



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CATERHAM PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INTERIM INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Caterham Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Caterham Preparatory School		
DfE Number	936/6567		
Registered Charity Number	1109508		
Address	Caterham Preparatory School Harestone Valley Road Caterham Surrey CR3 6YB		
Telephone Number	01883 342097		
Fax Number	01883 341230		
Email Address	prep-enquiries@caterhamschool.co.uk		
Head	Mr Howard Tuckett		
Chair of Trustees	Mr Jonathan Bloomer		
Age Range	3 to 11		
Total Number of Pupils	277		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (146 boys; 131 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 218
	3-5 (EYFS):	59	
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Kathy Shearman		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	24 May 2011 to 25 May 2011		

PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) schedule for INTERIM inspections*. The inspection is a two-day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in June 2007.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

*These Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

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

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31st August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills	2
The quality of the pupils' personal development	3
The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management	3
3 ACTION POINTS	5
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	5
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	5
4 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE	6
(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	6
(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	6
(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	6
(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	7
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	8

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Caterham Preparatory School educates boys and girls from three to eleven years. All three sections of the school, the senior, preparatory and pre-preparatory departments, are governed by a single body of trustees. The prep school is based in two large Edwardian houses with additional adjacent accommodation. Situated in its own spacious grounds alongside the senior school, the preparatory department was established as a boys' day and boarding school in 1935. It has developed into a school for day pupils with a pre-preparatory department which caters for pupils from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2 in separate accommodation. Most pupils enter the school in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school is academically selective from Year 1, and aims to develop the academic potential of each pupil, fostering mature, caring attitudes and the growth of religious faith based on Christian values.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, a total of 277 pupils were on roll. The pre-preparatory department caters for 59 EYFS children. Most pupils come from local professional families. The few for whom English is an additional language (EAL) require no specialist help. The ability profile of the school is above the national average. Eighteen pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), eight of whom receive specialist learning support from the school. One pupil with a statement of special educational needs is supported by an individual educational plan.
- 1.3 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

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

- 2.1 The pupils' overall achievement is excellent, fulfilling the school's aim for them to attain high academic standards. They make an excellent start in the EYFS and their success in learning is maintained throughout the school. Pupils display excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Their competence in speaking, listening, reading and writing is of a high standard, demonstrated in the written work scrutinised and interviews held during the inspection. Pupils communicate with each other and with their teachers clearly and confidently. Their numerical and scientific skills are well developed. Pupils achieve well in aesthetic, creative and physical development subjects. They enthusiastically take advantage of many opportunities for developing skills in these areas, within lessons and during after-school activities. They make good use of information and communication technology, which is now included effectively in all subjects to support their learning. Pupils achieve high standards, particularly in drama, sport and music, and they perform on a wide range of musical instruments. Individuals and teams are successful in local, county and national competitions in tennis, netball, water sports and chess. Pupils attain academic awards, including scholarships to the senior school and other local independent and maintained schools.
- 2.2 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence available, including the use of standardised tests, it is judged to be excellent. Appropriate provision is made for pupils of all abilities, including those with LDD or EAL, and the most able. All pupils make good progress in relation to their ability.
- 2.3 The pupils' enthusiasm to learn is supported by a broad curriculum that includes French and Latin along with technical and creative subjects. Good provision for those with LDD and the most able pupils is made by additional support staff in the core subjects. A course for pupils' personal, social and health education develops their confidence and a sense of responsibility not only for themselves, but for those around them. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities contributes significantly to pupils' learning and personal development.
- 2.4 The overall quality of teaching is excellent. Pupils' success in academic work, sport and music owes much to the thoughtful, interesting and challenging material used in lessons. The best teaching promotes rapid progress and engages pupils in a variety of learning styles, suited to their individual needs. These lessons are well planned and give pupils the opportunity to learn from each other and to share their opinions and findings. They work successfully on their own and enjoy taking the initiative in project work, which is well organised. On the few occasions observed teaching was less effective, the tasks provided gave pupils insufficient opportunities to show initiative and their progress was restricted. New systems for using assessment to enhance learning are working well, and are leading to effective use of data collected by teachers for use in their future planning. Most marking is thorough, with encouraging comments and advice for further improvement.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.5 Pupils of all ages demonstrate excellent personal development. In line with the school's aims, an environment is created in which all pupils are happy and feel valued, and which fosters their spiritual and moral values, and their sense of responsibility. Pupils are friendly and supportive of each other and are welcoming to visitors. They demonstrate great self-confidence without arrogance.
- 2.6 Pupils have a well-developed sense of the spiritual. In line with the Christian aims of the school, pupils are tolerant of different beliefs and customs whilst remaining fiercely proud of their own school and culture. They sing well in assembly and, in the time given for reflection, they consider the ethical issues presented. The pupils distinguish right from wrong and they have a high regard for the 'Caterham Way', a set of principles which promote good behaviour and consideration of others. Their concern for those less fortunate than themselves is manifest in their imaginative initiatives to support charities and fund-raising events. They accept posts of responsibility with enthusiasm and they carry out their duties well for the common good. Their excellent personal development is underpinned by the respectful yet friendly relationships enjoyed with each other and their teachers.
- 2.7 The pupils' success is strongly supported by the excellent pastoral care that they receive from all staff. Pupils demonstrate excellent understanding of how they are expected to behave. This is reinforced by the clear rewards system, which recognises their talents and achievements. Pupils of all ages are aware of the school's expectations and are keen to fulfil them. In their pre-inspection questionnaire returns, pupils were appreciative of the care they receive.
- 2.8 Great care is taken in health and safety to ensure that the school is a safe and positive environment. Routines and policies are regularly reviewed by a committee, including senior management and trustees. A robust anti-bullying policy and comprehensive procedures for safe guarding are in place. These work well and pupils say that there is always someone to whom they may turn if troubled. School trips and visits are supported by appropriate risk assessment. All planned development of the site has due regard for ensuring access for those with disabilities. Staff are appropriately trained in child protection matters. Routines for fire safety and first aid are well documented and the medical centre has appropriate facilities. Admission and attendance registers are meticulously kept. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure. They are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles, including taking regular exercise. They are enthusiastic about the choice and quality of healthy school meals.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.9 The excellent quality of governance brings strong support to the senior management team and the whole school community. Trustees have been instrumental in establishing the aims of the school and are rigorous in oversight of its achievement. The single board of trustees includes specific members with overall responsibility for each school. Named trustees are trained in child protection and health and safety matters.
- 2.10 All regulatory policies, including those concerning the recruitment and induction of appropriate staff comply with requirements, and the central register for staff appointments is scrupulously kept. Trustees oversee the annual review of policies. Regular visits, including those to classrooms, enable the trustees to know their

school well, experiencing at first hand the quality of education and care that the pupils receive. Considerable investment has been made in the extension and refurbishment of the premises, which are well maintained. The facilities for the teaching of music, art and design are restricted, although the school has plans in place to improve them. The school development plan is drawn up after consultation with staff, pupils and parents. It is regularly reviewed and updated, and illustrates a clear vision for the continued improvement of the school and for its future.

- 2.11 Leadership and management are excellent, and mindful at all times of the needs of pupils and teachers. The leadership has a clear vision for the future development of the school. Since the previous inspection, an imaginative re-structuring of senior roles has resulted in a number of new initiatives. Management is providing good staff training in the procedures for collecting and sharing assessment data, which has enhanced provision for all pupils' ability needs. These are well supported by very able subject leaders who share a continuing quest for improving the quality of teaching and learning. Lesson observations by the management team and between individual teachers have been vital in bringing about the improvements made thus far. An effective system and provision for the professional development of all staff are now established.
- 2.12 Links with parents are excellent, with efficient systems for good communication with individual families and the whole parent body. Parents are made aware of all relevant documentation. The complaints policy is readily accessible, correctly administered and well handled. Parent representatives are appointed for each class and have sufficient opportunities to be involved in the work of the school. In addition, a 'suggestions committee' brings parents' ideas and concerns to the school and these receive immediate attention. Reporting procedures are thorough and well regarded by parents. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority were satisfied with the education that their children receive and the worthwhile values promoted by the school, which they feel is very well managed.

3. ACTION POINTS

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 3.1 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 3.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Implement the plans for the improvement of the facilities for music, drama, art and design.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

4.1 The EYFS is outstanding, fulfilling its aim of encouraging children to become interesting people who are secure and confident in their learning. It meets the needs of all children, who feel valued, safe and happy. Staff show a clear understanding of their roles, and the recording of work and progress made by children is of a high level. The approach in the setting is continually evaluative, ensuring that children have only the best possible experiences. Outstanding links between home and school are appreciated by parents and contribute to their children's development.

4.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.2 The management of the very well-resourced setting is excellent. Meticulous checks are carried out to ensure that children are safeguarded at all times, and all policies meet requirements. Appropriate policies promote equality and eliminate discrimination. High quality resources are effectively used to support teaching and learning. Staff are keen to identify areas for development and incorporate new ideas for future improvement, for example introducing an annual questionnaire for parents and acting on suggestions made. Managers have ensured that teaching assistants receive appropriate training. This ensures that their support of children is excellent. They use careful observations and evaluations which lead to flexible planning to benefit the learning of each child. Staff are readily accessible, and parents feel involved in their children's learning through the excellent handbook, message books and email communications.

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

4.3 The learning environment provided is of outstanding quality. Although the Reception classes are situated on the first floor of the pre-preparatory building, which inhibits free flow to the outside area, every opportunity is made to enable children to make choices and initiate their own activities within the classrooms. Excellent provision is made for creative opportunities and all children are able to play in the magnificent grounds whenever practicable. The excellent wall displays indicate that children acquire a wide range of skills and demonstrate many self-initiated activities, balanced well by those led by adults. Knowledge and understanding of the world, past and present, are reinforced by the time line that runs along the walls of the building and through the travels of 'Katy the Caterham bear'. Children's welfare is effectively promoted at all times. Children are encouraged to keep healthy and to drink plenty of water. The Nursery children thoroughly enjoy the meals served to them in their classroom with a family atmosphere, while the Reception children feel very grown-up eating in the dining hall.

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

- 4.4 Outcomes for children are excellent. The children are enthusiastic learners who enjoy sharing and helping each other. Relationships between adults and children are outstanding. The high adult to child ratio and meticulous planning ensure that each child is treated as an individual. From the moment the register is taken, and Reception children respond in a language of their choice, their educational experiences are all positive. Children are aware of other languages and cultures. They write well and sing tunefully, while some can count in twos, and they all show interest in beginning to read. Children interact well socially and are very aware of the importance of hygiene. From Nursery and through Reception, the children become independent learners. This excellent foundation equips them to achieve success in future stages of their education.

Section 3 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed a sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with trustees' representatives, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Patricia Cullen

Reporting Inspector

Mr Gordon James

Headmaster, IAPS school

Mrs Annabelle Hancock

Early Years Lead Inspector