

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL  
(ISC)**

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**INSPECTION OF**

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE SCHOOL – JUNIOR BRANCH**

**By the**

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE  
(ISI)**

**on**

**November 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2005**

**MAIN REPORT**

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# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## INSPECTION REPORT ON

### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE SCHOOL – JUNIOR BRANCH

The senior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of the School	<b>University College School – Junior Branch</b>		
DfES Number	<b>202/6018</b>		
Address	<b>11 Holly Hill, Hampstead, London NW3 6QN</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>020 7435 3068</b>		
Fax Number	<b>020 7435 7332</b>		
E-mail Address	<b>info@ucsjb.org.uk</b>		
Name of Headmaster	<b>Mr K J Douglas</b>		
Name of Chair of Governors	<b>Sir V Blank</b>		
Age Range	<b>7-11</b>	Gender	<b>Male</b>
Number of Pupils	<b>231</b>	Number of Boarders	<b>None</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>November 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2005</b>		

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 162(A) of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2005, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comments on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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## **1. MAIN FINDINGS**

### **Overall Summary**

- 1.1 University College School, Junior Branch provides an education that enables pupils to achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils benefit significantly from very good quality teaching, very good provision for their personal development and a high level of care and support. The most positive ethos results in very good relationships, good behaviour and appropriately enthusiastic attitudes to work. The school is well led and managed, very well resourced and very good links have been established with parents. However, the role of subject co-ordinators is not yet fully developed, the school lacks a fully effective system to monitor and evaluate its work, and pupils' work is not always well marked.

### **What the School Does Well**

- 1.2 The school has many strengths of which the following are the most significant:
- pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science, largely as a result of very effective teaching, a well-planned curriculum and very good resource provision;
  - the very good ethos and programme of extra-curricular activities underpin the very good provision made for pupils' personal development;
  - pupils have very good attitudes to their work, they behave well and are very well cared for by the school's pastoral systems;
  - the school is well led and managed;
  - very good links have been established with parents.

### **What the School Should Do Better**

- 1.3 The school has some minor shortcomings in the following areas:
- the roles and responsibilities of the subject co-ordinators are not yet fully developed;
  - the school lacks an effective, structured system to monitor, review and evaluate its development;
  - pupils' work is not always well marked.

### **Standards of Attainment and Progress in Subjects**

- 1.4 The standards pupils attain are high in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment in national tests at the age of 11 is also high in relation to their abilities. Results in national tests over the last three years in English, mathematics and science are far above the national average for all maintained primary schools. Throughout the school, pupils make rapid progress in English, mathematics and science in order to attain high standards by the end of Year 6.
- 1.5 High standards are also reached in literacy and numeracy skills by the time pupils leave the school. These skills are appropriately applied to other subjects. As a result, they have a positive impact on other areas of the curriculum. However, the application of pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills to other subjects is variable, ranging from good in some subjects to sound in others.

- 1.6 Pupils requiring learning support, as well as those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in most lessons, with particularly good progress being made when the work set is specifically geared to their needs. Where pupils make good or very good progress, high quality teaching is the main contributory factor.

### **The Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and their Behaviour**

- 1.7 The very good quality of pupils' attitudes to their work and their good behaviour are major strengths of the school. Pupils display a good deal of common sense and responsibility. They are considerate and very polite. Older pupils, in particular, protect and help younger ones. This fosters the school's characteristic family atmosphere. In lessons, pupils apply themselves purposefully to their work. They sustain their concentration most of the time. When asked to do so, pupils work well in pairs or in small groups. Pupils' research and study skills are developing satisfactorily.

### **The Quality of Teaching**

- 1.8 The quality of teaching is very good. On occasions it is excellent. Such high quality teaching contributes directly to the high standards pupils attain. Classes are well managed and teachers provide a good combination of control, encouragement and support. In the majority of lessons, the expectations that are set are appropriate, but in a few lessons the work does not match the capabilities of all pupils and, as a result, some are not expected to complete their work at a sufficiently rapid rate. The activities set in most lessons are very good and appropriate to pupils' learning needs. The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is very good and this makes an important contribution to the work pupils produce.

### **Other Aspects of the School**

#### **Attendance**

- 1.9 Pupils' attendance is very good. Registers are called at the appropriate times and are safely stored. Most pupils are punctual when arriving at school. Attendance and admission registers are completed in accordance with statutory requirements.

#### **Assessment and Recording**

- 1.10 The systems to assess and record pupils' progress are good. Tests are set at appropriate intervals and pupils are assessed for attainment and effort. National Curriculum tests are taken at the end of Year 6 and these are externally moderated, enabling the school to compare its pupils' performance with those in other schools. Good assessment and recording systems are in place in many subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science. Pupils' work is marked regularly in most cases, although the amount of detail in the marking varies and pupils are not always given the precise help they need in order to continue to improve.

#### **Curriculum**

- 1.11 The curriculum provided by the school is good. It is broad and, apart from one or two anomalies related to history and geography, is appropriately balanced. It incorporates all subjects of the National Curriculum. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is appropriately covered throughout the school as a discrete subject, as also are French and drama.

- 1.12 In almost all subjects the policies and schemes of work are good and they are reviewed on a regular basis. Teachers' medium- and short-term planning is good. The curriculum of the school is greatly enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

#### **Teaching and Non-teaching Staff**

- 1.13 The number, qualifications and experience of the teaching and non-teaching staff are good and enable the full coverage of the curriculum offered. The sound adult-to-pupil ratio contributes to the rapid progress pupils make. Non-teaching assistants also make a valuable contribution to pupils' education. Good procedures are used for appraising teachers' work and helping them to keep their own professional development up to date. The programme of teacher training is becoming more closely linked to school development planning. All appropriate regulatory checks on staff are carried out.

#### **Resources for Learning**

- 1.14 The overall provision of resources to assist pupils' learning is very good. Resource provision for pupils needing learning support is good. ICT provision is very good for the teaching of the subject and this provision is becoming more effectively used to support other areas of the curriculum. The school makes good use of visits out of school. These are usually related to different areas of the curriculum. Where resources are used well by teachers, they have a most positive impact on pupils' learning and progress.

#### **Libraries**

- 1.15 Library provision is very good. The range and availability of the library stock supports pupils' learning, attainment and progress well. The library is very good and provides a useful resource to support teaching and learning. A refurbishment of the book stock is regularly made. In addition, good stocks of books are available in many classrooms and in some subject rooms. Sound opportunities are provided for pupils to use the library for personal study and research.

#### **Premises and Accommodation**

- 1.16 The premises and accommodation are good and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Rooms are pleasant, adequate in size and, together with the good displays of pupils' work, make a most attractive learning environment. Specialist facilities are used for a number of subjects. Outdoor games facilities are sound and these, together with other very good off-site games facilities, provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their games' skills.

#### **Links with Parents and the Community**

- 1.17 The school has established very good links with its parents and good links with the community. Good systems are used to inform parents of their children's progress. The reports parents receive are good and care is taken to inform parents, not only of their child's successes, but also what their child needs to do next in order to continue to improve. A small proportion of parents who responded to a questionnaire distributed prior to the inspection were not satisfied with the information they received about the school and how their child was progressing. However, inspection findings show that the information parents receive is of a good quality overall. Almost all parents were delighted with the curriculum offered, the provision for pupils requiring learning support, the good behaviour of the pupils and the range of extra-curricular activities offered. The school has good links with the wider community and pupils are always willing, through various charities, to help those less fortunate than themselves.

**Pupils' Personal Development**

- 1.18 The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Teachers encourage the development of personal responsibility and social awareness and, in many subjects, pupils are encouraged to think about and discuss appropriate values and responsibilities. Several subjects promote pupils' sense of awe and wonder and the curriculum generally promotes good social and moral values. Effective measures are taken to promote appropriate discipline and behaviour. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and for their cultural and spiritual development it is good.

**Pastoral Care**

- 1.19 The school makes very good arrangements for the pastoral care and support of its pupils. They work and play in a safe environment. Pupils report that they can easily approach any member of staff if they are worried. The academic support and guidance offered to pupils is good. Other support and guidance is of a high quality. All-round provision for the welfare and safety of pupils is also very good. Effective guidelines are followed for health and safety and suitable risk assessments are regularly carried out. Levels of supervision are good, both in the building and outside. All necessary measures have been taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. The school complies with all regulations for child protection.

**Governance and Management**

- 1.20 The governance, management and leadership of the school are good. The overall school's governing council has a sound knowledge and understanding of the developments and future needs of the Junior Branch, although they are less well informed about curricular developments. The head teacher, under the overall leadership of the headmaster of the senior school, has a good understanding of the needs of the school and its pupils. He provides the leadership necessary to achieve the high standards, good behaviour and personal development towards which the school aims. The school's aims are appropriate and reflected in many, though not all, of its policies, values and practice.
- 1.21 The school does not have a sufficiently detailed plan to cover future developments over the next few years. Although it does have a senior management team and curriculum leaders for all subjects, the roles and responsibilities of some are insufficiently clear and in need of further review, in order to enable the work of the school to be monitored more effectively.
- 1.22 The ethos of the school is very good and reflects a commitment to establishing a warm, friendly environment, appropriate academic standards and very good relationships with pupils. General administrative procedures are well known by all staff. The school runs very smoothly.

**Achievement and Quality in Activities**

- 1.23 The quality and range of extra-curricular activities are very good and make a significant contribution to enhancing pupils' overall experiences and the quality of education they receive. Such activities are greatly appreciated by parents and pupils alike.

**Progress Made by the School since its Last Inspection**

- 1.24 The school has made very good progress since its last inspection and all areas identified at that time have been addressed.

**Compliance with the Regulations for Registration**

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

### **Actions Required for Compliance with the Regulatory Requirements**

- 1.25 No action is required.
- 1.26 The school is asked to address any issues highlighted in '*What the School Should Do Better*'. These are set out as recommendations for the school in Section 2 of the report.

## **2. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The main recommendations are listed below. The numbers in brackets refer to relevant paragraphs in the main body of the report. The school should now:

R1 Develop further the role of subject co-ordinators by:

- providing additional opportunities for all subject co-ordinators to monitor the quality of education pupils receive in their subject over a period of time;
- enabling them to develop systems to help and support colleagues in the teaching of that subject;
- establishing a programme for the review and development of the curriculum and other aspects of school life over a three- or four-year period. (Paragraphs 7.5, 7.6, 7.7)

R2 Ensure that an appropriate marking policy, that indicates to pupils not only how well they have done but also what they need to do to continue to improve, is adhered to by all. (Paragraphs 5.8, 5.15, 7.3, 8.8, 8.14, 8.23, 8.38)

### **3. INTRODUCTION**

#### **Characteristics of the School**

- 3.1 University College School, Junior Branch, is situated in purpose-built accommodation near to the centre of Hampstead village in North London. Pupils, who are all boys, come from a relatively wide variety of social backgrounds, but most have one or both parents working in the professions. Most pupils come from Hampstead and the surrounding areas.
- 3.2 At the time of the inspection there were 231 pupils on roll aged between 7 and 11 years (Years 3-6). The school adopts a selective approach to entry at all ages. When they start school, pupils' average ability is above that of the national average, based on the assessments of the pupils at the age of seven and eight in particular. Where pupils are performing in line with their abilities, the standards they attain are expected to be above those of all maintained primary schools.
- 3.3 The school has identified 18 pupils as needing learning support and two have a statement of special educational need. In accordance with the school's foundation, no record is kept of a pupil's race or religion. Approximately a third of pupils have English as an additional language and around 10 per cent are not fully bi-lingual. At the age of 11, almost all pupils transfer to the senior school.
- 3.4 The school aims to promote the Benthamite principles of liberal scholarship. It seeks to achieve academic excellence for its pupils. In its policy of taking no regard to race or creed, the school aims to foster a sense of community in its pupils alongside tolerance and respect for the individual. It also aims to teach the value of commitment and the joy of achievement. Self-discovery and self-expression are seen as high priorities. Kindness, helpfulness, honesty and the ability to work independently are seen as most important qualities for the school to nurture.
- 3.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout the report to refer to year groups in the school.

## Key Indicators

3.6 Externally audited National Curriculum Assessments at age 11 (Key Stage 2).

Subject	Most recent year		Average for the last three years	
	Level 4 or higher (%)	Level 5 or higher (%)	Level 4 or higher (%)	Level 5 or higher (%)
English	100	83	100	75
Mathematics	100	85	100	86
Science	100	97	100	95

3.7 Attendance for Summer Term 2004 – Spring Tem 2005

	Authorised	Unauthorised
Percentage absence	1.8	0

3.8 Exclusions Over the Previous 12 Months

Temporary exclusions	Permanent exclusions
0	0

## **4. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

### **Attainment and Progress**

- 4.1 Pupils in Year 6 achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment in national tests is also high in relation to their abilities. The results that pupils have attained in national tests over the last three years in all three subjects have been far above the national average for all maintained primary schools.
- 4.2 In mathematics, pupils' skills in numeracy are very good and they attain particularly high standards in this aspect of the subject. In science, pupils attain high standards in all elements of the subject, although they attain slightly better levels in the life processes element than the others. In English, pupils attain high standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Throughout the school pupils make rapid progress in English, mathematics and science.
- 4.3 Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are also high. As a result, they have a most positive impact on the work pupils produce in other subjects. The application of pupils' ICT skills to other subjects, however, is more variable. In many subjects it is good, although in a small number it is less well developed.
- 4.4 Throughout the school, pupils who receive learning support, as well as those for whom English is an additional language, make similar amounts of progress to their peers. This is as a result of work, particularly in English and mathematics, being specifically set to match their needs. In a small number of lessons where this is not the case their progress is more limited. The same also applies to higher attaining pupils.
- 4.5 In their response to the questionnaire carried out prior to the inspection, parents indicated that they were pleased with their children's standards and progress. Inspection findings support these positive views.

### **Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and Behaviour**

- 4.6 The quality of pupils' attitudes to their learning is very good. Their behaviour is good and they are most competent learners, given their ages, abilities and aptitudes.
- 4.7 In almost all lessons pupils are well motivated and co-operative. They show enthusiasm for their work and apply themselves well. Most pupils settle quickly to their tasks and are able to sustain their concentration. They work well collaboratively, for example in Year 5 geography, when working together to produce crystals as part of their study of igneous rocks. Pupils relate very well to each other and listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. They are able to take turns when necessary, for example when using a vacuum forming machine with the technician in design and technology. The very good relationships that exist between pupils, teachers and all adults in the school make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' academic learning and growth in personal and social confidence.
- 4.8 All pupils, particularly the older ones, develop a sense of responsibility in terms of their actions towards other pupils, thus helping to maintain a most appropriate atmosphere in the school. This is noticeable, for example, in the way that older pupils look after younger ones during the day and at lunchtime. Such practice not only enhances pupils' sense of responsibility, but also sets a good role model towards which younger pupils may aspire. In addition, such good practice helps to foster positive attitudes amongst pupils towards helping other people, attitudes which are so evident amongst many of the pupils.

- 4.9 Pupils are encouraged to take a variety of responsible roles, for example by conducting guided tours of the school for prospective parents on open days. Pupils are very positive in their attitudes to learning. They are most interested in their work, for example when some Year 6 pupils undertook extra research following a lesson on tooth decay. Pupils respond keenly to questioning in lessons. Most pupils work hard to produce the work expected of them and they respond well to praise and incentives such as stickers, merits and commendations. However, the quality of presentation of pupils' work is variable, ranging from very good in some subjects to barely satisfactory in others. Pupils are competent learners and, when given the opportunity in subjects such as history and geography, have the capacity for personal research.
- 4.10 Good behaviour is evident in lessons, around the school, in the playground and at lunchtime. Pupils are sensible when moving around the premises and when playing at break times. They are pleasant, kind and helpful to each other, their teachers and visitors. The inclusive, caring ethos of the school is a significant factor in the creation of a community where pupils feel happy and secure and are able to learn in an environment of mutual respect.

### **Attendance**

- 4.11 Pupils' levels of attendance are very good and most are punctual when arriving at school. Daily registration is carried out in a routine and systematic manner and a record of absentees, efficiently maintained by office staff, ensures that absences are monitored and reasons for absence clearly established. Good arrangements exist for keeping registers safe and accessible during the school day. Attendance and admission registers conform to regulatory requirements.

## 5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### Teaching

- 5.1 The quality of teaching is very good overall and on occasion is excellent. It contributes most effectively to pupils' levels of attainment and progress. Such teaching also has a positive impact on the good behaviour shown by pupils in most lessons, as well as in the very positive attitudes they have to their work. In all lessons seen, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory; it was good in almost a third of lessons and very good in just over half. The quality of teaching in four lessons was outstanding. Good and very good teaching is evident in many classes in the school and in nearly all subjects.
- 5.2 In the few lessons where the quality of teaching was not as strong, the lesson proceeded at too slow a pace. Consequently, one or two pupils, particularly the higher attaining ones, did not complete sufficient work, given their capabilities. In addition, work was not always sufficiently well matched to some pupils' abilities as teachers had taken insufficient account of their assessment of pupils' previous work when planning the lesson.
- 5.3 Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and are able to give pupils challenging work and thus raise the standards that they attain. However, this is not always the case. Whilst the specialist teaching of ICT is very good in subject-specific lessons, the development of ICT skills in a small number of subjects is more limited. The school is aware of this and has plans to give teachers further opportunities to increase their own knowledge and skills through in-service training.
- 5.4 In most lessons, teaching meets the needs of pupils across the range of abilities within the class. In some lessons, a variation of material or teaching method is used, in order to cater for pupils with different abilities. The relatively small size of teaching groups often enables teachers to give individual attention to those pupils who are experiencing difficulties. Pupils who receive learning support are well catered for by work in most lessons. However, in a small number of lessons the lack of work specifically geared to their needs means that they do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- 5.5 The best teaching is characterised by several key features. Teachers plan their lessons well so that pupils are aware of what they are required to achieve and learn. Teachers introduce lessons in a way that catches pupils' imagination and gives them a clear focus to the lesson. Similarly, they ask clear, concise questions which challenge pupils' understanding and require them to articulate their thoughts appropriately. This was particularly noticeable in an excellent Year 3 science lesson which began with the revision of what conductors and insulators are and how electrical circuits are made. Pupils were then asked to make simple circuits in order to test different materials to discover whether they were conductors or insulators. Pupils were keen and eager to ask and answer questions, largely as a result of the enthusiasm and encouragement of the teacher. All made very good progress as a result.
- 5.6 In a large proportion of the very good and excellent lessons, questions were asked that were appropriate to the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding. Wrong answers were not criticised but skilfully turned into right answers, by requiring pupils to answer a series of other questions. This not only encouraged pupils, but also ensured that, by the development of their logical thought-processes, pupils reached the correct answers. On many occasions, the teacher's appropriate and well-judged intervention consistently challenged the pupils and enabled them to make rapid progress during the course of the lesson.
- 5.7 Very good lessons are well structured and pupils are encouraged to complete their work at a brisk pace. Teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. In many good

and very good lessons, teachers also manage their pupils well. In addition, they expect high levels of behaviour and use resources well to enhance their pupils' learning. Some or all of these factors were present in many lessons where pupils made good progress and displayed high standards of attainment.

- 5.8 Teachers' lesson planning is good overall. Where it is good, plans are well structured, clearly showing what pupils are required to do and learn, as well as highlighting what different ability groups will be doing. In some cases, however, planning is sound but gives no clear indication of what can be expected of the pupils. Furthermore, a small number of teachers do not always assess and mark their pupils' work sufficiently well in order to plan the next stages of work for them. Homework is set regularly and is used appropriately as an extension of the work going on in the classroom.
- 5.9 The parents' responses to the questionnaire carried out prior to the inspection showed that a high proportion of them are well satisfied with the quality of teaching their children receive. Inspection findings agree with these positive views.

***Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for teaching?***

- 5.10 Yes.

**Assessment and Recording**

- 5.11 The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is good overall, being particularly strong in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. The outcomes of assessment are appropriately used to inform future planning in most subjects.
- 5.12 Suitable assessment procedures are chosen and used to gauge pupils' progress and attainment and to screen for any difficulties at the start of their school career and at regular intervals throughout.
- 5.13 All pupils take the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. In addition, optional National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science are used as school examinations in Years 3, 4 and 5. Such tests are used to compare pupils' standards with those being attained by similar aged pupils nationally. In addition these tests help teachers to monitor aspects of pupils' progress across the age range and ensure that key curriculum areas are being covered. The information produced is recorded well. The outcomes of any assessments made through tests are used to identify areas of weakness in individual pupils so that further support may be given, or the curriculum adapted, in order to meet the needs of pupils.
- 5.14 Teachers know their pupils well and have a good knowledge of their day-to-day and weekly progress. Record keeping of ongoing assessment is frequent in most subjects. Pupils requiring learning support have individual educational plans and, in the best practice, work set for them in lessons is appropriately matched to their needs.
- 5.15 A good marking policy is in place but it is not fully adhered to by all staff. As a result, there is a lack of consistency in approach. The variability in the quality of teachers' marking ranges from very good, where pupils' work is constructively marked with appropriate suggestions for improvements indicated, to others where few comments are made. On some occasions work is unmarked and this is unsatisfactory. In these cases pupils have little understanding of how well they have done or what they need to do to improve.

## Curriculum

- 5.16 The curriculum offered by the school is good. The school bases its curriculum on the subjects of the National Curriculum but makes additions and modifications to meet the specific needs of its pupils and to use the specialist strengths of the staff to best advantage. It is successful in meeting these objectives.
- 5.17 The curriculum is broad although it is slightly unbalanced. Pupils are taught in excess of the nationally recommended number of hours for pupils of this age. However, there are some slight anomalies within the curriculum; for example history and geography receive a smaller time allocation than is usual in a school of this type and this leads to some difficulties if pupils are absent for religious festivals and miss the only time in the week when these subjects are taught. The school does not cover religious education as a discrete subject. However, aspects of the curriculum usually covered by that subject, for example the cultural, moral and ethical elements, are more than adequately addressed in other subjects as well as through the ethos of the school. The curriculum is well planned and the subjects offered to the pupils contribute effectively to their progress and learning and prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- 5.18 Detailed policies and effective schemes of work promote continuity of education for the pupils. These documents are reviewed annually by the subject co-ordinators and by the deputy head teacher, who has responsibility for the oversight and direction of the curriculum. Teachers' medium- and short-term planning is good for most subjects but such good practice does not extend to all. Productive liaison between the heads of department in the senior school with their counterparts in the Junior Branch takes place in some subjects but this good practice does not extend to all subjects. In the best practice, for example in PSHE, the head of department in the senior school visits the Junior Branch to teach Year 6 pupils, thus ensuring continuity of learning when they transfer at the end of the school year.
- 5.19 The curriculum also provides equal access for all pupils to learn and to make progress. Suitable provision is available for the two statemented pupils and there is appropriate liaison with the local education authority. The provision for those pupils requiring learning support is good. Most teachers are aware of the individual pupils' needs. However, the most able are not always challenged by work that is appropriately geared to their specific needs. Steps have begun to be taken to address this and a draft policy to cater for the gifted and talented pupils is under discussion.
- 5.20 Extra-curricular provision is very good with a wide range of clubs and other activities being available. Pupils appreciate and enjoy these activities as well as educational visits and special events; they make a significant contribution to the breadth of the curriculum that pupils receive. This enrichment deepens pupils' learning. The residential geographical field trip contributes significantly to pupils' academic progress as well as to their social development.
- 5.21 In a survey of parents carried out before the inspection, virtually all expressed satisfaction with the curriculum and with the extra-curricular provision. Inspection findings agree with these positive views.

### *Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the curriculum?*

- 5.22 Yes.

## Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

- 5.23 The qualifications and experience of the teaching and non-teaching staff are good and enable full coverage of the curriculum; the number of staff is sound. Teaching and support staff are very effectively deployed and contribute significantly to the quality of education provided and the high standards that pupils attain.
- 5.24 A considerable amount of high quality specialist teaching takes place in many subjects throughout the school and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Support, administrative and domestic staff also make very significant contributions to the smooth running of the school and to the welfare of all pupils. In addition, learning support staff, together with the technician and librarian, make considerable and effective contributions. A team of mothers also provides valuable help in Year 3 by hearing individuals read.
- 5.25 The appraisal system is good and staff are appraised every two years or every year if deemed necessary; it includes the completion of a self-evaluation form, teaching observations and a discussion with the head teacher. Training needs are identified through appraisal, personal choice and school-based needs. School-based in-service training is carried out successfully at the beginning of each term and individual courses are available as required. Members of staff have attended a wide range of courses in recent years, including attendance at a primary science conference, meeting the needs of able and talented children, using interactive whiteboards and child protection. An appropriate annual budget is set aside for staff development.
- 5.26 An informal policy covers the induction of new staff: it includes partnering with a mentor and regular meetings with the two deputy head teachers and subject co-ordinators. The school also participates in the Independent Schools Council teacher induction panel scheme when it has newly qualified teachers.
- 5.27 All members of staff have contracts and all adults working in school have been checked with the Criminal Records Bureau.

### *Does the school meet the regulatory requirements for the suitability of staff?*

- 5.28 Yes.

## Resources for Learning

- 5.29 The quality of the provision of resources is very good and they are used effectively. Resources for ICT, English, science, mathematics, drama, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education (PE) and games are very good and for the other subjects they are good.
- 5.30 The provision of resources in the ICT room is very good. Twenty-one networked computers and an overhead projector provide an exciting learning environment. Computers, overhead projectors and interactive whiteboards in the science laboratory and in many classrooms also enhance the pupils' opportunities for learning. ICT is used well to support learning in most, but not all, subjects. It is particularly well used in subjects such as English, geography and science. All classes use the ICT room. A filtered internet connection allows access to a wide range of educational sites. Digital cameras are also used in some subjects and provide a useful resource for recording a wide range of pupils' work.
- 5.31 Non-ICT resources, located in classrooms or specialist curriculum areas, are good and are used effectively to support learning. Resources to assist pupils who require learning support

are also good. The hall provides a good, well-used resource for assemblies, activities and lunches. The drama studio is an excellent resource and greatly assists pupils' creative development. Other specialist facilities for music, physical education and games, art and design, design and technology and science are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils benefit greatly from sharing some of the facilities in the senior school, such as the swimming pool, sports centre and drama theatre. The school playing fields, located off-site, are also a very good and well-used resource.

- 5.32 Subject co-ordinators are responsible for the organising and monitoring of resources. They have an allocated budget and any requests for major items are discussed with the head teacher.
- 5.33 In all areas of the curriculum, the very good provision of resources is used effectively to support pupils' attainment, progress and the quality of their learning.

### **Libraries**

- 5.34 Library provision is very good. The school has one main library which is centrally located. It is carpeted, comfortably furnished and stocked with a very good supply of books, tapes and videos.
- 5.35 The range, availability, quality and accessibility of the library stock are very good and support pupils' learning. Approximately 6000 books are available and these are augmented by supplies from the schools' library service, by music CDs, audio cassettes of books and plays and videos of a factual nature. The supply of fiction books in the main library is supplemented by well-stocked form libraries. Books are in good condition and are attractively displayed. A recognized system is used to catalogue and sort books and pupils understand the arrangements. All books are listed on a database which speeds up access to the lending process; borrowing takes place with thumbprint recognition. An electronic record is kept of the pupils' borrowing and this can be accessed by teachers.
- 5.36 Reference books are clearly arranged by subject and this enables easy access for independent study. Six computers for internet use are available to encourage pupils' individual research. Newspapers and periodicals allow pupils to read about current events. All classes use the library once a week.
- 5.37 The library is very well managed by a qualified librarian who is assisted by parents and pupils. It is open throughout the day and is well used by pupils. The library serves as a good resource for personal study and the special displays and reminders of events, past and present, encourage pupils to read and research widely both for information and for pleasure.

### **Premises and Accommodation**

- 5.38 The school buildings, accommodation and other facilities are good and enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. The premises are attractive and generally well maintained; they support teaching and learning and contribute positively to the personal development and welfare of the pupils.
- 5.39 The school occupies purpose-built accommodation, some of which has been recently refurbished, such as the science laboratory. Classrooms are adequate in size and are airy and well lit. Corridors are bright and sufficiently spacious to enable easy movement around the school. The very good quality of displays enhances the physical environment.

- 5.40 Specialist facilities for art and design, design and technology, drama, music, science and ICT are very good. The hall is well used for assemblies, activities and lunches. Toilets and the cloakroom are adequate and fitted with appropriately sized fittings. However, the cloakroom is in need of refurbishment.
- 5.41 Outdoor facilities on the school's main site are sound. The playground is adequate and the recent installation of a rubberised surface means that it can now safely be used for some games activities. Good use is made of the restricted site and, where the site restricts pupils' activities, the off-site playing fields provide very good opportunities for physical education and games.

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

- 5.42 Yes.

**Links with Parents and the Community**

- 5.43 The quality of the school's links is very good with parents and with the community it is good. Parents who responded to the questionnaire, sent out prior to the inspection, showed a high degree of satisfaction with the school. They were particularly happy with their child's curriculum, the provision for those requiring learning support, the help and guidance provided for their child, the good levels of behaviour and the range of extra-curricular activities. A small minority of parents had concerns about the information they received about their child's progress and about the amount of homework received. The inspection findings agree with parents' positive comments and find that the information given to parents is very good and that the homework given to pupils' is appropriate for their age and abilities.
- 5.44 Reporting procedures are very good; parents receive written reports twice a year and are invited to a consultation evening. Parents are able to arrange further meetings with the head teacher and staff if they have concerns. Reports are clear and contain useful information for parents about what work their child has covered and how well. They also contain comments on how they can improve further.
- 5.45 Other communications with parents are most effective and very good links are forged with parents from the beginning. For example, parents of Year 3 pupils are invited to an informal meeting with form teachers very early in the autumn term. The handbook for parents gives helpful information about the school. The informative website and twice termly newsletters describe the range of the school's activities. They include calendar dates and also celebrate achievements and successes. Notice boards outside the school also keep parents up to date with events and adverts. Homework diaries are signed by parents each week and are an extra means of communicating on matters of daily life at school. An effective text messaging system exists for the headmaster to contact all parents and staff in case of emergency or when reminders are necessary.
- 5.46 Parents are appropriately involved in school life. A very supportive 'Parents' Guild' provides a variety of well-supported social and fund-raising events which enable parents to become involved in the broader life of the school. Recent equipment purchased for the school includes two interactive whiteboards, a clock for the outside of the school, funds to start a 'garage band' and sports equipment. Parents give full support to dramatic and musical productions, accompany pupils on educational visits and provide support at sports fixtures. An appropriate complaints procedure is in place. Concerns can be discussed via an 'open door' policy or by parents making an appointment.

- 5.47 Links with the local community are good. The school supports many charities, particularly those with local connections, for example by providing play equipment for long-stay child patients at a nearby hospital, a ‘wobbly bridge’ for the playground of a special needs school and funds for deaf children. Sports matches are played with other independent schools and facilities are let occasionally.

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

- 5.48 Yes.

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

- 5.49 Yes.

## **6. PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PASTORAL CARE**

### **Pupils' Personal Development**

- 6.1 Throughout the school, the overall provision for the personal development of all pupils is very good. The school provides a very good range of activities to ensure the successful personal development of the pupils and to enable them to learn together. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are happy and enthusiastic about school life. A very positive, caring ethos is evident. The older pupils value this and make their own contribution to it.
- 6.2 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Several areas of the curriculum promote the development of pupils' spiritual awareness and their responsibilities to each other and to other things such as the nurture of the planet. This is evident in the programme of assemblies where music and the presentation of awards link the spiritual with the celebration of achievements. In some lessons and in many areas of the school, pupils develop a good understanding of self and the wonder of the natural world. Some aspects of the English curriculum for example, promote a feeling of wonder and awe, which is reinforced by several extra-curricular activities. The singing by the senior choir in assembly provided a highly spiritual moment for the whole school. The caring and compassionate ethos of the school is helping pupils to develop a sense of fulfilment beyond the material aspects of life.
- 6.3 The provision for moral development of pupils is very good. The PSHE curriculum is a positive vehicle for promoting a moral development programme for pupils of all ages. This has contributed towards establishing a code of practice which distinguishes between right and wrong. The consistent and good management of behaviour with high expectations is evident. Emphasis is always placed on the positive. The allocation of merits and recommendations rewards good citizenship and many awards presented recognise the achievement of individual pupils. Members of staff provide very good role models and prepare pupils to accept responsibility.
- 6.4 The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. The school fosters a strong sense of belonging, where everyone is valued. The house system helps pupils adjust to a smaller community than the whole school and stimulates a sense of responsibility in older pupils. Pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and to become involved with the wider community, for example carol singing in a local hospice. Very successful fund raising for charity is achieved, with pupils always encouraged to make a personal contribution. Recent projects have involved support for a children's hospital unit and a local hospice. The curriculum offers opportunities for collaborative work, in subjects such as music and science. Pupils relate well to each other and have very good relationships with teachers.
- 6.5 The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The curriculum provides a variety of opportunities for pupils to learn how to live in a multi-cultural society. Pupils are taught to value each other, as well as cultures and traditions which are different from their own. This occurs in a number of subjects, including music and art and design. The programme of visits includes Tate Modern and the Science Museum and these very effectively extend pupils' cultural horizons. The programme is enhanced by visiting theatre groups, authors and poets, such as Anne Fine and performances, such as that of '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*' at the senior school. The pupils understand and share the values promoted by the school. They know that much is expected of them and are clearly proud to be part of this community.

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

6.6 Yes.

**Pastoral Care, including Welfare and Health & Safety**

6.7 The school's provision for the pastoral care, support and guidance of its pupils is very good. It fosters the personal and academic development of the pupils effectively. The school's aims promote the pastoral care, support and guidance of all pupils. The school has policies, supported by daily practice, which ensure that the welfare of the pupils is promoted and safeguarded. Health and safety regulations are met.

6.8 Good quality pastoral support is evident throughout the school. Staff members enjoy good, mutually respectful relationships with their pupils and know them well. Pupils readily turn to staff members for help and advice and the school policy encourages access to whichever member of staff the pupil feels most comfortable with. Good liaison among staff members and regular meetings ensure that concerns are swiftly dealt with. Pupils speak well of their teachers and appreciate the care that is given to them. Relationships among the pupils are very good and several examples were evident of spontaneous acts of kindness and consideration being given to a pupil with a serious disability. Pupils are treated with equal respect regardless of ethnicity or culture. They receive much encouragement and praise from the staff and, as a result, they are confident and happy. The systems to celebrate success are clearly understood and appreciated by pupils and they treasure their certificates of commendation.

6.9 Systems to monitor academic progress are good in most subjects and particularly strong in English, mathematics and science. However, in some subjects such systems lack sufficient detail and consistency. Staff know their pupils well and provide them with good, appropriate support during lessons. A learning support teacher provides helpful guidance for those pupils that need extra help and good provision is made for the two statemented pupils. Pupils' successes in the non-academic areas of school life are celebrated by the awarding of certificates.

6.10 Measures to promote discipline and good behaviour, including procedures to guard against and deal with bullying, are effective. The expected rules of conduct are well known by pupils and are reinforced by the staff. The school's ethos promotes tolerance and understanding and plays a significant part in the establishment of civilised and considerate behaviour. Pupils are boisterous and energetic in their play but a good level of supervision ensures that active games remain under control.

6.11 The school has effective child protection procedures and all staff members have had in-service training in this area and are aware of the need to be alert to warning signs of child abuse. The head teacher is the nominated officer and works with the local authority social services department to ensure that he is up to date in his training and knowledge. The school makes appropriate checks on all those working with the pupils.

6.12 The school premises are secure and arrangements for dropping off and collecting children from school, in what is a cramped and difficult entrance drive, are well thought out and appropriately supervised.

6.13 The school aims to foster a sense of community and this is promoted by the non-denominational assemblies. Charities are supported and pupils are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves and to take active steps to help them by fund raising.

Measures to safeguard and promote all pupils' health and well-being are very good and the school nurse has a central role in welfare arrangements. Health and safety issues are covered by a thorough and well-documented policy. Procedures ensure that the policy is fully implemented. A health and safety committee meets regularly. It reports to senior management, who in turn report to the school's governing council.

- 6.14 An annual major risk assessment survey of the school is made by an outside agency and the resulting report is submitted to the council of the school. Regular risk assessment forms are completed for visits, coach journeys and any hazardous activities. Procedures for dealing with accidents are suitably handled and carefully recorded. Six qualified first aiders are on the staff. The school has an appropriate policy for administering and storing medicines. Documents confirm the school's compliance with fire protection and prevention regulations and all staff have recently received fire safety training.
- 6.15 Good quality cooked lunches and salads are available and served to the pupils by staff who take careful note of whether any pupils are eating too much or too little. Considerable efforts are made to promote healthy eating.

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

- 6.16 Yes.

## **7. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Governance and Management**

- 7.1 The overall governance, leadership and management of the school are good. Certain aspects are particularly good, notably the ethos of the school, the management of the pastoral care provided for pupils and the systems in many subjects to ensure that pupils attain good standards. The school is not so effective in the implementation of systems to monitor all aspects of the quality of education it offers in all subjects over a period of time.
- 7.2 The school is governed by an overall body recognised as a council. The council has a sound oversight of the work of the Junior Branch, being well informed about ongoing and major developments by the head of the senior school and head of Junior Branch. As a result, they are appropriately informed about major projects for the long-term development of the school. Their role in being involved in ongoing curricular developments in particular is much more limited and, as a result, they are not so well informed in this area.
- 7.3 The school aims are most appropriate and rightly identify a principal objective as ensuring that pupils attain high academic and personal standards. In addition, they are well supported by good long-term planning, which is inter-linked with the long-term planning of the whole school. The aims are reflected in many of the policies of the school, though not all; for example the marking policy is not implemented consistently in practice.
- 7.4 The head teacher is directly responsible to the head of the whole school. Good links are maintained between the two and consultation is regular and effective. The head teacher has a good understanding of the needs of the school and its pupils. He has a very good vision for the school based upon good standards of pupils' behaviour and personal development. He is very keen that pupils should make good progress and attain high academic standards. In addition, his vision for the development of the school is based upon a very good understanding of the priority needs of the pupils. Furthermore he has a leadership style that motivates both staff and pupils.
- 7.5 An effective senior management team make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school. Consequently good management systems and structures are being developed. All subjects have co-ordinators who are responsible for the running of their departments and monitoring its work. At present the roles and functions of these co-ordinators are, in some subjects, insufficiently well developed, particularly in monitoring in detail the progress pupils make in their particular subjects.
- 7.6 A formalised, consistent structure to monitor the work of the school is lacking and whilst some monitoring of teaching quality, teachers' planning and pupils' work is carried out, it is not done in a systematic or coherent way. The head teacher and staff co-operate well in the decision making process and regular meetings are held. As a result of such meetings and detailed policy documents, communication systems in the school are good.
- 7.7 An appropriate school development plan for the whole of University College School identifies general developments for the Junior Branch. However, a system for the review and development of the curriculum and other aspects of school life over a three- or four-year period is lacking. Similarly there is little indication of the link between development planning and the effect that any spending made on resources is having on the levels of pupils' attainment and progress.
- 7.8 The school has a very good positive ethos that reflects a commitment to establishing a warm, friendly environment as well as very good relationships with pupils. In this it is very

successful. Indeed, consultation with parents and many pupils showed that pupils really enjoy coming to the school. Good systems monitor the deployment of human and material resources in most areas of the school; as a result most areas of the curriculum are very well resourced. Plans are currently being discussed with regard to accessibility to the school for disabled pupils.

- 7.9 Daily administrative procedures and routines are well known by staff and pupils, and both are efficient and effective. Members of the school's administrative staff make a very good contribution to the smooth running of the school as a result of their competency and efficiency.

## 8. ACHIEVEMENT AND QUALITY IN SUBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

### Achievement and Quality in Subjects

#### English

- 8.1 Pupils' standards in English are high in Year 6. Their attainment in national tests is high in relation to their abilities. Results in national tests show pupils' standards in the subject to be far above the national average for all maintained primary schools.
- 8.2 In Year 6, pupils are most confident in speaking and listening; they listen attentively to their teachers and express their ideas clearly. A lesson with Year 6 based on a consideration of *'The Watchers'* by Walter de la Mare, for example, led to a discussion which was intelligent and sensitive. Prompted by the teacher, pupils were able to analyse the poem and understand why it was so evocative. The pupils listened to one another's views and developed their understanding, so that all were able to recognise the depth and full meaning of the poem. One pupil observed that it was 'interesting to note the different levels of philosophical content' and then went on to describe them. By Year 6, pupils also read fluently and expressively to their teachers and to each other, and their thinking and reasoning skills are developing well. In writing, standards are also high.
- 8.3 All pupils, including those needing learning support and those who have English as an additional language, make rapid progress from Year 3 to Year 6 in all aspects of English. In Year 3, whilst speaking and listening skills are good, handwriting is of a variable but improving quality. Very good teaching builds on the skills pupils have when they enter the school so that, by Year 5 for example, they are able to understand a factual report about Dr Crippen's murders, which led to an expression of firm views about capital punishment. Key features in the text were recognised and when pupils were asked to write their own police reports, based on witness statements, they appreciated the significance, in their evidence analysis, of changes in tense and the chronology of events. By discussion they were able to separate fact from opinion and showed good powers of deductive reasoning. As a result of high quality teaching, the standard of written work in Year 6 is high, with pupils understanding grammar well. The technical abilities and advanced language skills of the pupils enable them to write and speak with insight and fluency. Imagination and creativity are apparent in their written work, and skills of grammar, spelling and handwriting are very good. By Year 6 most pupils are able to use colons and semi-colons correctly and this enhances their writing.
- 8.4 Regular reading lessons ensure that teachers can easily check on the fluency of reading and on the quality of literature that pupils choose. Michael Morpurgo is a popular author amongst many high quality authors that pupils read. In fact, one Year 6 pupil chose to read *'Rebecca'* by Daphne du Maurier. Books chosen display a growing maturity in pupils' reading tastes. Spelling is tested regularly and most pupils achieve high standards by the time they leave.
- 8.5 Pupils' learning and attitudes to the subject are very good. They also behave well in lessons. Pupils throughout the school are enthusiastic about the subject and they are keen to learn. In English and in drama lessons, pupils work hard, listen with interest to one another and concentrate well. They are used to working collaboratively or in pairs and they gain much from the sharing of their ideas.

- 8.6 Drama is a separate subject with its own subject co-ordinator. However, the two departments work closely together and this co-operation is bringing benefits to the pupils. For example, whilst Year 6 were auditioning for a production of *Macbeth*, the English teachers used the opportunity to introduce a study of Shakespearean sonnets. By giving pupils a greater familiarity with 17<sup>th</sup> century English, they were able to gain full value from their study of the play and the poems.
- 8.7 The quality of the teaching in English and drama is very good. Work is well planned and objectives are clearly set. The teaching is sensitive, thorough and, on occasions, inspired with work well matched to pupils' abilities. Expectations are high and lessons proceed at a very good pace. Teachers use resources well to support and encourage their pupils' learning.
- 8.8 A good policy and a scheme of work are in place. They assist teachers' planning and enable consistency to be achieved while allowing for individual interpretation by different teachers. Assessment and recording procedures are very good and individual pupils' assessments are used to inform future, pupil-specific, planning. Most work is marked promptly and comments are positive and encouraging. Some, but not all, teachers offer advice on how pupils can improve their work. However, this advice is often too general to be effective as an attainable target for the pupil concerned. Resources are very good and all year groups within the school visit the library once a week. The drama studio is well equipped and parents help with the making of costumes for plays.
- 8.9 The leadership and management of English are very good. Human and material resources are managed very well. Teachers are monitored and observed in the classroom. Frequent formal and informal discussions take place and records are kept of meetings. Pupils' work is often scrutinised and standards are under regular review.

### **Mathematics**

- 8.10 Pupils achieve high standards in mathematics in Year 6. Pupils' attainment in national tests is high in relation to their abilities. Results in national tests at the age of 11 over the last three years have been far above the national average for all maintained primary schools.
- 8.11 In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of place value, number processes and the properties of shapes, for example, rhombus, parallelogram and trapezium. They are also able to interpret and construct different types of graphs and mathematical diagrams. They are accurate with approximations and understand the relationship between percentages, fractions, decimals and ratios. Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities make rapid progress in their knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- 8.12 The quality of pupils' attitudes, learning and behaviour is very good overall. Pupils are most positive about mathematics; they are very well motivated, apply themselves well and are able to sustain their concentration. For example a Year 5 class worked calmly and with occasional discussion with neighbours or their teacher, when using mirrors to draw reflections of shapes in two axes. On almost all occasions they behave well in class.
- 8.13 The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and in most lessons work is appropriately matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils are managed well and have very good relations with each other and with their teachers. Challenging questioning techniques, used in many lessons, encourage pupils to make very good use of mathematical language; very good teaching points are used to aid pupils' memory, for example when a Year 5 class was reminded to work out the co-ordinates of a point by "going along the corridor and up the stairs". The best lessons begin with a short mental mathematics warm-up session in preparation for more advanced work and this quickly motivates the pupils.

- 8.14 The quality of assessment and record keeping is good and it is well used to influence the future planning of the curriculum, as well as to analyse individual pupils' needs. Marking is variable in quality, ranging from very good to sound. The best has positive comments and suggests ways in which pupils can make improvements. Good cross-curricular links exist although many are informal and opportunities can be missed: for example, a Year 5 class could have benefited in a design and technology lesson from previous knowledge of angles in triangles, when designing a 'net' for packaging a sandwich. Very effective use is made of assessment to spot individuals who need extra support and to track their further progress.
- 8.15 The curriculum has a good balance of work on number, algebra, using and applying mathematics, shape and measurement, and data handling. The scheme of work contains very good medium- and long-term planning. Open-ended investigative work is a regular part of mathematics topics and enables pupils, especially the most able, to progress well in their use and application of the subject. For example, the Year 6 project in which pupils plan a virtual holiday for a family involves many aspects of the curriculum and reinforces the relevance of mathematics for example, in finance, travel, accommodation arrangements, medical matters, insurance and weather.
- 8.16 The subject is well led and managed; the co-ordinator has the opportunity to monitor colleagues' teaching and pupils' work, in order to share the good practice of many teachers and to monitor the standards of teaching and learning. Mathematics is very well resourced with books and equipment. ICT is well used by pupils and by some teachers but its use is sometimes limited by the lack of sufficient interactive whiteboards.
- 8.17 Many good displays of work in classrooms and corridors enhance the school environment as well as providing interest and opportunities for the reinforcement of recently covered work.

### **Science**

- 8.18 Pupils achieve high standards in Year 6. Their attainment in national tests is high in relation to their abilities. Results in national tests over the last three years have been far above national averages for all maintained schools.
- 8.19 In Year 6, pupils have a well-developed understanding of biological, chemical and physical knowledge and have extended their investigative skills. They are able to carry out complicated practical tasks independently, such as the work they were doing on chromatography. They know that scientific ideas are based on evidence that must be obtained fairly and recorded systematically, using appropriate scientific language to reach conclusions. Pupils develop their ICT skills well. They use them with increasing sophistication to carry out presentations of their work for peer and teacher assessment.
- 8.20 All groups of pupils make rapid progress. In Year 3, pupils are able to construct a simple electrical circuit and test a variety of materials to see whether they are conductors or insulators and record their results accurately. The skills of scientific enquiry form an integral part of the teaching and are well developed. These are successfully built upon, so that by Year 5 pupils are able to devise an experiment and complete a practical investigation to compare the cooling rates of water in insulated and non-insulated flasks. They are then able to record their results on computer and use their findings to explain the difference in the cooling rates. Throughout the school, pupils develop an increasing awareness of the scientific approach of prediction, fair testing, accuracy and analysis of results, as well as the use of correct scientific language. As a result of this rapid progress throughout the school, pupils attain high standards.

- 8.21 Pupils' learning, attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils are well motivated, enjoy their lessons and are good learners. They respond well to their teacher by answering questions and offering observations. They collaborate very well when working in pairs or small groups. In Year 6, they are well able to use disclosing tablets to highlight plaque on their teeth and are able to discuss the relative effectiveness of their teeth brushing styles. They communicate their thoughts clearly and are responsive to each other's views, thus improving their depth of knowledge.
- 8.22 The overall quality of the teaching is very good, ranging from good to excellent. Teachers give clear objectives and use effective question and answer sessions to enthuse and challenge pupils. Lessons are very well planned with a good balance of practical investigations and written recording. Good demonstrations help pupils to understand the concepts being taught. Investigative and observational skills are nurtured and activities are well chosen to challenge and extend the thinking of pupils across all ability ranges. Extension tasks in a Year 6 class for example, where pupils produce their own display work on dental hygiene, ensure that high achieving pupils are well catered for. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and resources are very well used to support pupils' learning.
- 8.23 The assessment and recording of pupils' work are very good. However, the quality of the marking of their work is variable. Where it is very good, it encourages pupils' progress and gives them a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. Some marking is less informative and, as a result, is less helpful to pupils. Policies and schemes of work are very good and have a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and progress. Assessments are made regularly. The records kept are used effectively to plan for the pupils' future work.
- 8.24 The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The well-planned curriculum ensures a good balance and breadth across the various aspects of the subject. It is used successfully to establish a link with other subjects and is enriched by visits, such as a residential trip for Year 6 pupils to a local study centre, which add to the pupils' educational experiences. The co-ordinator monitors the teaching of the non-specialist teachers and they meet regularly to review and plan pupils' work. The recently refurbished science laboratory, with very good ICT provision, is an excellent resource, enabling an emphasis on practical and investigative work and contributing significantly to the high standards achieved.

### **Short Subject Reports**

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

### ***Art and Design***

- 8.25 Four lessons were observed; a range of work on display around the school, as well as photographic records of past work and sketchbooks, were scrutinised. Discussions also took place with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.26 The quality of teaching was very good and lessons were very well planned. Teachers had very strong subject knowledge, were able to give clear demonstrations and answered pupils' questions patiently. Through good questioning they ensured that all pupils understood what to do, gave encouragement so that pupils had the confidence to experiment with newly learnt techniques and provided positive reinforcement of good behaviour.

- 8.27 Pupils were very positive about the subject; they were very well motivated, applied themselves well and were able to sustain their concentration. On almost all occasions pupils behaved well in class.
- 8.28 The very good scheme of work is appropriate for all pupils, ensures that lessons are well matched to pupils' abilities and that good use is made of the available time. Written and photographic records are kept of the assessment of pupils' work, so that their progress is clearly monitored.
- 8.29 Good use is made of small rooms, especially by splitting classes in half. Rooms are well lit, have well planned storage facilities and contain areas for the high quality display of pupils' work. The very good provision of equipment, along with the good range of available books, ensures that pupils have a rich choice of sources of inspiration.

### ***Design and Technology***

- 8.30 Four lessons were observed; a range of work on display around the school, photographic records of past work, and sketchbooks were scrutinised. Discussions also took place with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.31 The quality of teaching was very good and teachers had strong subject knowledge. They were very well supported by the technician who helped individuals and supervised the use of machinery. Teachers moved appropriately around the class and checked on safety aspects, discussed designs and gave patient revision sessions and encouragement.
- 8.32 Pupils were very attentive to their teachers and asked for help if they did not understand. They were most appreciative of the work of others. They worked well both independently and collaboratively. Pupils were enthusiastic about the subject and behaved well in class.
- 8.33 The curriculum and scheme of work are very well planned; for example, the food technology section builds carefully on past knowledge each year to ensure good continuity of learning. It fits well with the catering department's provision of nutritious meals.
- 8.34 The very good provision of equipment, together with a good range of books, provides plenty of inspiration, information and areas for research. Good use is made of small rooms, especially by teaching half classes. Assessment is regular with photographs of past work, and appropriate comments showing the continuity and progression in pupils' learning.

### ***Geography***

- 8.35 Four lessons were observed and a range of pupils' work was scrutinised. Discussions were also held with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.36 The quality of teaching was good. Lessons were well planned with clear objectives set for the pupils. Previous lessons were built upon, as seen when Year 5 pupils developed their knowledge of igneous rock formation by experimenting with crystal growing to test the hypothesis that temperature affects growth. In all lessons pupils were able to use their knowledge of geographical terms well. A variety of teaching techniques was used and good use was made of an interactive whiteboard. ICT was well used to support pupils' learning.
- 8.37 Pupils' behaviour was good and they were enthusiastic about the subject. Most of the time their interest was well maintained. On a limited number of occasions pupils grew restless and a number of them strayed off task.

- 8.38 The policy and scheme of work are good. However there is no clear approach for assessing pupils' work. Marking is sound. Comments are encouraging although sometimes too general to allow pupils to rectify specific weaknesses.
- 8.39 Resources are good. Visits or field trips are an important feature for each year group and the residential visit to a field study centre by Year 6 led to some good follow-up work and enhanced pupils' social and moral development.

### ***History***

- 8.40 Four lessons were observed and a range of pupils' work was scrutinised. Discussions were also held with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.41 The quality of teaching was good. Lessons were well planned. Activities were well chosen and the pace of lessons was good. In a Year 5 class, for example, pupils took on the role of a Roman general planning an attack on a Celtic hill fort. Their completed plans clearly showed that they had understood how to use the weapons at their disposal as well as their knowledge of the layout of the fort. Resources were well used to support pupils' learning. Good support was given to those pupils who had different educational needs.
- 8.42 Pupils were well motivated and enthusiastic. They co-operated well and were happy to seek advice and guidance as necessary. Year 3 pupils thoroughly enjoyed their role-play activity of enacting an Aztec ceremony of sacrifice. Pupils were keen to participate in discussion and were good learners.
- 8.43 The policy and schemes of work are good. Good assessment and recording systems help pupils' understanding and progress in the subject. Resources to support teaching are good and include a good range of topic material and reference books. Good use is made of outside visits, such as a local guided walk looking at evidence of Tudor times in Hampstead.

### ***Information and Communication Technology (ICT)***

- 8.44 Four lessons were observed and pupils' work as well as curricular documentation was scrutinised. Discussions were also held with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.45 The quality of teaching was very good. The teacher had very secure subject knowledge. Lessons were very well planned and organised and challenged pupils of all ability levels. The pace of the lessons was good, pupils were well motivated and the work challenged them sufficiently. This was particularly noticeable in a very good Year 6 lesson planning a multimedia presentation using sound, graphics, video text and hyperlinks about a project related to 'All about Me'.
- 8.46 Pupils enjoyed the lessons. They settled down to work quickly and were confident with the procedures for logging on and opening programs. They listened well and co-operated well with a partner when required, for example when Year 3 were entering data about the characterisation of monsters they had created.
- 8.47 The curriculum is very well planned and systems to assess and record pupils' progress are well developed. Resources are very good and include an ICT suite and numerous programs to teach the learning of skills. Good use is made of ICT to support the curriculum in most but not all subjects.

***Music***

- 8.48 Three lessons were observed together with two assemblies and a choir practice. Curriculum documents were scrutinised and discussions also took place with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.49 The teaching was very good. Lessons were very well planned and challenged pupils of all abilities. As a result of the teacher's very strong knowledge and good demonstration skills, pupils were very clear about what was expected of them in their learning. Very good support was given to all pupils when learning and singing songs. This was particularly noticeable in an excellent Year 6 lesson, where pupils were required to sing, in three parts, songs they had learnt from '*Les Miserables*'. High expectations by the teacher ensured that a high quality performance resulted.
- 8.50 Pupils were keen to participate in lessons as a result of the highly skilled teaching they received. They had good constructive relationships with their teacher and each other. They developed their listening skills in the subject and were fully involved, responding quickly to new learning tasks.
- 8.51 The scheme of work and teacher's planning are very good, and together with very good provision for extra-curricular activities, promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress are good and well used to inform the teacher's future planning. Many pupils are learning to play an instrument and a significant number are successful in external examinations.

***Modern Foreign Language - French***

- 8.52 Three French lessons were observed and pupils' work and other documentation were scrutinised. Discussions were held with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.53 The quality of the teaching was sound; lessons were well prepared and conducted in French. Grammar, vocabulary learning and correct French spelling and punctuation were emphasized. Teaching was enthusiastic and encouraging and pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed the competitive games that were introduced and the French songs that they sang. Good use was made of worksheets. When answering questions, pupils were confident in their French speaking. French plays, performed by Year 5 pupils, are a popular annual feature. ICT use was apparent in wall displays and in pupils' books.
- 8.54 Pupils were mostly well behaved and co-operative but when the pace of lessons slowed, some became restless and lost focus on the task. This was particularly apparent with a Year 6 class where the pupils were not sufficiently well motivated by a word game that had been introduced to them.
- 8.55 Planning is good and shows progression in the development of pupils' learning. Resources are good, with many of the worksheets and visual aids produced by the co-ordinator. The assessment and recording of pupils' work are good. Pupils' weaknesses are analysed and steps are taken to strengthen them.

***Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)***

- 8.56 Three lessons were observed and pupils' work was scrutinised. In addition, discussions were held with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.57 Teaching was good, with a close rapport existing between pupils and their teacher. Lessons were appropriately planned with work matched to pupils' ability levels. In a Year 6 lesson for example, pupils were asked to consider how the world's resources are distributed. By the

end of the lesson they understood that people in many parts of the world are living without basic amenities. Lessons proceeded at a good pace and resources were well used by teachers to advance pupils' learning.

- 8.58 Pupils responded well and had a positive attitude to their work. They behaved well. They also listened attentively and communicated their opinions articulately. Pupils were keen to participate in discussions and were considerate of the views of their peers.
- 8.59 Strong links with other subjects helped to develop pupils' understanding in the subject. In science, for example, Year 6 pupils had discussed the effects of solvent abuse. Issues arising from current events were introduced if appropriate.
- 8.60 The subject policy, scheme of work and assessment procedures are good and appropriate for the pupils, thus promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Special events, such as a programme of activities about safety for Year 6 pupils, effectively support learning.

### ***Physical Education (PE)***

- 8.61 Four lessons were observed and curriculum documents were scrutinised. Discussions took place with the subject co-ordinator.
- 8.62 The teaching was very good. Lessons were typified by careful planning. This built on the skills pupils had and developed them carefully through well-structured lessons. What they were going to learn was clear and carefully presented to them. Expectations were high and teaching was enthusiastic and encouraging. Pupils worked well as a result of the teachers' very good subject knowledge. This was particularly noticeable in Year 5 and 6 games lessons where pupils were very well taught the skills of passing and catching in rugby.
- 8.63 The attitudes, learning and behaviour of the pupils were also very good. They were responsive and keen to learn. All pupils involved themselves fully in each activity. They co-operated well and encouraged one another, for example in hockey where pupils encouraged each other when passing and intercepting the ball.
- 8.64 A good policy and a scheme of work promote progress in all elements of the taught PE programme. The formal assessment and recording systems are sound. The resources that are available are very good. The programme of extra-curricular activities has a significant impact on the physical development of the pupils. Inter-house, inter-school and regional competitive sports opportunities enhance the rich programme.

### **Achievement and Quality in Activities**

- 8.65 The range and quality of the activities provided are very good. They contribute effectively to the life of the school and enhance pupils' experience and the quality of education they receive. A significant number of pupils participate in clubs, before school, at lunchtime and after school. A high proportion of pupils have instrumental music lessons in school, taught by peripatetic staff. Many of these pupils attain high grades, for their ages, in music examinations.
- 8.66 The balance between traditional sporting and non-sporting activities is very good. The school offers a wide range of activities which enables pupils to broaden their interests, develop talents and extend their skills. Junior and senior choirs perform regularly. Pupils have the opportunity to join the orchestra, saxophone and brass groups, the Klezmer band and a number of Year 6 pupils attend the 'garage band', composing music on computers. Other activities include chess, with pupils reaching the finals in regional competitions, war

games club, cookery club, photography, theatre arts and karate clubs. Fencing is popular, with pupils winning national awards and competing in European competitions. Sports teams compete regularly against other schools and are very successful.

- 8.67 Pupils also have the opportunity to extend their knowledge through educational visits. These include a Year 6 residential field trip and Year 4 visits to the British Museum and the Planetarium. All pupils benefit from regular visits to school by outside organisations such as theatre groups and presentations on poetry and journalism. Special days are organised for all year groups, for example ‘puzzle day’ for Year 3 and ‘thinking and philosophy day’ for Year 5. Pupils’ participation and successes in activities, such as drama productions, are celebrated in attractive displays on notice boards around the school. Parents are kept well informed of events through school newsletters. However, pupils’ involvement in school activities is not recorded in school reports.
- 8.68 Many members of staff, supported by instructors from out of school, contribute their considerable time and enthusiasm to run activities and to organise visits and special events. Their contribution means that pupils’ learning right across the curriculum is greatly enhanced.

## **9. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- 9.1 The inspection was carried out from November 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> 2005. All subjects of the curriculum were inspected and all members of the teaching staff were observed teaching. However, the size of the team did not permit all subjects to be reported in full. The following subjects do not have full reports in Section 8: art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, French, music, PSHE and PE. The inspectors visited 64 lessons or parts of lessons, examined extensive samples of work by pupils of different abilities in each year and held formal discussions with these pupils as well as informal discussions with other pupils. They attended two assemblies and six registration sessions. They observed five extra-curricular and sporting activities. They held discussions with 14 teaching and non-teaching staff at various levels in the school. They analysed the responses of 104 parents to a questionnaire distributed in advance of the inspection. They examined a wide range of documentation made available by the school.

### **List of Inspectors**

Mr G Nunn	Reporting Inspector
Mr H Davies-Jones	Former Headteacher IAPS School
Mrs J Jenkins	Former Headteacher IAPS School
Mr L Fairclough	Headteacher IAPS School