



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION**

**DUKE OF KENT SCHOOL**

**JANUARY 2017**



## SCHOOL'S DETAILS

<b>School</b>	Duke of Kent
<b>DfE number</b>	936/6036
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1064183
<b>Address</b>	Peaslake Road Ewhurst Surrey GU6 7NS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01483 277313
<b>Email address</b>	office@dokschool.org
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Judith Fremont-Barnes
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Richard Brocksom
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 16
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	299
	<b>Boys</b> 201 <b>Girls</b> 98
	<b>EYFS</b> 21 <b>Pre-Prep</b> 21
	<b>Prep</b> 89 <b>Senior</b> 168
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18 to 19 January 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 chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended class registrations and 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

Dr Alison Primrose

Reporting inspector

Mrs Alison Fleming

Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Mr Jonathan Ullmer MBE

Team inspector (Principal, ISA school)

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## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **About the school**

- 1.1 Duke of Kent School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged between 3 and 16. It was founded in 1948 and amalgamated with a Royal Air Force (RAF) school, Vanbrugh Castle, in 1976. After the extension of provision in 2010 to include pupils to the age of 16, the first cohort completed their GCSEs in 2012. Since the previous inspection, the school has established an extended day programme and ceased to offer boarding. In 2014 dedicated personal electronic devices were introduced for all staff and pupils across the prep and senior parts of the school.

### **What the school seeks to do**

- 1.2 With kindness and respect as core values of the community, the school aims to support and challenge pupils in all areas of their development. It aims to provide a stimulating curriculum and promote an attitude of continuous improvement. Through opportunities for leadership, teamwork and service, the school aims to provide its pupils with the knowledge and skills, empathy and understanding that will enable them to become positive, compassionate and constructive members of their local and global community, prepared for future challenges and opportunities.

### **About the pupils**

- 1.3 Pupils come from town and country areas within a 20-mile radius of the School; they are predominantly of white British ethnicity, reflecting the local community. Standardised testing data provided by the school indicates that the ability of pupils is above the national average. The school has identified approximately one third of the pupils as having specific talents or abilities in one or more subjects, including sport. It has also identified 44 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including dyslexia and dyspraxia. They receive support appropriate to their needs. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs and receives support accordingly. English is an additional language (EAL) for four pupils, three of whom have additional support and one whose needs are met within the classroom.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

### **Recommendations from previous inspections**

- 1.5 The previous inspection of the school by ISI was an interim inspection in January 2011. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Make better use of information and communication technology (ICT) in each pupil's learning across the curriculum.
  - Ensure that the best practice in teaching and learning is disseminated throughout the school.
- 1.6 The school has successfully met all the recommendations of the previous inspection.

## **2. KEY FINDINGS**

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

- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning, relishing the many opportunities provided in the curricular and extra-curricular programmes offered.
- Pupils of all ages demonstrate excellent communication skills, speaking confidently in a wide range of contexts.
- The pupils' confidence with, competence in and effective use of ICT to support learning is outstanding and is successfully supported by leadership and management within the school and strategic planning by governors.

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

- The pupils are highly confident, articulate young people, aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and sensitive to the needs of others.
- Pupils are resilient learners who persevere with challenges and respond positively to the excellent support they receive from all staff.
- Pupils' excellent social skills are evident in the strength of their team work and collaboration within their peer groups and across age groups.

### **Recommendations**

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

- Ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teaching across all subjects.
- Broadening opportunities for pupils to engage with other cultural traditions.

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils of all ability levels make excellent progress in their studies. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), children make rapid progress in their core literacy and numeracy skills through the skilful inclusion of regular opportunities to practise and reinforce previous learning. They successfully apply number skills when reading the daily calendar and independently apply phonic knowledge in their creative writing. Prep pupils' excellent progress is evident in their enthusiastic engagement in problem solving tasks. They collaborate and debate effectively, listening well to each other, enabling all to succeed. In the senior part of the school, GCSE results over the past three years are above the national average, with nearly all pupils gaining at least 5 A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics. These high levels of attainment and progress are evidence of the impact of the school's commitment to support and challenge each pupil.
- 3.3 Nearly all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agree that teaching enables their child to make good progress, with individual needs well met. Pupils value the encouragement that they receive from the teachers, whose support helps to build their confidence as learners, enabling them to succeed, often exceeding expectations. Pupils with SEND or EAL also make excellent progress, benefitting from teaching which is targeted to meet their individual needs. They develop strategies to tackle specific challenges and apply these effectively in their work. Pupils with particular strengths achieve success beyond the core curriculum. Able mathematicians choose to study for an externally accredited qualification in further mathematics, supported by the school. Pupils with specific strengths and interests participate successfully in competitions, such as a county-wide design technology (DT) challenge. The growth mindset initiative, which focuses on pupils becoming successful, aspirational learners, underpins these high levels of achievement. Its successful integration and positive impact on learning is evidence of effective leadership and management at every level.
- 3.4 Pupils' communication skills are excellent. Pupils of all ages speak confidently to adults and peers alike. These skills are developed and honed through participation in many different activities and events such as drama productions, school assemblies, debates and class discussions. In the EYFS, the children develop excellent speaking and listening skills through role play activities in the classroom. In the prep school, pupils regularly develop their ideas through talking with a partner, such as debating the properties and uses of different materials in a science lesson, or recapping previous learning. By the time the pupils reach the senior part of the school they are highly articulate. The pupils have well developed skills in literacy. From early mark-making activities in the EYFS, pupils develop fluent handwriting and many become enthusiastic writers. Prep pupils' virtual meeting with an author in France gave them inspiration for their own creative writing. Senior pupils critically analyse texts, for example producing a sophisticated analysis of character in *The Boy in Striped Pyjamas*. Pupils with SEND achieve good levels of literacy, benefitting from personal learning plans which are reviewed regularly. Games are used to support their skill development and clear targets enable them to succeed, progressing from being reluctant writers to successful authors, writing their own stories. The pupils' excellent communication and literacy skills benefit from careful planning, knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching, provision of opportunity and excellent pupil teacher relationships.
- 3.5 Pupils' ICT skills and competence are outstanding. They use and apply these skills highly effectively to support all areas of their learning. Underpinned by a clear understanding of the appropriate use of individual electronic devices, pupils competently carry out independent research. In a prep geography lesson, pupils researched animal adaptations to different environments, and in a senior science lesson, electronic devices were used effectively to check previous learning. Pupils record their work electronically, for example, using a series of photographs to record group work on a science challenge. In a prep mathematics lesson, pupils used photography to record their observations of perpendicular and parallel lines around the school. Younger prep pupils prepare their own presentations on the charities that they have researched. Senior pupils use design software packages competently in their

DT work. Pupils record their musical performances, and a selection of them have been assembled into a CD. The successful integration of ICT to support all areas of the curriculum and the positive impact on learning from the provision of personal devices to all pupils are evidence of effective development planning by the leadership team. Careful preparation and resourcing, including the development of a robust infrastructure, underpin these excellent outcomes.

- 3.6 All pupils achieve good results in mathematics, and some excel. In the EYFS, children enjoy many opportunities to use and apply their growing number knowledge, whether they are counting bags of ice or the number of asteroids in their space project. Prep pupils acquire good levels of numeracy and mathematical knowledge as a result of teaching which provides effectively for different ability levels. The pupils apply their knowledge competently when carrying out science investigations and when constructing and interpreting climate data in geography. Senior pupils of all ability levels make rapid progress in lessons when the pace is carefully matched to their needs and abilities. Pupils with particular strengths in mathematics achieve at an exceptionally high level through the 'stretch and challenge' programme. The pupils' interest, motivation and commitment, evident from the many additional hours of study required, is nurtured and supported by the school. Pupils with SEND are well supported in the class and all pupils feel confident to ask for help because of the positive teacher-pupil relationships that create a supportive learning environment. In the few occasions where teaching plans and strategies do not match pupils' different abilities, the rate of their progress is restricted. The school's practice of staff sharing successful teaching strategies and methods, building on the recommendation of the previous inspection, supports teachers' professional development. This has been effective in implementing whole school initiatives but the quality of teaching is not yet consistent across all subjects.
- 3.7 Pupils' physical development is excellent. With a focus on personal targets and fulfilling one's potential embedded in the school's aims and ethos, pupils of all ages participate successfully in a wide range of sporting and outdoor activities. From exploring the woodlands in the EYFS through to participating in expeditions as part of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE), pupils of all ages have numerous opportunities to develop their physical skills and competencies. They achieve highly in a wide range of different activities and disciplines across the school. In line with the school's aims and values, pupil success is measured by what each achievement means for that individual. A pupil with communication challenges was inspired by a school poetry festival to write a poem explaining how his brain works, and had the confidence to read it to a wide audience. Pupils' focus on continual improvement means they respond positively to challenges and focus on achieving a personal best, whether that is in improving cross-country times, achieving individual writing targets or success in a music examination. All are acknowledged and celebrated. This desire to achieve is clearly articulated by the pupils and demonstrated in their attitudes both in and out of the classroom.
- 3.8 There are many excellent group and individual achievements and successes beyond the school. School swimming teams are successful nationally and locally. Prep cross-country teams achieve well in local tournaments and individual pupils have been selected to play netball at county level. All senior pupils participate enthusiastically in the DofE and the majority continue to gain bronze awards. Other achievements include success in national competitions, attaining referee qualifications and selection for national squads in climbing and swimming. In each of these cases the pupils' individual talents and interests are nurtured by the school, and opportunities are identified for the pupils to continue developing their special gifts and interests.
- 3.9 Pupils of all ages demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to their learning. From an early age they develop excellent collaborative skills, such as working together to make ice mountains in the EYFS. Across the prep forms, pupils support each other in many ways, enjoying group work in lessons and paired reading across year groups. Pupils of all ages across the school work effectively together. Special projects linked to a focus day, such as a recent day celebrating the life and work of Roald Dahl, provide a whole school opportunity for pupils from different year groups to collaborate. Senior pupils

voluntarily go to prep music lessons or activities in their lunchbreaks, where they help and support the younger pupils.

- 3.10 Pupils take responsibility for their own learning and confidently tackle new challenges. They face challenges with focus and determination which are reinforced through regular discussion of their skills feedback sheets, and underpinned by the whole school growth mindset. With the rich curriculum offered both in and out of the classroom, and a learning environment which supports their individual passions and interest, pupils willingly take on leadership roles, demonstrating initiative and independence in their learning.

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils of all ages demonstrate high levels of self-knowledge and understanding, well aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and most understand how to improve. In the questionnaire responses a small minority of pupils felt they did not know how well they were doing in their subjects. Inspectors found that while the extent of feedback in marking was variable, regular reviews of progress with form tutors do identify progress and next steps. Pupils who spoke to inspectors were clear about their progress and targets. Senior pupils are appreciative of the fact that they are challenged in their learning without being put under pressure. The pupils are resilient learners who persevere with tasks and challenges and develop positive self-esteem and self-belief through the sensitive pastoral care they receive which helps them to deal with challenging situations beyond the school. They are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their lives, a view endorsed by a large majority of parents in the questionnaire responses.
- 4.3 Pupils at every level understand that the decisions they take can impact on their own lives and on the lives of others. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to make decisions about their learning. In the EYFS children select equipment and choose activities in their daily programme. Prep pupils make decisions in different contexts, such as selecting who they respect and why in a Religious Education (RE) lesson or determining how to interpret the theme of 'Fire' in an open-ended holiday project challenge. Senior pupils develop their analytical skills as they make decisions about packaging designs in design technology (DT) lessons. Pupils of all ages select from an excellent range of clubs and extra-curricular activities, including opportunities to undertake additional academic work and higher level qualifications. In other areas of the curriculum, such as in art and music, pupils are confident to make choices in their work, justifying those choices and are not afraid to experiment and to learn from experience. This is clearly demonstrated in the diversity of their creative artwork, including original costume designs, complex sculpture and careful portraiture. The wide range of opportunities for the pupils is valued highly by the parents, nearly all of whom expressed their satisfaction with curricular and extra-curricular provision. As pupils take on positions of responsibility, they learn to analyse their decision making. Through the school council pupils demonstrate a high level of maturity when making decisions that benefit the school community.
- 4.4 Pupils value opportunities to pause and think about the non-material aspects of life through careful curriculum planning, which incorporates a range of opportunities for them to explore the world around them and to appreciate its beauty. Children in the EYFS enjoy gazing at the blue sky through the bare trees, an experience they later capture in artwork. Older pupils' photography following a school trip captures their sensitivity to the environment around them. Pupils show empathy for others which they translate into action, initiating various charity fundraising events. Prep pupils show real passion for a range of different situations and needs, and often convey these eloquently to others in assemblies and class presentations. A presentation about the Paralympics incorporated a pupil-led moment of silence in order to reflect on the amazing achievements of these athletes. Pupils value assemblies and reflect on the inspirational stories that they hear. Their understanding of and respect for those with different beliefs is promoted in RE lessons, where they learn about other faiths and develop an understanding of those with other beliefs through visiting different places of worship. In their questionnaire responses, pupils report not needing to be encouraged to respect other faiths as they already do as a school. The senior pupils have a well-developed spiritual and moral awareness, which is evident in their class debates, such as when analysing the motivation of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in their studies of literature. Pupils meet together for collective worship in assemblies, where the inclusion of prayer and singing contributes to their spiritual development and strengthens the strong sense of family, which permeates the whole school community.
- 4.5 Pupils have a strong sense of moral awareness. They distinguish right from wrong, with younger children relating their understanding to the 'golden rules'. Senior pupils discuss moral dilemmas in

Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) lessons and begin to identify the different pressures that can influence their choices. Pupils have a well-developed sense of responsibility. They appreciate that rules make a community safe and demonstrate this through the high standards of behaviour and courtesy that are evident throughout the school. Pupils value the support and encouragement provided by the staff, and respond positively to the prompts and guidance given which enable them to manage their own behaviour effectively. The pupils' high standards of behaviour are underpinned by consistent behaviour management and the respectful relationships established between staff and pupils. This reflects successful leadership at every level. The overwhelming majority of parents agree that the school actively promotes the values of democracy, respect and tolerance, and maintains high standards of behaviour.

- 4.6 Pupils demonstrate excellent collaborative skills, working together positively to achieve a common goal or solve a problem. They often work in pairs. Through talking together, sharing ideas, discussing solutions and pondering on complex problems, pupils work effectively together and make progress in their learning. Younger pupils confidently recall details from their in-class 'flight' to Iceland as they talk together, whereas senior pupils prompt each other as they recall definitions in history and work in pairs in senior mathematics lessons to solve challenging questions posed at the end of an exercise on reverse percentages. The development of their strong teamwork skills is promoted through many different activities, including sports, participation in the DofE award scheme and school drama productions. Pupils enjoy overcoming physical challenges on their residential team building courses, where they co-operate to solve problems. Pupils of all ages and abilities respect each other. Pupils with SEND or EAL are fully integrated into the life of the school, where an inclusive ethos ensures everyone is valued as an individual. This awareness of and respect for others extends beyond the school and pupils engage in the wider community, in activities as varied as clearing bracken in an overgrown wildlife park and visiting residents in a local care home. Pupils develop their appreciation of other cultures through some aspects of the curriculum and also through the link established with a school in Malawi. This link has heightened pupils' awareness of environmental issues overseas. They have demonstrated their understanding of the issues and the challenges posed to communities far away, by initiating fundraising activities to support them. However, opportunities for more direct engagement with other cultural traditions are limited.
- 4.7 Pupils of all ages speak confidently about keeping safe and understand how to keep healthy. In the EYFS, children explain the importance of seat belts when on a flight and younger prep pupils understand the importance of sleep and drinking water to keep healthy. Senior pupils consider the importance of a balanced diet in PHSE, and in their French lessons they demonstrated this knowledge in their discussions of healthy lifestyles. All pupils have an excellent age-appropriate understanding about e-safety. They are well aware of the benefits of using ICT and the internet to support their learning. In addition to this, they are also well informed about how to keep safe online because of the excellent care taken by the leadership in providing clear guidance, establishing safe procedures and maintaining robust systems. Direct involvement of parents in this process has also contributed to the successful introduction of individual personal devices. Overall the pupils are kind, confident and responsible young people, who take responsibility for their own behaviour. They are sensitive to the needs of others and highly motivated learners who work hard to achieve success.