



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

COOPERSALE HALL SCHOOL

JUNE 2017



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Coopersale Hall School			
DfE number	881/6040			
Address	Coopersale Hall School Flux's Lane Epping Essex CM16 7PE			
Telephone number	01992 577133			
Email address	info@coopersalehallschool.co.uk			
Headmistress	Miss Kaye Lovejoy			
Managing principal	Mr Matthew Hagger			
Age range	2 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	282			
	Boys	135	Girls	147
	EYFS	103	Juniors	179
Inspection dates	21 to 22 June 2017			

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 a combined inspection 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 arrangements for grading 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 specifically in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, different inspectorates 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 the national inspectorate, 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 managing principal, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended assemblies. Inspectors visited 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

Mr Richard Johnson	Reporting inspector
Dr Pamela Edmonds	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Caroline Goodsman	Team inspector (Head, ISA school)

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Coopersale Hall School is a co-educational independent school for pupils aged between two-and-a-half and eleven years of age. Founded in 1989, it forms part of the Oak-Tree Group whose proprietors are members of the same family. It occupies an eighteenth-century house with later additions, which is set in seven acres of grounds adjacent to Epping Forest. The school is involved in regular collaboration with the other schools in the group, including through special events and inter-school activities.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the school has opened additional classrooms, including dedicated accommodation for the youngest children. Its playground has been extended, a large all-weather canopy has been installed over the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outside area, and many other areas have been refurbished. The school now carries out formal assessments upon entry and the inclusion programme has been extended. Its website has been developed to provide additional information for parents.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide an outstanding education with excellent teaching and learning. It seeks to ensure that the traditional values on which the school was founded continue to be at the core of its philosophy, enhanced by the very best practices in modern education.

About the pupils

- 1.4 The pupils come predominantly from local professional and business families, whose varied ethnic backgrounds reflect those of the local area. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. Thirty-four pupils require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) including dyslexia, two of whom also have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school has one pupil for whom English is an additional language (EAL), who requires additional support for this aspect of their learning. Academically more able pupils are identified by the school through its assessment processes, alongside those talented in particular areas such as sport and music. The school adjusts its curriculum and provides additional activities to support their needs.
- 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>
Transition	Reception
Upper Kindergarten	Nursery (3 to 4 years)
Lower Kindergarten	Nursery (2 to 3 years)

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- Pupils make good progress. By the end of Reception, most children in the EYFS achieve and a few exceed the expected levels of development for their age.
- Pupils' achievements in academic and other areas are good. Older pupils are consistently successful in gaining places at selective senior schools.
- At all ages, pupils willingly engage with their learning and display positive attitudes.
- Progress for the more able pupils is sometimes limited by activities that are not appropriately matched to their abilities.
- Marking does not always indicate to pupils how they can improve future work.

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

- Pupils leave the school as confident young people with high aspirations for their future, and they feel well prepared for the transition to their senior school.
- All pupils demonstrate an outstanding cultural understanding and a strong respect for diversity.
- Supported by the school's strong sense of community, pupils have an excellent awareness of those around them and can empathise with their emotions.
- Pupils have an excellent sense of social responsibility and readily participate in numerous charitable events.

Recommendations

2.3 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

- Provide challenging activities for the more able pupils in all lessons.
- Ensure that marking consistently indicates areas for improvement, enabling pupils to reflect upon their learning.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.2 Inspection evidence based upon the results of standardised tests, lesson observations, work scrutiny, and interviews with staff and pupils indicates that pupils' attainment is good. Overall, pupils including those with SEND, EHC plans or EAL make good progress as lessons are generally well planned, and both teachers and learning support staff work closely together to determine intervention strategies to support individual pupils within the classroom. More able pupils make good progress in most lessons, but in a few lessons their progress is limited by activities that are not matched to their abilities. The school has recognised this as a development priority, but good practice in this area is not fully embedded. In line with the recommendation of the previous inspection to develop the use of assessment information to monitor pupils' progress, the school has revised its procedures and makes effective use of data to provide suitable support. The proprietors monitor pupils' progress alongside the leadership team, and ensure the availability of suitable resources to support teaching and learning. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, all pupils felt that the school provides them the opportunity to learn and make good progress.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS enter broadly in line with expectations for their age. By end of Reception, most achieve and a few exceed age-related expectations. The EYFS educational programmes are broad and balanced, providing children many opportunities to experience a wide range of activities. Teaching throughout the setting is characterised by a thorough knowledge of each child, and planning which responds to their interests. Recent results have been excellent, particularly the proportion of children exceeding the expected levels of development in reading and writing, due to a newly introduced reading scheme and additional opportunities for children to develop their creative writing skills.
- 3.4 Pupils' achievements in academic and other areas are good. Older pupils are consistently successful in gaining places at selective senior schools, some of which have challenging entry requirements, as a result of teachers who are aware of these requirements and tailor their teaching to help pupils meet them. Many pupils attend speech and drama clubs, and achieve outstanding outcomes in national examinations. Results in music grade examinations are good; pupils are successful in local art competitions and gain good results in sport at district level, particularly in swimming and cross-country running. These achievements are supported by a popular and varied programme of activities, ranging from karate to an 'out of the box' club to develop thinking and reasoning skills. In their questionnaire responses, all pupils and parents who responded agreed that they can be involved in a good range of activities.
- 3.5 Pupils throughout the school willingly engage with their learning and demonstrate positive attitudes due to staff consistently communicating high expectations of behaviour and effort, and motivating the pupils judiciously with praise. The pupils demonstrate high levels of concentration and apply themselves readily to the tasks set. For example, pupils of different abilities collaborated highly effectively to produce a project on African animals. Children in the EYFS follow instructions promptly and listen carefully to their teachers and peers, working collaboratively when choosing clothes to dress dolls, and happily use their initiative to select activities. Parents also play a significant part in nurturing their children's positive attitudes to learning by contributing to their learning journeys in the EYFS, and by monitoring home-school and reading diaries for older pupils. These, in addition to two full summative reports which the school provides, allow them to share their children's successes and to encourage them to address any areas of development, meeting a recommendation of a previous report.
- 3.6 Good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills is evident across all the key areas of learning. The pupils' achievements are supported by a broad and balanced curriculum which

accommodates those with different abilities and needs, particularly those who require additional support. In their questionnaire responses, all parents felt the range of subjects is suitable for their children. Pupils have strong artistic skills and good levels of physical development. Children in the EYFS demonstrated well-developed physical skills in their sports day, tackling an obstacle course with confidence. Their strong fine motor skills can be seen in a display of gingerbread man puppets and their excellent handwriting. In response to a recommendation of a previous inspection, the outdoor environments in the EYFS now provide imaginative and challenging opportunities for children to pursue their interests outside of the classroom, supporting and developing their creativity and practical skills.

- 3.7 Excellent scientific skills were observed in the presentations provided by older pupils as part of 'science week', and pupils develop good linguistic skills in French lessons. Pupils enjoy playing in ensembles, singing in choirs and their involvement in school productions, demonstrating well-developed musical abilities and enhancing their confidence. The provision of specialist teachers for physical education, art, music, dance, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and French supports their achievement in these areas. Pupils develop good ICT skills, supported by the increased provision of resources in this area. Teaching assistants are used highly effectively to support individual pupils. Marking is regular and provides pupils with praise and encouragement. It does not always indicate how pupils can improve future work, thereby encouraging pupils to reflect on their learning, as required by the school's marking policy.
- 3.8 Communication and literacy skills are good throughout the school. Pupils have numerous opportunities to develop these skills through performances to the school, to parents and to the public, and also through activities in extra-curricular clubs. Children in the EYFS have a strong understanding of the sounds which make up words. They can use these to sound out more complex words such as the days of the week, as staff are adept at highlighting examples in everyday situations. Reception children can use and understand more complex words such as 'amphibian', and older pupils used challenging vocabulary and advanced grammar to describe animals in their poetry. Pupils have good numeracy skills and can use these effectively to support their learning in other subjects; pupils measured the outside temperature in a science lesson, creating a graph to show how it changes during the day.
- 3.9 Pupils' study skills are good, and they work both independently and collaboratively. In a science club, pupils analysed and compared the heat-conducting properties of different materials to choose a suitable container for takeaway food. Teachers sometimes make effective use of open-ended questioning so that more able pupils are prompted to think answers through for themselves and deepen their understanding rather than accept answers at face value, but this is not consistent practice. When provided the opportunity, pupils will take risks and are not deterred by the possibility of giving the wrong answer, recognising this is an important part of learning. Pupils complete independent work such as homework research tasks conscientiously.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils leave the school as confident young people with high aspirations for their future, feeling well prepared for transition to their senior school. They are aware of their individual strengths and recognise areas where they could develop further, demonstrating an increasing degree of resilience. This is due to the school providing a warm, caring and supportive atmosphere which fosters self-esteem and self-worth. Staff know the pupils well and someone is always available for the children to talk to if necessary. Leaders are highly visible and provide strong role models for pupils. The proprietors know the pupils very well and can monitor and support their individual development, and the success with which the school meets its aims, most notably by ensuring that the traditional values on which the school was founded continue to be at the core of its philosophy. A strong sense of self-esteem is particularly notable in those pupils with SEND due to staff 'buddies' and the numerous teaching assistants helping to develop this in pupils who lack confidence or are experiencing social difficulties. Reception children are well prepared for the move to Year 1 through involvement in many wider school activities and increased levels of adult-led learning.
- 4.3 All pupils display an outstanding cultural understanding and a strong respect for diversity. They interact happily with others from diverse backgrounds, listen carefully to the opinions and beliefs of others and enjoy the informative assemblies which celebrate special days such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. Children in the EYFS understand that everyone is different and with their own unique characteristics, and they readily discuss similarities and differences between faiths. Older pupils respond thoughtfully to the insights provided by their visits to local care homes and places of worship such as synagogues, and enjoy finding out about life in other countries through their French pen-friends. In their questionnaire responses, all pupils agreed that the school encourages them to respect other people and be tolerant of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 4.4 Supported by the school's strong sense of community, pupils have an excellent awareness of those around them and can empathise with their emotions. These key principles are reinforced during assemblies, personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and 'circle time'. Each pupil's contribution to the school community and beyond is publicly celebrated on such occasions. In response to a recent news story, older pupils discussed sensitively how they would feel if they had lost all of their possessions in a fire. Pupils recognise the importance and can readily provide examples of shared British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect. They work hard to gain merit badges for politeness, care and thoughtfulness. Children in the EYFS demonstrate notably well-developed social skills, collaborating effectively with each other, displaying tolerance and patiently taking turns to use a computer. They congratulated each other after races on sports day and commiserated with those who had not been so successful, and unaffectedly welcome each other, visitors and staff upon arrival at school in the morning. Regular residential trips help older pupils to enhance their social skills.

- 4.5 Pupils have an outstanding sense of social responsibility. In their many roles as prefects, monitors, school councillors and 'buddies' for younger pupils, they develop empathy, responsibility and social skills. Older pupils are proud to help show prospective parents around their school. Children in the EYFS are also very keen to take on responsibilities such as laying the table for snack time and pouring drinks for others. All pupils display a strong awareness of issues in the wider world and readily participate in numerous charitable events for a wide variety of national and local charities, many of which they help to choose. They sing in local care homes and proudly represent the school in public events such as Remembrance Day.
- 4.6 An excellent awareness of right and wrong is apparent in pupils' approach to school life and is evident in their good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils readily accept responsibility for their actions and understand that life in any society is based upon rules; they self-assess their own behaviour using a 'traffic light' system, trying hard to 'stay in the green'. Pupils can use conflict resolution strategies to help sort out any disputes and will readily engage with moral issues; a group of lower pupils in the middle of the school designed posters reinforcing the importance of honesty, forgiveness and compassion. In their questionnaire responses, an overwhelming majority of parents and pupils felt that the school actively promotes good behaviour. Staff highlight fairness and respecting the feelings of others and they encourage pupils to develop their own rules, modelling mistakes and how to rectify them. The school's house point schemes reinforce a sense of collective responsibility, and visits from police and magistrates increase pupils' awareness of the role of law in society. Younger children are not afraid to apologise, as was observed when one sought forgiveness for having taken an important piece required to build another child's model, before promptly returning it.
- 4.7 Pupils display a strong awareness of the need to make good choices due to staff reinforcing the concept of making the right decisions. They understand the need to reflect on their actions and the importance of not always copying their peers. Staff help in this by emphasising the need for fairness, and respecting the feelings of others. One group of pupils reflected on the importance of making career choices which would lead to personal satisfaction and the ability to influence the world for the better, not merely for financial reward. Pupils enjoy voting for the school council, who in turn suggested practical improvements to the playground and healthier lunch menus. Children in an EYFS lesson voted for their favourite character, comparing the relative merits of attributes such as kindness, bravery and forgiveness.
- 4.8 All pupils have a good understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe. They are aware of the importance of safety instructions in lessons, and follow them conscientiously. Pupils can readily recognise the need for both exercise and relaxation, including the importance of having time away from television and computers. Younger pupils understand the importance of safety in the sun, know why they need to wear hats and sunscreen, and the need to drink regularly. Older pupils can identify healthy snacks, understand balanced food choices and are confident about how to stay safe online. They are supported in this by the school's PSHE programme, with its key messages reinforced by staff. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to select and grow their own produce in the school garden, and the older pupils feel that attending a personal safety course leaves them better prepared for life in their senior school.

- 4.9 In their response to the world around them and in reflections upon the intangible aspects of their lives, pupils display a good sense of spirituality. Staff reinforce the importance of reflection, for example through opportunities to respond to the issues discussed in religious education lessons. Pupils discuss religious beliefs with sensitivity; a group of younger pupils empathised with the challenge of upholding the traditions of Ramadan, whilst others found a shell and wondered how the intricate shapes and patterns came about. Effective use of school's extensive grounds also helps to nurture a respect for the natural world; children in the EYFS were fascinated by the hatching, growth and eventual release of butterflies and ladybirds.