3 Continue to develop the storage of all information on pupils' achievements so that it is accessible centrally. (Paragraphs 1.1, 1.3, 1.8, 5.8)

3. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 3.1 Falkner House School was founded in 1954 as a selective school for girls between the ages of 4 and 11 years. A co-educational nursery was opened in 1996. It is a family owned school, and the present head, who has been in post since 1999, is the daughter of the founder-Principal. The school is housed in two large Victorian houses on a compact site. The school seeks to provide a broad, yet rigorous, education that enables pupils to gain places at academic senior independent schools. However, this is set in the context of a family atmosphere which promotes pupils' self-esteem, and in which they are able to enjoy their education and gain a love and enthusiasm for learning.
- 3.2 The number on roll at the time of the inspection was 182. The Foundation Stage consists of 59 pupils, 11 boys and 26 girls in Nursery and 22 in Reception. Years 1 and 2 have 42 pupils, and Years 3 to 6 have 81 pupils. Pupils come from professional and business families who live within five miles of the school. The school population, with about a half of its pupils coming from families with an international background, but who are permanently based in London, reflects the local society of west London. About eight percent of pupils have English as an additional language, but almost all are virtually bilingual.
- 3.3 Entrance to the Nursery is non-selective and based on the date of registration, with preference given to siblings. Detailed assessment is used for entry to all other classes based on pupils' ability and their potential. Judged by standardised tests, pupils' average ability is well above that of the national average. A very few pupils are average or below. The school has identified 25 pupils who need special provision, and one pupil has a statement of special educational need.
- 3.4 Most pupils gain entry to their first choice of senior school at the age of eleven, competing for limited places in highly academic schools. Almost all go to independent day and boarding schools.
- 3.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

Key Indicators

- 3.6 The school does not use National Curriculum Assessment Tests at ages 7 and 11.
- 3.7 Attendance for Second Half of Summer Term 2005:

	Authorised	Unauthorised
Percentage absence	1.3	0

- 3.8 Exclusions Over the Previous 12 Months:

Temporary exclusions	Permanent exclusions
0	0

4. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and Progress

- 4.1 Pupils achieve high standards throughout the school.
- 4.2 The majority of pupils gain places to highly competitive academic independent senior schools. Pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education. A significant proportion gain academic and music awards.
- 4.3 In the Foundation Stage, attainment in lessons is high and children make rapid progress. By the end of Reception, all children, including those needing additional support are on track to achieve all the early learning goals. All children will have begun work on the first stage of the National Curriculum before they move into Year 1.
- 4.4 In Year 2, pupils' attainment is high in mathematics, science and PE, good in English, music and ICT. In Year 6, pupils' attainment is excellent in PE, high in English, mathematics, science, ICT and music.
- 4.5 Pupils of all ages make rapid progress. The brisk pace of lessons and the variety of tasks provided challenge pupils, which greatly enhances their learning. Pupils needing additional support progress well.
- 4.6 Throughout the school, pupils are extremely articulate. They are sufficiently confident to argue a relevant point in a discussion, or to ask challenging questions of their teachers to ensure that they understand what they are learning. This was demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson on corrosion when pupils were determined to argue and discuss the issues until they were satisfied that they fully understood the topic.
- 4.7 Pupils of all ages read extremely well with expression and comprehension. They have excellent listening skills. This was amply demonstrated in the French assembly when pupils were attentive listening to a story in French with a parallel translation. Pupils learn a piece of poetry regularly, which greatly enhances their memory skills. Pupils are highly numerate. Their investigative skills are developing well in mathematics and science. They sing musically and are creative in their art and design. The quality of presentation, handwriting and organisation of work in pupils' books is very good. Most of the pupils' work on display is of a very good standard. Pupils' physical motor skills are developing well and their ICT competence is good.

Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and Behaviour

- 4.8 The quality of pupils' attitudes to learning and of their personal development and behaviour is very good and makes a major contribution to the quality of their learning.
- 4.9 Pupils are well-motivated, highly competent learners. A common feature of all lessons is the way in which they settle to their work quickly and efficiently, responding well to their teachers. They are keen to answer and ask questions, and sustain their concentration throughout lessons, even towards the end of the busy day. Pupils work well collaboratively when necessary. Pupils are highly articulate, and have good listening skills, showing respect for the beliefs, values and feelings of others.

- 4.10 The quality of learning in lessons was very good. Pupils behave extremely well in lessons and are determined to do the best possible work. They are supportive of each other in their learning. Opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning skills are well developed in some subjects. A good example was seen in Year 4 geography work on fossils.
- 4.11 Pupils' excellent behaviour around the school reflects the caring ethos, which is based on an atmosphere of strong mutual respect. Pupils of different ages are seen playing together, enhancing the family atmosphere of the school. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously such as being Year 6 'Grandes' who look after the 'Petites', Reception pupils. Pupils are relaxed, confident and polite to those around them. They are happy, secure and comfortable in their environment and they willingly share their openness, warmth and friendship with visitors in a well-mannered and respectful way.
- 4.12 Pupils of all ages move around the school buildings in a sensible manner, and the numerous games played amicably in the compact playground is further evidence of the co-operation girls show each other. All pupils obviously enjoy their school life.

Attendance

- 4.13 Pupils' levels of attendance are excellent, enabling them to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the school. Pupils are punctual when arriving at school. However, lessons do not always start punctually.
- 4.14 Registration is carried out satisfactorily at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Efficient systems are in place to monitor pupils who are late or absent. Registers are completed properly. Admission and attendance registers comply with statutory regulations.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

- 5.1 The quality of teaching is very good and promotes pupils' progress and attainment. In all the lessons observed teaching was at least good, and in nearly half it was very good with examples of excellence.
- 5.2 The best teaching is characterised by the setting of clear objectives and lessons conducted at a brisk pace. A feature of many lessons is the high quality of the challenging questioning which encouraged pupils to think.
- 5.3 In most lessons, tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities, with additional challenges for those who finish quickly, and support for those who need it. This was seen working particularly effectively in a Year 5 Latin lesson, when different activities were provided so that all pupils could achieve well at their own level.
- 5.4 Teachers are knowledgeable and unfailingly patient and caring, giving time and attention to support and encourage individuals. Their enthusiasm and sense of fun gives great value to their teaching and to their pupils' achievement. Teachers work most effectively as a team for the benefit of their pupils. Pupils and teachers enjoy excellent relationships, and pupils volunteered that they felt confident to ask for help when necessary.
- 5.5 Teachers plan lessons carefully, linking them to schemes of work. All pupils are very well known, and their strengths and weaknesses well understood, by their teachers. Efficient assessment procedures are used, and in most subjects, they are used effectively to assist in future lesson planning.
- 5.6 Teachers generally organise resources efficiently. They use a variety of teaching strategies to enhance their teaching and their pupils' learning. A real sense of shared enjoyment demonstrates that teachers have an understanding of the best way to interest these able pupils. However, opportunities for independent learning are not always provided in all subjects. The homework set complements relevant class work and matches pupils' needs.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for teaching?

- 5.7 Yes.

Assessment and Recording

- 5.8 The methods used for assessing and recording pupils' achievements, progress and needs are very good. The systems are very good, accurate, consistent and effective and, in particular, appropriate to the ages of the pupils, their particular needs and their stages of development. However, although pupils' strengths and weaknesses are well understood by their teachers no system currently exists for assessment information to be held and monitored centrally where it would be easily accessible by all teachers.
- 5.9 Pupils are assessed on entry and at each stage of the school. The Foundation Stage has a very thorough system of assessment, incorporating a baseline assessment and detailed pupil profiles.
- 5.10 Assessment procedures are frequent, accurate and assist pupils to make progress. Throughout the school grades are awarded for attainment and effort in relation to pupils' abilities in key pieces of work, tests and school examinations. Pupils understand the system,

and find it helpful. Emphasis is placed on individual pupil achievement, rather than comparison with others. Results are recorded efficiently in teacher's mark books. An overall grade for each subject is reported to parents twice a year. Each class has a file containing copies of reports in core subjects, as well as exemplars of work which are used for moderation purposes. Regular meetings are held to discuss pupils' progress. The PE department has a very good system for grading and recording pupil attainment and progress in a range of sports and activities.

- 5.11 A brief yet clear whole school marking policy exists. Marking is usually prompt and thorough. Most pieces of written work are graded and recorded by teachers, although this grade is appropriately not always given to lower forms. Good examples of positive written comments were observed, and in some subjects such as English, advice was also given on how work could be improved. The use of smiley faces, incentive stickers and house points is effective for the younger children, and oral feedback witnessed during lessons was very positive and encouraging.
- 5.12 Good use is made of the results of standardised tests in verbal reasoning, and these have been supplemented recently by trials of an ICT based system.
- 5.13 Assessment results from written work, examinations and tests are used very effectively to identify areas for improvement, and to inform the subsequent planning of the curriculum in most subjects. This is a flexible system, allowing staff to react to remedy any weak areas. Good examples were seen in Year 1 teaching where assessment information helped to implement support work for weaker pupils and extension work for the most able. This was also in Year 5 Latin where early assessment in this new subject led to different tasks being set to match pupils' needs.

Curriculum

- 5.14 The curriculum provided by the school is very good. It is a broad and generally balanced curriculum suited to all pupils across the full age and ability range. Very good learning opportunities are offered at all stages, promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development.
- 5.15 The curriculum is broadly based and offers a very good range of language, mathematical, scientific, technical, physical and aesthetic subjects to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education. In addition to the full range of National Curriculum subjects, French is taught at all levels, history of art is introduced from Reception, followed by classical studies from Year 3 and Latin from Year 5 upwards. Personal, health and social education (PSHE) is also timetabled for all pupils.
- 5.16 In the Foundation Stage, the well-balanced curriculum covers the national Early Learning Goals for children of five years of age, in addition to aspects of the QCA Stepping Stones programme.
- 5.17 The balance between subjects is generally sound. The generous provision for cultural and sporting opportunities reflects the importance placed upon these by the school.
- 5.18 The curriculum is very well planned to provide effective continuity and progression of learning. Documentation is always sound, and usually very good, as in the case of the Foundation Stage and the PE programmes of study. It is supported throughout by a high level of informal contact between staff, which allows a flexible approach to be adopted to areas of the curriculum as necessary.

- 5.19 Full advantage is taken of a very wide range of cross-curricular opportunities. For example, Year 1 linked a theme on the senses to creative writing and descriptions of apples which was then reflected in their art work. Other examples of the links between subjects include a Year 4 topic on fossils, where geography, design technology (DT) and ICT elements were all drawn together.
- 5.20 The school fulfils its statutory obligations for a pupil with a statement of special educational needs, and an individual education plan (IEP) is in place which is reviewed annually. All pupils have very good opportunities to learn and make rapid progress. A flexible approach ensures equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. Support for those who need additional help and more challenging tasks for high achievers are always provided ensuring that all pupils progress well.
- 5.21 Very good extra-curricular activities and many educational visits enrich the curriculum. Visits to many local sites of interest such as museums and art galleries, as well as trips further afield to PGL centres for Year 5, and to Chichester Harbour and France for Year 6, make a significant contribution to the quality of education offered. These visits are greatly valued by both pupils and parents.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the curriculum?

- 5.22 Yes.

Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

- 5.23 The quality of teaching and non-teaching staff is very good. Teachers are well qualified, experienced and effectively deployed. They contribute well to the school's ethos and to the personal development of pupils. Non-teaching staff also make an extremely positive contribution to the smooth running of the school. Staffing levels for children under the age of five are in line with current national guidance. The number of staff is very good therefore staff/pupil ratios are generous, enabling pupils to receive individual attention. All staff have appropriate job descriptions.
- 5.24 Pupils benefit greatly from the experience and commitment of the staff, some of whom have taught for a significant number of years at the school. They show great care and interest in supporting and encouraging pupils' development.
- 5.25 Specialist subject teachers are used for music, French and PE throughout the school. Years 5 and 6 are taught by specialists for English, mathematics, science, art, classical studies, ICT and Latin. This use of specialist teachers works well. It affords pupils the benefit of working with subject specialists and yet retains the centrality of form teachers as the main adult in the pastoral care system. Non-contact time for staff is generous. Very good support is provided by the administrative and kitchen teams and those who look after the buildings.
- 5.26 Very good procedures are in place for staff appraisal. The senior management team advises on training needs, and visits to other schools to share good practice have been more useful than specific in-service training. However, staff are encouraged to attend appropriate courses to further their professional development.
- 5.27 The arrangements for the support of new teachers are very good. The school participates in the government's induction scheme for newly qualified teachers and meets regulatory requirements. The head is most readily available to support staff in any way that they need.

- 5.28 Procedures for checking employees' backgrounds and credentials, including mandatory checks with the Criminal Records Bureau, are in place.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff?

- 5.29 Yes.

Resources for Learning

- 5.30 The quality of resources is good. Books, materials and equipment are used well to support teaching, learning, study and the recreation of pupils across the age range. They make a good contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. Resources are generally organised efficiently.
- 5.31 ICT resources are very good. The designated suite has 22 networked computers which enable whole-class tuition to take place. The Foundation Stage has a computer in each of its classrooms and these are used effectively and appropriately. A good range of suitable software exists to support the curriculum. A computer with a specialist booking-out system is used efficiently in the library. As teachers gain confidence, increasing use is being made of the ICT facilities, and this is enhancing opportunities for pupils' learning.
- 5.32 A wide range of suitable resources is provided for the Foundation Stage which are in a good condition. They cover all aspects of learning as well as free and imaginative play.
- 5.33 A good range of resources is available to match the needs of the pupils. All resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning. Resources are stored carefully, labelled clearly and pupils can access most of them. These resources include up-to-date text books, worksheets, pictures, photographs, artefacts, percussion instruments and very good PE equipment. Teaching rooms with TV and video facilities are well used to enhance the curriculum and quality of learning.
- 5.34 Resources for pupils with special education needs normally devolve from the classroom ones, and good use is made of them together with specialist items. The budgeting system work well and receives a positive response from the staff. Useful inventories are kept in department handbooks.
- 5.35 Teachers make good use of the resources available to them to enhance and enliven pupils' learning and progress. Many teachers frequently make their own resources. These are of a good quality and are particularly relevant to their pupils' needs.

Libraries

- 5.36 Library facilities in the school are sound. They provide some useful support for the curriculum, but are not always used effectively.
- 5.37 The junior library contains some 400 titles, and in general these meet the needs and interests of pupils. Pupils can take books out from it directly, or it can act as a reserve allowing some stock to rotate through the classrooms for these younger pupils. The stock is also well managed, in fair condition and renewed on a regular basis. However, its location on a staircase as space is limited, whilst good for access, makes it a poor reading area.
- 5.38 The main library, used by pupils from Year 3, has benefited from a recent re-organisation. It contains some 2000 books which include a good selection of fiction and a satisfactory range

of reference books. The stock is replenished under a recent arrangement with a local bookshop with a range of books to suit pupils of all abilities and tastes, including advanced readers. Additional books are also available in subject specialist rooms.

- 5.39 A computer is used efficiently to run the stock management. Pupils enjoy using this system, and it allows the effective monitoring of lending and returns.
- 5.40 All pupils benefit from a weekly timetabled library session, and almost all pupils will have at least one library book out at any one time. Lending also takes place before and after school. Staff can also borrow library books on particular topics to enhance their teaching resources.
- 5.41 The use of the library for independent study or recreational reading is restricted at present, and the library itself is not always used effectively as a teaching resource for research and project work.
- 5.42 Management of the libraries is good. The main library is manned by an informal group of staff and parents, who periodically cull outdated or damaged stock, and identify purchasing requirements for new stock. Staff can contribute ideas in order to improve coverage of curriculum areas. New books and posters are displayed, and a new books file is used, to draw attention to the changes in library stock. The library is a resource valued by the pupils.

Premises and Accommodation

- 5.43 The building, accommodation and other facilities are satisfactory for the numbers, abilities, ages and gender of the pupils. Extremely good and imaginative use is made of all areas.
- 5.44 The buildings consist of two Victorian terraced houses, lying within an urban conservation area, providing appropriate accommodation for the number and ages of pupils in the school. Although restricted in size, the accommodation has been used most efficiently, enabling a broad curriculum to be taught.
- 5.45 The school has worked hard to overcome the constraints imposed by the site. A sensitive series of developments and refurbishments in recent years has seen the creation of new library, science, music and ICT facilities. Maximum use is made of all areas within the school site, and good use is made of off-site outdoor sports areas in Kensington Gardens, Battersea Park, and external swimming and gymnastic facilities.
- 5.46 Outdoor play space for activities and recreation is limited. However, pupils benefit greatly from the soft play surface in the playground. Efficient use is made of this by the careful timetabling of the pupils during the school day.
- 5.47 Classrooms, although compact, are mostly suitable for the current pupil numbers. However, the art and science rooms are only just able to accommodate the larger classes. The classrooms are light and well decorated. Storage facilities are satisfactory.
- 5.48 The staircases and other common areas are warm and welcoming, creating the atmosphere of a family home, and pupils benefit from this, and respond well to this peaceful environment. Some very good examples of wall displays and other presentations of pupils' work and objects of interest enhance the school environment.
- 5.49 The premises are very clean, hygienic and maintained to a high standard. All external entrances are either locked, or have controlled access. A continuing programme of redecoration and improvement is in place to ensure that the current high standards are

maintained. However the number of washbasins provided does not meet regulatory requirements.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for premises and accommodation?

5.50 The school meets almost all of the regulatory requirements. In order to meet all the requirements, the school must:

- (a) Provide an additional washbasin for pupil use. [Regulation 5 (k)]

Links with Parents and the Community

5.51 The school has developed a very good partnership with parents and worthwhile links with the community. Overwhelming support in the pre-inspection parental questionnaire, to which over three-quarters of families responded, and from a meeting with parents, indicated that they were very satisfied with almost all areas of school life. Parents were particularly strong in their appreciation of the enthusiasm and approachability of the head. A few parents had concerns about the information received from the school and opportunities to discuss their children's work. Inspectors found that parents are provided with good information about the school and their children's progress.

5.52 Parents are provided with good information about the school and their children's progress. A detailed information pack is sent to all new parents and weekly bulletins keep them well informed about all school activities including class visits, as well as pupils' successes in all aspects of the curriculum. Parents are invited to curriculum meetings during the first few weeks of the autumn term, and workshop sessions are held to explain how the school teaches aspects of mathematics and reading. Links with parents in the Foundation Stage are very good, with parents viewed as partners.

5.53 Parents are invited to assemblies and concerts if their child is participating, and on a bi-annual basis are invited for lunch class by class. They also assist in the school library and during the school's 'Money Week' parents help run the 'tote' for Year 6. An annual staff versus parents rounders match is enjoyed by all. Homework diaries also provide an effective resource for communication between staff and parents.

5.54 Written reports are sent home twice a year, and formal parents' evenings are held annually. Parents are encouraged and welcome to make appointments at any time and do so. During the week of the inspection parents were seen receiving immediate attention and support from the school over their concerns. However, the quality of the reports is variable. The best inform parents of the work covered, the levels of achievement and progress of pupils and suggest ways for improvement. Others give little detail of work covered and comment on pupils' attitude with no guidance on areas for improvement.

5.55 The school complaints procedure meets regulatory requirements. Parents' concerns are dealt with sensitively and swiftly.

5.56 Pupils' experiences are suitably enriched by helpful links with the community. The police and fire brigade visit the school and a representative from the United Nations has given a talk to pupils. Pupils visit many local sites of interest such as museums and art galleries. They sing carols at an old people's home and use a local church at Christmas. Years 5 and 6 participate in a Citizen 2000 project which is run by the police. Pupils participate in matches and galas and in the wider community spend a night in Itchenor and go on a residential trip to France. The school has links with a school in Zimbabwe and every year raises

considerable funds for a variety of charities. Over £23,000 has been raised in the last two years.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the provision of information?

5.57 Yes.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the manner in which complaints are to be handled?

5.58 Yes.

6. PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PASTORAL CARE

Pupils' Personal Development

- 6.1 The school provides a very good range of opportunities through which its pupils can develop spiritual beliefs and a moral code. Pupils also develop very well culturally and socially.
- 6.2 Opportunities for spiritual development are very good. Pupils join in with the hymn and prayers at assemblies. Christian festivals are celebrated and Remembrance Day is shared with family and friends. Assembly themes are wide-ranging, from celebrating a Jewish festival for obeying rules, to considering Wordsworth's poem '*Daffodils*' in connection with protecting the environment. The weekly French assembly is a very good way of combining spiritual and cultural development. Pupils visit local churches and learn about the stations-of-the-cross. Photographs and pictures around the school, and the building itself stimulate the mind. An appreciation for the intangible such as truth and beauty and time for reflection are also developed in subjects such as religious education (RE) art, music and art history.
- 6.3 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school values courtesy, good manners and caring about others. The very good PSHE programme includes topics such as, 'my feelings', 'good relationships', and 'becoming an active citizen'. Teamwork and fair play are encouraged in all aspects of school life. Year 1 devised a set of rules so 'everyone is safe, happy and clever – children have rules, adults have rules too'. Relevant policies are in place to emphasis mutual tolerance, respect and being accountable for one's actions. A role-play lesson gave the clear message that jealousy is not worthwhile. Staff act as excellent role models.
- 6.4 Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils learn to become good citizens in a multi-cultural society. They learn about the past in the traditions of the Greeks and Romans and how the rich and poor lived in London. Opportunities are given to visit art galleries. Within the classroom, pupils can widen their knowledge through activities such as African drumming and by celebrating the Chinese New Year. They appreciate that pupils have different backgrounds and one class applauded a new pupil from abroad for her lesson contribution.
- 6.5 Provision for social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and participate fully in the school community. Pupils are given the role of weekly class badge girl and the head girl, deputy and librarian are elected each half term. Older pupils are encouraged to support younger pupils, care for new pupils and show round visitors. Across the curriculum, the emphasis is on taking turns and working together. Pupils experience a feeling of worth and others enjoy their company.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils?

- 6.6 Yes.

Pastoral Care, including Welfare and Health & Safety

- 6.7 The school's provision for pastoral care, support and guidance is excellent. It greatly enhances pupils' personal and academic development and makes the school a happy place. This view was confirmed in the strong response to the parental questionnaire and by parents who attended a meeting with the inspectors.

- 6.8 The pastoral care structure operates extremely well through form teachers who are the initial point of contact for pupils. Pupils interviewed said one of the things that made their school special was that the teachers made subjects fun, taught well and were extremely caring. Not only do the teachers care for the pupils, but older pupils also take on a responsibility of care for younger pupils. Pupils feel confident about approaching a member of staff if they have a problem. Information on pupils' progress and their pastoral needs are efficiently passed on to the next class teacher.
- 6.9 Pupils requiring support with their learning receive appropriate guidance. Success is celebrated in many ways with stickers, verbal praise and house points which reward good work and behaviour. Pupils' achievements are recognised in assemblies, the weekly bulletin and on school display boards.
- 6.10 Measures to promote good discipline and to guard against harassment and bullying are effective. Appropriate policies are in place. Pupils thought the school rules were fair and said that any problems were quickly sorted out by the teachers. This view was reinforced by the parents.
- 6.11 Provision for before and after school care is very well organised and enjoyed by the pupils. Thorough, effective and clear child protection procedures are in place and understood by the staff. The head is the child protection officer and all staff have attended in-service training.
- 6.12 The school's provision for welfare, health and safety is excellent. Thorough measures are taken to promote pupils' welfare and well-being. The Bursar is the health and safety officer. Telephones outside all classrooms provide instant access to staff.
- 6.13 School lunches are balanced, healthy and of a very high standard. Pupils said that they enjoyed their meals and were very proud that the cook had won a prize for the best school cook in Britain.
- 6.14 The school complies with necessary fire regulations, and all reasonable measures have been taken to reduce the risk from fire. PE staff are qualified first aiders and all other staff have attended courses. Procedures for dealing with accidents and emergencies are clearly understood by staff. An accident book records any injuries and parents are advised. Risk assessments are thorough for all aspects of school life and for outings. A detailed and thorough terrorism policy shows good forethought for a London school.
- 6.15 All procedures required to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are thorough, clear and comprehensive. The school fulfils its duties under the special education needs and disability act, and under race and gender discrimination.

Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils?

- 6.16 Yes.

7. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Governance and Management

- 7.1 Leadership and management are very good, ensuring that the school's aims are well met and a suitable quality of education is provided. Planning is efficient in securing resources for teaching and learning. The head exercises approachable, strong yet caring leadership; she has a clear vision for the development of the school and the education that she wishes to provide for pupils. This vision is shared and supported by all her committed staff, both teaching and non-teaching. The very good quality of the teaching and the excellent welfare and pastoral systems ensure that pupils are happy, extremely confident and caring. They are secure in the family atmosphere, well known as individuals, and prepared successfully for the next stage of their education.
- 7.2 The founder principal is in partnership with the head, maintains a great interest in the school, but is no longer directly involved in its management. Very good management systems ensure that the school is well organised so that the whole community has a shared understanding of its ethos, and works together for the good of the pupils. The senior management team consists of the head, the lower school co-ordinator, the head of nursery and the Year 3 to 6 teachers who are also subject leaders. They meet at least twice a term. The head also has a weekly meeting with the head of nursery. Subject leaders meet regularly, and the lower school co-ordinator meets weekly with the teachers in that department. Regular staff meetings keep them well informed, and much informal discussion takes place over any concerns that staff have about pupils, which reflects the caring ethos of the school.
- 7.3 Subject leadership is an emerging strength, and very good links exist across the whole school. An excellent feature is the level of constructive monitoring which takes place, and subject leaders work with colleagues in a supportive role. For example the head of ICT is frequently timetabled to support colleagues in the ICT suite. Departmental documentation is of a good quality ensuring effective continuity for pupils' learning.
- 7.4 The day-to-day running of the school is highly efficient and communication is very good, well supported by the friendly office team. The staff handbook provides useful guidance and reflects the emphasis placed on mutual respect for all within the community.
- 7.5 The current development plan is a useful document which has identified immediate well-chosen priorities. However it does not yet extend to cover longer term strategic development, nor does it include a rolling programme of subject review.

8. ACHIEVEMENT AND QUALITY IN SUBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Achievement and Quality in Subjects

The Foundation Stage

- 8.1 Attainment is high in relation to the pupils' abilities and they make rapid progress. Children are on track to achieve the early learning goals and move on to the National Curriculum during their year in Reception.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- 8.2 Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. They are willing and eager learners who listen with sustained concentration. They talk confidently with adults using a mature vocabulary. They are helpful, responsible and carry out simple tasks as asked. Teachers' praise motivates and encourages all children to take an active part in lessons. From their start at the school, children are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. This leads to very good relationships and an environment that stimulates learning. Children are given many opportunities to express their own feelings and are encouraged to support their peers by sharing and listening to others. Respect for everyone, as well as the school environment, helps children enjoy the family experience of school.

Communication, Language and Literacy Development

- 8.3 Attainment in communication, language and literacy is very good. Children have many opportunities to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Work is always appropriate to the needs of the children. They answer questions readily and enjoy listening to stories. Often they will anticipate 'what comes next' showing good comprehension. Phonic learning starts early and children are encouraged to look for objects at home. During inspection week, Nursery children found items starting with 'd'. Reading starts with incidental reading of signs and labels, and name. This leads them, when ready, to more formal skills in recognising words in a book. In Reception, children take reading books home to share, and independent reading becomes a pleasurable experience. Children are helped to hold their pencil correctly and to form their letters accurately by much tracing and copying. Independent sentence and story writing is gradually built up. ICT software is used within the classroom to broaden reading and writing skills.

Mathematical Development

- 8.4 Mathematical development is very good. Children are encouraged to find enjoyment in practical activities, which are often linked to other areas of the curriculum. Many informal opportunities exist during the day for counting. Children are introduced to the recognition of numbers 1-10, building up to counting and using numbers 1-20. They learn skills such as matching and comparisons. They can name and draw 2- and 3- dimensional shapes. Children in Reception know the properties of the square, rectangle, triangle and circle. They use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and add and subtract both accurately. Displays and activities enhance the classrooms. ICT within the rooms is used appropriately for the concept that maths is fun.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- 8.5 Children's development in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. Topics encourage them to find out for themselves and to observe closely what goes on around them. Practical science studies were observed in Reception, where children most thoughtfully put various foods into healthy or non-healthy eating categories. Studying their own and animal families helps them to notice similarities and differences. For example, Nursery children have looked closely at pictures to match mother to baby animals. Each morning, Reception children observe the weather and record it. All children are given excellent opportunities to learn about other countries. They learn French and speak simple words such as 'bonjour' and 'au revoir' confidently. Reception children extend this to saying good morning in 16 other languages.

Physical Development

- 8.6 Children's physical development is very good. They use small tools such as pencils, crayons and scissors with dexterity and their fine manipulative skills are developing very well. Children have many opportunities to move, climb and run both at playtimes and in games and dance lessons. They are developing very good hand/eye coordination as seen in a Reception games lesson on bouncing a large ball and catching it. Their awareness and use of space is very good. They are very confident in dance sessions moving their bodies sensitively in time to the music.

Creative Development

- 8.7 Creative development is very good. Children are encouraged to explore, make and build for themselves expressing their ideas in their own way. Older children have very well developed observational skills as seen in Reception's art history lesson where they looked closely at a picture of St. George and the Dragon. Many were able to interpret mood and feeling in a very mature manner. Role-play in designated areas such as the Nursery farm leads to very good imaginative play. In music, children sing in tune, clap rhythms and accompany themselves using percussion instruments. They are learning to recognise pitch and timbre. The very good range of art work on display shows a variety of skills and techniques often linked to other aspects of the curriculum.

Other Aspects of the Foundation Stage

- 8.8 Children have very good attitudes to learning; they are very well behaved, responsive and highly motivated to do their best. They are co-operative and attentive, whether listening or participating.
- 8.9 Teaching is almost always good or very good. Lessons are very well planned with a wide range of appropriate tasks. Staff are knowledgeable and very caring, giving individual support as well as positively encouraging independent learning.
- 8.10 The curriculum is very broad and enhanced by specialist teaching in music, dance, games and French. Assessment is very thorough and used effectively to aid individual progress. Resources are good and stimulate children's learning. Many are made by the teachers and are always relevant.
- 8.11 Accommodation is good. Nursery rooms are in a very secure unit with its own access so that parents can communicate directly with the staff. The two classrooms, number and literacy based, are well arranged with designated areas for reading and imaginative play. Appropriate furniture and display areas feature in both rooms and cloakroom/toilet areas

fulfil legal requirements. Both years have direct access to the playground, which is managed extremely well to ensure the children work and play in a safe environment.

- 8.12 Parents are encouraged to be partners with the school and both links and access are very good. The head and other staff are always available for concerned parents, and a formal written report concludes the school year.
- 8.13 Leadership and management are very good. The dedication of the teachers, who are given invaluable support by their assistants, make up a team that provides a happy, stimulating learning environment.

English

- 8.14 Pupils achieve high standards in English.
- 8.15 At the age of 7, standards are good. Pupils express themselves using simple sentences, and the neatness, accuracy and length of their written work is good
- 8.16 By the age of 11, standards are high. Years 5 and 6 have a significant amount of work published in a poetry anthology and the Year 6 project on the General Election showed their ability to write fluently and persuasively, presenting their arguments in both written and oral form. Pupils have very good extended writing skills and show an awareness of their audience. Standards of reading throughout the school are high, with pupils accessing a wide range of fiction texts.
- 8.17 Pupils' progress in lessons and over time is consistently good by the age of 7, and it becomes rapid as they approach the age of 11. The range of writing tasks increases and their use of language improves. Pupils who require additional support and the very able also make rapid progress.
- 8.18 The quality of learning and behaviour is very good. Pupils throughout the school are keen to learn, and work hard. Behaviour in lessons is of a high standard. Concentration levels are high, and pupils approach written tasks conscientiously. Responses to questions are very orderly, and pupils displayed patience whilst waiting their turn to contribute to discussions.
- 8.19 The quality of teaching is always good, and often very good. It is characterised by high expectations of attainment and effort, clear learning goals, well-planned tasks and a flexibility of approach, showing an awareness of the needs of individual pupils. For example this was seen in a Year 6 lesson that showed good pace and a variety of tasks, and in which pupils were encouraged to use their own reading to supplement the given texts. Teaching in year 6 showed an appropriate awareness of the needs of 11+ entry examinations without allowing it to dominate the planning of lessons. Formal monitoring of reading currently only extends to the end of Year 4. Homework is well planned, and both supports and extends work in the classroom. Work is well marked, and positive and constructive comments added where appropriate.
- 8.20 The departmental documentation is sound, and is supported by classroom practice which allows for very good progression. This documentation is supported by numerous informal meetings between staff. Fruitful cross-curricular links with ICT have led to the production of some good presentation work, including recent Year 6 work on Beowulf.
- 8.21 Management and leadership are good. The advent of a new head of department is providing the opportunity for an assessment of all aspects of the subject, building on the present good foundations. Her timetabled support role in the junior classes allows for the efficient

monitoring of teaching and learning standards, and creates an effective liaison with the class teachers. Teaching resources are sound and are used successfully and imaginatively to support the curriculum.

Mathematics

- 8.22 Pupils achieve high standards in mathematics.
- 8.23 Pupils' attainment in Years 1 and 2 is high. By the end of Year 2, pupils can add in tens and units, do simple money sums, understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition and understand simple fractions. Many pupils are working at Level 3 of the National Curriculum.
- 8.24 The good foundations in Years 1 and 2 are built on in Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is high, as reflected by their success in entry examinations to competitive senior schools, and by the number of scholarships awarded. From Year 5 all pupils are working from a text book which is at least one year ahead for their age.
- 8.25 Pupils' progress in the development of mathematical skills is good in Years 1 and 2. Rapid progress was made in Year 1 when pupils used cards to make up subtraction sums by taking away the number of counters they had taken out of a feely bag from the original total. Pupils make rapid progress in Years 3 to 6. This was seen in Year 3, when pupils completed a number grid adding tens and units with one of the numbers near a multiple of ten. Year 5, in a lesson on angles, understood that the angles in triangles add up to 180° and measured the angles efficiently using a protractor.
- 8.26 The quality of learning and behaviour is very good. Pupils are very motivated, enthusiastic and competent learners, who are keen to answer questions. They concentrate throughout lessons, whether working independently or in pairs, and encourage each other.
- 8.27 The quality of teaching observed was always at least good, and in half the lessons it was very good or excellent. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the mathematical curriculum and are aware of the individual needs of their pupils, asking challenging questions to match their ability. Work is carefully planned and clear learning objectives and a brisk pace are set. In the best lessons, learning was fun, with activities well chosen to promote learning.
- 8.28 The subject is well resourced and some use of ICT was seen in a Year 1 display of concentric circles and in the Year 6 display of famous mathematicians. Good guidelines and documentation help staff to plan thoroughly.
- 8.29 The whole school 'Money Week' is an excellent reinforcement of mathematics. Each class has a particular topic which involves many cross-curricular links, such as looking at the currency of other countries. They also make hats in DT for Year 6's 'race week'.
- 8.30 Departmental documentation is good, containing a clear syllabus, schemes of work and lesson plans for every class. Good records are kept to test results and these are used to inform future planning. However, reports are of variable quality. Some give a clear picture of work covered whilst others only concentrate on the pupils' attitude. Whilst there is no written target setting, a good example of oral target setting is part of the regular mental arithmetic testing in Year 6.
- 8.31 Leadership and management are good, with both co-ordinators being aware of the work covered by other classes as they are both timetabled to observe lessons regularly. The co-

ordinator of Years 4 to 6 is building good relationships with senior schools and receives useful feedback about past pupils.

Science

- 8.32 Pupils' achieve high standards throughout the school.
- 8.33 Pupils' attainment in lessons is high. Pupils use appropriate scientific vocabulary at all ages. From Year 1 they handle apparatus confidently and safely, and understand the essential elements of fair tests and investigations. Year 2 worked on materials and their properties. They saw bread become toast and quickly realised that it was an irreversible change. Pupils recall themes from previous years accurately and promptly. This was seen in a Year 4 lesson on electricity, when pupils successfully completed a circuit previously learned in Year 2. They are quick to comprehend new facts and what is required for experiments. Written work scrutinised showed good or high attainment. Pupils show high standards of understanding, analysis and presentation.
- 8.34 Pupils' progress in their written work over time and in their understanding of new topics in lessons is rapid at all ages and occasionally older pupils excelled. Pupils learn to record for themselves, draw conclusions and evaluate evidence with confidence and interest. Recording is done in various ways such as graphs, diagrams and tables. By age 11, pupils are thinking in a scientific manner and presenting their written work in a correct format. During Years 3 to 6 they are learning to appreciate that science is an everyday part of their life.
- 8.35 Pupils' learning and behaviour are very good at all ages. They are highly motivated learners with an enthusiastic enjoyment for involvement in practical activities. Older pupils show considerable initiative and are keen to exchange ideas, sometimes challenging other people's statements. Their concentration is sustained and they work independently as well as collaboratively, sharing tasks equally. Pupils are aware of the need for safety, especially in the science room, and appropriate clothes are available whenever necessary. Year 5 wore overall and disposable gloves when handling animal lungs and hearts during their practical observational work.
- 8.36 Teaching is always very good and on occasions excellent. Provision is made for all abilities with excellent individual support given when appropriate. Lessons are planned carefully with a range of interesting activities. Objectives and summaries are clearly presented, expectations are high and the best lessons move at a rapid pace, well matched to pupils' abilities and ages. For example, Year 6 pupils were asked to set up and label their experiment on corrosion unaided from the materials available: 5 test tubes, 5 nails, table salt, malt vinegar, tap water, oil and calcium carbonate as a drying agent. The secure subject knowledge of the teachers leads to well-managed discussions and pupils' questions being answered confidently. All teachers of science channel pupils' curiosity in a positive and purposeful manner. Marking is prompt and accurate. Homework is relevant and explained clearly.
- 8.37 Assessment is used very efficiently to track individual achievement and progress. A high proportion of teaching is done in the science room, which is only just adequate in size for practical work with larger classes. Good use of TV/video facilities was seen for Year 5. ICT is being developed in class work by using the designated suite, and some very good extended work was seen in the Year 5 summer project books on renewable and on renewable energy sources.

- 8.38 Management and leadership are very good. Support and useful advice are given to non-specialist teachers. The head of science is timetabled to work with the Year 1 and 2 form teachers and this practice greatly enhances the quality of learning. This team teaching was used to very good effect in a Year 1 lesson on the sense of taste with the result that that each pupil was able to complete the task successfully. Team teaching also ensures effective monitoring to ensure consistent standards are set throughout the school. The subject policy and schemes of work are clear and comprehensive.

Information and Communication Technology

- 8.39 Overall pupils achieve good standards, and apply their skills across a number of curriculum areas.
- 8.40 Attainment is good at the age of 7 and by the age of 11 it is high. Year 2 can log on and follow a touch-typing course with very little prompting, and access their own results and targets. By Year 6, pupils can produce clear and attractive posters showing the lives of famous mathematicians, having collected the information themselves and using a variety of publishing skills. They collaborated to produce a year book for the leaving pupils. Individual pieces of work are of an excellent standard.
- 8.41 Pupils' progress is good overall, and this progress has become rapid during recent months. Through Years 1 to 3, pupils progress well in mastering basic computer skills, becoming more confident in using the mouse and the keyboard, as well as in developing touch typing skills via a recently introduced programme. In Years 4 to 6, pupils demonstrate an increasing knowledge of the presentation of information, accessing information available on the internet, and an ability to save, retrieve and manipulate data. Pupils needing additional support and those of high ability also make good progress.
- 8.42 The quality of learning and behaviour is very good throughout the school. Pupils are interested and motivated, show good levels of application and can concentrate for extended periods of time. The skills learned are applied effectively in independent tasks.
- 8.43 The quality of teaching is good. Both pupils and staff benefit from the expertise of a specialist teacher, who is able to advise other staff in order to make full use of the facilities available. Staffing levels in lessons are very good. Pupils are encouraged to set themselves targets in order to improve. Examples of very good work are displayed in the ICT room in order to motivate pupils.
- 8.44 The broad and recently revised curriculum takes appropriate account of the National Curriculum programmes of study and attainment objectives. A very good range of skills and applications is taught and put to use in a wide and varied range of tasks.
- 8.45 The very good quality of the resources and accommodation in the ICT suite makes a major impact on pupils' learning and reflects the school's commitment to ICT. This room is often accessible to staff teaching other subjects. Younger pupils have access in their classrooms to older machines that support basic keyboard skills and some aspects of early language and number.
- 8.46 Management and leadership are very good. Recent changes have been important in raising awareness of ICT and its cross-curricular applications. Training is arranged which takes into account the varying skill levels of staff, and the monitoring of teaching allows for a sharing of knowledge, increased confidence and a consistency of teaching standards.

Music

- 8.47 Overall pupils achieve high standards. In Years 1 and 2 achievement is good and by Year 6 it is high.
- 8.48 Pupils sing tunefully in assembly, with good diction and rhythm. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a broad range of musical understanding. They use musical terms appropriately and are inventive in using a wide range of percussion instruments to paint sound pictures. Year 5 working on a sequence of music based on a river from its source to the sea captured the sound of the quiet bubbling-up of the water highly effectively. Year 6 composed amusing catchy jingles for an advertisement, matching them to sounds that would sell their product.
- 8.49 Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Progress is rapid in Years 3 to 6, when pupils demonstrate increasing skills in their compositions. They match rhythm to words and select and play instruments most effectively.
- 8.50 Pupils of all ages are enthusiastic in their lessons and well motivated. They take part in all activities eagerly and are quick to respond to their teacher. Pupils of all ages settle extremely quickly to group work, co-operating successfully to create their compositions. They are keen to experiment and persevere in improving their work, and a feature of all lessons is the considerate way in which pupils listen to each other's work, and offer constructive criticism.
- 8.51 The quality of teaching is always at least good and often very good. Teachers are knowledgeable. Lessons are planned carefully with clear objectives and useful cross-curricular links are made. Year 3 explored sounds that might be heard in Roman times. Expectations are high and questioning is challenging, ensuring that pupils have to think carefully about their work. Relationships in lessons are excellent and great patience is shown to all pupils.
- 8.52 Pupils benefit from a significant number of opportunities to perform. Nearly all pupils learn instruments, many to good standards and take part in a number of ensembles. However, no full orchestra exist to provide these able pupils with the experience of playing as part of a much larger group.
- 8.53 Although no system exists for one person to have a fully co-ordinated overview of music, the current arrangements work effectively so that management and leadership of the department are good. The part-time subject teacher is responsible for all the class teaching, well supported by a team of specialist instrumental teachers. A member of this peripatetic team organises the instrumental teachers and undertakes the complex timetabling for the individual pupils' lessons efficiently.

Physical Education

- 8.54 Overall standards achieved by pupils of all ages are high.
- 8.55 By Year 2 pupils' attainment is high. By the time that pupils reach Year 6 their achievement is excellent. Pupils' skills in netball and swimming are very good and they are used to good effect in matches and in swimming galas. The school was well placed in the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools swimming gala and in netball it won the South West London Preparatory Schools tournament winning a shield and gold medals. Attainment in dance and gymnastics is also high with pupils gaining British Amateur Gymnastics Awards at a higher level than that expected for their age.

- 8.56 Pupils' progress rapidly during lessons and over time. Pupils in Year 2 made rapid progress learning movements for the Sailor's Hornpipe. In a Year 6 netball lesson, pupils had acquired the basic skills of throwing and catching in previous years, but were now very aware of where the ball was, how to dodge and how to use space effectively.
- 8.57 Pupils' attitudes, learning and behaviour are excellent. They are highly motivated, listen carefully to instructions, carry them out promptly and work with enthusiasm and commitment. This was very evident in the local park and local swimming pool where the noise and presence of other people could easily have been a distraction. Pupils work well, both independently and in groups, practising and improving their skills.
- 8.58 The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the PE programme. The results of matches, competitions and galas are evidence of their teaching skills.
- 8.59 Although the school has no outdoor resources of its own, it has made very good arrangements to hire grass and artificial pitches for football, hockey, netball and tennis and an athletics track. A local swimming pool and gymnasium are also used. As a result, provision for PE is very good and sport is a vital and integral part of school life.
- 8.60 The rigorous sports programme has been given considerable prominence with generous timetable allocation. Football and hockey have recently been introduced to the curriculum. Football is proving popular with some of the girls who have attended 'taster' sessions at Fulham Football Club.
- 8.61 Many extra-curricular activities and clubs extend the curriculum. They also provide an opportunity to allow practice and advanced coaching for teams and enable matches and tournaments to be played against pupils from other schools up to a national level. The curriculum is further enriched for Year 6 by an annual residential activity week.
- 8.62 Leadership, organisation and management of the PE programme are carried out with a high level of competence, making the department one of the strengths of the school. Departmental documentation is very good and thorough assessment provides detailed records of pupils' individual skills and achievements.

Short Subject Reports

Short subject reports contain concise evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning and of provision in the school.

Art and Design and Technology

- 8.63 2 art lessons and 2 art clubs were observed. Samples of art and design technology work and displays were scrutinised and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.64 Teaching was very good. Lessons were carefully planned and tasks explained clearly. The organisation of activities was extremely good. Tasks set and teacher expectations were well matched to pupils' abilities. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils were challenged to think carefully about texture in their drawings of elephants and not merely to consider colour.
- 8.65 Learning was very good. Pupils responded well and were enthusiastic. They listened carefully and approached tasks thoughtfully. They co-operated well with one another, sharing equipment, and ensuring that they did not disturb each other while working in the rather restricted space.

- 8.66 The art room is barely adequate to accommodate whole classes for more than small-scale art work and has little space for storage or display. However, opportunities are provided to extend pupils' experiences in whole school projects such as the scenery for school productions. The curriculum is broad and benefits from generous timetable provision.
- 8.67 Some design and technology skills are taught as part of art lessons. Others are successfully incorporated in cross-curricular work by class teachers. For example, model solar systems are created as part of science in Year 6. No system currently exists to track the acquisition of skills across the school to ensure continuity of learning.

Classics (Latin, classical civilisation, myths and legends)

- 8.68 Two Latin and two myths and legends lessons were observed, a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator and pupils' work and displays were scrutinised.
- 8.69 The quality of teaching was very good. An appropriate emphasis was placed on the enjoyment of the subject, and the recent introduction of a lively text book provided an excellent introduction to Latin. Useful connections were made to English, challenging pupils to think independently. Lessons were carefully planned with different tasks and homework set to match pupils' individual needs. Lessons also included a variety of activities to sustain pupils' interest. For example, a Year 5 lesson started with revision and some translation, followed with different sheets matching tasks to individual needs and finished with a game and check-up for understanding. A wide variety of written work was undertaken, such as newspaper articles and a lively piece entitled 'How to kill Medusa in five easy steps'. Relationships were very good.
- 8.70 Pupils' behaviour was very good. Pupils were keen to answer and ask questions and settled promptly to independent work, and assisted each other when necessary. The curriculum is enriched by visits to museums.
- 8.71 For Year 4 pupils the study of myths and legends provides a useful background to the classical studies and Latin taught to Years 5 and 6. Pupils tried hard to master the complexities of the language, and were confident in attempting translations.

French

- 8.72 Three lessons were observed, pupils' work was scrutinised and discussions held with the co-ordinators.
- 8.73 Teaching was very good. Pupils benefit from teachers who are native speakers. They have a good knowledge of their subject and planned lessons well, making good use of a variety of resources. The emphasis was appropriately on oral work with no formal written work until Year 3. The majority of the teaching was in French from the earliest age.
- 8.74 Pupils were very enthusiastic and responded well to the action songs and French games. Year 4 pupils loved playing Jacques 'a dit'. Pupils were competent, motivated learners with a very good recall of previously taught vocabulary.
- 8.75 Subject planning is sound. It covers an appropriate range of activities which provide guidance to help non-specialist teachers if necessary. The regular French assembly with French hymns and prayers is an example of the confidence given to pupils in speaking and singing in another language. The subject is reinforced for Year 6 pupils by an annual trip to France.

Geography

- 8.76 Three lessons were observed, discussions were held with staff and written work scrutinised.
- 8.77 The quality of teaching was very good. Lessons were well paced and teachers used a variety of techniques to develop interest and to ensure understanding of the topics. They made effective use of time and resources. Year 3 in a topic on money brought in their own foreign currency to compare them to examples provided by the teacher. Subject knowledge is secure, and good use was made of challenging questions to establish pupils' understanding.
- 8.78 Pupils responded well to the teaching. They showed considerable interest, and their concentration and behaviour were very good. They enjoyed opportunities to research topics independently.
- 8.79 Planning is sound, and shows a clear progression through the school. A wide range of aspects of physical and human geography is covered, and an awareness of ethical issues is developed through work such as the Year 6 work on refugee families. However, fieldwork is not included in the curriculum. Sound resources are available to support the curriculum. The curriculum is enhanced by good cross-curricular links and a range of visits. These include the Lookout Environmental Centre, Holland Park Ecology Centre and trips to Chichester and France.

History

- 8.80 Three lessons were observed, samples of work were scrutinised and discussions held with teachers.
- 8.81 Teaching was usually very good. It was characterised by a good knowledge and understanding of the pupils. Teachers are knowledgeable and showed an enthusiasm for the topics. In Years 4 to 6, teaching involved a wide and imaginative range of approaches, as well as good use of cross-curricular links. For example, Year 6, in their study of the twentieth century made historical games and constructed dreadnought battleships. Open-ended questioning allowed pupils to expand their own thoughts and ideas. Where teaching was less successful, tasks given to the pupils were quite simple, and questioning was less challenging.
- 8.82 The quality of learning and behaviour was very good. Pupils enjoyed the subject and were very positive about it. They cultivated an interest and enthusiasm for the topics, and had pride in their work. They also enjoyed carrying out research of their own, which increased their sense of responsibility for their own learning.
- 8.83 A clear, detailed and progressive scheme of work is in place. Resources are sound, support the curriculum, and are used effectively. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of visits, including the Tower of London and many local museums.

Religious Education

- 8.84 Two lessons and two assemblies were observed and a sample of pupils' work was scrutinised. A discussion was held with the co-ordinator.
- 8.85 The quality of teaching was good. Teachers related well to the pupils and planned lessons effectively with clear objectives. Effective use was made of time and resources. Challenging questions were asked to develop pupils' understanding. A good example was

when Year 4 pupils considered the Hindu version of how the world was created, and compared it with their own ideas.

- 8.86 Pupils responded well to the teaching and sustained their concentration. They thought carefully about different faiths and how their ideas differed from those of Christian beliefs. Year 2 pupils learned about the concept of a community, and selected a person from pictures of different people who help us.
- 8.87 The subject is covered with a detailed syllabus and schemes of work, and strengthened by the co-ordinator being timetabled to observe other classes.

Achievement and Quality in Activities

- 8.88 Achievement and quality in the activities provided are very good for the ages and abilities of the pupils. The quality of provision contributes very positively towards their personal development.
- 8.89 The school offers a wide and varied range of activities, which includes sports squads, musical and dance groups as well as recreational activities such as art, computer, mini-bridge, puppetry and craft. Some, such as team squads and music ensembles, are for selected groups of pupils, but others are open to pupils who have a general interest in the activity.
- 8.90 Many pupils achieve high standards in sporting and musical activities. Various teams are very successful in their matches and competitions. A high proportion of pupils learn a musical instrument and achieve good results in public examinations. They are given a number of opportunities to perform to a school audience in assembly and a wider audience in concerts and plays.
- 8.91 Activities are arranged before and after school to give adequate time to the sessions. In addition to these activities, all years experience extra-curricular day visits in connection with their subject curriculum, while older pupils enjoy residential trips both in this country and abroad.
- 8.92 Activities are popular with the pupils, and although they are voluntary, many pupils attend, thus enhancing their educational experiences and achievements. All activities observed were felt to be extremely worthwhile and very well managed.
- 8.93 The programme is implemented by teachers and visiting specialists who make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. In response to the recent questionnaire, parents expressed appreciation for the range of activities.
- 8.94 Registers are taken at the start of the activities and the school keeps a record of pupils' participation although these are not recorded on report. All achievements are acknowledged in assembly by the rest of the school.

9. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 9.1 The inspection was carried out from 26th to 30th September, 2005. All subjects of the curriculum were inspected and all members of the teaching staff were observed teaching. However, the size of the team did not permit all subjects to be reported on in full. The following subjects do not have full reports in Section 8: art and DT, classics, French, geography, history, RE. The inspectors visited 60 lessons or parts of lessons, examined extensive samples of work by pupils of different abilities in each year and held formal discussions with these pupils as well as informal discussions with other pupils. They attended three assemblies and eight registration sessions. They observed extra-curricular and sporting activities. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff at various levels in the school. They analysed the responses of 85 parents to a questionnaire distributed in advance of the inspection. They examined a wide range of documentation made available by the school.

List of Inspectors

Lady Fiona Mynors	Reporting Inspector, former IAPS head
Mr Richard Johnson	Deputy head, IAPS school
Mrs Mary Philpott	Retired head, GSA junior school
Mrs Shirley Winson	Retired head, ISA school