



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**DONHEAD**

**INTERIM INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Donhead

Full Name of School	<b>Donhead</b>	
DfE Number	<b>315/6004</b>	
Registered Charity Number	<b>230165</b>	
Address	<b>Donhead 33 Edge Hill Wimbledon London SW19 4NP</b>	
Telephone Number	<b>020 8946 7000</b>	
Fax Number	<b>020 8947 1219</b>	
Email Address	<b>office@donhead.org.uk</b>	
Headmaster	<b>Mr Chris McGrath</b>	
Chairman of Governors	<b>Mr Michael Blundell</b>	
Age Range	<b>4 to 11</b>	
Total Number of Pupils	<b>286</b>	
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys</b>	
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>34</b>
	5-11:	<b>252</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>286</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Boys</b>	
Inspection dates	<b>14 June 2011 to 15 June 2011</b>	

## PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) schedule for INTERIM inspections*. The inspection is a two-day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in June 2007.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to 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 pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (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 Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, 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 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.

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Donhead was opened in 1933 as the preparatory school for Wimbledon College, in a substantial building standing in its own grounds opposite the college itself. Up to 2002 it catered for boys from seven to thirteen years of age, with the expectation that the boys would transfer to Wimbledon College. In 2002, as Wimbledon College changed its entry age to eleven, Donhead became a school for boys aged seven to eleven with plans to extend the age range downwards. From 2007 classes were operational in all year groups from four to eleven years of age. The school is under the trusteeship of the Society of Jesus and the governing body act as agents of the trustees. Substantial developments have taken place since the previous inspection. These include expanding to two-form entry in the Pre-Prep and have seen the completion of a new Pre-Prep classroom building, kitchen and dining room and music practice centre.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, there were 286 boys on the roll. A total of 34 were in were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and 252 were in the prep. Four pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), and they receive specialist support with their learning. Eighteen pupils have English as an additional language, and six receive support. One in six pupils comes from an ethnic minority background and most pupils come from professional and business families within a radius of five miles of the school. The school is academically unselective. Although its admissions policy gives priority to pupils from regularly practising Roman Catholic families, ten places annually are reserved for other denominations in order of registration. The ability profile of the school is above the national average although the range of abilities is wide. The majority of pupils transfer at age eleven to Wimbledon College or local maintained grammar schools, whilst others transfer to independent senior schools.
- 1.3 The school sets out the ethos of Jesuit education as fundamentally believing in the formation of the whole person. It seeks to educate 'Leaders in Service'; persons of competence, conscience and compassion, who will seek to make a difference. The school motto is 'Semper Magis', interpreted as, 'What more can I do? What more can I give?' Amongst the declared aims of the school supporting this ideal are the promotion of a religious and ethical context in the curriculum, ensuring that the pastoral structures of the school reflect an ethos of care for all members of the school community and that a spirit of generosity is evident amongst the boys in the school who help each other. The school encourages all to develop their talents as fully as possible and to use those gifts for others.

- 1.4 The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Reception	Reception

***Preparatory School***

School	NC name
Pre-Prep 1	Year 1
Pre-Prep 2	Year 2
Lower Prep 1	Year 3
Lower Prep 2	Year 4
Prep 1	Year 5
Elements	Year 6

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills**

- 2.1 The pupils' overall achievement is excellent. Through a broad range of diverse experiences, pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding fulfilling the aims of the school to encourage all to develop their talents as fully as possible. Pupils are articulate from the earliest ages using their well developed reasoning skills to respond thoughtfully to questions. Their listening, reading, writing and creative skills are strong and they apply their information and communication technology (ICT) and numeracy skills highly successfully across a range of subjects. Their language skills are developed highly effectively from an early age. Pupils work hard and achieve high levels of success in a wide range of activities in music, art and sport including, for example, being the under-11 winners of the National Schools Rugby Tournament 2011.
- 2.2 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress for their ages and capabilities supported by the breadth of the curriculum and the high standards of teaching. Pupils are highly successful in passing entrance examinations for selective senior schools, with some being awarded scholarships, and most gain places at their first choice school. Good support is provided to pupils who require it, including those pupils for whom English is not their principal language, and they make good progress in relation to their abilities as is seen from the improvement in their spelling and reading ages. Similarly, extended work is provided for pupils who are more able. The pupils' excellent achievement is supported by their exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning. They show great enjoyment in their tasks and settle quickly to work either individually or with others. They concentrate exceptionally well in this happy and stimulating environment which provides opportunities for them to be creative or take initiative.
- 2.3 The broad curriculum is excellently planned. It encompasses all the required areas of learning and the study of modern foreign languages from the EYFS. Additionally it is supported by critical thinking days, investigative learning days and French days to improve pupils' learning skills. The comprehensive personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and religious studies schemes of work reflect the school's aims and ethos. The breadth of the extra-curricular programme is outstanding encompassing a wealth of daily activities, residential leadership courses, opportunities to reflect as they go on retreat, and many visitors to school. Amongst the links with the community are the opportunities for extensive use of the school facilities by the parish, close links with the local church and the participation in a local book festival.
- 2.4 The quality of teaching is excellent and makes an outstanding contribution to the pupils' achievement. Lessons are thoroughly planned with clear objectives and the excellent pace ensures interest and focus. Teaching methods are excellent with a variety of resources being used to ensure the high levels of interest and application by the pupils. For example in much teaching ICT is used highly effectively to develop understanding and further achievement. Teaching demonstrates strong subject knowledge and uses praise effectively. Marking encourages improvement

and in interviews pupils commented that the comments provided and the targets set helped them understand what they had to do to improve. The pupils' academic performance is closely monitored and additional support and challenge is provided where necessary. However, as the school recognises, the information collected is not always used fully to further develop the learning experience of the pupils. Skilful questioning by the teachers across lessons and activities enables the pupils of all abilities to achieve thorough understanding.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 2.5 The pupils' personal development is excellent and a strength of the school, fulfilling its aim to educate persons of competence, conscience and compassion, who will seek to make a difference. Pupils have a strong spiritual understanding fostered through assemblies, religious studies and PSHCE and reinforced by the ethos of the school. Pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem are strong enhanced by the celebration of the achievements of all within the school from the many coupons awarded daily to the celebration day at the end of the year. The pupils' moral and social development are excellent; behaviour is exemplary in and out of the classroom, pupils are friendly and confident and well supported by the excellent relationships that exist throughout the school. Through the active school council the pupils' views are heard. The high profile attributed to charitable work, in particular the support of three sister schools in Zimbabwe, gives pupils an excellent understanding of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils gain a thorough knowledge of their own and other cultures through art, religious studies and the school's day and extended educational visits.
- 2.6 Clear systems, training and policies, including those for the prevention of bullying, support the excellent pastoral care provided. The small number of pupils who responded to the pupil questionnaire and those interviewed were clear about the system of sanctions and rewards, considered it fair, and knew who to turn to if they should have an issue. Safeguarding procedures and policies are appropriately in place and all staff have received relevant training. Risk assessments are completed for all relevant areas of school life, and all measures have been taken to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained. The school has a thorough health and safety policy, clear procedures for first-aid arrangements and an appropriate medical room is available for those pupils who fall ill during the school day. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the requirements for leading a healthy lifestyle, enjoying the nutritious lunches provided, and the many sports activities and facilities. The school has a suitable plan for increasing access for pupils with disabilities to the premises and to the education offered.

### **The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management**

- 2.7 The quality of governance is excellent. The school is supported and guided by an informed governing body that sets appropriate school aims. Governors have a comprehensive overview of the school's direction. They bring a wide range of skills to their role and strategic and financial planning is exceptionally strong, as is evident in the recent building work and the ready provision of human and material resources which are highly effective in contributing to the school's educational well-being. Many governors have a specific role within the school community. Their day-to-day knowledge of what goes on, informed by visits, reports and meetings with staff, adds to the school's capacity for future development. Their knowledge, oversight and promotion of safeguarding and health and safety is effective.

- 2.8 Leadership and management are excellent, underpinning the aims and values of the school. The headmaster has overall responsibility for the school, but devolves day-to-day management to the carefully structured senior management team. Outstanding features include the many excellent processes linked to monitoring of teaching and learning and the development of curriculum planning throughout the school contributing strongly to the educational achievement and personal development of pupils. Clear structures now exist for subject coordinators enabling them to carry out their roles successfully. The professional development for its staff is a priority for the school and is supported by many in-service training opportunities. The development plan provides a clear vision for the future of the school and is derived from perceptive self evaluation involving all staff. Staff recruitment checks at the time of appointment have been suitably carried out and recorded on a single central register. Pupils benefit from the purpose-built teaching space for subjects such as art, music and ICT and enjoy using the extremely well-maintained outdoor areas for a wide range of activities, including the development of the garden which is managed by pupils.
- 2.9 The quality of links with parents is excellent and meets the aims of the school. Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with full and relevant information and their views are sought. Parents are fully involved in the life of the school helping with activities, accompanying outings and talking to pupils about their work experiences. There are regular consultations between parents and teachers as well as regular reports. Responses to pre-inspection parental questionnaires indicated strong support for the school. A few parents expressed concern over the information provided about their child's progress, worthwhile help regarding special educational needs and the work provided for their child at home. The school has conducted a survey on homework and as a result more suitable arrangements have been put in place. Inspectors found no evidence to support the other concerns. Inspectors agree with the positive views on progress, pastoral care, worthwhile attitudes and standards of behaviour and the appropriate range of subjects provided. The school's complaints procedure is appropriate, available to parents and concerns are handled with due care.

### **3. ACTION POINTS**

#### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

- 3.1 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

#### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

- 3.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure full use is made of assessment data to support the learning and progress of the pupils
  2. Expand resources In the EYFS, especially those outdoors.

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

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

4.1 The EYFS is outstanding and fulfils its aim of meeting each child's needs through personalised learning highly effectively. The children are happy, secure, valued and safe. High expectations and clear understanding of differing needs and abilities explain the significant progress made by all the children. Comprehensive development planning identifies clear actions for future improvement.

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

4.2 Leadership and management of the setting are outstanding. All relevant policies and procedures meet the EYFS requirements and are regularly reviewed; inclusion is an intrinsic part of the setting's ethos. The children's well being and safeguarding are enhanced by risk assessments that ensure they are safe. Appointment checks are appropriate. Staff are dedicated and hard working, with access to relevant training. Procedures for self evaluation are thorough. Careful observation and assessment benefit the children's learning and are linked to clear planning. Positive comments on the questionnaires indicate that highly effective relationships with parents exist. In discussion, many parents commented on the happiness of their children and their pleasure at the progress their children make. Good resources support the activities provided but, as the school has identified, do not yet fully enable pupils to move freely in and out of doors.

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

4.3 The quality of provision is outstanding. Through thorough knowledge of each child and careful observation, staff provide challenging work for every child in a stimulating environment. Targets are set and reviewed regularly to ensure progress is made. Although teaching styles vary there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities, with opportunities given for children to choose, experiment and discover. The careful planning ensures coverage of the six areas of learning including an introduction to other languages. Key people identify and monitor individual needs with additional support given when necessary. All children have equal opportunity to make maximum progress. Staffing arrangements provide good, caring supervision at all times, including before and after school care. Relationships between children and adults are excellent. Welfare is strongly promoted. Healthy snacks are provided by the school in the mornings and children are encouraged to make healthy choices from a varied menu at lunch time.

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

- 4.4 Outcomes are outstanding. The children thoroughly enjoy school and show considerable pride in their achievements in all areas of the curriculum. They are articulate and confident to initiate discussion, or talk about what they are doing. Children enjoy challenging number work and their correct pencil grip assists them to form letters well. Achievement in reading is very high. The children understand the benefits of exercise and make excellent use of the wide range of outdoor climbing equipment. Classroom displays and class books illustrate a variety of creative skills. Children are independent, inquisitive learners who enjoy sharing and helping each other. Their sensitivity to those who are ill was observed in circle time session. They fully understand the class rules and behave considerately to adults and to each other. Children understand that healthy eating, personal hygiene and physical exercise are prerequisites of a healthy lifestyle. Positive incentives such as the “Star pupil” scheme encourage behaviour of a high order.

**Section 3 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.**

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed a small sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the vice chairman 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**

Mrs Sara Wiggins

Mr Rodney Smith

Mrs Annabelle Hancock

Reporting Inspector

Teacher, GSA

EYFS Co-ordinating Inspector