



**ISI**

Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION**

**THE HAWTHORNS SCHOOL**

**30 NOVEMBER TO 01 DECEMBER 2016**



## SCHOOL'S DETAILS

<b>School</b>	The Hawthorns School			
<b>DfE number</b>	936/6076			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	312067			
<b>Address</b>	The Hawthorns School Pendell Court Bletchingley Redhill Surrey RH1 4QJ			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01883 743048			
<b>Email address</b>	admissions@hawthorns.com			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Adrian Floyd			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Zoe Creighton			
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 13			
<b>Number of pupils</b>	526			
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>239</b>
	<b>EYFS</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>Years 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>110</b>
	<b>Pre-prep</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>Prep</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 Nov 2016 to 01 Dec 2016			

## PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

### Inspectors

Mrs Jan Preece	Reporting inspector
Mrs Angela Alsop	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Dr David Livingstone	Team inspector (Former headmaster, IAPS school)
Mrs Jane Morgan	Team inspector (Former head of pre-prep, IAPS school)
Mr Martin Watson	Team inspector (Former headmaster, HMC/Society of Heads school)

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## 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### About the school

- 1.1 The Hawthorns is a co-educational day school for pupils aged between 2 and 13 years. It is located in a 35-acre estate in the Surrey countryside, close to Redhill. Accommodation is arranged around a Jacobean manor house, and comprises historic and contemporary buildings. The school and its premises are owned by the Hawthorns Educational Trust Ltd, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. It is administered by a board of governors. Founded in 1926 as a boys' preparatory school, it moved to its present location in 1961. A co-educational pre-prep department was opened in 1979 and the prep school became co-educational in 1992. The prep school is divided into Lower, Middle and Upper schools. Since the previous inspection the school has introduced independent thinking programmes for all pupils and developed an extensive programme of conservation and outdoor education. In 2015 the current headmaster joined the school, and the construction of a new five-classroom teaching block has been completed.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school has high expectations for its pupils, based upon a set of key principles and values. It aims to inspire each child with a love of learning and prepare them for a fulfilling life through focusing upon four key areas: academic achievement, a breadth of opportunity, pastoral care and social responsibility.

### About the pupils

- 1.3 The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is forty-one. They require support with mild learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, and speech and language difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Seventeen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom six receive support. The school has identified fifty-three pupils as more able and fifty-seven who are gifted or talented in areas such as music, sport and drama.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Rainbow	Nursery (2-3 years)
Ark	Nursery (3-4 years)

### **Recommendations from previous inspections**

- 1.5 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was an interim inspection in November 2010. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Ensure that pupils have greater opportunities to develop their independent learning skills.
  - Ensure that all pupils fully understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions.
  - In the EYFS, ensure a consistency of approach to planning across all three year groups.
- 1.6 The recommendation of the intermediate EYFS inspection in November 2013 was:
- Ensure lesson observations identify strengths and areas for development in teaching and provide staff with secure evaluations of their teaching.
- 1.7 The school has fully met all but one of the recommendations. It has partially met the recommendation to ensure that pupils have greater opportunities to develop their independent learning skills.

## 2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), most children attain expected levels and some exceed them.
- Most pupils make expected or better than expected levels of progress in English and mathematics, and the school has taken steps to improve progress where under-achievement is identified.
- Pupils acquire good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum.
- Some pupils' progress is limited by an over-dependence on worksheets and lack of provision for challenging and open-ended tasks which facilitate independent learning.
- Pupils achieve group and individual success in a wide variety of sports and extra-curricular pursuits, and the attitudes which underpin their learning are exemplary.

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

- The pupils' personal and social development reflects well the school's motto of 'Love God, love thy neighbour', since their attitudes and conduct demonstrate strong personal values and a sense of caring within their community.
- Throughout the school, pupils display high levels of self-knowledge and confidence.
- Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong; their behaviour is excellent and sanctions are consequently rare.
- Pupils have a strong sense of social responsibility which is engendered through the many opportunities they are provided to take responsibility, the mentoring and buddying within the house system, and outreach into the local community and beyond.

### Recommendation

2.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement:

- Ensure that the school's plan to introduce a cohesive whole-school approach to teaching and the curriculum enables all pupils to consistently maintain high levels of achievement.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.2 Most children in the EYFS make rapid progress from their starting points so that by the end of Reception almost all attain the early learning goals expected for their age, and some exceed them. They demonstrate strong skills across all areas of learning, promoted by thorough planning in response to their needs and interests. This is a positive response to a recommendation of the previous inspection in 2010: to ensure a consistency of approach to planning across all three year groups of the EYFS.
- 3.3 The school is in the second year of using standardised tests to assess pupils' attainment and progress from Year 1 upwards in English and mathematics. An analysis of data available so far demonstrates that most pupils are achieving in line with or better than national expectations, with no appreciable difference in the attainment of boys and girls. From careful analysis, the leadership has identified areas of underachievement and is taking steps to address this. At this early stage, insufficient data is available to evaluate the impact of the additional interventions in English and mathematics.
- 3.4 Evidence from books and lesson observations indicate that pupils are progressing well and acquiring good knowledge, understanding and skills in key areas. This is the result of a broad curriculum in which teaching is well-organised and grounded in secure teacher knowledge, if not always sufficiently challenging in expectation. The leadership has identified the need to balance the curriculum and re-shape the timetable to further enhance outcomes for pupils, such as by providing more time to some subjects currently taught on a rotating basis in the Upper School and by adjusting the length of lessons to ensure a purposeful pace yet also allow time for extended writing. Most pupils gain places at the senior school of their choice. Last year over half of pupils secured an award at their senior school and this year over 60 per cent achieved this.
- 3.5 Communication skills are strong. Children in the EYFS speak clearly and confidently. They listen attentively to adults and each other, for instance during show and tell in older Nursery classes where they articulate their reasons for bringing a toy or artefact to school and answer questions accurately due to skilful questioning from staff. The youngest children in Nursery are developing effective communication skills, supported by the staff's use of signing. Pupils throughout the school are articulate and express themselves using a wide vocabulary. For example as a result of receiving clear guidance on what needs to be included, pupils in Year 8 demonstrated excellent communication skills when preparing group presentations on sea defences. Due to well-organised lessons, pupils' interactions when working together are purposeful and they communicate questions and answers to teachers well. Pupils' listening skills are a strong learning attribute, not only to their teachers but also when working collaboratively. The more able children in Reception read fluently and with understanding, using their phonic knowledge effectively. Their emerging writing skills demonstrate perseverance, such as when writing a list of items for needed for the Christmas party. Pupils across the remainder of the school write well, demonstrating age-appropriate use of punctuation and spelling. Their writing reflects their capacity to use descriptive language, such as Year 2 pupils' written work about the life of the Queen. While good examples of writing in a variety of genres are evident from pupils across the school, scrutiny of older pupils' work reveals insufficient available opportunities to develop their imagination and ideas in extended writing in some subjects.

- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate a clear development of numeracy as they move through the school. Children in Nursery display secure counting and one-to-one correspondence skills and can identify two-dimensional shapes. Their numerical skills are developing well through well-planned cross-curricular activities in which they have access to high-quality and stimulating resources. Children in Reception can count forwards and backwards to 20. They can also add numbers to 10, and the more able can do so to 20. Mathematical problem-solving skills are well developed throughout the school and concepts successfully applied in design technology, science and in the use of co-ordinates in geography. Pupils in Year 6 display high levels of mental agility in applying number concepts to fractions, decimals and percentages, and those in Year 8 can select the appropriate strategy to solve problems.
- 3.7 Pupils use technology well in their learning. Children in Reception use desktop computers confidently; they are able to find programs of their choice and can follow instructions to navigate through them. Their skills are promoted by free accessibility to computers for practise, and clear explanation and modelling by teachers. Throughout the school pupils use technology confidently for research in many subject areas such as in science to research factors affecting evaporation, in mathematics to aid speed of recording, and in geography to present findings in fieldwork projects. They display a considerable interest and developing confidence in coding, for example when creating a storyboard, animating characters and adding sounds in Year 3.
- 3.8 The pupils develop secure study skills with increasingly sophisticated approaches to learning. Following the recommendation of the previous EYFS inspection in 2013 to ensure that lesson observations identify strengths and areas for development, senior leaders regularly monitor practitioners as they work with the children, identifying which strategies promote outcomes effectively and recognising elements for improvement which are then revisited during further observations. From an early age children in the EYFS work together effectively, remain focused and respect each other's ideas, and are encouraged by individual support, well-targeted questioning and praise. These skills are also promoted by high staff ratios, appropriate challenge and excellent provision of resources. The oldest pupils in the school are developing useful skills to support their learning. They demonstrate the ability to make reasoned hypotheses in science investigations and to explain their knowledge clearly. Similarly, older pupils analysed and synthesised material from a variety of sources extremely well to prepare a geography presentation. These skills are also evident in younger pupils such as in Year 2 where pupils employed higher-order thinking skills in an English comprehension, and in Year 3 textiles where pupils analysed their felt angels and discussed ways to improve them. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate high levels of inference and deduction when using photographic and written source material. These deeper thinking skills are well developed through questioning which checks understanding, probes thinking and enables teachers to amend their instruction where necessary. Older pupils appreciate the impact of study skills lessons in developing their revision skills. The recommendation from the 2010 inspection to ensure that pupils have greater opportunities to develop their independent learning skills has been partially met, as pupils use digital technology regularly for research and the school has embarked on a learning skills programme for pupils of all ages. As a result of this initiative, pupils demonstrate clear abilities in perseverance, self-reflection and collaborative working. Not all the learning habits instilled, such as problem-solving and investigation, are well-developed before pupils reach the Upper School since teaching does not regularly include open-ended tasks. An over-reliance on worksheets reduces opportunities for extended writing so that pupils may demonstrate their depth of understanding and make links in their learning.

- 3.9 Standardised assessments confirm that pupils with SEND or EAL make good progress in line with their abilities. They progress well in class as information about their learning needs and appropriate strategies are disseminated to teachers by specialist staff, and then reflected in classroom management and adjusted tasks. In interview, pupils with SEND said that they appreciate the patience and individual support offered them by their teachers. Progress of the more able pupils is carefully monitored and they make good progress in relation to their abilities, particularly when receiving tasks that offer greater challenge and the need for deeper thought. The pace of learning for these pupils particularly before setting is introduced in the Upper School is reduced when they are required to complete a core task prior to receiving extension material.
- 3.10 Pupils participate successfully in a wide range of pursuits such sports, music, dance, drama and chess; half of the awards gained to senior schools are for sports and drama. The athletics, swimming and chess teams have enjoyed recent success at national level. These achievements accord strongly with the school's aim to inspire a love of learning through breadth of opportunity. A very large majority of parents and pupils in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses agreed that the school provides pupils the opportunity to make good progress in a wide range of subjects and activities.
- 3.11 Throughout the school, pupils' good all-round progress is strongly supported by their exemplary attitudes towards learning. When working collaboratively such as when depicting a Greek myth visually in history, they express creative ideas about how to achieve the common objective yet are willing to listen to others' contributions and advice from their teachers. Enthusiasm is palpable, such as in Latin where pupils rapidly acquire new vocabulary by matching it vigorously to actions. From a young age they are curious and keen to investigate. Pupils are eager to participate in learning activities due to teachers choosing ones which are close to their own experience, supported by interesting resources. Pupils are confident to offer their ideas without any fear of peer or teacher rebuttal. This is a strong result of the 'have a go' culture which permeates the life of the school, and which promotes discussion and deeper learning.

#### **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 The living out of the school's motto 'Love God, love thy neighbour' by all members of the school community and the successful realisation of the school's aims in relation to pastoral care and social responsibility are strong factors in ensuring that pupils develop into balanced, responsible and kind young people by the time they leave.
- 4.3 Pupils display high levels of self-knowledge and confidence. Children in the EYFS approach new experiences with confidence and enthusiasm, and are not discouraged if things go wrong. This is due to them receiving many opportunities to initiate their own learning whilst staff provide sensitive support. As they progress through the school, pupils reflect insightfully on their success and how they might improve, due to the time provided in lessons for self- and peer-appraisal as well as positive and helpful marking of their work and oral feedback. In their questionnaire responses a small minority of pupils did not agree that marking informs them of their progress and helps them improve, but in interview all pupils were fulsome in expressing how useful marking is. Inspection evidence concluded that marking consistently provides helpful ideas for improvement. Pupils are sufficiently confident to share insights, and one pupil in Year 3 stated: 'we are encouraged to try everything; doing our best is always praised'. Due to this culture within the school, self-confidence is high; pupils are keen to ask questions, make decisions and take risks, confident that a wrong answer is turned into a positive. Children in the EYFS persevere with tasks and maintain focus when they encounter difficulties, since the staff know them well and provide them with the strategies that individuals need to promote success. Qualities such as perseverance are promoted in the learning skills programme so pupils generally maintain concentration, and are highly motivated to achieve personal and group targets.
- 4.4 Pupils throughout the school demonstrate a keen sense of right and wrong, playing and interacting with their peers and adults naturally but respecting the boundaries of good behaviour. They are friendly, polite and helpful, and respect the need for rules. As one pupil stated: 'all the rules are fair and keep us safe'. The system of 'families' within the houses encourages older pupils to interact and support younger ones, and a sense of fair play prevails. This system also promotes opportunities for leadership and responsibility in the older pupils. Pupils understand the values shared across society through direct teaching and assemblies. As they grow older, pupils develop an awareness of the role of the law in maintaining justice, and of ethical issues; for example they develop an awareness of issues such as immigration in discussion in personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lessons. A recommendation of the 2010 inspection to ensure that all pupils fully understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions is well met. In their questionnaire responses, most pupils agreed that they are encouraged to behave well and understand the sanctions for poor behaviour. As one pupil expressed in interview: 'you have to take responsibility for things and learn from your mistakes'. Pupils experience democracy in action through the school council where improvements such as to the lunch menu have been made in response to their ideas, and through holding their own referendum. Pupils have a strong grasp of the concept of social responsibility. The school's ethos underpins the strong sense of teamwork which pervades the school. As one pupil said in interview: 'working together is important at Hawthorns'. Good relationships, both between pupils and with staff, instil in pupils a sense of care and support for one another so that they work and play positively with partners and small groups, negotiating, taking turns and solving problems. Children in Reception not only develop their fine motor skills but also their ability to co-operate; they collaborated successfully as 'Santa's elves' to wrap presents. A sense of responsibility is promoted

throughout the school so that all pupils display pride in the posts that they hold, whether it be in their class or in the school community. Such opportunities for younger pupils to take on responsibilities include the roles of head boy and girl in the pre-prep, and the daily issuing of jobs to children in the EYFS. The older pupils rotate their roles of responsibility such as house captain, librarian and that of a prefect to increase the availability of leadership roles. Pupils also extend their sense of social responsibility outside school, such as by collecting food to donate to the elderly in the community and sponsoring a child in Africa. Across the prep school, pupils represent their peers' views on the school council and lead the conservation work on the eco-committee. As a result of such wide opportunities to contribute, pupils understand that they can all play a positive role within the community.

- 4.5 Pupils display a clear awareness of non-material aspects of life. The youngest children appreciate the changing seasons and the natural world through their woodland learning sessions and proximity to livestock such as the chickens, ducks, swans and a horse in the natural asset of the school's grounds, which are used widely by all ages for outdoor learning. As they grow older, pupils demonstrate a strong appreciation for conservation and an understanding of sustainability, as evidenced in their gaining an award for their use of recycling and a joint conservation project with a local junior school. They appreciate the value of the arts to their own emotional well-being as well as the pleasure of performance, as a result of the ample opportunities they are provided to take part in dance, drama and music. They are developing an understanding of the expression of emotion through art, and demonstrate empathy for those less fortunate than themselves through the whole-school support of a school in Sri Lanka.
- 4.6 Throughout the school, pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Children in the EYFS understand that only some foods are healthy, and older pupils can explain the benefits of a healthy diet and exercise. Pupils demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves healthy, which is promoted by PSHE and science lessons, the provision of healthy snacks and lunches, and the wide programme of sports and activities. They also understand how to keep themselves safe on the internet through effective lessons on e-safety. In interview, all pupils said that they were confident of staff support should they experience personal difficulties. The leadership ensures that layers of pastoral care which start with the form tutor and include the full-time services of a school counsellor support the well-being of pupils and their families. In their questionnaire responses, a large majority of parents agreed that the school meets their children's pastoral and welfare needs effectively.

- 4.7 Pupils embrace the diversity of the school community through their tolerant acceptance of one another's differing backgrounds and cultural traditions. In interview they expressed that they respect one another as individuals. These views were supported by pupils' questionnaire responses, where most agreed that the school encourages them to respect other people and to be tolerant of those with different faiths and beliefs. This understanding is promoted in the PSHE programme and assemblies, such as one focusing on the Paralympics, which provide them positive messages about diversity and equality. Pupils move confidently between sections of the school due to careful attention by the staff in managing their transitions. Their awareness of the world outside of school is expanded through talks by visitors, who are carefully vetted. As they grow older they are afforded greater independence. By sharing tutorials, those in their penultimate year benefit from the insights of those who are about to leave. Consequently, when pupils leave the school they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and development into young adults. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school promotes an environment which successfully supports their children's personal development through the active promotion of values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.