



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

THE MALL SCHOOL

INTERIM INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

The Mall School

Full Name of School	The Mall School		
DfE Number	318/6003		
Registered Charity Number	295003		
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Head	Dr Jeremy Jeanes		
Chair of Governors	Mr Rupert Walker		
Age Range	4 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	308		
Gender of Pupils	Boys		
Numbers by Age	4-5 (EYFS):	36	5-11: 209
	11-13:	63	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	308	
Head of EYFS Setting	Mr David Price		
EYFS Gender	Boys		
Inspection dates	16 Nov 2010 to 17 Nov 2010		

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 November 2006.

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.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL.

- 1.1 The Mall School is a preparatory school for boys aged between four and thirteen, located in Twickenham. It was founded in 1872, but its buildings were destroyed by fire in 1960 so that the building is now modern and purpose built. It has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for two Reception classes, totalling 36 pupils aged four, which, together with Year 1, is housed in a separate building.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, in 2006, the school has built and opened a new theatre, with art and design studios, has developed a scheme for personalised learning and has also developed its assessment procedures.
- 1.3 At the time of this inspection the school had a total of 308 pupils: 36 in the EYFS, 209 in Years 1 to 6, and 63 in Years 7 and 8. Entry to the school at age 4 is non-selective and, on entry, pupils' ability profile is in line with the national average. Pupils represent a range of religious and ethnic groups and are drawn from a wide area of south-west London. The parents come from a variety of mainly professional backgrounds, including many from business and medicine.
- 1.4 The Mall School aims to develop the talents and abilities of each individual boy and to encourage boys to participate in the range of extra-curricular activities on offer. The school aims to enable boys to do their best in everything they undertake and believes it is important to balance the demands of the curriculum with outlets for physical and creative energy. The school is an educational trust and the governing body meets regularly to oversee the school's procedures and activities.
- 1.5 The school has two pupils for whom English is an additional language, both of whom receive support for their English. Forty-six pupils have been identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), of whom nine receive additional specialist support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.6 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 quality of the pupils' achievements is good. Pupils are successfully educated in line with the school's aims and make good progress in relation to their ability. Children in the Reception classes receive a very secure educational foundation.
- 2.2 Pupils write fluently and are extremely articulate, expressing complex ideas confidently. In mathematics pupils of all abilities show a thorough grasp of the topics covered and apply their knowledge to a wide range of problem-solving activities. They have achieved significant success in recent UK Maths challenges. French throughout the main school is of a very high standard for all abilities. Pupils almost always progress to their first choice school.
- 2.3 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They listen attentively, discuss maturely and have high levels of concentration. They take their studies very seriously and complete all work assiduously. During the inspection they were always enthusiastic, well behaved and showed a keen thirst for knowledge. They respond positively to the opportunities they are given to succeed in sports, music, drama and art and pleasing displays of their work are evident throughout the school.
- 2.4 The curriculum is well suited to the school's targets of Common Entrance and Scholarship success. Pupils benefit from specialist teachers with a broad range of experiences and skills. The pupils enjoy their information and communications technology (ICT) lessons but there is insufficient opportunity to use the skills learnt to enhance learning in other subjects. Extra-curricular provision is particularly strong in sport, music and school productions.
- 2.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be good and indicates that they make good progress in relation to their ability profile on entry, which is in line with the national average. Good and sometimes excellent teaching encourages application, effort and cheerful good humour in lessons. There is insufficient setting of different tasks to suit pupils of differing abilities.
- 2.6 A wide range of standardised assessments are used to provide information and to highlight struggling pupils, for whom interventions are then planned. Tracking of pupils' progress is thorough but target-setting by pupils and staff, recently developed and successful in Year 8, has not yet been extended to other year groups.
- 2.7 Marking is monitored by heads of department and the senior management team but the quality remains uneven. The best practice recognises strengths, applauds effort made and points to the next steps that will ensure future progress.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.8 The personal development of pupils is good with many excellent aspects. Pupils are extremely articulate, pleasant, polite to adults and each other and have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- 2.9 Younger pupils learn the wonder of nature in their classrooms and reflect this in their art and nature study. They are given opportunities to consider the extra dimension a

spiritual life gives in their religious studies programme. The importance attached to the life of the spirit by religions and cultures other than their own is considered by the older pupils in activities in personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils of all ages show good levels of self-esteem, self-knowledge and self-confidence.

- 2.10 The pupils consider their responsibility for themselves, their school community and the needs of the outside world, and play a large role in helping new pupils and younger ones settle into the school. They develop their moral sense in their discussions on the need for rules and good behaviour, elect representatives to the school council and charity committee and older pupils hold a range of positions of responsibility with the school. All pupils take pride in the school's work within the community and the wider world. Through the curriculum, pupils learn important lessons about their country's institutions and their rights and responsibilities, and receive valuable information about healthy lifestyles. A variety of cultures and faiths, and tolerance towards each other, are also taught through the PSHE programme. These lessons are reinforced by a wide range of school visits, speakers and themed assemblies which help to broaden the pupils' range of experiences.
- 2.11 The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good, except in respect of the central register of appointments, which indicates that formerly some staff were able to take up their appointments before all the appropriate clearances had been received. The system has been completely overhauled, and all personnel in the school are now fully compliant with the legislation regarding safe appointment. Effective policies are in place, including all necessary procedures to reduce risk from fire and while on school trips. Fire practices are regular, and properly logged. Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding pupils and in first aid, and sick pupils are well provided for in the medical room; all accidents, treatment and medication are appropriately recorded. Pupils are appreciative of the school meals, and expressed enthusiasm for them in their questionnaire responses. Inspectors agreed with them, and noted the provision of healthy eating options. Registers are efficiently maintained, and the school has an appropriate three-year policy for disabled access.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.12 The governance of the school is satisfactory, with many good features, and contributes to supporting the school's aims in both the academic and personal development of the pupils. The governors have various committees through which they keep in close touch with the school's activities. Through financial and strategic planning, provision of both human and material resources is efficient. Governors now fulfil their responsibilities for child protection, welfare, health and safety.
- 2.13 Leadership and management are effective, in line with the school's aims of striving for high academic standards and good personal development. Leadership is strong, as seen in clearly defined senior management posts and heads of department. Budgets are delegated to departments, and are managed effectively. An extensive and effective staff appraisal system is in place, and professional development is fostered both within the school and through external agencies. The procedures for keeping the central register of appointments have been thoroughly revised and strengthened to ensure compliance with legal requirements.
- 2.14 The school is purpose built, and classrooms and specialist rooms are clean, tidy and appropriate for their uses. The newly completed theatre, with art and design studios, is a very useful addition to this well-resourced school.

- 2.15 The school has effective links with parents, who indicated in their questionnaire that they were very satisfied with the curriculum, standards of behaviour, the school's attitudes and values, information availability, governance and management of the school. They were less happy with the help provided to pupils requiring learning support, both LDD and able, gifted and talented (AGT), and with the range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors agreed with parents about activities and provision for AGT pupils. However, inspectors judged that the needs of LDD pupils are covered well in the personalised learning programme the school has developed. Parents receive detailed reports twice a year, some, but not all, of which include targets for improvement. Parents also receive the school's monthly newsletter, and have the email addresses of key staff, for quick and easy contact.
- 2.16 Parental concerns are dealt with informally, either by letter or by discussion with the appropriate member of staff. No concerns have been taken to the formal stage in the last few years, although the school has a comprehensive complaints policy.

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 does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore must:

- Ensure that all recruitment checks are carried out on staff before their appointment [Regulation 19(2)(a) and (c); and 19(3) under suitability of staff and proprietors, and, for the same reason, Regulation (7)(a)] under welfare, health and safety].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

3.2 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Encourage pupils to use the techniques they learn in ICT lessons in all appropriate areas of the curriculum.
2. Extend to the whole of the main school the procedures for target-setting currently used in Year 8.
3. In the EYFS, continue the development and use of the outdoor area for both recreational and learning activities.

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 Overall the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding: the needs of the children are very well met. They develop personally and socially throughout the academic year so that they move to Year 1 with a solid foundation. The management and staff meet regularly to review progress and plan ahead. Continuous improvement takes place so that existing excellent standards are sustained. For example, since the last inspection an improved induction procedure for new pupils has been introduced and considerable improvement in arrangements for access to the outdoor area has taken place, although this still has potential for further development.

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

4.2 Leadership and management are outstanding. Well-informed staff help all children to make good progress in their learning and personal development. Regular meetings for self-evaluation take place to establish priorities. Safeguarding procedures are secure and all the required checks are in place. The staff know how to deal with a safeguarding issue. Policies to promote equality and eliminate discrimination are implemented consistently and effectively. Parents are strongly supportive of the EYFS and take a keen interest in their children's education. Classes are well equipped and efficient use is made of the resources to promote effective teaching and learning.

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

4.3 The quality of the provision in the setting is outstanding. Adults' secure knowledge of the learning and development and welfare requirements promotes children's learning and their social and physical well-being. The children have some opportunity to choose what learning activities they undertake: the activities room in the basement is a particularly useful resource in this respect. Although children have direct access to the garden there is less frequent use of the outside space as a teaching resource. Children's welfare lies at the heart of the school's objectives and is exceptionally well promoted across the setting.

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

4.4 Outcomes for children are outstanding. Children achieve levels above the national average, being able to speak clearly and listen attentively, and read and write simple sentences; they develop mathematical ideas and understand fundamental concepts of quantity, size and shape. The recent introduction of a phonics scheme benefits their literary skills. They enjoy their lessons and the school as a whole. They learn about the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from the firm but congenial atmosphere which adds to their sense of security and well-being. They develop self-confidence which typically makes them approachable and responsive.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed a small sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior 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 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 Jenny McCallum

Reporting Inspector

Mr Anthony Lowery

Director of Studies, IAPS school

Mr James Macpherson

Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector