



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

JUNIOR KING'S SCHOOL

MARCH 2017



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Junior King's School			
DfE number	886/6061			
Registered charity number	307942			
Address	Milner Court Sturry Canterbury Kent CT2 0AY			
Telephone number	01227 714000			
Email address	head@junior-kings.co.uk			
Headmaster	Mr Peter Wells			
Chair of governors	The Very Reverend Dr Robert Willis			
Age range	2 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	360			
	Boys	199	Girls	161
	Day pupils	276	Boarders	84
	EYFS	41	Juniors	189
	Seniors	130		
Inspection dates	8 to 9 March 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 unmet standards identified at their previous inspection.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Karen Williams	Reporting inspector
Mr Dominic Crehan	Team inspector (Principal, IAPS school)
Mr Martin Stott	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Junior King's School is an independent day and boarding school for boys and girls aged between 2 and 13 years. The school was founded in 1879 as the preparatory school for The King's School, Canterbury, and moved to its current location in 1929. The school belongs to the Canterbury Cathedral Foundation, and is governed by a full governing board which also oversees The King's School, Canterbury. The school consists of two departments: the pre-prep, for pupils aged 2 to 7 years, and prep, for those aged 7 to 13 years. The school provides two boarding houses.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has undertaken wide ranging refurbishment and building works, increased the number of teaching staff and introduced new means of assessing and monitoring teaching and learning.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to encourage each pupil to reach their potential and to develop each pupil's physical, social, spiritual, cultural and intellectual life. It seeks to provide a complete and outstanding education in which creativity is promoted and sport is valued, building confident foundations for life and with a vibrant boarding community at its centre.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a wide local area as well as various countries. English is an additional language for 51 pupils, of whom 32 receive additional support in class, in small groups or individually. The school has identified 32 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 25 receive support, predominantly for dyslexia. One pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHC). More able pupils and those with talents in sport and the arts develop their abilities in scholarship classes and advanced activities. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.6 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was a standard inspection in February 2011. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Review the organisation of the school day to ensure that the new arrangements for assessment can be implemented effectively.
 - Provide training for all staff in the effective use of interactive boards.
 - Consolidate procedures in the EYFS for assessing learning and development to ensure that they are consistent between the Nursery and Reception classes.
- 1.7 The recommendation of the intermediate boarding inspection in May 2013 was:
- Ensure that the school's response to the boarders' suggestions is communicated to them.
- 1.8 The school has successfully met the recommendations of the previous inspections.

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- Pupils of all ages and abilities make excellent progress and achieve the highest standards.
- Pupils' communication, as shown through their speaking, listening, reading, and writing, is outstanding.
- Pupils' learning benefits significantly from their substantial information and communication technology (ICT) skills.
- Pupils are extremely enthusiastic, collaborative and independent learners.

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

- Pupils are highly confident, self-aware, and resilient learners.
- Pupils demonstrate a mature appreciation of the non-material aspects of life.
- Pupils have a highly-developed understanding of right and wrong and of the importance of rules.
- Pupils make a significant contribution to the school.
- Pupils show the highest respect for those of other cultures.

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

- Seek ways in which pupils may contribute further to the lives of others in the local and international communities.

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 and abilities make excellent progress. The proportion of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) achieving a good level of development is considerably above the national average, enabled by well-planned activities and targeted questioning. Pupils with SEND and EAL make exceptional progress, attaining places at their first choice of senior schools alongside their peers, due to the high levels of targeted support offered to them both in and outside the classroom. The progress of more able pupils is ensured by positive encouragement from their teachers, who quickly identify their strengths and assign them to extension groups where they are challenged further. The vast majority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school helps them to learn and make progress. Pupils' progress is accelerated throughout the school because leaders ensure the provision of high quality teaching which makes effective use of the school's assessment systems to identify each pupil's strengths and weaknesses and respond to them in lessons. The school fully meets its aim to encourage every pupil to achieve their potential.
- 3.3 Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed to levels considerably above expectations for their ages, confirming the fulfilment of the school's aim to provide an outstanding all-round education. They have highly developed skills in the sciences, from pupils in Year 2, who knew the chemical symbol for water and could plan their own experiments, to those in Year 7 who displayed an excellent knowledge of chromosomes and microscopy skills. Pupils' knowledge of the vocabulary of foreign languages is excellent, and pupils are confident in its use, tackling translations with the attitude that 'if you work hard it becomes easy'. The school aims to provide a complete education, in which achievement in sport and the arts is celebrated alongside academic success. In questionnaire responses, almost all parents agreed that the range of subjects provided is suitable for their child, and the vast majority of pupils agreed that they can be involved in a good range of activities.
- 3.4 Academic achievement is of a very high standard across the school, enabled by excellent teaching and the use of high quality resources and accommodation. Although the school no longer assesses pupil attainment through national tests, past results at age 7 have been above average in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools, and were well above the national average in 2015. The achievements of older pupils in sports, drama and music awards, performances and competitions are excellent, as are their scholarship results. In the previous academic year, all pupils in Year 8 gained places at their first choice of senior school, and a significant number gained scholarships and awards for sport, music, art, drama and design technology (DT) as well as for academic ability. The school is highly successful in sporting events, having reached national finals in netball, hockey, swimming, athletics, fencing and swimming, and enjoyed an exceptional level of success in local and regional rugby and football tournaments. Pupils' strong achievement in the arts results from leaders' focus on creativity. They achieve highly in music examinations and performances, undertaking demanding material and performing with commitment in a wide range of ensembles which develop their skills in many different genres. Pupils are highly skilled in drama, performing with confidence and commitment from an early age, and excelling in examinations. Pupils have experienced increasing success in art following the introduction of advanced art groups, where those with ability can extend and develop their skills. The attainment of these pupils is advanced for their years, and their success in gaining scholarships and awards has benefitted from teachers' encouragement and strong emphasis on pupils' individual talents.

- 3.5 Outstanding communication skills are the norm across the school. From the youngest age, pupils develop their communication skills well by applying and extending them in all subjects. Pupils speak with poise and confidence, and listen with care and attention, such as in a Year 2 lesson where pupils shared their ideas about rainforests, and a discussion of 'Oliver Twist' in Year 8, where a pupil described the narrator as 'omniscient'. Pupils in the EYFS develop strong writing skills from an early age, using their skills effectively in their topic books. Older pupils' writing is fluent, well-written for purpose, and applied successfully in history, geography, science and independent project work. Pupils with SEND or EAL make rapid progress in their communication skills, aided by teaching that develops their confidence and is well matched to their individual needs. Pupils are avid readers, and value the many ways in which the school encourages them to read. They enjoy utilising their writing skills in competitions and challenging activities, such as creating a new 'Roald Dahl' character. Pupils' essays and poetry demonstrate understanding and an intuitive use of language. Pupils of all different abilities relish presenting their ideas in class and speaking in public. This is because the school ensures that all pupils, including those who experience difficulty in reading, are given such opportunities.
- 3.6 Pupils employ their excellent and wide-ranging information and communication technology (ICT) skills with confidence across the curriculum. Pupils develop ICT skills rapidly because the use of ICT is embedded in their learning from the earliest years. Children in the EYFS develop basic skills and begin to use tablets, whilst older pupils make regular use of ICT in maths quizzes, the design of websites and the production of patterns for the laser cutter in design technology. They film and analyse their own performances in dance and sport, and prepare presentations to explain to their peers in class. Pupils conduct research and produce independent work on computers as a matter of course, and the computer studies programme ensures that pupils acquire high levels of competency in coding and building circuits. Pupils with SEND are particularly well served by their touch-typing training and the opportunity to produce their work electronically. Throughout the school, pupils' progress is facilitated by the plentiful supply of well-maintained equipment, and boarders are particularly appreciative of their ready access to computers and the school network, which helps them in their homework and revision.
- 3.7 Pupils of all ages demonstrate high levels of numeracy and apply these skills successfully to subjects such as science, DT, English and geography. Pupils' rapid progress in mathematics lessons is ensured by engaging teaching methods, teachers' acute awareness of the different needs and abilities of the pupils, and the teaching of older pupils in groups based on prior attainment. Most pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their lessons were interesting. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that their lessons were fun and that they appreciated the means by which teachers provide them with a range of strategies from which to choose when solving problems.
- 3.8 Pupils demonstrate excellent study skills. They enjoy and benefit from opportunities to select their own topics and carry out research. Pupils are willing to think for themselves, and older pupils demonstrate high-level reasoning skills, thinking logically, critically and analytically. These skills are fostered by the many challenging academic and non-academic opportunities offered for pupils to think for themselves. Whilst older pupils regularly undertake independent research projects on topics such as famous artists, the moon, the local microclimate and the history of Canterbury, younger children consider matters such as what will happen to their hair if it gets wet. Pupils in Year 2 conducted research on the rainforest and those in Year 8 analysed challenging mathematical problems, testing hypotheses when determining which method would produce a solution. Pupils are enthused by the 'Milner Challenge', an annual event in which pupils are set different challenges according to their age.

- 3.9 Pupils display exemplary attitudes toward their learning. Pupils of all ages are highly engaged and focused in class and exhibit a deep love of learning. They demonstrate initiative and independence, and highly-developed collaborative skills. Children in the EYFS make daily choices about which activities to engage in and work happily with their peers in junk modelling, games, construction, and other activities. This readiness to work together is encouraged and developed well in all subjects. Pupils work in pairs and groups throughout their working day, such as when designing a soundproofing experiment in science, or collaborating in decisions about where to find different microclimates in geography. Pupils regularly take leadership roles in their learning in group work in class and independent project work. They thrive through being given the freedom to work independently and do so with confidence, such as when tackling problems in mathematics and undertaking project work in art and the humanities. Teaching actively encourages collaboration and initiative through the many opportunities offered throughout the curriculum.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils are quietly self-assured and happy. Pupils' substantial confidence and self-esteem is nurtured by the school's ethos of celebrating one's own gifts and those of others, and by staff, who lead by example and demonstrate integrity and commitment to learning. Pupils, including those who have EAL or SEND, are confident in their ability to succeed and know how to use their talents to overcome their difficulties. Boarders develop independence and organisational skills, which they feel will stand them in good stead for the future. This is a result of the wide range of opportunities open to them for taking personal responsibility and the staff's high expectations of self-discipline. Pupils are highly self-aware and skilled at communicating their feelings and ideas. They are reflective and highly resilient learners who appreciate that they will not succeed at everything immediately, but are happy to take part nonetheless. Pupils' self-knowledge is strengthened by teachers' clear and constructive guidance on how to improve their work and behaviour. Pupils are able to set their own targets with support as a result of leaders' successful embedding of the school's effective assessment programme. Effective transition programmes ensure that pupils move from one stage of the school to another and into their senior schools with ease and confidence.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual development is outstanding. They enjoy the quiet moments of the school day, are calm and empathetic, and demonstrate an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Pupils appreciate the ways in which the school chaplain encourages them to consider spiritual issues, and the regular opportunities for reflection which are provided in assemblies and religious studies (RS) and personal, social, and health education (PSHE) lessons. Pupils enjoy listening to each other in assemblies and break times, when they can read or think quietly. Pupils in Year 8 shared thoughts and ideas about Jesus' crucifixion, while Year 5 pupils' individual projects demonstrated an appreciation of Canterbury cathedral's architecture and the meanings it communicates. Boarders demonstrate spiritual awareness through regular discussions of non-material issues and current affairs. Pupils' poetry and essays demonstrate the value they place on integrity. For example, this was seen in pupils' reflections about the poem 'Dulce et decorum est'. Year 2 pupils respected and understood the view, expressed in 'Siddhartha', that it is better to save a life than to take a life. Pupils place a high value on friendship, saying that the best thing about being in a sports team is the opportunity to make new friends in school and from other schools. They are appreciative of the fact that working with others in class and the boarding houses enables them to become friends with people they would not normally have known well. The school fully meets its aim to develop each pupil's physical, social, spiritual, cultural and intellectual life.
- 4.4 Pupils have an outstanding sense of right and wrong and readily accept responsibility for their actions. Children in the EYFS appreciate the importance of rules and of taking ownership of their actions, and pupils throughout the school demonstrate a strong commitment to codes of conduct and lawful behaviour. This is a result of the excellent example set by staff in this regard. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and entirely respectful. Pupils are able to write and review school and class rules for behaviour in ways that demonstrate their moral understanding. Pupils' appreciation of the importance and impact of ethical codes of conduct is furthered by the curriculum, such as when pupils in Year 1 devised their own commandments, and those in Year 8 discussed the differences between the modern justice system and that of the Victorian era. The vast majority of parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes good behaviour.

- 4.5 Pupils take great pride and pleasure in contributing to the lives of others. Pupils become able to take on a substantial amount of responsibility towards others. This is because the school council, senior boarding team, catering committee and arts committee provide opportunities for pupils of all ages to select charities and to contribute to the school community. Pupils of all ages contribute to the well-being of others in significant ways, such as asking if others need help in EYFS classrooms, or offering discreet support to other pupils in older years, and every pupil in Year 8 takes on a named role. Pupils support local, national and international charities, including a local charity for the homeless and a school in Africa. Younger pupils particularly enjoy entertaining and socialising with visitors from a local retirement home, whilst older ones take on the challenge of planning and running their own stalls for the annual charities fair. There is also scope for developing pupils' contributions to the local and international communities even further.
- 4.6 Pupils show the highest levels of respect towards people from their own and other faiths and cultures. They are interested in and welcoming towards those with different backgrounds. Diversity is respected, accepted and celebrated, particularly within the boarding community, where pupils find that their appreciation of those with different customs grows through getting to know them well. Pupils enjoy listening to their friends speaking in other languages, reading bilingual books in the library, and tasting food from different countries each week in the dining hall. Pupils say that their teachers treat them all the same and encourage them to do likewise. The vast majority of parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school actively promotes respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures is strongly developed through the curriculum, as they learn about the cultures of the languages they study and are taught about the similarities and differences between different faiths.
- 4.7 Pupils make decisions about their learning and behaviour very confidently. The school's high expectations of behaviour and effective pastoral systems provide clear guidance to pupils, who readily follow the guidance given. Pupils have many opportunities to make decisions in their learning. They regularly choose which topic to investigate for project work, which medium to use in art and which method to use when solving a mathematical challenge. Children in the EYFS make daily choices about their activities, while boarders have many decisions to make about their behaviour and personal organisation. Both these groups are well supported in their decision-making by clear expectations and individual support from caring staff. The curriculum and teachers' planning ensure that pupils develop a strong ability to make their own choices in line with the ambitious goals they set for their futures.
- 4.8 Pupils display a high level of social awareness and work collaboratively on meaningful projects throughout the school. This is a result of the many opportunities which are provided for pupils to develop team building skills, such as the induction into the school year and the TASC (Thinking Actively in a Social Context) day for pupils in Year 5, when they undertake a group project, such as planning and budgeting for a whole school event. Pupils in the senior boarding team work as a team to identify and resolve issues in the boarding houses, and the whole boarding community works together to seek ways in which to improve the boarding experience. They are well supported by the school in this, with their questions and requests receiving swift and constructive responses.
- 4.9 Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise, learning about their benefits from the EYFS onwards. The school is assiduous in ensuring pupils maintain a balanced diet, through the provision of plentiful, high-quality, nutritious food and careful monitoring of pupils' choices, all of which are appreciated and understood by the pupils. Boarders value the routines of the

boarding houses which ensure that they engage in a healthy balance of activities. Pupils of all ages have a strongly embedded understanding of how to keep safe within the school grounds and when using the internet. This is because the school provides effective and consistent guidance for pupils about how to stay safe. The school ethos encompasses a respect for the body, mind and spirit, and this is reflected in pupils' understanding and appreciation of what constitutes a balanced lifestyle.