

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL
(ISC)**

INSPECTION OF

CHELTENHAM COLLEGE JUNIOR SCHOOL

by the

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE
(ISI)**

on

January 31st – February 4th, 2005

SUMMARY REPORT

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

SUMMARY INSPECTION REPORT ON

Cheltenham College Junior School

Full Name of the School	Cheltenham College Junior School		
DfES Number	9166033		
Address	Thirlestaine Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 7AB		
Telephone Number	01242 522697		
Fax Number	01242 265620		
E-mail Address	<u>ccjs@cheltcoll.gloucs.sch.uk</u>		
Name of Headmaster	Nigel Archdale		
Chairman of Governors	Lady Fiona Mynors		
Age Range	3 – 13	Gender	Mixed
Number of Pupils	504	Number of Boarders	55
Inspection Dates	January 31st to February 4th, 2005		

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 163(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

The inspection was not carried out in conjunction with the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Boarding Standards. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education and development in general.

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.

MAIN FINDINGS

Overall Summary

Cheltenham College Junior School combines the stimulation of a busy and purposeful school with the warmth of a supportive family environment. The high quality and flexibility of the school's boarding provision and its commitment to pupils' personal development and pastoral care strengthen it as a community. Good teaching promotes very good attitudes towards learning and high standards of behaviour. The quality of the curriculum, and the extra-curricular activities that support it, enrich pupils' lives. The high standard of facilities and accommodation is only diminished by inappropriate provision for the Nursery and design technology. The school's espousal of computer technology ensures very good communication between staff and ready access to pupil records. However, the school makes limited use of assessment data to develop its curriculum. Furthermore, the lack of specific current job descriptions, and the inconsistency with which departmental appraisal and monitoring are implemented, diminish otherwise good management systems.

What the School Does Well

The school has many distinct strengths, the foremost of which identified by this inspection are:

- The school is well led by its headmaster and senior management team.
- The caring and supportive environment the school creates and the many opportunities it affords combine to make its pupils confident and sensitive citizens of the future.
- The excellent contribution made by boarding, and the very high quality of pastoral care, together create a strong and happy community.
- Teaching promotes good standards and very good learning, attitudes and behaviour throughout the school, and especially at the Foundation Stage.
- The activities that support and extend the curriculum are very good.
- The school's management and information system ensures ready access to academic and other records and facilitates a high level of communication between staff.
- In PE and games, outstanding facilities and the strong commitment of the teaching staff lead to excellent opportunities for all pupils.

What the School Should Do Better

The school has very few weaknesses. The most significant identified by this inspection are:

- The standard of nursery accommodation and the facilities for design and technology are not wholly appropriate.
- Insufficient use is made of the valuable assessment data the school collects to refine curriculum planning.
- Not all teachers hold specific current job descriptions, and appraisal and monitoring within departments is inconsistently implemented.

Standards of Attainment and Progress in Subjects

Pupils achieve good standards and make good progress throughout the school and in all subjects. Pupils in the pre-preparatory department attain especially well. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also make good progress and attain well. Standards of literacy and numeracy are good, and in ICT they are

high at the age of 13. Pupils are successful in their applications to selective senior schools, both at 11 and 13 and a good proportion win scholarships.

The Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and their Behaviour

The quality of pupils' learning, attitudes and behaviour is very good and contributes very effectively to their learning. Pupils are competent learners. They relate well to their peers and show respect for each other and for their teachers. Their behaviour in the classroom and beyond is very good.

The Quality of Teaching

The quality of teaching is good. Examples of very good teaching are found at every stage of the school and in many subjects. At the Foundation Stage, teaching is very good. Teaching meets the needs of all the pupils. It is rooted in good subject knowledge, has high expectations, is well planned and uses both time and resources effectively. It exploits opportunities for cross-curricular learning very well. However, it does not make good use of homework. Teachers maintain good discipline through high expectations and relationships of mutual trust with their pupils.

Other Aspects of the School

Attendance

The level of attendance is good; it enables pupils to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the school. The school's admission and attendance registers comply with statutory requirements.

Assessment and Recording

The quality of assessment and recording throughout the school is sound. The systems used for assessing and recording pupils' achievement and progress are efficient and appropriate. However, whilst assessment is used very effectively to track the progress of individual pupils, it is not used consistently beyond the pre-preparatory department and outside the learning support department to influence planning. Teachers' marking is accurate and generally effective, but departmental policies and their observance are not wholly consistent.

Curriculum

Curricular provision is good for all age groups. It contributes well to the intellectual, physical and personal development of the pupils. Pupils are offered a broad and balanced programme of study. The time allocated to various subjects is appropriate. Planning for pupils' attainment and progress is good throughout the school. Attention to individual needs ensures that the curriculum is accessible to pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of activities.

Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

The number, qualifications and experience of the teaching and non-teaching staff are good and contribute well to the good quality of education provided and to the educational standards achieved. Administrative, secretarial, catering, maintenance and technical support staff all make a considerable contribution to the day to day running of the school. Staff are hardworking, loyal, supportive and committed to the school's ethos. They make good use of opportunities to extend their professional development. However, appraisal and monitoring at departmental level are inconsistent. Statutory checks are carried out on all teaching and

non-teaching staff before an appointment is confirmed, but medical checks have not been made.

Resources for Learning

The provision of resources for learning is good. The books and materials which are needed to support the teaching, learning and recreation of the pupils at all levels are of good quantity, quality and organisation. Teachers make effective use of them to support pupils' learning. In the pre-preparatory department, and in art, mathematics and history, resources are very good. In English, ICT, music and PE and games, they are excellent.

Libraries

Library facilities are good; they afford good support for the curriculum. The range, availability, quality and accessibility of library stock contribute effectively to pupils' learning. The library is well-managed and encourages pupils to read widely for information and pleasure. Pupils use it effectively. Departmental libraries in the pre-preparatory department and lower school are well stocked and are organised appropriately.

Premises and Accommodation

The buildings, accommodation and other facilities are generally good and for physical education they are very good. Accommodation is appropriate for the numbers, abilities, ages and genders of the pupils. Facilities are well used and enable almost all the curriculum to be taught very effectively. However, provision for the Nursery and for design and technology is not wholly satisfactory.

Links with Parents and the Community

The school's links with parents are good. Parents receive a good range of general information about the school and largely good information about their children's attainment and progress. However, formal opportunities to discuss progress with staff are too few and too short. Parents have appropriate opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. Links with the community are also good. They enable local people to make good use of the school's fine facilities.

Just under half of the total number of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Overall, parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and especially positive about the provision for boarding, the attitudes and values promoted by the school and the high standards of behaviour. The vast majority of parents are pleased with levels of attainment, progress and teaching, the curriculum and the range of extra curricular activities available. However, a small number of parents express concern about the amount of homework their children have to complete. This inspection found the amount of homework variable and that there was sometimes a lack of clarity in teachers' expectations. A small minority of parents also criticise the opportunities for them to discuss their children's progress and to be involved in the school. This inspection found that, whilst the school responds promptly to individual requests to discuss pupils' progress, scheduled opportunities for discussion are limited. However, it found that parents have an appropriate range of opportunities to become involved in the life of the school.

Pupils' Personal Development

The school provides a good range of suitable opportunities through which its pupils can develop a system of spiritual beliefs and a moral code, as well as developing appropriately personally, socially and culturally. Staff and pupils make good use of these opportunities.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The school fulfils its aims well to promote personal responsibility, build respect for people and property, develop awareness of the world and provide equal opportunities. Its flexible boarding arrangements enable many pupils to benefit from the experience of living together in a community.

Pastoral Care

In almost every respect, pastoral care and welfare is very good. Pastoral systems ensure that pupils have an appropriate range of adults to turn to. The school offers a high quality of support, advice and guidance. It monitors academic and personal development effectively. It maintains good discipline. It provides an excellent experience of boarding to a wide range of pupils. In general, it provides very well for the health and safety and welfare of the pupils. However, in two important areas of health and safety, the school fails to meet all the regulatory requirements, and its accessibility plan does not fully comply with the Disability Act.

Boarding Standards

No Commission for Social Care Inspection team took part in the inspection.

Governance and Management

The governance of the school is good. It ensures that the school's aims are met, that a suitable quality of education is provided and that there is efficient planning to secure good resources for teaching and learning. Governors make effective arrangements to monitor the school's work. Leadership at all levels is good. Management at senior management level is also good, but at head of department level, it lacks consistency over appraisal and the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Achievement and Quality in Activities

The quality and achievement in activities are very good. Activities outside the realm of the academic are an integral part of life at school and provide very good opportunities for pupils' personal development through a wide range of valuable recreation.

Progress Made by the School since its Last Inspection

The school has made good progress since its inspection in 1999. It has improved development planning and now produces and circulates to parents a strategic plan in common with the senior school. This plan draws on the school and pre-preparatory department development plans to identify joint and separate aims, objectives and needs. Departmental planning, however, remains inconsistent. Provision for boarding and the library are now of a good standard. Statutory requirements for recording pupil attendance are fully met. The school carries out appropriate checks on the suitability of its staff, but has not been checking their medical fitness appropriately. The roles of the senior management team are clear; however, heads of department are not consistently monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects. The Junior School Committee of Council has been disbanded in favour of a joint policies committee with a remit to monitor policies and developments across both phases of the school. This change has the backing of both senior and junior headmasters and works well to the benefit of both schools.

Compliance with the Regulations for Registration

DfES Standard		Does the school meet the regulatory requirements?
1. Quality of education:	1.(2) Curriculum	Yes
	1.(3)-(5) Teaching	Yes
2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		Yes
3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils		It meets almost all of the requirements
4. Suitability of proprietors and staff		It meets almost all of the requirements
5. Premises and accommodation		Yes
6. Provision of information		Yes
7. Manner in which complaints are to be handled		Yes

Actions Required for Compliance with the Regulatory Requirements

In order to meet all the requirements, the school must:

- (1) carry out appropriate checks to confirm the medical fitness of staff prior to appointment [Regulation 4, (c)]
- (2) ensure that the design and technology rooms, and the lake meet health and safety requirements [Regulation 5 (j) and 3 (4)]
- (3) provide risk assessments for all areas of the school [Regulation 3, (4)].

In addition, in order to comply with the Special Education Needs and Disability Act, the school must:

Conduct a disability audit and prepare an access plan.

In addition to the actions set out above, the school is asked to address any issues highlighted in *What the School Should Do Better*. These are set out as recommendations for the school in Section 2 of the report.