



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

THE GRANVILLE SCHOOL

MAY 2017



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	The Granville School			
DfE number	886/6029			
Registered charity number	307391			
Address	2 Bradbourne Park Road Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3LJ			
Telephone number	01732 453039			
Email address	secretary@granvilleschool.org			
Headmistress	Mrs Jane Scott			
Chairman of governors	Mr Jonathan Sorrell			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	205			
	Boys	11	Girls	194
	EYFS	53	Juniors	46
	Seniors	106		
Inspection dates	24 to 25 May 2017			

PREFACE

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards following their inspection may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Paul Spillane	Reporting inspector
Miss Naomi Bartholomew	Team inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Cross	Team inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 The Granville School is a preparatory day school for girls aged three to eleven and for boys aged three to four. It was founded in Sevenoaks in 1945, moving to its present site in 1957. Until 1957 the school was run by the founder and her niece. The school is now a charitable trust and is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee, with a board of governors. In addition, a small group of 'members' oversees the proceedings of the governors. Since the previous inspection a new building housing art, design and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has been opened.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to set the highest academic and pastoral standards, and to identify and develop the full potential and natural talents of each individual pupil. It seeks to provide a broad, stimulating and ambitious curriculum which encourages pupils to develop a love of learning. The school also aims to educate its pupils in a happy, caring environment.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come mostly from White British families living in the locality. About one-sixth come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. Nationally standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the school is above average. The school has identified thirty-two pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, twenty-six of whom receive additional specialist help. English is an additional language (EAL) for five pupils, one of whom receives additional specialist support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Data used by the school have identified forty pupils as the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them and for forty-six other pupils due to their special talents in sport, music, art, design and drama.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- The pupils' wholehearted approach to all that they undertake helps them to make the most of their ability.
- Pupils build rapidly on prior attainment and make swift academic progress.
- The pupils are outstandingly articulate and they express themselves confidently in conversation, in the classroom and on the public stage.
- Pupils achieve success and fulfilment across a wide range of activities and pursuits.
- The pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) proficiently, although the use of electronic tablets as an aid to learning is not always fully exploited.

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

- The pupils display resilience, independence and increasing self-awareness in their responses to academic and other challenges.
- Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, and they behave exceptionally well.
- The pupils are confident and co-operative in their dealings with staff and one another.
- Pupils display care and concern for others, across all age groups.
- The pupils recognise that each can make a positive contribution to their school and to the wider community.

Recommendation

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

- Develop the use of electronic tablets throughout the school and across the curriculum.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils benefit from an excellent all-round education. The school meets its aims to enable the pupils to fulfil their potential and cultivate their natural talents in a happy, caring environment. Governors, leadership and staff have created a warm, supportive and close-knit community in which the pupils flourish and develop a real love of learning.
- 3.3 An atmosphere of enjoyable, collaborative endeavour permeates school life, and is reflected in high achievement across a wide range of academic and other disciplines. The school does not enter pupils for National Curriculum tests. As a result, the pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence from observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils confirms this judgement. From the earliest years onwards and in all subjects, academic attainment is considerably in advance of that expected at the relevant levels of age and stage of development. Furthermore nearly all of those leaving from Year 6 gain places to their first-choice senior schools, many of which have demanding entry requirements, with a consistently substantial proportion of such pupils also awarded entrance scholarships. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils also achieve a high rate of progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Less able pupils and those with EAL or SEND make excellent progress as they are extremely well supported both in class and also when receiving specialist support. More able pupils and those with particular talents are challenged in lessons through enrichment and extension tasks, and benefit from setting in some subjects, so enabling them to achieve in line with their potential. All of the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school provides them the opportunity to learn and make good progress.
- 3.4 Pupils at all levels display high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding, achieving excellence in many aspects of their studies. They are exceptionally articulate for their age. Pupils express themselves confidently and cogently in conversation, both in class and on the public stage. In all age groups, their command of a wide and active vocabulary enables them to engage in mature discussion and to make the most of question and answer opportunities in lessons. They are helped to achieve these high standards not only by the encouragement of their teachers but also by the emphasis placed on the importance of reading; the school takes many initiatives to promote reading such as visits by authors, 'book bingo', the provision of varied places to read, and an excellent stock of fiction and non-fiction books. In addition, from the earliest age pupils speak 'in public'; in the EYFS a pupil brought in and talked about a tomato plant as part of the class's study of growing things. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 presented their own poetry, prose and monologues before an audience of parents and staff, performing expressively, entertainingly and with great assurance. Pupils write fluently and accurately, with the presentation of work reflecting pride and care. In English, creative writing is a particular strength. Observed work of high quality in classroom and corridor displays included projects on the Tudors, the Mayan civilisation, and animals and their habitats. Pupils say that they greatly enjoy undertaking these sustained pieces of work.

- 3.5 Pupils develop high levels of competence in numeracy, and they confidently apply prior learning to unfamiliar contexts. Their mental mathematics is strong with adept manipulation of calculations, and they use the appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Pupils respond willingly if asked to think again when they fail to solve a problem at the first attempt. They are proficient in the application of ICT, using electronic tablets for a variety of purposes including historical research and testing themselves in mathematics; the tablets' potential as an aid to learning is not always fully exploited. Pupils achieve very good typing speeds as a result of timetabled touch-typing lessons.
- 3.6 Pupils are helped to achieve academic fulfilment by an academic curriculum, which in accordance with the schools' stated aims is broad and balanced, paying due attention to the creative and performing arts. They benefit from a wide-ranging and well-planned programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE); older pupils enjoy learning about current affairs and most recently acquired an understanding of the democratic processes associated with the forthcoming general election. All of the parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the range of subjects is suitable for their children. Central to the excellent academic standards throughout the school is the quality of teaching; well-prepared lessons are taught with clarity and a high level of professional expertise, with pupils taught increasingly by subject specialists as they move up the school. Pupils enjoy an excellent rapport with their teachers. Pupils respond readily in their lessons which are lively and taken at a brisk pace, combining humour and a lightness of touch with high expectations and often ambitious content. Pupils reported that they appreciate the amount of time their teachers willingly provide outside lessons.
- 3.7 Those pupils with SEND or EAL benefit from having individually prepared education plans, which are of good practical use to subject teachers. These plans are produced in consultation with the pupils concerned, and those interviewed said that they appreciated the tuition they were provided and the consequent progress which they made. The special needs of the most able are also recognised and very well provided for in extension tasks and enrichment activities. All pupils' expected progress is kept on course by systematic tracking and target setting, with regular reviews of effort and achievement, and remedial help for those falling short of expectations. Pupils' learning about aspects of the natural world is enhanced by woodland walks and the gardening club, two ways in which the school has met the recommendation of the previous report stating that it should make more use of its gardens and woodland for educational purposes. Another recommendation of the previous inspection concerning closer liaison in the EYFS has also been successfully met. The Nursery, Transition and Reception classes are now accommodated side by side in the new building, with Nursery and Transition enjoying shared resources and opening, connecting doors, and all aspects of their work and activities are closely linked. A few parents' questionnaire responses indicated that the school does not meet their children's needs, no evidence of inadequacy was found during the inspection.
- 3.8 Pupils are genuinely excited about learning. They apply themselves with determination and can be relied on to work independently. Pupils maintain excellent concentration and application in their lessons, in which they display mature study skills and intellectual curiosity, eagerly questioning and enquiring about and around the subject taught. They benefit from taking responsibility for their own learning when required, for example when evaluating their own work methodically and when responding to their teachers' feedback with comments and targets of their own. Pupils' breadth of knowledge and understanding is greatly enhanced by the large number of visits to places of educational interest, and initiatives such as the Year 6 residential trip to France and the introduction of Latin in that year group. In class, pupils work with evident enjoyment, keen to do well and eager to be challenged. Lively participants in their lessons, they readily offer answers, opinions and ideas articulately and confidently. Their

spirited approach to learning and participation contributes significantly to their successes and personal development. Pupils have a 'can do' approach and are competitive, but are also generous in their appreciation of others' achievements. They work collaboratively in many contexts and listen attentively and sympathetically to one another. Pupils participate in extra-curricular activities in a similarly enthusiastic way.

- 3.9 Pupils' extra-curricular achievement is excellent. Leadership and management, supported by the governing body and by both teaching and non-teaching staff, provide extensive opportunities for pupils to find and develop their aptitudes and interests, thus fulfilling the school's aim to develop their individual talents. The wide range of extra-curricular activities meets the third recommendation of the previous inspection, namely that pupils should have a greater choice. Inspection evidence did not support the view of a very small minority of parents who in their questionnaire responses did not feel that the school provides a good choice of extra-curricular activities. Indeed, all of the pupil respondents affirmed that they can be involved in a good range of activities. In sport, pupils achieve success at local, district, county and national levels in biathlon, netball, rounders, swimming and tennis. Each year, large numbers of pupils achieve excellent grades in examinations in music, speech, ballet and drama, as well as national mathematics challenges. During the inspection, much work of high quality in the creative and performing arts was observed. For example the senior choir, numbering over fifty, gave an accomplished performance of a part song, and excellent displays of art work that adorned the school included portraits, koi kites and Japanese cranes. These achievements not only give pleasure to their creators and to others, but they also instil confidence and a feeling of application rewarded. Through this provision of opportunities and the staff's enthusiastic support and coaching, pupils achieve fulfilment and gain great satisfaction.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' excellent personal development is supported extremely well by the fact that the school is a joyous place in which to work and play, and because they benefit from enjoying the attractive, welcoming and well-maintained premises which the governors and leadership have provided and in which pupils feel happy and safe. All through the school, the walls are alive with colourful displays of pupils' work. In these surroundings, pupils grow in confidence and self-worth, supported by excellent pastoral care. As they advance up the school the pupils become increasingly self-aware, developing an astute understanding of how to improve their own learning and performance. Resilient in their response to academic and other challenges, they understand without fear that mistakes are an essential ingredient in achieving success. The nurturing and supportive ethos of the school means that failure or mistakes carry no stigma. Pupils are made to feel comfortable in the presence of an audience of adults or their peers. Their development of self-confidence is helped, for instance, by the opportunity to perform in informal lunchtime concerts in the school and recitals in the local church. Inspection evidence did not support the view of a very small minority of parents who felt that the school fails to provide an environment which successfully supports their children's personal development.
- 4.3 Pupils are very well schooled in the skills needed to manage difficult situations, and the PSHE programme and assembly themes provide them with the wherewithal to make informed choices. Their appreciation of the way democracy works benefits from the school council which is peopled by elected representatives, and from 'feedback' assemblies which allow the pupil voice to be heard and lead to real results such as the acquisition of the boat in the playground.
- 4.4 Pupils gain spiritual enrichment and an appreciation of non-material aspects of life through a wealth of uplifting sources and experiences which generate awe and wonder. These can range from the EYFS chickens' first egg to house visits to local stately homes. The creative and performing arts coupled with the presentation of many displays around the school provide many inspiring experiences. Pupils benefit, too, from the calm focus on spirituality and reflection in assemblies. They have also taken the opportunity to reflect at significant national moments, not only in the two minute's silence on Armistice Day but also in the minute's silence following a recent major terrorist attack.
- 4.5 Pupils develop a clear sense of right and wrong, and they appreciate the importance of personal values and codes of behaviour. Indeed, the school rules were enhanced two years ago when the pupils themselves devised their own code of conduct. In the younger age groups, pupils create their own set of class rules. Pupils are quick to own up to mistakes and minor misdemeanours. Not only do they conduct themselves with impeccable manners around the school, but their classroom behaviour is exemplary, affording them every opportunity for productive study. They deservedly win courtesy points and badges. In daily life, disciplinary matters are not an issue; only two incidents in the past three years have been serious enough to reach the headmistress. Personable, mature and self-assured in the company of adults, pupils are excellent ambassadors for their school.

- 4.6 The pupils' social education is excellent. As they do in lessons, pupils elsewhere successfully learn to co-operate and to work effectively as team members. On the games field, in clubs and around the school generally, they demonstrate thoughtfulness in the high quality of their collaboration. Those in Year 6 develop their capacity for teamwork in tasks such as a group presentation and a design project. Pupils also benefit from the trust exercises in physical education (PE) classes. In and among all age groups, help is willingly offered and gratefully received. At lunch, pupils sit in mixed-age groups thus learning to get on with everyone, and the new building has been designed to house not only the EYFS but also the art and design departments so that pupils, as they grow older, never lose touch with the youngest. At morning break and lunchtime, pupils take the opportunity to play across age groups and with their younger siblings.
- 4.7 Pupils throughout the school display warm regard, care and concern for one another and for their teachers. All of the pupil respondents to the questionnaire acknowledged that the school encourages them to respect other people. The school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. In this school, pupils from many different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds attend, the pupils co-exist entirely harmoniously and they relish the cultural diversity. Pupils enjoy learning to greet one another and to count to eleven in up to twenty different languages. All the pupils who were interviewed spoke warmly of a very friendly community in which pupils across the age groups get on very well with one another.
- 4.8 Pupils benefit from the opportunities for leadership and service. All members of Year 6 are given positions of responsibility which they take seriously and proudly, and they fulfil an expectation to supervise younger pupils by rota in free time. Charitable ventures which are mainly house-based, with pupils themselves devising means of raising money, awaken them to issues in the wider world and develop their understanding of and compassion for people much less fortunate than themselves. Recent beneficiaries include the local hospice, the church, children's charities and hearing dogs for the deaf. Pupils sing carols at a residential home and contribute to the Christmas shoebox appeal.
- 4.9 All of those pupils who responded to the questionnaire stated that they understand how to keep safe online. In interview, pupils confirmed that they have been regularly educated in the dangers of social media, and that they know what to do if they need help or advice, or if one of their fellows is in difficulty or distress. Especially in PE and PSHE lessons, pupils learn about mental and physical health. A busy programme of PE and games ensures that all pupils benefit from plenty of physical exercise. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and are allowed to bring fruit into school. The choice of food at lunch is somewhat limited, but always includes fruit and salad. Pupils are very well looked after if they are injured or unwell.
- 4.10 When they leave the school, the pupils are extremely well prepared for the responsibilities, opportunities and experiences of the next chapter in their education.