



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CHIGWELL JUNIOR SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Chigwell Junior School

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

Full Name of School	Chigwell Junior School
DCSF Number	881/6006
Registered Charity Number	1115098
Address	Chigwell Junior School High Road Chigwell Essex IG7 6QF
Telephone Number	0208 5015721
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Email Address	jgwinn@chigwell-school.org
Head	Mrs J Gwinn
Chair of Governors	Mr C P de Boer
Age Range	7 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	323
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (176 boys; 147 girls;)
Numbers by Age	5-11: 143 11-18: 180
Number of Day Pupils	323
Final (team) visit	22 Feb 2010 to 24 Feb 2010

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in May 2004

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the 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.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Chigwell School is situated to the north of Chigwell village, Essex, twelve miles from central London and is set in its own grounds of over 70 acres. The junior and senior school share the same site and facilities, and have the same Christian ethos and educational philosophy. The school is administered by a board of governors. The school aims to provide a rounded education of high quality which enables pupils to develop their talents and interests and to achieve their individual and collective potential. It seeks to foster in pupils a love of learning and to develop an awareness of the spiritual dimension of life and an inclusive approach to others.
- 1.2 The junior school caters for 323 pupils, aged seven to thirteen. It has been co-educational since 1997; currently, boys slightly outnumber girls. The school is academically selective. Pupils are drawn from the surrounding areas of Essex and North London and from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. The main points of entry are at the ages of seven and eleven. Almost all pupils continue their education at the adjoining senior school.
- 1.3 Nationally standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the school is above the national average. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. However the school identifies 33 pupils as having learning disabilities or difficulties and twenty-eight of these receive specialist learning support from the school. No pupil requires support for English as an additional language.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Junior School.

School	NC name
Lower 1	Year 3
Upper 1	Year 4
Lower 2	Year 5
Upper 2	Year 6
Third	Year 7
Fourth	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its aims. Pupils are well educated. They are articulate, have strong literacy skills and show considerable creativity. Results in national tests at age 11 are excellent when compared with the national average for maintained primary schools. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make exceptional progress in relation to their above average ability and they continue to make good progress in Years 7 and 8. Pupils behave well and enjoy their lessons. The curriculum supports learning very well and the programme of extra-curricular activities is excellent. Good and occasionally outstanding teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' achievement. Lesson planning is thorough but occasionally, for Years 7 and 8, the lessons planned do not match the needs of pupils. Most marking is careful and constructive; but some falls below this good level.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is outstanding. They have an excellent moral understanding. They show self discipline, a sensitive awareness of the needs of others and a strong sense of social responsibility. Pupils appreciate their own culture and the rich variety of cultures around them. The school fosters successfully an ethos of mutual respect and tolerance. The quality of pastoral care is excellent and contributes strongly to pupils' outstanding personal development. Good provision is made for the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- 2.3 The governing body provides strong governance which fully supports the aims of the school. Governors discharge their responsibilities conscientiously. They now pay close attention to ensuring that staff recruitment procedures are rigorous. They have arranged for external appraisal of the head of Junior School as recommended in the previous report. Leadership and management are strong. The headteacher and her senior management team provide strong and purposeful educational direction. This is reflected in the pupils' high levels of academic achievement and excellent personal development. The arrangement for the monitoring of the pupils' teaching and learning in Years 7 and 8 is not fully effective. Teaching staff and all support staff are valued and are well deployed. The school has rectified fully the regulatory shortcomings in relation to the recruitment of staff that were noted during the initial inspection visit. A strong working relationship with parents enables the school to meet its aims. The school communicates most effectively with parents. They are highly supportive of the school's provision and welcome the opportunities they have to be involved in the school life of their children.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended, and therefore it was required to:
- carry out checks of medical fitness, obtain character references and where appropriate professional references [Regulation 4(2)(a) under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors];

- complete CRB checks on governors before appointment and ensure that they are entered positively on the central register [Regulations 4B(4)(a) and 4C(6) under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors].

2.5 At the time of the final team visit the school had rectified all of the above shortcomings as noted in the text of the report.

(ii) Recommended action

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

1. ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning in Years 7 and 8 is thorough and effective;
2. make arrangements for the head of the junior school to be appraised.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

- 3.1 Standards are excellent. At all stages of the school, in their lessons and many activities, they show high levels of knowledge and understanding and well developed skills. The school meets fully its aim to instil a love of learning and to challenge pupils to think for themselves with critical and creative curiosity. Results in national tests at age 11, over the last three years for which comparative data are available, have been excellent when compared with the national average for maintained primary schools.
- 3.2 Progress is exceptional overall. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make exceptional progress over time in relation to their ability profile, In Years 7 and 8 pupils continue to make good progress. Throughout the school pupils are consistently successful in passing instrumental music examinations and frequently achieve success at merit or distinction level. Pupils are articulate. They listen, reflect and respond carefully to the ideas of others and of their teachers, as well as thinking for themselves and expressing their opinions confidently. By Year 8 they discuss complex issues thoughtfully and can understand and explain opposing points of view.
- 3.3 Strong literacy skills are evident in the pupils' work across the curriculum; as they move up the school they become fluent readers. They achieve technical accuracy in their writing and the ability to match style to purpose whether creating a play-script, recording an investigation in science or describing a historical event. Numeracy skills are well developed and applied effectively. Pupils show strong creativity in their imaginative prose, poetry and vibrant art work. They have the confidence to work independently and to collaborate successfully in many group and paired activities. They use information and communication technology (ICT) competently in the presentation of their work, to research topics and to compile spreadsheets. They learn successfully because they are encouraged to take their work seriously and they know that their efforts are appreciated.
- 3.4 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They behave well and enjoy their lessons in a learning environment that is both relaxed and purposeful. They settle down quickly and approach tasks with confidence. They apply themselves well and persevere with tasks.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

- 3.5 The school's curriculum and programme of extra-curricular activities provide excellent support for pupils' learning and personal development. The school meets its aim to provide a high quality education which enables pupils to discover interests and talents across and beyond the curriculum.
- 3.6 The curriculum provides a wide range of educational opportunities and covers the requisite areas of learning most effectively. At all stages it is broadly based on the National Curriculum and extends beyond to include French throughout the school. It expands in Years 7 and 8 to include separate sciences, Spanish and German, classics and public speaking skills.

- 3.7 The curriculum is suitable for pupils at all stages of the school and meets their varying needs and abilities. It is well planned and enables pupils to learn and make progress. Since the last inspection, provision for the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities has improved. A member of staff has been appointed to oversee learning support. Screening procedures have been established to identify pupils with difficulties. Clear individual education plans are devised for pupils who require one-to-one support. Arrangements for individual and group support in the classroom are effective. Formal identification of gifted and talented pupils and provision for them within the curriculum is a developing area. However good opportunities for the most able pupils are provided in extra-curricular activities, particularly in Years 7 and 8. The use of ICT in some areas of the curriculum enhances the pupils' learning and places an emphasis on independent research; the school has plans for further expansion of provision.
- 3.8 The programme of extra-curricular activities is excellent. Pupils have wide opportunities to be creative in drama, physical education (PE) art and in many instrumental and choral group activities. Provision for sports and PE is strong and includes an extensive fixture list and a recent boys' hockey tour to Dublin. After school clubs range from science to astronomy and include trampolining and an ICT animation club. Older pupils enjoy their participation in the national 'BBC report'. Guest speakers provide opportunities for pupils to discuss such topics as 'Are we discriminating against future people?' Pupils benefit from links with the community through use of the local parish church and visits to museums and art galleries. Participation in sporting events and competitions provides valuable links with the local and wider community.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.9 Good and occasionally outstanding teaching makes a strong contribution to the pupils' achievement throughout the school and ensures that the school meets its aim to enable pupils to fulfil their individual and collective potential.
- 3.10 Teachers use a wide range of strategies; lessons are well structured and contain a variety of activities. The teachers' subject knowledge is strong and they show energy and enthusiasm. Lessons are well paced and time is managed effectively. Pupils are encouraged to play an active part in their learning and they respond responsibly and with enjoyment. Their creativity is fostered well in many subjects including art and English. Teachers know and understand their pupils; skilful questioning challenges more able pupils and gives measured support to those who find work more difficult. In a minority of lessons where teaching is less effective the pace is slower and pupils are not so actively involved in their learning. The planning of lessons is almost always thorough and detailed. However, arrangements for the monitoring of teaching and learning in Years 7 and 8 are not sufficiently rigorous and occasionally the lessons planned are not closely matched to the needs of the pupils.
- 3.11 A wide range of high quality resources is used effectively to support teaching. The pupils' work is well displayed and classrooms provide a stimulating environment. The interactive whiteboards in some classrooms and specialist rooms, including the junior science laboratory, are used well. For Years 7 and 8 setting arrangements in mathematics lead to some inequalities in the learning environment provided; one group has lessons in four different rooms in the course of the week. The computer suites are excellent and ICT is used very imaginatively in some subjects. The recently refurbished library supports teaching and is enjoyed by pupils; there is still scope for further development of its use.

- 3.12 Arrangements for the assessment of pupils' work and progress are thorough. The majority of the teachers' marking is careful and constructive; the marking of project work is excellent and provides detailed guidance for pupils. However, the school's marking policy is not followed consistently, and sometimes poorly written comments are unhelpful or spoil the appearance of the pupils' work. Well devised systems of self assessment and peer appraisal encourage pupils to review their efforts and to work with 'talk partners' to define success criteria and identify areas for improvement. The pupils' progress is tracked effectively using appropriate standardised tests throughout Years 3 to 8. The school has therefore decided that it no longer requires the information provided by externally marked national tests for pupils at age 11 and will cease to use them.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 The personal development of pupils is outstanding. This supports the school's aims to develop the qualities of determination and independence of spirit, as exemplified by the school's motto 'aut viam inveniam aut faciam' ('find a way or make a way').
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. A strong Christian ethos permeates the school and the chapel is central to school life. Pupils benefit from the opportunities for quiet reflection that it offers. Their understanding and appreciation of other faiths is highly developed because the tenets of these faiths are discussed and celebrated within chapel services and in RE and PSHE lessons. The pupils' self-esteem is high because they feel valued and respected as individuals. They benefit from the good opportunities to discuss thought-provoking issues, and show maturity and self confidence because they know that their opinions are respected. The pleasure of making music together and the appreciation of art and literature heighten their spiritual awareness. Pupils acknowledge the beauty of their surroundings. A Year 8 pupil described the school grounds as being, 'tranquil and awe inspiring.'
- 4.3 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of right and wrong. They show self-discipline and they value friendship, courtesy and good behaviour. Pupils of all ages accept responsibility for their behaviour and demonstrate a sensitive awareness of the needs of others. They are respectful towards staff and work collaboratively in the classroom. They flourish in an environment where mutual respect is carefully fostered by staff who lead by example and take time to discuss moral dilemmas and the importance of making wise decisions.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. Older pupils are eager to accept responsibilities as house captains, prefects, play buddies and librarians and they take their responsibilities very seriously. They develop important social skills as members of the school council whilst younger pupils are elected as class representatives and enjoy assisting in the classroom. Copious opportunities to compete in sports teams, to participate in drama productions, in orchestras and in choirs, allow pupils to experience success and teamwork and contribute to their highly developed social skills. Pupils show a strong sense of social responsibility; a strong awareness of the need to help others is apparent in their diligent and imaginative charitable fundraising.
- 4.5 Pupils show a highly developed appreciation of their own culture and of the rich variety of cultures within a school that fosters, very successfully, an ethos of mutual respect and tolerance. Pupils appreciate other values and points of view because they are encouraged to look outwards and gain a wider perspective. Throughout the school, pupils develop culturally through their participation in drama and music. Their appreciation of art is strengthened through working in the style of great artists. Visits to museums, art galleries, historical sites and theatres further develop their cultural appreciation. A recent trip to the National Gallery delighted one pupil in Year 8 and he was able to describe Hans Holbein's 'The Ambassadors' in detail. Pupils also benefit from the annual year 7 trip to France which allows them to explore a different culture and speak a foreign language. A group of pupils recently visited the Shantivanam Ashram in India and, on their return, they shared their valuable experiences with the rest of the school.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

- 4.6 Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good overall. The quality of pastoral care is excellent and supports the pupils' outstanding personal development. The school meets its aim to provide a stimulating, rewarding and supportive environment for the whole school community.
- 4.7 Staff provide excellent support and guidance for the pupils throughout the junior school. In Years 3 to 6, form tutors are primarily responsible for their classes; in Years 7 and 8, in addition to form tutors who have limited contact with their pupils during the day, two pastoral tutors oversee the pupils' care. The academic progress and personal development of pupils is carefully monitored and tracked throughout the school. Academic records are stored in the school office and are available to staff on the school intranet system.
- 4.8 The academic provision for Years 7 and 8 of the junior school is the responsibility of the director of studies in the senior school. This shared responsibility for pupils in Years 7 and 8 assists a smooth transition to the senior school at the end of Year 8. Strong communication and teamwork between those involved in both sections of the school ensure that the system works well.
- 4.9 The quality of relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils is excellent; staff know their pupils well. The ethos of the school is relaxed but respectful. Pupils are understanding and tolerant of one another. A comprehensive code of behaviour governs the school community. Pupils enjoy the system of rewards in which allegiance to house is an important factor. They understand clearly the sanctions for misbehaviour. Procedures and advice to staff are clearly set out in the comprehensive anti-bullying policy. Pupils play an active part in setting the tone of the school and class representatives on the anti-bullying committee are ready to listen and advise their peers. Pupils feel confident that adults will help them if a problem arises and that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and will be dealt with constructively.
- 4.10 The child protection policy is implemented effectively and supported by regular staff training. The school now has robust staff recruitment procedures which are followed meticulously. Deficiencies in past procedures identified during the initial visit of the inspection have been remedied. All necessary checks are carried out for suitability to work with children. The school has comprehensive policies and procedures to minimise the risks of fire; equipment checks and fire drills take place regularly. Appropriate measures are taken to ensure the health and safety of the school community and required risk assessments are carried out. Medical arrangements are excellent. A registered nurse is on duty throughout the day in the well equipped medical centre. Comprehensive medical records are kept and parents are kept well informed of any problems.
- 4.11 The school provides excellent school lunches which are nutritious and popular with pupils. The choice is wide and special dietary requirements are catered for. The atmosphere of the dining room is relaxed and friendly. The importance of healthy eating is promoted in PSHE and science lessons. Pupils have excellent opportunities for physical exercise. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with disabilities. Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The board of governors provides strong governance which fully supports the aims of the school and which sees Chigwell School as a single entity. Governors have an effective oversight of the school. They bring to their work as governors great breadth of experience and knowledge in many fields including law, finance and education. The structures of governance as laid down in a comprehensive governors' handbook are clear. Recent self evaluation and review have resulted in some modifications to meet the expanding role of governance.
- 5.2 Governors are fully involved in strategic and development planning. Regular and well-minuted meetings of the whole board and the five clearly focused subcommittees ensure that governors are well informed and able to fulfil their responsibilities for maintaining high educational standards. Financial management is strong and enables governors to oversee successful educational provision and wise investment in staff, material resources and accommodation.
- 5.3 The governing body has a clear insight into the working of the school. In response to the recommendations of the last inspection a governor takes specific responsibility for linking with the junior school. The head of the junior school now presents a detailed termly report to the governing body, which provides a valuable insight into the achievements and educational direction of the school.
- 5.4 The annual whole school 'Governors' Day' provides an opportunity for governors to spend time in the junior school and to see at first-hand the daily life of the school and the educational experience of pupils. This, together with their attendance at plays, concerts and sporting events, increases their understanding of the school and it strengthens the support and guidance they offer. The school has not responded to the recommendation of the last report to arrange for appraisal of the head of the junior school by an independent appraiser. However a governor with valuable educational expertise gives strong support and guidance and fulfils the role of critical friend to the head.
- 5.5 In almost all respects governors discharge their responsibilities carefully in relation to child protection and welfare, health and safety; some have undertaken training to ensure that they are well informed on legal requirements. They are fully involved in all aspects of health and safety and are represented on the school's health and safety committee. A designated governor takes responsibility for child protection matters. However, until recently, the governing body had paid insufficient attention to ensuring that all of the required checks in regard to staff recruitment were made and recorded. This, and a procedural deficiency involving the appointment of a small number of governors before all suitability checks had been completed, has been rectified.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.6 Strong leadership and management at all levels of responsibility enables the school to fulfil its aim to provide a rounded education of high quality. Since the time of the last inspection closer links with the senior school have been established. The head of the junior school is a member of the whole school senior leadership team; this promotes the integration of the junior and senior sections of the school and ensures

that the needs of the school are well represented in whole school decisions. Whilst ultimate responsibility for the school lies with the Headmaster of Chigwell School, the head of junior school has a high level of autonomy in all aspects of management and in the day-to-day running of the school.

- 5.7 Development planning is thorough and sets clearly defined targets. It is well linked to subject planning and to the whole school development plan. Regular meetings and informal discussion ensure that all staff are involved in the planning process and the self evaluation that runs parallel to it.
- 5.8 The head and her senior management team have a clear vision of school needs and the strong and purposeful educational direction they provide is reflected in pupils' high levels of academic achievement and excellent personal development. In Years 3 to 6 the roles of subject coordinators are well developed and the monitoring of teaching and learning is generally thorough and careful. The senior school director of studies and departmental heads are responsible for the curriculum and academic progress of Years 7 and 8 whilst all other aspects of their well-being are the concern of the junior school. Strong pastoral and academic support and guidance is provided to ensure that the all-round development of pupils in these two year groups is carefully fostered. However systems for the monitoring of pupils' teaching and learning in Years 7 and 8 are not sufficiently rigorous.
- 5.9 The school appreciates its hard-working teaching staff; they are deployed well and all support and administrative staff are highly valued and used very effectively. A two-year cycle of career development review is well established and good opportunities for in-service training are linked effectively to individual professional development and to school needs. All staff receive the required child protection and health and safety training.
- 5.10 The school has rectified the regulatory shortcomings in relation to the recruitment of staff that were noted at the time of the initial inspection visit. All staff have made declarations of medical fitness. Current rigorous recruitment procedures include medical checks, character references and, where appropriate, professional references. Procedures for the appointment of governors specify that the suitability checks must be completed and included on the central register before an appointment is taken up.

5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.11 The quality of links with parents is outstanding. The school's successful working relationship with parents supports strongly the school's aim that pupils should fulfil their potential and enjoy their time at the school.
- 5.12 A third of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Their responses showed parents to be highly supportive of the school's provision. In particular they are unanimous in the view that teaching helps their children to learn and that the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and views. They are particularly appreciative of the extra-curricular activities provided and of the school's curriculum. They feel that they can communicate easily with the school and that the school responds promptly.
- 5.13 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They support their children's participation in sporting events, plays, concerts and charitable ventures. They give practical assistance during an annual activities week, and accompany forms on educational visits. The parents' organisation the 'Friends

of Chigwell' gives strong support through the social and fundraising events it organises.

- 5.14 The quality of information provided for parents is excellent. The parents' handbook and year group information booklets are comprehensive. The website offers detailed information on all aspects of school life. Parents receive two full reports each year; these are detailed and constructive in tone, frequently indicating ways in which pupils can improve. In addition parents' evenings offer good opportunities for one-to-one consultation. In response to parental concern about the time allocation for interviews, arrangements have been modified. A recent innovation that has been widely welcomed is the presence of Year 8 pupils with their parents at consultations.
- 5.15 The school handles parents' concerns with thought and care. An open door policy and the ready availability of staff ensure that difficulties can usually be sorted out quickly and informally. Parents are well informed about the clear and detailed formal complaints procedure. In response to the regulatory requirement of the last inspection the school ensures that parents are aware that policies relating to the curriculum are available on request; these are also now readily available on the school website.

What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.

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 governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Jill Moore

Mrs Jennifer Scott

Mr Adrian Morris

Mrs Jennifer Moran

Reporting Inspector

Junior Team Inspector (Head of Dept, IAPS)

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