



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

CLAYESMORE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Clayesmore Preparatory School			
DfE number	835/6028			
Registered charity number	306214			
Address	Clayesmore Preparatory School Iwerne Minster Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 8PH England			
Telephone number	01747 811707			
Email address	prepheadpa@clayesmore.com			
Head	Mr William Dunlop			
Chair of governors	Mr John Andrews			
Age range	3 to 13			
Number of pupils	237			
	Boys	141	Girls	96
	Day pupils	172	Boarders	65
	EYFS	24	Prep	213
Inspection dates	05 to 06 October 2016			

PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Sue Bennett	Reporting inspector
Mrs Tracy Handford	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Adrian Hathaway	Team inspector for boarding (Head of Boarding and Senior Teacher, IAPS school)

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Clayesmore Preparatory School is a day and boarding school for boys and girls aged between three and thirteen years. The school was established in 1929 and later developed a link with a senior school, Clayesmore School. In 1975 Clayesmore Preparatory School moved to the Clayesmore School site in Iwerne Minster near Blandford Forum in Dorset and the two schools amalgamated formally.
- 1.2 The school is a charitable trust, overseen by a single governing body. The preparatory and senior sections have separate governing committees. The preparatory school has its own separate educational and recreational facilities within the site, including a single boarding house for both boys and girls and a pre-preparatory department, which also makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The preparatory and senior schools share key facilities such as the sports centre, astroturf and chapel. Since the previous inspection, the school has redeveloped its outside play areas, including those for children in the EYFS, and refurbished the art, design and technology facilities. A programme of ongoing refurbishment programme for the boarding accommodation is underway.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school's aim is to discover and develop the unique gifts of every girl and boy. It strives to provide the highest levels of pastoral care, to nurture each pupil's love of learning and enable them to fulfil their full potential. Furthermore, the school seeks to enhance each boy and girls' understanding of the Christian faith, to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and to increase their understanding of responsibilities to the school community and wider world. The school's boarding provision aspires, as far as possible, to reflect family life.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional, farming and armed forces family backgrounds. Very few come from a minority ethnic background. The school has identified 89 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia, dyspraxia and autistic spectrum disorder. Fifty-eight pupils receive additional specialist help. One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for six pupils, and five are supported through specialist teaching. Data used by the school has identified 13 pupils as being the most able in the school's population. The curriculum is modified for them and for 27 other pupils because of their special talents in sport, music and creative arts.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Nursery Cubs (rising 3 years old)	Nursery
Nursery Lions (rising 4 years old)	Nursery

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.6 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was a standard inspection in October and November 2010. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Identify, share and extend best practice in teaching to ensure that pupils are actively engaged in their learning and challenged to enquire further.
 - Increase opportunities for teachers to learn from each other, across subjects and different parts of the school.
 - Monitor the development of pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and how these are applied across the curriculum.
 - Offer more opportunities for children in the EYFS to explore and investigate independently, both indoors and outdoors.
- 1.7 The school has fully met the recommendations to increase opportunities for teachers to learn from one another and for children in the EYFS to explore and investigate independently. It has partially addressed the recommendations to monitor pupils' application of ICT skills across the curriculum and to ensure that pupils are actively engaged in learning and challenged to enquire further. Further detail is in given in the main text of the report.
- 1.8 The previous intermediate boarding inspection by ISI was in May 2013. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Ensure that further snacks are readily available to boarders during the evening.
 - Develop further the appraisal process for boarding support staff.
- 1.9 The school has successfully met all the recommendations of the previous inspection. Further detail is in given in the main text of the report.

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- Throughout the school pupils are well educated in line with the school's aim to discover and develop the unique gifts of every pupil.
- Pupils with SEND and EAL achieve well and make good progress because of the specialist support for their learning.
- Pupils and EYFS children have highly positive attitudes to learning and are confident communicators due to the supportive teaching and high levels of encouragement they receive.
- The development of more able pupils' thinking and independent working skills is sometimes restricted as a result of limited opportunities within lessons.
- Pupils cannot always practise and develop their excellent information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects, due to inconsistent curriculum planning.

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

- Pupils are confident, resilient and feel valued as individuals because of the excellent relationships with staff and their peers.
- Boarders are happy, self-assured, feel safe and well cared for because of the family atmosphere throughout boarding house.
- Pupils have an excellent moral understanding; they are tolerant and respectful toward the diverse needs of others because of the clear and consistent guidance provided.
- Pupils are proud of their school and understand that perseverance is key to their future success, in line with the school's aims and Christian values.

Recommendations

2.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Develop further opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their high level ICT skills across a range of subject areas.
- Provide more challenge in lessons for the most able pupils in order to develop their independent thinking skills.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.2 During their time in the school, pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well in a wide range of curriculum areas. This is because careful consideration has been given by senior leaders and managers to ensure that there is breadth and balance to the educational provision, which nurtures pupils' love of learning and a willingness to 'have a go' and overcome their difficulties. This is fully in line with the school's aims and ethos which seeks to ensure that the talents and achievements of every pupil are valued. Many pupils join the school with varied learning. In their pre-inspection questionnaire response an overwhelming majority of parents commented positively on the suitability of the curriculum for their child's needs and all pupils felt the school gives them opportunity to learn and make progress needs. However, because of good quality individualised learning plans and the specialist teaching intervention sessions for English and mathematics, pupils with SEND and/or EAL make at least good and sometimes excellent progress and achieve well. More able pupils make good progress overall, although their ultimate attainment is sometimes limited by a lack of appropriately challenging activities in lessons.
- 3.3 Governors provide effective oversight and support, and the regular monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders and managers ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to make good progress. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils commented that they were unsure about their progress in their subjects. This was not supported by inspection evidence. During discussions, pupils said that staff provide clear guidance on their attainment and what they need to do to improve their work. Furthermore, they say staff are constantly encouraging them to persevere, which they feel contributes significantly to their progress. Across the school, good practice is shared between staff through collaborative teaching approaches, as observed in a design and technology lesson, thus addressing a previous inspection recommendation. This helps pupils to make smooth transitions across phases and enhances their learning experiences. The school does not take part in national curriculum tests. However, the school's own data analysis, supported by inspection evidence, shows attainment to be above national age-related expectations. In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents feel their child make good progress and develops good skills for the future.
- 3.4 In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children make good progress in their learning, including those with SEND and/or EAL, and some more able children exceed expected levels of attainment by the end of Reception. This is because staff, leaders and managers have a strong knowledge about how to support their learning and development needs. Leaders and managers regularly review the provision and meet with staff to review practice to ensure the best outcomes for all children. Children participate enthusiastically in an exciting range of activities which provide rich opportunities for them to explore and investigate both indoors and outside. This is because the curriculum is carefully planned to support and stimulate children of all ages and abilities and good quality teaching motivates them to learn. This successfully addresses a recommendation from the previous inspection. Communication, literacy and numeracy skills are a strong focus of the provision. Children confidently ask questions to further their understanding and used a range of appropriate vocabulary to describe a star. In the outside area, children designed a treasure map and clearly explained how to read it to staff. Older children recognise their names and the first sounds of words, which they competently match to pictures. The youngest children can recognise numbers to 6 and older children count competently to 15 and understand the concept of volume, as observed when they poured liquid in containers when making sensory bottles. Adults make

good use of open-questioning which encourages children's problem solving skills extremely well. For example, during a discussion on the arctic, children were keen to share their knowledge on the properties of ice and why it melts. Good use is made of the natural environment and children understand the changes that autumn brings. Creatively, children initiate their own ideas and show good imaginative skills when using cardboard boxes to design a space ship. There are many opportunities for physical development. Outside, children can run and climb on specialist apparatus. They are developing good fine co-ordination skills through the use of pencils and scissors.

- 3.5 All pupils develop good understanding and learning skills because of well-planned lessons and good-quality teaching. In an English lesson, pupils confidently explained and defined a clause, subject and verb and younger pupils competently wrote fictional character descriptions, taking great care with their presentation and letter formation. In mathematics, pupils develop strong calculation skills which they ably apply to other curriculum areas, such as in a cookery activity, where pupils adeptly transferred their numeracy skills when weighing out ingredients. A few pupils, in questionnaire returns, felt that lessons are not interesting. Inspection evidence does not concur; during discussions, pupils say they enjoy the breadth of curriculum and activities immensely. Pupils are articulate and extremely keen to communicate their thoughts and ideas, such as during a geography lesson, when they confidently analysed the differences between typhoons and hurricanes and predicted the effects that these weather forces have on landscapes. In science, pupils show good levels of previous understanding through their clear explanations of neutralisation and the use of homemade products to neutralise wasp stings. Pupils make good progress in ICT and have high levels of skill and competence. This has been an area the school has sought to address following a recommendation from the previous inspection. However, there is still limited opportunity for pupils to transfer their skills to other curriculum areas. Through specific group sessions to support learning, especially for those with SEND and/or EAL, pupils develop confidence which supports their skill application in lessons extremely well. For example, pupils develop their touch typing and text comprehension skills using ICT during a group session which they feel are of significant benefit and help them considerably in learning.
- 3.6 Pupils listen well to instructions and understand the importance of 'focus' to assist their learning. Good use is made of visual resources, so that lessons are interactive and help pupils understand concepts being taught. In history, pupils developed a good understanding about events in the Battle of Stamford Bridge, because cubes representing the advancing army were moved around a hand-drawn map to illustrate the timeline of events. This addresses a recommendation from the previous inspection in most respects. However, a few lessons were over-guided and lacked a flexible structure, which limited opportunities for the more able pupils to work independently to extend and challenge their problem solving skills.
- 3.7 Pupils achieve well in a wide range of sporting, musical and creative activities. During a choir rehearsal, pupils' sang with high levels of enthusiasm and were keen to achieve excellent standards in musicianship. Pupils' creative talents and expertise were evidenced through their ability to create a print from a sketch, which was then traced and cut into lino. In sports, pupils greatly enjoy the wide range of physical opportunities provided and participate wholeheartedly. In swimming and basketball lessons they demonstrate a good range of skill competences. Outside the classroom, pupils have notable success in competitions both locally and nationally, ranging from sporting, musical, artistic and academically focused events. Those with particular talents are able pursue their own area of expertise through the wide-ranging activity programme, which includes Japanese, sailing, orienteering, and food technology. During discussions pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about their enjoyment of these activities. Many achieve scholarships to the senior school at the end of Year 8.

- 3.8 Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning and a desire to succeed. They are motivated and enthusiastic learners. During lessons they apply themselves well, particularly when working collaboratively, such as in a computing lesson during a coding activity, when they worked in pairs developing an algorithm to convert meters to centimetres. Pupils are keen to demonstrate their initiative and take responsibility for their learning, which contributes extremely well towards their academic achievements and progress.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' excellent levels of personal development are exemplified by their highly positive approaches to learning. For example, younger pupils persevered extremely well when reading difficult text and older pupils demonstrated excellent attitudes to learning, listening attentively and confidently asking questions to clarify their mathematical understanding. Pupils have a mature awareness of their personal strengths and weaknesses. This can be attributed to highly effective systems of pastoral support, and happy and positive relationships which pupils have with staff. Furthermore, during discussions, pupils felt that the programme for positive learning habits helps them to be resilient and to understand how to cope with difficulties which they may encounter, to develop their self-confidence and to always try their best. This is fully in line with the aims of the school to provide the highest possible standards of pastoral care within which pupils can thrive and flourish.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, children's personal development is excellent. Younger children play together happily, sharing and taking turns and are beginning to understand the principles of British values. Older children listen respectfully to each other, help one another and think carefully before making choices or coming to decisions. Children of all ages are confident in making their own choices and speaking to adults. They are independent and persevere extremely well during their self-chosen activities. Children are keen to take on responsibility such as helping out with classroom organisational routines. They behave well, interact in a highly positive manner with one another and readily accept each other's differences. This is because staff are consistent in applying the behavioural management strategies, instil a culture of mutual tolerance and make excellent use of praise and encouragement to support children's well-being. By the end of Reception, children's high standards in personal development means that they are well prepared for their transition to their next class.
- 4.4 Pupils are competent in forming and expressing their personal views, such as debating current affairs issues in tutor time. They understand that making the right decisions impacts on their own well-being, such as the importance of making collaborative decisions about rules in games, which ensure equality and fairness. Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of perseverance and self-discipline both in the classroom and during activities. They are respectful and tolerant of the opinions of their peers, understanding that everyone has the right to a personal viewpoint. During discussions, they articulated the fairness of democratic processes following a recent mock election held in school. The strong Christian ethos that permeates throughout the school, enables pupils to develop high levels of spiritual awareness and appreciate the non-materialistic aspects of life. Assemblies provide quiet opportunities for pupils to reflect on the qualities of a 'good person', how they can help others, be honest and true. During discussions, pupils articulate that life isn't all about money, but how you can help others. They show great empathy for people of different cultures. For example, they speak in a passionate manner about helping a school in Bangladesh, explaining that these pupils are much worse off than those at Clayesmore. Pupils of all ages embrace responsibility, whether it be helping with classroom organisation or for older pupils, acting as 'friends' and mentors for younger pupils and those new to the school. They have a mature understanding of the importance of achieving common goals for the good of the school community. For example, during a discussion following a sports' match against another school, pupils spoke with great conviction about the need to all pull together and play to the best they could for the good of the school.

- 4.5 The high levels of care and support provided for boarders has a significant impact on their personal development. In discussion, boarders comment that staff set high expectations and encourage them to be responsible, which makes them feel good about themselves and shows that staff trust and value them. Through house routines, such as organising their personal belongings, and responsibilities in the evenings, boarders develop outstanding levels of self-discipline and understand the importance of making good decisions. They are proud of the contribution they make to the house community and understand that, as within a family, they need to exercise tolerance and understanding towards one another. Boarders develop spiritual awareness through the community chapel service on the weekends and the homely ambience of the house, which provides many opportunities for them to relax and be reflective about the day's activities in the company of their friends. Boarders said they felt the balance between their free time and activities in the evenings and at weekends was 'just right'. During discussions boarders articulate that they feel extremely safe and their boarding experiences develop their appreciation of healthy lifestyle attitudes. They greatly enjoy the meals provided and comment that there is always plenty to eat, including snacks in the evenings.
- 4.6 Senior boarding staff meet with leaders regularly to review boarding practice. Both recommendations from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Through council meetings with the boarding management, boarders feel they make a positive contribution to the development of boarding, such as their ideas being represented in the recent refurbishment of dormitories. Boarders have a mature understanding about the effects of their decisions on others and display a considered tolerance towards the needs of their peers. They demonstrate determination and have a clear understanding that teamwork benefits the school community. This can be attributed to the significant focus on team spirit that permeates throughout of whole school, notably role modelled amongst the staff. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very large majority of parents expressed a view that the boarding experience has helped their child's progress and personal development. Similarly, almost all pupils who responded felt that their boarding experiences help them to become more confident and independent.
- 4.7 Pupils of all ages have an excellent understanding of moral values. The consistency of behavioural management strategies that staff use and careful monitoring of patterns in behaviour logs ensures that appropriate support and intervention is put in place at an early stage. Pupils respect this approach and are keen to meet staff expectations. They try hard to behave in a sensible and mature manner and have a clear understanding that negative behaviour has consequences. Pupils respect rules and during discussions articulate that staff are fair in awarding any sanctions and rewards. They greatly enjoy receiving team points and senior leaders' commendation certificates. Through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and ICT lessons, pupils develop an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. They have a clear understanding of on-line danger when using the internet. Their good health both mentally and physically is extremely well promoted. For example, older pupils have recently discussed mental health issues in PSHE and the effects of personal perception. Pupils of all ages are empathetic to the diverse needs of the school community and the wider world. Through the taught curriculum and discussions on world events, pupils develop strong cultural awareness. They are enthusiastic about their charity work such as recent donations to a local food bank following harvest festival celebrations. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses parents overwhelmingly reported that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance towards diverse communities.
- 4.8 By the end of their time in the school pupils have extremely mature attitudes to life and an excellent understanding of the importance of fundamental British values. They are confident,

independent and keen to embrace future challenge. Older pupils are beginning to formulate ideas for their future careers following a recent 'career carousel' day, during which parents came in and talked to groups of pupils about their respective professions. These experiences ensure that pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stages in their lives.