



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**SHREWSBURY HOUSE**

**INTERIM INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Shrewsbury House

Full Name of School	<b>Shrewsbury House</b>
DCSF Number	<b>314/6002</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>277324</b>
Address	<b>Shrewsbury House 107 Ditton Road Surbiton Surrey KT6 6RL</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 8399 3066</b>
Fax Number	<b>020 8339 9529</b>
Email Address	<b>cmr@shspost.co.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr C M Ross</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr A Weiss</b>
Age Range	<b>7 to 14</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>311</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>7-11: 215 11-13: 96</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>15 Mar 2010 to 16 Mar 2010</b>

## 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 May 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 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard 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.

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 comment 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.

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills	2
The quality of the pupils' personal development	3
The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management	4
<b>3 ACTION POINTS</b>	<b>5</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	5
(ii) Recommended action	5
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>6</b>

## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Shrewsbury House School aims to provide both an academic and a broad education; to give a comprehensive preparation for the various examinations required by independent senior schools; to develop sound work attitudes and habits; to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to advance individual development, including instilling self-esteem, confidence and wholeheartedness.
- 1.2 The school is an independent day preparatory school for boys aged 7 to 13. It was founded in 1865 and came close to closure in 1979, when it was saved by a group of parents; it ceased to be a proprietary school and was made into an educational trust. The school is on a quiet road in Surbiton, and based around an old house, in a six acre site, including a playing field. During the period 2006-9 a major investment in information and communication technology (ICT) in the classroom provided computer-integrated desks in all appropriate teaching rooms. In April 2009 the school joined forces with a local pre-preparatory school (Milbourne Lodge Junior School, Esher) and, as a result, a new joint board of governors was formed with fifteen members in total representing both schools.
- 1.3 The school is attended by 311 pupils. The school does not enter pupils for National Curriculum tests. The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with a bias towards the upper part of that band. The school reflects the diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the area. Most of the pupils come from professional or business backgrounds.
- 1.4 The school has identified 28 pupils as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), for whom it provides learning support. All pupils have English as their first language or are fully bilingual. Almost all pupils proceed to independent schools when they leave at the end of Year 8.
- 1.5 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 In keeping with the school's aims pupils make rapid progress in relation to their above average abilities, and thus reach high all-round standards. Throughout the school, they are articulate and speak confidently to adults and in public. In drama, they speak with expression and intonation. From an early age they read well; they make good use of the library to read for pleasure and research. They read aloud confidently, are attentive listeners and absorb information readily. Pupils write well, in a wide range of idioms and for a range of purposes. Their handwriting is of a high standard, and spelling and grammar are good. Pupils use their well developed skills with number in other subjects such as science. They are comfortable with ICT and use it appropriately when necessary. Pupils display high levels of creativity in the arts. A very high percentage of pupils are learning to play musical instruments; many achieve success in graded music examinations and perform to a high standard in the many ensembles, choir and orchestra. All pupils play sport in teams, and many to a very high level. Pupils achieve well in competitions such as national Mathematics Challenges. They achieve success in entrance examinations to selective senior schools and many secure scholarships. Pupils are successful fund-raisers for charities and often raise considerable amounts of money.
- 2.2 The high standards achieved owe much to the good teaching provided throughout the school. Teaching demonstrates a secure knowledge of examination requirements and of the subjects taught. This gives pupils confidence in the teaching. Individual attention and encouragement motivates pupils positively and enables them to progress well. Teachers provide good spoken feedback and marking is usually informative and constructive. Grades for effort and attainment are centrally recorded on the school information system, enabling the pupils' progress to be monitored.
- 2.3 The curriculum provides well for all aptitudes and abilities. It places sufficient emphasis on the core subjects and provides a good range of academic and other subjects. The provision for sport and the arts is particularly strong. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught both across the curriculum and in form tutor time, but it lacks overall coordination and provides limited opportunities for pupils to learn about the law and public institutions. Pupils with LDD are supported by teachers in class with some additional lessons provided outside the curriculum. The school is in the process of strengthening its support for pupils with LDD. The extra-curricular programme is outstanding, particularly for sport and music. Numerous additional activities are provided to stimulate pupils' interests. Visits, such as to Portugal, Normandy and an art trip to the National Gallery for Year 3 enrich the curriculum. Links exist with a local special school. Pupils study and work co-operatively with others. Most work well on their own, settle quickly and apply themselves with enthusiasm and perseverance. Behaviour is excellent; pupils are polite and considerate of each other.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 2.4 The personal development of the pupils is good. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate well-developed spiritual, moral and social skills. Cultural development is excellent. Pupils are self-confident and appreciate the non-material dimensions of life through, for example, aesthetic appreciation. They understand moral issues when considering issues of right and wrong, but their understanding of the law and public institutions is relatively underdeveloped. In the upper part of the school they undertake responsibilities such as monitors, house captains or prefects conscientiously; fewer such opportunities are provided in the lower years. In their responses to the pupils' questionnaire some pupils were concerned about opportunities for their concerns to be heard. There are relatively few channels for pupils to express their opinions to the school leadership. Pupils exhibit deep understanding of the arts. They appreciate cultures from around the world, indicating considerable improvement in this respect since the previous inspection.
- 2.5 Pupils benefit from high-quality pastoral care. Form tutors know their pupils well and the house system provides an additional dimension of care. A positive approach to behaviour management is effective; pupils respond well to encouragement, and are keen to be rewarded for their contribution to school life and for the progress they have made. Anti-bullying arrangements are effective; pupils do not perceive bullying to be a problem and are confident that, should any occur, it would be swiftly and effectively dealt with. Staff have received sufficient suitable anti-bullying training. The school has an appropriate plan with timescales to continue to improve provision for the disabled. Fire safety arrangements are thorough and effective but several shortcomings exist in health and safety in practical subjects, indicating that arrangements are insufficiently robust. The provision for pupils who are ill is sound. The school maintains suitable admissions and attendance registers. Pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and to eat healthily. School meals are of high quality.

## **The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management**

- 2.6 Governance has ensured that the school achieves its aims, and has improved upon the good standards found at the previous inspection. Continual improvement to the facilities is testimony to their diligent hard work. The several shortcomings in health and safety and omissions in the central register of appointments indicate that arrangements are not strong enough for these areas. A single governing body for this school and the recently acquired pre-preparatory school has got off to a good start, but it is clear that separate arrangements are necessary to oversee compliance with statutory and other requirements.
- 2.7 The school benefits from strong, positive leadership and management, and those with management responsibilities carry out their tasks well. A thorough appraisal system ensures the staff review their effectiveness and take responsibility for their professional development. Lesson observation, including peer review, ensures teachers can develop their pedagogical skills. The school is very well-equipped and, overall, good use is made of educational resources. Accommodation is of a very high standard.
- 2.8 Though the appointments process is thorough, some background checks have been undertaken after appointments have been made without indicating the need for supervision, not all recent appointments have completed health declarations, and peripatetic staff have not provided employment records, medical fitness declarations, references or qualifications. Otherwise, induction arrangements for newly qualified or new teachers to the school are thorough.
- 2.9 The response to the parents' questionnaire was largely positive. Inspectors share parents' views that the quality of teaching provided is of a high standard, that the range of subjects taught is broad and the range of extra-curricular activities is wide. Some were concerned about the extent to which the school encourages parents to become involved, inspection findings do not concur as there are many such opportunities provided through, for example, the Parents Association. Some were concerned about the amount of homework; inspectors feel the amount is appropriate. There was some concern about the provision for pupils with LDD. The school makes it clear that it does not withdraw pupils from lessons for additional help but that additional tuition is available after school or during breaks if necessary. The school provides or makes available to parents all of the information to which they are entitled, and electronic communication is proving to be particularly beneficial. School publications are attractive and informative. School reports are detailed and positive but provide limited guidance as to how to improve. The school deals with parents' concerns sensitively.

### 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 2003 as subsequently amended, and therefore must:

- have regard to the DCSF Guidance 'Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers' by installing dust extraction for scroll saws in the DT room, placing a protective cage around the pottery kiln in the pottery room and ensuring stored chemicals are inaccessible to pupils in the science prep room. [Regulation 3.(4), under Welfare, health and safety];
- carry out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of peripatetic staff (ii) medical fitness; (iii) right to work in the UK; (iv) previous employment history; (v) character references; (vi) where appropriate, professional references; (vii) qualifications, [Regulation 4.(2) a, under DCSF Standard 4 – Appointment of staff since 1st May 2007 ];
- make an enhanced criminal record check before or as soon as practicable after the appointment and note the need for supervision on the centralised register, [Regulation 4. (2) (b), under DCSF Standard 4 – Appointment of staff since 1st May 2007 ];
- obtain an enhanced CRB check before appointment of all governors.[Regulation 4B. (4)(a), under DCSF Standard 4B – Checks on proprietors/governors since 1st May 2007.

#### (ii) Recommended action

3.2 In addition to rectifying the weaknesses in meeting regulatory requirements, the school is advised to make the following improvements:

1. ensure that governance has suitable mechanisms for monitoring health and safety and safe recruitment processes;
2. improve the co-ordination of PSHE and place more emphasis on learning about the law and public institutions;
3. continue to develop provision for pupils with LDD.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed 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/the proprietor/a governors' representative/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**

Mr John King

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Elaine Hooton

Head of IAPS school