



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CANBURY SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Canbury School

Full Name of School	Canbury School
DfE Number	314/6068
Registered Charity Number	803766
Address	Canbury School Kingston Hill Kingston Upon Thames Surrey KT2 7LN
Telephone Number	020 8549 8622
Fax Number	020 8974 6018
Email Address	head@canburyschool.co.uk
Head teacher	Mr Robin Metters
Chair of Governors	Revd Amanda Beck
Age Range	11 to 16
Total Number of Students	62
Gender of Students	Mixed (44 boys; 18 girls)
Number of Day Students	Total: 62
Inspection dates	19 Oct 2010 to 20 Oct 2010 15 Nov 2010 to 17 Nov 2010

PREFACE

This inspection was conducted to assess the suitability of Canbury School for membership of ISA. It follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. The inspection consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in October 2004.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of students
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

*These Standards Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of students, is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

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

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	2
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	2
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	3
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	3
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	3
(c) The contribution of teaching	4
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	6
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	6
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	7
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	8
(a) The quality of governance	8
(b) The quality of leadership and management	8
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	8
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	10

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Canbury School is an independent co-educational day school for pupils aged from eleven to sixteen. It is non-denominational. It was founded in 1982 for pupils who required an alternative to the independent and maintained day schools locally. The founding headmaster retired in 1997, when an educational charitable trust was established with a board of governors. The school occupies a villa on Kingston Hill, on the boundary of Richmond Park.
- 1.2 Canbury School exists to provide education to a broad range of children, including various nationalities, who stand to benefit from being in a small school. With only a maximum of 65 students on roll, each is treated very much as an individual, hence the school motto: "*An individual approach to success*". The school aims to maximise the achievement of each individual consistent with their potential.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection visit, the school had 62 students on roll; 44 boys and 18 girls. There are five students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and three of them are receiving support. There are 13 students who have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and the school has identified 10 as needing some additional learning support for learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). The school caters for a wide range of ability and needs.
- 1.4 The pupils' average ability is slightly below the national average. The range of their abilities is wide. Some have literacy and numeracy skills below expectation for their age and ability on entry.
- 1.5 Since the last inspection there have been major building works, including an extension providing a science laboratory and additional cloakroom facilities, and the rest of the premises have been completely refurbished. The art area has been developed to include design and technology (DT) facilities. The playground has been resurfaced with a soft play material and a new garden area created.
- 1.6 Entry into the school is through an admission process. Pupils from overseas are given a test in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic and business and professional backgrounds, and travel from a radius of about 10 miles. A very small number of pupils who come from overseas are living with local guardians, arranged by their parents. All students leaving Year 11 move on to further education.
- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school succeeds in its aims of achieving high standards within its ethos of valuing each pupil highly as an individual. This is a small school community where each pupil is encouraged to reflect on their own worth. They achieve high standards because their learning is grounded in well-informed teaching, a good curriculum and close attention to their welfare, health and safety.
- 2.2 The personal development of the pupils is good. This stems from a family atmosphere of mutual respect, guidance provided by the kind and caring staff and supportive governance. Relationships at all levels are positive. The pupils respond well to the school's expectations of conduct and work. Pupils thrive in the nurturing environment.
- 2.3 Leadership and management are satisfactory, but formal monitoring of staff is not fully developed and the quality of reports to parents is not consistent. The ethos in the school helps to promote the pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Students were enthusiastic in their response to pre-inspection questionnaires and confirmed that they enjoy school. Parents are supportive of the school and responded positively, commenting on the calm atmosphere provided by the school. The inspection team agreed with the parents about the positive impact the school had on the pupils.
- 2.4 The school has made some response to the recommendations in the last report and has formulated a development plan as to how they are to fully address them.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.5 At the time of the initial visit, the school met all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that all the curriculum schemes of work are consistent, including appropriate provision for pupils with LDD.
 2. Ensure that assessment data is used effectively to inform the planning of lessons.
 3. Improve the formal monitoring of staff.
 4. Improve the quality of reports to parents to ensure they give a succinct overview of the pupils' learning and progress, and steps for future improvement.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The pupils are well educated according to the school's aims, with each pupil's individual strengths supported through sympathetic and encouraging teaching. Standards are good in relation to the pupils' individual abilities. Not all pupils join the school at the beginning of their secondary education, and the school has had notable success in enabling these students to integrate well in the school and make good progress. The pupils' individual success is achieved as a result of being in a small school with smaller class groups, supportive teaching and close attention to their personal and social development.
- 3.2 The pupils effectively increase their knowledge, understanding and skills. Their creativity is very effectively promoted through the art lessons, where older pupils especially are given a level of autonomy, which enables them to express themselves creatively. The pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are well developed through the positive teaching and they are becoming confident speakers. Older pupils discussed and analysed a poem in English and then gave a short, well thought out summary of their findings. The pupils' numeracy skills were put to effective use in chemistry. The pupils have many opportunities for investigation in science. Many individual pupils have achieved notable success in sports. Pupils compete in local and regional sports competitions against other schools. Information and communication technology (ICT) is given prominence, with a well-equipped ICT suite being used constantly both during planned lessons and at break and lunchtimes.
- 3.3 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2007-2009. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE have been similar in relation to the national average for maintained schools. In 2009 and 2010 they were above the national average for maintained schools, and nearly all pupils achieved five or more GCSE grades A* to C. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability.
- 3.4 The pupils, including those who have additional learning needs, achieve well and have positive attitudes to learning and demonstrate through their commitment during lessons that they wish to succeed in their studies. Most work hard in lessons, complete the tasks required of them to the best of their ability and behave well.

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

- 3.5 The curriculum is good and meets the needs of the pupils. It supports the aims of the school effectively and gives the pupils an appropriate range of experiences. Study in Years 7 to 9 is broadly based on the national curriculum and includes Spanish, drama, and art and DT. Options at GCSE include dual award science, business studies, ICT and DT. The schemes of work for individual subjects are variable and some do not include sufficient detail to support teaching, learning and assessment. Year 10 students are set in mathematics and Spanish and this matches their individual needs well, but such arrangements are not in place in other year groups. Pupils with EAL follow an ESOL programme and achieve

commendable results. Older pupils are given good careers support in preparation for the next stage of their education.

- 3.6 Creativity is encouraged. Pupils confirmed that they enjoy their work in art and they enthusiastically attend art club at lunchtime. Very attractive displays of the pupils' artwork through the school demonstrate the fruits of this. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is well taught and given a high priority within the timetable. The school provides a very wide range of physical education opportunities and makes effective use of local facilities. Football, netball, basketball, athletics, tennis, cricket, swimming, water sports and cross-country running are available.
- 3.7 The school provides suitable curricular provision for pupils with additional learning needs, including those pupils with SEN. Pupils are tested each year and any with identified literacy problems are withdrawn from mainstream lessons for individual tuition. Personal attention from learning support assistants is provided according to the requirements of individual pupils with SEN, alongside support within lessons, and arrangements are reviewed annually. The school has identified in their development plan that improvements are necessary to the current arrangement for pupils with LDD. At present, subject-specific provisions from individual pupils' plans are not included in the appropriate scheme of work or in individual lesson plans.
- 3.8 The school provides a good range of clubs at lunchtime and after school, which currently includes diverse activities such as chess and karate. There is a wide range of curriculum-related visits, including to theme parks as part of business studies, to London art galleries as part of a history topic and to other museums, galleries and sporting events. Older pupils have made good use of the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to Spain recently, and an adventure activity trip takes place during the summer term.
- 3.9 Community links with other schools in the area are good. Visitors to the school include representatives coming to talk about charities, others to talk about their faith, authors, poets and drama groups.

3. (c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.10 The teaching is good. In the most effective, well-planned lessons, teachers make good use of their prior knowledge of each pupil's capabilities, including those with special needs, and the pace of the lesson is good, keeping the pupils' interest and engagement with the subject. As a result good progress is made. However, in some teaching too little account is taken of the range of abilities within a group. Pupils with LDD are generally well supported in lessons. However, when this support is not sufficiently considered in lesson planning, the individual expertise of the learning support assistants is not always fully utilised. Some lessons are unduly repetitive, which results in limited challenge for the more able pupils. Pupils feel they are given good support.
- 3.11 The skilful use of questioning by some teachers helps to clarify the pupils' understanding. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and use a variety of teaching methods and activities to engage the pupils. Teaching encourages the pupils to become independent learners. Most pupils behave well in class. Resources are generally used well to support learning with good use of ICT by some staff, however, the interactive whiteboards are not used to their full potential due to a lack of staff expertise.

- 3.12 Most staff give pupils good verbal feedback and individual support on their progress during lessons. This gives the pupils confidence in their abilities. The written marking of work is inconsistent, with not all staff giving supportive comments to help pupils to improve. This aspect of a recommendation in the previous report has not been fully addressed.
- 3.13 The school assesses the pupils' capabilities on entry to the school using standardised testing but no further tests are taken. The school has made some progress towards the recommendation from the previous inspection to use assessment information to inform curriculum planning and to keep the pupils well informed about their progress but this is not yet fully developed. They have instituted a tracking process, which they call assessment gateways. This allows the school to monitor the pupils' progress more effectively over time and provides a benchmark against which the staff and parents can see the overall improvement in the pupils' attainment.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The personal development of the pupils is good and helps to promote the school's aim to support the individual. They are nurtured and respond well to the school's expectations of conduct and work. Displays in classrooms and around the school help to reinforce and further promote this ethos of tolerance and mutual respect. Through discussion pupils confirmed that they are happy at school. They develop self-confidence and are given encouragement to try their best. Pupils confidently present their work to the class, including excellent use of ICT when presenting 'Fortune Bars', a new product in business studies.
- 4.2 Pupils have a good spiritual awareness. Events such as the interfaith forum and a visit to a Holocaust exhibition give opportunities for them to explore their own beliefs and those of others. This awareness permeates the school. The falling of poppies at the Act of Remembrance was used to illustrate the effects of air resistance in a physics lesson for younger pupils. The huge impact on some older pupils of the school's visit to the First World War battlefields was evident in their reflective comments.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral development is good. The school places emphasis on helping them to develop a sense of self-worth and helps to raise their aspirations. Pupils know clearly the difference between right and wrong, accept responsibility for their failings and willingly apologise where appropriate. Most pupils behave well. Discussions in PSHCE lessons show that most students are aware of how to behave in the wider community. Staff are good role models and have high expectations. The pupils respond by being thoughtful and considerate of others.
- 4.4 The social awareness of pupils has been increased as a result of belonging to the small close-knit community, with many making comments in the pre-inspection questionnaire about how they enjoy being in a small school. They are becoming responsible citizens, aware of the needs of others and how they can help. They raise significant amounts of money for charities, chosen by the school council, and speak proudly of having done so. Team spirit is reinforced through the house system with events involving pupils of different ages. A historical link is provided through the naming of one house after Malcolm Campbell, a previous resident of the building. Pupils gain a good knowledge of public institutions through visits and curricular studies.
- 4.5 The pupils' cultural development is good. The members of the multi-cultural school community work happily together and share their experiences unselfconsciously. Throughout the school pupils learn to appreciate and respect their own and other cultures and develop attitudes of understanding and tolerance. This is enhanced by events such as a demonstration of Japanese cooking, the recent visit to Spain and learning Spanish.

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

- 4.6 Good arrangements for welfare, health and safety enable pupils to feel safe and well cared for in a friendly supportive environment. Pastoral care for the pupils is good. They report that there is always someone they can talk to and willing to help them with any little problem.
- 4.7 Each year group has their own form tutor, who gets to know the pupils very well and can support them both pastorally and with their academic work. The pupils report that they like their school with comments such as, "We are like a big happy family" and comment on the small size of the school and the trust placed in them by staff. Most were positive about the school in response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, but some of the girls commented on their small numbers as a proportion of the school. Although there are fewer girls they all mix very well and confirm that they have friends in all year groups.
- 4.8 Relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils are good. All year groups mix well socially at break and lunchtimes. The atmosphere in the school is friendly, relaxed and courteous. The school has devised and implemented effective procedures for promoting good behaviour and guarding against bullying. The pupils are adamant that there is no bullying.
- 4.9 The procedures for safeguarding are robust, with all members of staff trained appropriately and two additional members, plus a governor, trained to a higher level. The school has devised appropriate policies for behaviour, welfare, health and safety on educational visits, anti-bullying and child protection. Fire precautions are thorough, regular fire drills are held and documented and a detailed fire risk assessment has been carried out on all areas of the school. There is a detailed risk assessment undertaken for all activities in and out of the school, including residential visits. Most staff are trained in first aid and accidents are recorded. The medical room is a welcoming place for those who may be unwell. The school has a suitable access plan for those with disabilities, which it puts into effective use daily. The attendance and admission registers are kept appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to bring healthy food in their packed lunches, fruit is available at break times and many planned physical education lessons promote good health.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good. The governors preside over a small, friendly school, which effectively secures its aims, provides good academic and pastoral development for the pupils and provides a safe environment in which they thrive.
- 5.2 The governors' oversight of the school is good. They have a clear view of their role in governance. The committed governors visit regularly and are involved in the life of the school. A governor has been delegated to oversee safeguarding, while others have responsibility for curriculum, premises and welfare, health and safety, and all report back regularly. They monitor policies, procedures and provision well.
- 5.3 The governing body offers good support for the school's continuing development through their investment in staff, accommodation and resources. The recent improvements in the premises have necessitated a considerable financial commitment and show the dedication and involvement of the governing body.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The head teacher and senior leadership team are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils benefit from their time at the school, and the school promotes their personal development well in line with its aims. Aspects of management such as curriculum development, premises, welfare, health and safety and the recruitment of staff and students are overseen by the head teacher and senior leadership team. Many of these operate effectively, but there are inconsistencies in some areas, such as arrangements for marking and assessment, and curriculum planning. Senior staff are trained in safeguarding to a high level. Senior managers provide an active presence around the school and at games off-site.
- 5.5 The senior leadership team, which includes the bursar and two senior teachers, review the required policies annually. They have devised a school development plan and are clear about the educational direction of the school. However, some matters still outstanding have not been addressed since the last school inspection, such as the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- 5.6 The school provides the staff with information on outside training and some take these opportunities to further their professional development, but the school's formal monitoring of staff is limited in scope. Their suitability for employment is checked thoroughly, together with the suitability of governors, and the information is held on the required single central register of staff appointment. A staff induction programme is followed, which places emphasis on the safeguarding of the pupils and their welfare, health and safety.

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

- 5.7 Links between parents and the school are good. Through the website, prospectus and regular newsletters, parents of pupils or prospective pupils are given a good range of information, including required policies. They are kept well informed through regular meetings with staff and feel that the school is approachable.

- 5.8 Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were supportive of the school. They commented on the great encouragement and benefit provided by teaching in small groups, individual attention, and the good academic progress made by their children. A small number of parents mentioned limited options for GCSE courses, but inspectors found that this was not a general opinion expressed by parents and that for a small school a good range of subjects was offered. Positive comments were made by parents on the provision for pupils with particular needs.
- 5.9 The school informs parents of their children's progress satisfactorily through the pupil profiles, which give grades for effort and achievement. Some parents commented that they did not always understand the progress their child was making from reports. Inspectors found that reports are unnecessarily complicated, and contain limited information about what the pupil has learnt in each subject and what they need to do next to improve.
- 5.10 Parents confirmed that they are able to participate in many activities at the school and many attend productions and sporting events, although there is no formal parents' association. Parents confirmed that they were aware of the complaints procedures, which are appropriate, but no complaints have been made to the school which reached the formal stage.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and 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 students. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Jill Bainton

Mrs Lynda Correy

Mr Stephen Jolly

Reporting Inspector

Head, ISA school

Deputy Head, ISA/SHMIS school