



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL GDST**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

**FINAL VISIT**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Oxford High School GDST

Full Name of School	<b>Oxford High School GDST</b>		
DCSF Number	<b>931/6093</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>306983</b>		
Address	<b>Oxford High School GDST Belbroughton Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX2 6XA</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01865 559888</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01865 552343</b>		
Email Address	<b>f.lusk@oxf.gdst.net</b>		
Headmistress	<b>Miss O F S Lusk</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Margaret Shannon</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 18</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>952</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>72</b>	5-11: <b>292</b>
	11-18	<b>588</b>	
Number of Day Pupils	<b>952</b>	Capacity for flexi-boarding:	<b>N/A</b>
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>0</b>	
	Full:		Weekly:
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs J Scotcher</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection date/EYFS	<b>12 Jan 2010 to 13 Jan 2010</b>		
Final (team) visit	<b>08 Feb 2010 to 10 Feb 2010</b>		

## 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 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.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31<sup>st</sup> August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

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 Oxford High School is a day school for girls aged from three to nineteen and for boys from four to seven. It was founded in 1875. In 1998, the Trust acquired two nearby preparatory schools enabling the school to lower the age of entry from nine years to three. The school is non denominational and admits pupils of all faiths, and of no faith.
- 1.2 The school aims ‘to deliver an education consistent with its mission statement which will challenge and engage the minds of pupils and foster a lifetime of curiosity, independent thinking and creativity; provide an enjoyable, excellent and stimulating academic education which meets the needs of individual pupils, and enables them to realise their potential, regardless of background; offer a wide range of life enhancing and stimulating extra-curricular activities to enrich pupils’ experience; provide the highest quality teaching and support; provide for the welfare and health and safety of all who attend and work here; help raise self-esteem by celebrating achievement and effort and providing opportunities for pupils to make positive contributions; promote sound personal values such as respect and awareness of the needs of others; promote awareness and understanding of the diverse and challenging world in which we live; prepare our pupils to be successful and fulfilled in life after school.’
- 1.3 The school is a member of Girls’ Day School Trust (GDST) which provides the governance and overall strategic planning. Legal responsibility for the school is vested in the GDST Council with a group of local governors, who have no legal powers, providing informal advice and local oversight.
- 1.4 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has seventy-two pupils. Twenty-four of these are part-time pupils in the Nursery. Among the 364 pupils in the junior school, 23 are boys and are taught in Years 1 and 2. Five hundred and eighty-eight girls are taught in the senior school. Of these, 142 are students in the sixth form. Ofsted inspected the nursery in 2008. Since then the school has decided to phase out boys’ education. Fifty-seven EYFS pupils receive government funding.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the junior school is above the national average. The ability of the senior school is far above the national average. Sixty-three pupils in the junior school have been identified as needing learning support, sixteen of whom receive help from the school. In the senior school the number is 36, of whom four receive help from the school. One hundred and twenty pupils overall do not have English as their first language. The majority of them do not require additional support. In the junior school thirteen pupils receive some assistance in language development and three receive one-to-one support.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 From the EYFS onwards, pupils of all abilities and needs achieve high success in their learning and personal development. The school fully meets its aim to enable each individual to find fulfilment during their school life, to feel valued, to be sensitive and tolerant towards others, to develop talents, to grow in integrity and responsibility, and ultimately to face the challenge of adult life with justifiable self-confidence. The high level of achievement of its pupils reflects the achievement of the school in delivering an education consistent with its mission statement, which challenges and engages the minds of pupils and fosters a lifetime of curiosity, independent thinking and creativity. Parents acknowledge the high quality of the pupils' education. Success is high across a wide range of activities in sport, music, drama and non-exam pursuits. Pupils' overall success is promoted by their positive attitudes, their ability as learners and by the quality of teaching that is good with many outstanding features. The breadth and richness of the curricular and extra-curricular experiences provide an excellent arena in which qualifications are pursued in the context of a broad and personal education.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal qualities are particularly well developed in an atmosphere that places great emphasis on responsibility and self-reliance. The evidence of confidence and personal development is apparent in all parts of the school. The acceptance of responsibility for the well-being of others, the willingness to offer support and their active participation in the life of the school contribute to their personal development and to maintaining and developing the strong ethos of the school. The high quality of pastoral care is a key factor in developing pupils as confident and self-reliant people.
- 2.3 Excellent leadership at all levels ensures the aims of the school are met. Parents offer strong support and in a variety of ways contribute to the education of the pupils. Issues identified in the last inspection have been remedied so that the roles of the coordinators in the junior school have been rationalised with particular attention given to their monitoring. The library and playground facilities have been refurbished in accordance with the recommendation in the last report. In the senior school the personal, social, health and citizenship education has been strengthened (PSHCE) as the last report recommended. The school has taken considerable care to meet all statutory requirements.

### **2.(b) Action points**

#### **(i) For the main school**

##### **(a) Compliance with the Independent School Standards Regulations**

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

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended.

#### **For the Early Years Foundation Stage setting**

##### **(a) Compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements**

2.5 The school's provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and no action is required.

**(b) Recommended action**

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements;

1. continue to maintain the high standards of learning and personal development throughout the school;
2. consider ways of further developing staff members' qualifications and skills so that greater depth can be given to their already strong understanding of EYFS.

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

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

- 3.1 Pupils' performance in national tests at the age of eleven, for the last three years for which comparative data is available, has been excellent when compared with the national average for girls in all maintained primary schools. The results for externally-moderated national tests at the age of seven in 2006 to 2007, the last year in which pupils were entered, were excellent when compared with the national average for all maintained primary schools. Results in GCSE and A Level over the last three years for which comparative data is available, have been excellent when compared with the national average for girls in all maintained schools, and high when compared with girls in maintained selective schools. In their academic study, pupils in the junior school make exceptional progress over time in relation to their ability profile, which is above the national average. In the senior school, pupils make good progress over time in relation to their ability profile, which is far above the national average.
- 3.2 Pupils are very well educated in accordance with the school's aims to challenge and engage them, fostering a lifetime of curiosity, independent thinking and creativity. In lessons, during interviews and extra-curricular activities pupils throughout the school displayed enthusiasm for their learning, and achieved high levels of success.
- 3.3 The pupils reach a high level of knowledge, understanding and skill in lessons and across the range of extra-curricular options. In Year 1, high levels of literacy and the application of mathematics were evident, and in a Year 9 French lesson pupils displayed excellent speaking and writing skills. Pupils showed independence of thought when discussing the character of Iago in a Year 10 English lesson, and exhibited excellent ICT skills across many subjects but especially in art and design. Problem solving and creative thinking are developed as strong features in the learning of pupils as they move through the school. The quality of musical performance is outstanding. Pupils work collaboratively in small groups and are equally at home working independently.
- 3.4 A wide range of subjects are pursued to GCSE level, including IGCSE mathematics. The range of A-Level subjects on offer is very broad with the school responding to the curriculum needs of each pupil. Ability and progress is monitored using nationally standardised assessments throughout the school. The result of this monitoring is used effectively to support the development of pupils and to help them shape the choices they will make about their future steps in education.
- 3.5 At all ages pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are lively, creative, confident and inquisitive learners. High levels of intellectual curiosity are evident in many lessons. Pupils enjoy a wide range of challenges. They are attentive, enthusiastic and co-operate actively with their teachers. The key skills for learning are deeply engrained by the time pupils reach the higher years in the senior school, thus enabling them to make rapid progress and achieve very high standards.

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

- 3.6 The curriculum is effective. It is broad, well balanced and suitable for all ages, abilities and needs and it supports the aims of the school. Emphasis is clearly on education in its widest sense. In Years 10 and 11 the curriculum is enriched by Complementary Studies, providing avenues for pupils to enhance their learning in a number of subject areas. Both junior and senior pupils benefit from the range of subjects and the wealth of opportunities offered to them. Liaison work between junior and senior school continues to develop as suggested in the last inspection report. Almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection survey indicated that they thought their children were offered an appropriate range of subjects and experiences.
- 3.7 Pupils' educational experience is greatly enhanced by the wide reach of extra-curricular activities. Clubs and societies flourish around academic interests such as in literature, art, music and science. In addition there are clubs that cater for more general recreational pursuits. Business and charity ventures are encouraged and contacts with local schools and organisations are well developed. Pupils have many opportunities to organise their own activities and thereby exercise leadership qualities. In this way extra-curricular activities play an important role in the promotion of personal qualities. In the junior school, staff plan these activities to enrich the curriculum and to respond to requests from pupils. For example, a craft club was introduced to promote fine motor skills; a writing club to further this area of literacy. Pupils' interests and wishes are taken into account in deciding which clubs and activities to provide. For instance, in the senior school, the engineering club has fuelled the interest and aspirations of physicists.
- 3.8 The highly successful programmes of outdoor pursuits, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DoE) and the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) make a significant contribution to pupils' development by creating situations where leadership, team working and personal responsibility are key elements, and where self-confidence and support for others are developed. The extra-curricular drama clubs and activities, the wide range of sports, expeditions, trips abroad, residential and outward-bound experiences contribute to an outstanding educational experience. The variety and quality of visiting speakers adds to the rich educational experience on offer.
- 3.9 Pupils participate enthusiastically in clubs and activities, some of which are so popular that they are regularly oversubscribed. Sixth form pupils take a lead in setting up and running some of the clubs for younger pupils.
- 3.10 Links with the world beyond the school environment are many, and include day trips and visits locally to museums, and national and international links, such as school exchanges which enhance language learning and increase cultural understanding. The breadth of the curriculum and its extra provisions add up to excellent provision.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.11 The outstanding successes achieved by pupils in so many areas of endeavour are strongly promoted by well-structured teaching with a strong focus on responding to the needs and opportunities of individual pupils throughout the school. The effective promotion of curiosity, problem solving, creative thought and strong emphasis on

active involvement allow pupils to develop as independent learners. The high quality of teaching noted in the last inspection has been maintained and enriched by the school's constant reviews of performance. Throughout the school pupils are helped to develop a secure understanding of their subjects and they make rapid progress overall because of the teaching they experience. The overwhelming majority of parents and pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaires commented that the quality of the teaching in the school contributed to the progress of pupils.

- 3.12 The flair and enthusiasm teachers bring to their lessons proves infectious and sparks interest in the pupils. From the earliest years in the EYFS section of the school, pupils benefit greatly from the well-modulated experience of this quality teaching that often has outstanding features. The foundations for effective learning established in these early years are well developed by the quality of teaching in the junior school. As a result, teachers in the senior school can actively involve pupils in their learning by utilising a wide range of well-embedded learning techniques thereby promoting outstanding levels of achievement.
- 3.13 Teaching places considerable emphasis from Year 1 onwards on acquiring the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT while at the same time building self-confidence. Language teaching develops high levels of skill in language acquisition. The range of languages experienced by pupils, and particularly the teaching of Mandarin in the senior school, facilitates learners' understanding that the challenge of languages is not rooted only in grammar and vocabulary. Teaching promotes creative work across many subjects and particularly through the well-integrated approaches of the subject disciplines in the art faculty and through engaging teaching in drama.
- 3.14 Teachers are knowledgeable in their subjects and make good use of a range of resources. In particular, the availability of the well-stocked library in combination with ample opportunities for internet access gives teachers a valuable resource they use effectively in supporting exciting and varied approaches to learning.
- 3.15 Teachers are well informed about pupils' progress through whole school standardised assessments. Teachers know their pupils' capabilities and are effective in building on their prior learning and helping them overcome difficulties. Assessment is productively focused on guiding improvement and ensures that pupils have a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development. The use of on-going assessment in lessons to focus support on individual pupils is a strong feature of the teaching in many lessons. The quality of teaching is a key factor in promoting academic excellence in line with the school's aims.

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

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

- 4.1 Pupils of all ages have outstandingly well-developed personal qualities and are confident, articulate and sociable, taking every opportunity to make positive contributions to the ethos and successes of the school. In this regard, the school is most successful in its aim to enable pupils to find fulfilment, to feel valued, to be sensitive and tolerant towards others, to grow in integrity and responsibility, and ultimately to face the challenge of adult life with justifiable self-confidence. The poise, confidence and high level of thoughtfulness towards others shown by pupils and the easy manner with which they manage their many achievements reflect their high level of personal development.
- 4.2 Pupils have a well-developed sense of the spiritual, which is nurtured by and expressed in their participation in the school community. Pupils learn to reflect, listen, show respect and be aware of the needs of those around them. They relate confidently to the adults they meet. Through participation in the wide range of activities in the life of the school, and through interaction with staff who challenge them to be independent, they develop self-confidence and acquire a sense of responsibility. Pupils gain insight into values and beliefs and how these affect people's lives through the work of the religious studies department, through the PSHCE programme and the study of those subjects that consider the human condition. They respond knowledgeably to ethical issues and are able to empathise with those less fortunate.
- 4.3 Their moral development is at a conspicuously high level. Almost all the parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire declared they were satisfied that the school promoted worthwhile attitudes and views and that the pupils displayed high standards of behaviour. The pupils throughout the school show commitment to raising money for charity and helping children and elderly people locally. In the junior school pupils have devised their own rules of behaviour, demonstrating their innate sense of justice. Pupils show a keen sense of fair play and appreciate the need to be mindful of others. They are able to give convincing reasons for the values which they espouse. The school is highly successful in its aim to promote strong personal values such as respect and awareness of the needs of others.
- 4.4 Pupils are extremely well developed socially and enjoy exercising responsibility in the wide range of leadership roles they are given. Pupils take great pride in their school and in the contribution they make to its well-being. They welcome opportunities to represent the school through games, music and drama, as well as through participation in charities working for the sick and needy. Pupils show an awareness of social issues beyond the school. The wide range of topics in the PSHCE programme provides many opportunities for pupils to display their understanding and insights into the challenges that affect society. The positive relationships and support offered by sixth form pupils to pupils in the junior school and to those in the early years in the senior school are greatly appreciated by those who benefit from the generosity of these older pupils. Contact with outside speakers from a wide range of backgrounds, occupations and professions gives pupils a developing awareness of the wider society in which they live and of the public institutions and services available.

4.5 Pupils' cultural awareness is strongly developed. They come to understand Western European cultural heritage through literature and art and they learn about other cultures in subjects such as geography, history, religious studies, English and wide range of languages they experience. They develop a respectful attitude to those from different backgrounds as a result of their trips abroad as well as from meeting visitors from other faiths and cultures. The school is successful in achieving its aim to promote understanding of the challenging world in which the pupils live.

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

4.6 A significant feature in nurturing the personal development of pupils is the high quality of the pastoral care provided. Over nine-tenths of the parents responding to the pre-inspection review said they were happy with the pastoral care offered by the school. Almost all the pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaire wrote that they liked being at the school, and felt they were known to staff and were valued and supported.

4.7 The school has effective structures to oversee pupils' welfare and academic progress. Particular emphasis is placed on giving targeted guidance and in developing confidence and self-reliance as a key element in the pupils' growing maturity. The leadership and management of this area of the school's provision are of a high quality. Teachers and tutors know their pupils well and help them take advantage of the opportunities provided. Their involvement is regular, and reviews and assessments of pupils' development are an important factor in the effectiveness of the school's provision. In the junior school the same role is carried out by senior staff who guide and develop the work of the form tutors so that younger pupils are well provided for.

4.8 Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, resulting in a high level of trust that encourages pupils to seek guidance, and contributes to a positive atmosphere.

4.9 At key points of transition, advice from experienced staff is available to pupils. Induction procedures are comprehensive, creating a supportive atmosphere in which pupils make a successful entry to the junior school, or to Years 7 and 12 in the senior school. Careers advice in making option choices addresses the needs of individuals. Great care is taken to help pupils in choosing the next step in their education so that, well informed and well prepared, they make appropriate choices. The school nurse and the well-organised medical centre provide easily accessible health care to pupils and staff.

4.10 The school has a range of well-formulated policies that address the requirements for effective management of the welfare, health and safety of pupils. The anti-bullying policy is well publicised and implemented. The promotion of good behaviour is a clear success. Sanctions are available but rarely used. The safeguarding policy contains all the necessary elements for protecting pupils. Its principles and procedures are well known and are supported by designated officers in each section of the school. Their training and the training for all staff in the school is up to date. Fire precautions receive due attention and fire practices are held regularly. Security is well-regulated intertwining vigilance for the safety of pupils with attention to the needs of visitors. Health and safety matters are well supervised by the health and safety committee. The access plan for those with learning or physical problems is appropriate demonstrating the preparedness of the school to respond to all likely requirements of staff and pupils. School food is healthy and varied. Clear advice is

given on healthy eating and on the importance of taking exercise. Pupils with health issues are well supported. The admissions and attendance registers are appropriately maintained.

- 4.11 The excellent pastoral care is a major contributor to the happy atmosphere of the school and to the high standards reached in personal development and in all areas of achievement. As a result, the school meets its aims of providing effectively for the welfare and health and safety of its pupils and in preparing them to be fulfilled in life after school.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 Clear educational direction and leadership are provided by those with leadership and management responsibilities, as reflected in the quality of education, the care and personal development and in the successes of pupils.
- 5.2 The school is effectively governed by the Trust. The Trust has a good insight into the working of the school. The officers of the Trust give strong support, valuable advice and encouragement. Well-established procedures are in place so that the Trust is able to support planning and to monitor, evaluate and develop further the many good practices that make the school successful. Delegation of responsibility is effective. The school development plan considers all aspects of the school's improvement and is based on a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of development. Sufficient resources have been provided that enable staff to teach effectively. Suitable numbers of qualified staff appropriate to the needs and ages of pupils are in post. The Trust effectively discharges its responsibilities for child protection, welfare, health and safety throughout the school. Rigorous checks are carried out on all staff appointed to work in the school. The central register of appointments is kept appropriately.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management**

- 5.3 Strong leadership and management are evident at all levels in the school so that from the EYFS stage through to the senior school the school successfully achieves its aims.
- 5.4 The active and purposeful involvement of leaders and managers at all levels in pursuing the aims of the school is a striking feature of the school. Equally significant is the strong commitment of staff in their response to the needs of individual pupils. Establishing unanimity of purpose among all staff in pursuing the aims of the school is an outstanding consequence of the work of leaders and others with delegated responsibilities throughout the school.
- 5.5 The school has a clear view of its strengths and of its areas for development. School development planning operates effectively. Analysis of the school's needs draws on views from staff, pupils and the local governors and from the consultations GDST carries out of parents' views. The active involvement of teachers and tutors in these reviews gives the process of monitoring the breadth and substance needed to be of benefit to the pupils. The participation of staff in the curriculum and the pastoral committees gives them a place to voice opinions and to contribute to the improvement of the school. Monitoring is strongly established and effective, with data carefully evaluated.
- 5.6 Strong emphasis is placed on the selection of high quality staff and their induction. The induction and the staff development programmes are well managed and contribute to developing and motivating high quality staff. Budgets for training are generous and beneficial use is made of the high calibre training provided by GDST. The constant attention to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and to assessing the best way to provide for the education of pupils grows from the

determination of the school to provide the optimum experience possible for each pupil.

- 5.7 Evaluation of performance of staff and pupils is extensive and has a direct impact on raising standards. Staff review procedures are well established and assist in the identification of staff development opportunities. They also provide the context for the sharing of best practice. Lesson observation has a central place in these reviews.
- 5.8 Staff are carefully appointed with a sharp focus on their suitability to be involved in the education of children. All those working in the school are appropriately checked through recruitment procedures which are followed scrupulously. The central register of appointments is properly maintained.
- 5.9 The recommendation in the last report for enhancing the effectiveness of middle managers in the junior school has been met.

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

- 5.10 The school has continued to maintain good relationships with parents in accordance with its aims. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, there was a very high level of agreement among parents that they were satisfied with the broad educational experience provided, with teaching, pastoral care, standards of behaviour and the promotion of worthwhile attitudes and views. Almost every parent who replied acknowledged that the teaching helped pupils to make progress.
- 5.11 A small minority of parents felt they were not encouraged to be active participants in the life of the school. The inspectors found on the contrary that the school welcomes parents' contributions and makes excellent use of parents' experiences and skills. Teachers are readily available to parents who have questions. Prompt responses to phone calls or emails are considered to be an important part of the school's relationship with parents.
- 5.12 Regular communication with parents is maintained through a range of printed and digital formats. Regular reports provide insights into the progress and performance of pupils giving parents the information they require to be active supporters of their children's education. Reports are detailed and give opportunities for pupil and parental feedback. The homework diaries provide a useful channel of communication between school and home. The school publishes its policies and procedures on the school website.
- 5.13 The Friends of Oxford High School provide substantial support for the school and allow parents to be actively involved in promoting its success. A major focus of its activities is the raising of funds that are used well to provide pupils with equipment and resources so allowing parents to make a worthwhile contribution to their children's education.
- 5.14 Parental concerns are given careful attention and dealt with effectively through direct contact between school and parents. Where necessary, the school will initiate the contact when a possible problem is developing. A strong feature of the school's response is its willingness to work closely with parents and take all necessary steps to promote the well-being of pupils. Complaints are dealt with appropriately and in accordance with the school's complaints procedure.

- 5.15 Links with the community are many and provide pupils with beneficial opportunities to meet a wide range of people and organisations. Flourishing sporting, musical and educational links exist with sections of the community and with local schools and organisations. Outreach work into the community by sixth form pupils and by those involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme give pupils the chance to offer service in the community. Contacts between the sixth form and the junior school have proved of benefit to the pupils and to the staff in each school. Equally beneficial have been the contacts established through the CCF and the many educational, sporting and musical links at county, regional and national level.

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

## **6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **6.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

6.1 Pupils' needs are met outstandingly. The school's aim of underpinning all future learning is strongly achieved, especially through supporting personal development, listening, linguistic and co-operative skills. Exciting, highly enjoyable challenges and wide-ranging experiences ensure an excellent start to an environment where every pupil receives particularly strong personal attention. The highly committed staff team has detailed pupil knowledge, supported by high quality records, and undertakes considerable professional self-evaluation. This is shared effectively at three-weekly EYFS staff meetings and ensures that plans, policies and procedure quickly undergo adaptation.

### **6.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

6.2 EYFS and junior school leadership work closely together and provide outstanding leadership and management. Comprehensive and clear documents support all requirements, helping ensure outstanding procedures and outcomes for pupils. Such matters receive regular review as do the uniformly thorough, high quality, risk assessments. Staff are appropriately qualified and checked, are well aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and benefit from a range of professional development opportunities. Excellent relationships exist with parents who, at interview, expressed enthusiastic support for, and all round confidence in, the setting. They receive full curriculum information and helpful, regular reports. As a result parents are thoroughly involved and children are strongly supported.

### **6.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

6.3 Provision strongly supports outstanding learning and personal development. Through detailed understanding of individuals and thorough observations, staff make well-targeted and effectively-refined, plans. Consequently, they provide an excellent, enjoyable range of child-initiated activities, appropriate to all abilities, in the six learning areas. Pupils respond strongly to staff expectations and their excellent examples which give a strong understanding of welfare considerations. Key staff work most effectively with their pupils. High staffing ratios, together with adults' warm, caring dispositions ensure all pupils feel confident and accepted.

### **6.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

6.4 Outcomes are outstanding. Starting points are assessed using nationally recognised scales and EYFS profiles shortly after each pupil's arrival. Information from pre-school settings is valued. Profile reassessments are regular, enhanced by additional, thorough information from various formal and informal observations. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school, working particularly well, co-operatively or as individuals, appreciating books and showing especially strong literacy and communication skills. They behave and concentrate outstandingly well individually and corporately showing good physical co-ordination, strong problem solving skills, and high creativity. Personal development is outstanding, as are relationships with each other and teachers. Matters of hygiene, healthy eating, fitness and exercise are well understood.

**What the Early Years Foundation Stage 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 other key leaders in the school and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mr Edward Dunphy	Reporting inspector
Miss Mary Burridge	Assistant Reporting Inspector (Former Head of School (Prep), GSA)
Dr Caroline Archer	Junior Team Inspector (Director of Studies, IAPS)
Mr Timothy Lunn	Junior Team Inspector (Head of Dept, IAPS)
Mrs Naomi Fowke	Junior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, ISA)
Mrs Marie Bush	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA)
Mrs Julia Burns	Senior Team Inspector (Head, GSA)
Mr Steven Pearce	Senior Team Inspector (Head of Dept, ISA/IAPS)
Mr Adam Pettitt	Senior Team Inspector (Head, HMC)
Mr Robin Lewis	Early Years Lead Inspector