

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL
(ISC)**

INSPECTION OF

THE KING'S SCHOOL, WORCESTER

By the

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE
(ISI)**

on

October 17th – 21st 2005

SUMMARY

1. MAIN FINDINGS

Overall Summary

- 1.1 The King's School enables its pupils, both boys and girls equally, to become confident, independent and well-rounded young people. The well-qualified and hard working staff ensure a high standard of pastoral care, matched by good standards of academic achievement. Relationships within the school are excellent and pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibility. The school's exceptional site in the grounds of the cathedral contributes both to the pupils' sense of belonging and to their strong moral code, based on Christian values. Leadership by example from the highest level engenders an ethos of tolerance, trust and mutual respect.

What the School Does Well

- 1.2 The school has many strengths; outstanding among these are the following:
- Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are excellent, characterised by courtesy, loyalty and respect.
 - The high quality of pastoral care contributes very successfully to pupils' development and helps to give them a real sense of belonging.
 - Pupils have a strong moral code and are very able to take on responsibilities and to show leadership.
 - Pupils are very capable independent learners who are willing to take responsibility for their own learning.
 - The staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are enthusiastic, hard working and committed to helping pupils make the best of their talents.
 - A very good range of high quality extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils.

What the School Should Do Better

- 1.3 The school has no major weaknesses. The following area, however, could be improved:
- Monitoring by both senior and middle management is not always sufficiently rigorous to ensure consistent implementation of all policies and improvements in teaching and learning.

Standards of Attainment and Progress in Subjects

- 1.4 Pupils achieve good standards throughout the school. Pupils' attainment overall in both General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and Advanced level (A level) is satisfactory in relation to their abilities. Results in both GCSE and A level in the last three years have been well above the national average for all maintained schools. Pupils of all ages are articulate. Levels of literacy throughout the school are high and pupils are articulate. Mathematical understanding is also very good. Pupils of all ages are competent users of information and communication technology (ICT).
- 1.5 Pupils' progress is good, including the progress of those identified as requiring special educational provision. Nationally standardised measurements indicate that progress to GCSE in the last three years has been above national norms in most subjects. Progress from GCSE to A level is above national norms overall, but with considerable variation between subjects.

The Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and their Behaviour

- 1.6 The quality of pupils' learning, attitudes and behaviour is very good. Pupils work effectively on their own and collaboratively. They listen attentively, ask shrewd questions and are keen to debate ideas. All year groups provided good examples of independent learning. Pupils are well motivated and have excellent relationships with one another and with their teachers. The standard of pupils' behaviour is very high both within and outside of the classroom.

The Quality of Teaching

- 1.7 The quality of teaching is good. The teaching meets the needs of all pupils, including those identified as requiring special educational provision. The teaching was very good in about two-fifths of the lessons seen, excellent in a significant number and very little was unsatisfactory. Teachers know their subjects well. Many communicate vividly in lessons and their enthusiasm encourages pupils to strive to improve. Most teaching challenges pupils to think hard and test out their own conclusions.

Other Aspects of the School

Attendance

- 1.8 Attendance levels at the school are good. Clear procedures are followed for registering pupils and establishing the reasons for any absence. The late arrival of a minority of pupils disrupts some lessons. The attendance and admissions registers are maintained in accordance with legal requirements.

Assessment and Recording

- 1.9 The quality of assessment and recording is good. The school has good systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress and these are appropriate for the age of pupils, their particular needs and their stage of development. These are mostly applied consistently and effectively. The school tracks pupils' progress efficiently and takes appropriate action when a need for learning support or extension work is indicated.

Curriculum

- 1.10 The school's curriculum is good. It is balanced and broad and it contributes well to the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal attainment and development. A very good programme of extra-curricular activities enriches the pupils' education.

Teaching and Non-teaching Staff

- 1.11 The quality of teaching and non-teaching staff is very good. Both teaching and non-teaching staff are well qualified, sufficient in number and effectively deployed. They contribute very well to the life of the school and its efficient running.

Resources for Learning

- 1.12 The quality of resources for learning is good. The provision of ICT for teaching and learning is good. The range, quality and accessibility of all other resources are good and they are used well to support pupils' learning and development.

Libraries

- 1.13 The quality of provision in the main school library is good. The library is very well organised and used regularly and productively. Many subjects also have separate departmental libraries, some of which are particularly well used.

Premises and Accommodation

- 1.14 The overall quality of accommodation is good, with some very good features. The premises and accommodation support curriculum provision, teaching and learning well and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare.

Links with Parents and the Community

- 1.15 Links with parents and the community are very good. The school has made significant links with the local community and extensive links with the wider national and international communities. These considerably enrich the pupils' educational experience.
- 1.16 Almost all parents who responded to the ISI pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied with the information provided by the school, the encouragement given to them to be involved in their children's education and the opportunity to approach the school with any concerns. The inspection team found no evidence to support the view of a small number of parents that reports and parents' evenings are not provided frequently enough.

Pupils' Personal Development

- 1.17 The school makes very good educational provision for pupils' spiritual and moral, social and cultural development. Great importance is placed on pupils developing their own personal code of conduct strong enough to enable them to enter adult life with a set of values that has been tested. The opportunities provided for social development are excellent.

Pastoral Care

- 1.18 The provision for pastoral care is very good. The very well managed pastoral, guidance and support systems and the whole-hearted commitment of staff, ensure that the school provides high quality care for the well-being, health and safety of its pupils. The school works hard to maintain a safe environment both for staff and for pupils

Governance and Management

- 1.19 Governance and management are good. Governance and leadership at the most senior level provide clear educational direction for the school and commitment to ensuring that the school's aims are met. Detailed and appropriate short- and long-term development planning support the school's aims, values and policies very well. However, routine monitoring by both senior and middle management is not always sufficiently rigorous to ensure consistent implementation of all policies and procedures. Day-to-day routines and administration work well.

Achievement and Quality in Activities

- 1.20 The range and quality of activities offered by the school are very good. Pupils support the activities very well and a very high proportion participates regularly. Many pupils of all ages achieve high standards in extra-curricular activities. Most staff make a significant commitment to the activities programme.

Progress Made by the School since its Last Inspection

- 1.21 The previous inspection was carried out in November 1999, under the auspices of the HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference) and it followed a different framework. Five overall recommendations were made. These concerned: the provision of challenge for the most able and a review of setting arrangements; devising opportunities for spiritual stimulus and exploration; moving the library to new accommodation; increasing cross-curricular collaboration and extending the computer network. The school has reviewed all these areas and taken appropriate action.

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		Yes
4. Suitability of proprietors and staff		Yes
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

- 1.22 No action is required.
- 1.23 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.