



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION**

**DANESHILL SCHOOL**

**MARCH 2017**



## SCHOOL'S DETAILS

<b>School</b>	Daneshill School			
<b>DfE number</b>	850/6024			
<b>Address</b>	Daneshill School Stratfield Turgis Hook Hampshire RG27 0AR			
<b>Telephone number</b>	01256 882707			
<b>Email address</b>	office@daneshillprepschool.com			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Jonathan Wansey			
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mrs Sarah Spencer			
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 13			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	268			
	<b>Boys</b>	116	<b>Girls</b>	152
	<b>Day pupils</b>	268		
	<b>EYFS</b>	35	<b>Prep</b>	233
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22 to 23 March 2017			

## PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

### Inspectors

Mr Richard Johnson	Reporting inspector
Miss Rosemary Walker	Team inspector (Former director of studies, IAPS school)
Mrs Lynn Weeks	Team inspector (Former assistant head, IAPS school)

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## 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### About the school

- 1.1 Daneshill School is a preparatory school for pupils between the ages of 3 and 13 years. It was founded in 1950, under the name of St. Salvator's. It moved to its current site, near the village of Stratfield Turgis in Hampshire, in 1979. Its proprietor undertakes the role of governance. A new proprietor and an interim headmaster took up their respective roles in August 2016, with a permanent headmaster taking up this position in September 2017. They are supported by an advisory board of governors.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has opened new science facilities and increased its outdoor play areas, as well as providing additional information and communication technology (ICT) resources and infrastructure. It has also invested in a new sports hall with modernised changing facilities for the senior pupils.

### What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide a secure, happy and stimulating environment where children can learn to be tolerant, courteous and caring. It aspires to make learning enjoyable by offering a broad curriculum, allowing children to find where their talents and potential lie. The school endeavours to foster self-esteem, good working habits, an enquiring mind, self-discipline and kindness, and to encourage children to take pride in their work, play fair and develop high aspirations.

### About the pupils

- 1.4 The pupils predominantly come from professional and business families, with a White British heritage, living within a 20-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. Thirty-one pupils require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They require support with dyslexia and other learning difficulties. There are no pupils with a statement of educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 20 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), none of whom require support for this aspect of their learning. Academically more able pupils are identified by the school through its assessment processes, alongside those with talents in particular areas, such as sport and music. The school adjusts its curriculum and provides additional activities to support their needs.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

### Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.6 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was an interim inspection in November 2010. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Formalise development planning arrangements.
  - Ensure that pupils' academic work and progress receive dedicated oversight from senior management.
  - Extend the use of ICT across the curriculum and throughout the school, including the EYFS.
  - Extend the current examples of good Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) practice throughout the EYFS and pre-preparatory department.

- 1.7 The school has fully met the recommendations to formalise development planning, ensure the oversight of pupils' work and progress and to extend the current examples of good EYFS practice. It has partially addressed the recommendation to extend the use of ICT across the curriculum. Further detail is given in the main text of the report.

## **2. KEY FINDINGS**

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

- Daneshill School's pupils are notably successful in gaining places to their first choice of senior school, most of which have challenging entry requirements. Many gain scholarships and other awards.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are highly positive; they concentrate well and follow instructions promptly. They are curious, willing to learn and not afraid to take risks.
- Pupils, including the more able, make rapid progress overall. Pupils with SEND make good progress.
- Pupils gain high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in a wide range of subjects due to a broad curriculum.
- Pupils' ICT skills are good. However, they are not as highly developed as those in other areas.

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

- The pupils are notably confident, with strong self-esteem.
- Pupils are quick to encourage and support each other and show excellent collaborative working skills.
- Standards of behaviour are exceptionally high and pupils are extremely polite and well-mannered.
- Pupils show a highly developed and tangible spirituality.
- Pupils make a strong contribution to their own school community and the wider world.

### **Recommendations**

2.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- Strengthening pupils' ICT skills by providing greater opportunities for pupils to practise and develop these in lessons across the curriculum.



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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Daneshill pupils are notably successful in gaining places at their first choice of senior school, most of which have challenging entry requirements. In addition, many gain scholarships and other awards. The latter also reflect pupils' all-round achievements in other areas, particularly in music and sport. Pupils are ably supported by specialist teaching staff who have a strong understanding of the entry requirements.
- 3.3 School teams have achieved regional and national success in tennis and swimming. Individual pupils are also highly successful in areas as diverse as trampolining, golf, biathlon and diving, as well as general knowledge and chess competitions. Pupils' musical achievements are outstanding. Individuals have gained national choir and orchestra places, and have performed on the West End stage. Pupils' results in music grade examinations are consistently high; they sing melodiously in various choirs and perform ably in instrumental groups. The school has either played a coaching role in this, or encouraged and supported pupils' commitment.
- 3.4 Pupils' attitudes to work are highly positive. They concentrate well and follow instructions promptly, maximising their learning opportunities. They are curious, willing to learn new skills and not afraid to take risks, and recognise that making mistakes is part of the learning process. In lessons, they tackle additional, more challenging, tasks unprompted. They present their work well, and show excellent levels of personal organisation. High expectations and effective support from staff contribute to this, along with the praise and encouragement offered by both staff and their peers.
- 3.5 The school does not take part in national curriculum tests, but the available evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own assessment data shows attainment to be above, and in some cases well above, national age-related expectations and pupils usually make rapid progress. Teachers are aware of individual needs and match activities accordingly and pupils report that they freely give up their time to support individuals. Excellent progress is underpinned by work which is generally well marked, and includes helpful suggestions for improvement. In interviews, pupils said they understand their progress in individual subjects and know how to improve their work, despite concerns in this area raised by a few pupils in the questionnaires. The school has high aspirations as to its outcomes for pupils. Staff assess pupils' knowledge and plan accordingly, and the effective use of ability grouping also supports this excellent progress.
- 3.6 More able pupils also make rapid progress, due to the early identification and support for potential scholars. Currently no pupils require support with EAL; in the past, they have made strong progress due to targeted individual support. The EYFS profile results show that these children make good progress. They come in broadly in line with their expected level of development and almost all achieve and some exceed their early learning goals. Pupils with SEND make good progress overall because all teachers are aware of their needs and plan activities with care. This could be seen in the strong progress that pupils with SEND have made in science due to teaching techniques which are adapted to suit their style of learning. The school's learning support department also provides tailored support. However, this provision is currently limited, which occasionally results in slower progress. This is recognised by the school, and also by a few parents in the questionnaires, and there are plans to increase the availability of this support. In the questionnaire, almost all pupils feel that the school gives them the opportunity to learn and make good progress.
- 3.7 The high levels of progress are achieved because senior staff monitor progress and standards of teaching, in line with the recommendation of the previous inspection. Both the

management and the proprietor have successfully ensured continuity of leadership during a period of transition, continuing to provide high levels of staffing and resources. The recommendation to formalise development planning arrangements has also been met. A development plan is now in place, with clearly identified priorities. The recommendation to extend the examples of good EYFS practice has also been met; excellent practice can now be seen in many areas of the setting.

- 3.8 Pupils gain high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in a wide range of subjects due to effective teaching and a broad-based curriculum. In the questionnaires, a very large majority of parents and almost all pupils feel that the range of subjects is suitable, reflecting the fact that the school is highly successful in meeting its aim of developing pupils' talents and potential. Pupils have strong linguistic skills and enjoy learning new languages. They read eagerly, deriving considerable enjoyment and knowledge from the varied books they engage with. Their scientific skills are outstanding; older pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding of principles of reflection and could therefore confidently build upon their previous work on this topic. Nursery children showed excellent co-ordination skills whilst threading beads for a necklace for Mother's Day.
- 3.9 Pupils' musical skills are well advanced for their age because many learn an instrument and the school provides numerous opportunities to perform and sing in front of their parents and peers. Excellent artistic work can be seen in displays around the school; pupils draw with care, and older pupils have recently used their imaginative ideas in a project involving designing and making shoes. The ready availability of specialist coaching and the school's sport facilities ensure that pupils develop good levels of skill across a wide range of sports. Younger children show excellent physical development as they are encouraged to take full advantage of equipment in their outdoor area.
- 3.10 Pupils have outstanding communication skills and are highly articulate, which can be seen in their excellent public speaking ability. They listen to one another, share ideas and respect the views of others. Staff encourage them to keep an open mind and to question assumptions. In the Nursery, children can use the sounds that letters make effectively to help them recall, sound out and write simple words. Older pupils understand different literary genres and can adjust their own writing to reflect a particular style and audience. All teachers recognise a shared responsibility for literacy and provide many opportunities to build upon existing skills. Pupils can apply their excellent numeracy skills effectively across a range of subjects, such as science and geography, because of well-planned lessons where teachers highlight practical applications. Lively discussions ensued in a mathematics lesson as pupils sought ways of finding out the value of Pi in real life situations. Children in the EYFS learned to use money confidently as they bought and sold flowers, which they had chosen themselves, in their shop.
- 3.11 Pupils' ICT skills are good, although not as highly developed as those in other areas. Resources in this area have recently been increased and pupils respond enthusiastically when given the opportunity to use these. Rapid progress was seen in some lessons observed, such as the EYFS children making independent use of programmable toys. However, pupils also report that not all staff give them the opportunity to practise and develop these skills. Therefore, the recommendation from the previous inspection to extend the use of ICT across the curriculum is only partially met.
- 3.12 Lesson observations show excellent collaborative learning, such as when pupils in the middle of the school worked together to devise a fair test to measure the burning rates for materials, without any support from the teacher. Strong independent research skills were seen in a history lesson with older pupils hypothesising as to reasons behind King John's turbulent relationship with the church. Older pupils recognise the importance of developing effective

revision techniques. Staff foster pupils' independence by encouraging them to think through problems first, rather than to ask for support immediately.

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Daneshill pupils are notably confident children with strong self-esteem. This is a consequence of the success with which the school fulfils its aims to foster this aspect of their character, alongside tolerance, courtesy and care for those around them. Pupils' self-confidence is enhanced by the way in which they naturally praise and encourage each other, and nurtured by a strong ethos of mutual respect in the school and the way in which leaders and the proprietor publicly celebrate the achievements of all pupils. Pupils demonstrate excellent resilience in many areas of school life, including the Year 8 leavers who all take part in the Three Peaks Challenge each year. Both the proprietor and the leadership are highly committed to ensuring pupils emerge as well-rounded personalities with a secure understanding of their own strengths. As a result, pupils understand where they need to improve and are well prepared for life in their senior school.
- 4.3 Pupils are exceptionally polite, welcoming and interested in visitors. All who completed the questionnaire feel the school encourages them to respect each other. Pupils show excellent collaborative working in lessons, clubs and activities such as rugby training. Older ones willingly take on responsibility to help the younger children. All pupils are patient with others around them, and respond positively to their suggestions, meaning that they can work effectively to solve problems. Skills improved in a pop lacrosse lesson as a result of the encouragement and positive advice that pupils provided for each other. Children in the EYFS understand the importance of sharing and taking turns; this was seen as they worked to produce their own story booklets, selecting equipment and patiently awaiting their turn.
- 4.4 Pupils show an excellent respect for the rules of their own school community and those of the wider world, and recognise the importance of these. They have drawn up their own code of conduct and took pride in discussing this with inspectors. Their standards of behaviour are exceptionally high and pupils are notably well-mannered, including during mealtimes. Pupils display a strong moral stance. In personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and tutorials, staff encourage balanced debate on current world issues, and pupils show a mature insight into issues such as the causes of terrorism and its consequences, and whether people's right of access to forests should give way to the needs of the natural environment. Rewards are keenly sought after and sanctions are rarely required. Pupils report that bullying is rare because the school takes this seriously and acts promptly to support all parties involved. The school has high expectations and staff provide excellent role models; in the questionnaires, all pupils stated that they believe that school encourages them to behave well.
- 4.5 Pupils show a highly developed and tangible spirituality in their prayers and singing in assemblies. Older pupils appreciate the serenity of their garden, which they helped to create, and told inspectors how much they appreciate their 'thought for the week', provided by a member of the teaching staff. Children in the Nursery demonstrate a growing appreciation of the wonders of the natural world during their weekly woodland walks in the extensive grounds.
- 4.6 Pupils make a strong contribution to both their own school community and the wider world. They aspire to gain positions on the school council, as prefects and heads of school, knowing they can help to organise and improve their own community. Older pupils are very keen to help in sports coaching for their peers. Pupils eagerly approach activities such as fundraising for a variety of local, national and international charities, and gardening at a local old people's home. Pupils perform enthusiastically in the choir, performing in the Blenheim Palace carol concert and at local rugby matches. A group came up with the idea of having a cappella choir, and then created one by themselves. The school actively encourages and supports these

activities and then celebrates pupil contributions through its assemblies, awards and in newsletters to parents.

- 4.7 In the questionnaires, almost all pupils and their parents felt that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. As a result, pupils show good understanding of the cultures within their own school and those which they study. This can be seen in their letters reflecting upon the key tenets of Judaism. The broad religious studies curriculum both fosters their interest and enhances their understanding.
- 4.8 Pupils relish their involvement in sports and outdoor activities, and regard these as a natural part of a healthy lifestyle. They understand the importance of a balanced diet, and will willingly choose fruit options for dessert. They know how to keep safe online, and could readily recall the key aspects of a recent presentation on this topic. Children in the EYFS enjoy their time outside each day and are physically active. Pupils' excellent awareness of the importance of making appropriate choices in staying safe and being healthy is supported by the school's extensive science, PSHE and sports programmes.
- 4.9 Pupils display a strong awareness of the importance of their choices to their own futures. They readily make decisions in areas such as fundraising for charities, and will often choose those with links to members of their own community. The school council relish opportunities to discuss options for healthy food and improving the school environment. Staff give clear guidance and advice to support this process, but are careful to leave the final choice to the pupils themselves. As a result, pupils are mature learners and ready for challenges at their respective senior schools. They understand that open-mindedness in trying a wide range of new experiences is important in later life. These outcomes are enhanced by the school's initiatives such as the ALS (Adventure, Leadership and Service) and 'growth mindset' programmes, which focus on developing pupils' decision-making and leadership skills as well as encouraging open-mindedness.