



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

EATON SQUARE SCHOOL

12 TO 13 OCTOBER 2016



SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	Eaton Square School			
DfE number	213/6370			
Address	Eaton Square School 79 Eccleston Square London SW1V 1PP England			
Telephone number	020 7931 9469			
Email address	admissions@eatonsquareschool.com			
Headmaster	Mr Sebastian Hepher			
Proprietor	Minerva Education			
Chair of Directors	Mr Aatif Hassan			
Age range	2 to 13			
Number of pupils	471			
	Boys	278	Girls	193
	EYFS	136	Juniors	335
Inspection dates	12 to 13 Oct 2016			

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 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 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 grade descriptors 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 in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they 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 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 a director, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and 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

Mrs Linda Donowho	Reporting inspector
Mrs Julie Jackson	Team inspector (Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)
Mr Nicholas Park	Team inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Raistrick	Team inspector (Head of Teaching and Learning, IAPS school)
Mrs Amanda Stables	Team inspector (Assistant Head, IAPS school)
Mr Grant Whitaker	Team inspector (Director of Studies, IAPS school)
Mrs Jane Morgan	Team inspector for EYFS (Former Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 Eaton Square School was founded in 1981. It is situated in central London, with its main site located in Belgravia. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is in three locations: Belgravia, Pimlico and Knightsbridge. In 2014 the school became part of the Minerva Education group of schools, whose directors are the proprietors of the school. The school is divided into three separate sections, each with its own head. The headmaster is responsible for the whole school.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to offer academic excellence within outstanding facilities, whilst placing emphasis on developing the whole child. It strives for its pupils to develop a purposeful attitude, self-confidence and a respect for others; developing trust, truth and a strong sense of community. The school also desires its pupils to develop a love of learning which is fostered from within, resulting in pupils who are well-balanced, well-attuned, well in mind and body, and happy in themselves and in each other's company.

About the pupils

- 1.3 The results of standardised tests demonstrate that the ability profile of pupils throughout the school is above the national average. The school has identified thirty-one pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional specialist support. Two hundred and eighty-six pupils have English as an additional language (EAL); their needs are mostly catered for in lessons. Specific support for EAL is provided for 52 of these pupils. The school has identified 34 pupils as more able or talented. These pupils are supported through the system of grouping by ability in English and mathematics, and by the wide range of extra-curricular activities available. No pupil in the school has an educational health and care plan or statement of educational needs.
- 1.4 Most pupils are drawn from business or professional families in the local area, and a wide range of nationalities, faiths and cultures is represented.

Recommendations from previous inspections

- 1.5 The previous full inspection of the school by ISI was a standard inspection in January 2011. The recommendations from that inspection were:
- Extend and monitor further the full integration of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.
 - Afford the head of EYFS adequate time to monitor and support provision across all EYFS settings.
 - At Boltons Nursery, implement monitoring and self-evaluation systems regularly and use the results to promote further development.
 - At Knightsbridge Nursery, further develop systems to monitor and evaluate provision and improve outdoor provision for younger children.
 - At Ringrose Nursery, increase contact with the head of EYFS, regularise appraisal and monitoring systems and expand the outdoor programme.
 - At Twickenham Park Nursery, increase communication with the head of EYFS, promote a shared vision and set clear priorities for improvement.
 - At Eccleston Street EYFS, share good practice between rooms, extend child initiated learning in Reception and provide sufficient time for Reception parents to discuss the EYFS assessment results with staff.

2. KEY FINDINGS

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

- Pupils have excellent literacy and numeracy skills as the result of a strong focus on maths and English. Ability grouping in these subjects allows pupils with SEND and EAL to be well supported and more able pupils to work at an appropriate level and be challenged. A developing system of assessment and monitoring underpins this.
- Pupils achieve high standards in music and creative arts as a result of the excellent teaching in, and the time and high priority allocated to these subjects.
- Pupils achieve well across a wide range of extra-curricular activities, developing their self-esteem and confidence whilst they enthusiastically take advantage of the many opportunities provided.
- Pupils' achievements in ICT are less strong. Resources in this area have improved since the previous inspection, but opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum are limited.
- Pupils also have limited opportunities for independent thought. As a result, opportunities for pupils to think for themselves, make decisions and explore are not consistently provided.
- Continuity in progress in the EYFS is assured, due to a now more cohesive approach to planning across the various settings.

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

- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning, and take on responsibilities within the school with enthusiasm and maturity.
- Pupils are confident, thoughtful and eager to talk about themselves and their school. They are considered in their thoughts and discuss topics with a mature openness.
- Pupils are tolerant and accepting of all members of the community and consider themselves fortunate to belong to such a diverse one, in which they can share their languages and cultures.

Recommendations

2.3 In the context of these excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:

- Encouraging less prescriptive teaching styles in order to provide pupils more opportunities to take responsibility for their learning, particularly for older pupils.
- Provide additional opportunities for the use of ICT across the curriculum, to further enrich learning.
- Continue to develop the tracking of pupil's progress so that it takes place across all subjects.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 In line with school's aims, pupils develop positive attitudes and an enthusiasm for learning that ensures their success. Their progress in mathematics and English is particularly notable due to highly effective teaching and the strong focus on these subjects.
- 3.3 Results in standardised tests of attainment in English and mathematics for which data is available for 2014 and 2015 have been above the national average. Inspection evidence from the observation of lessons, a scrutiny of work and discussions with individual pupils confirms this judgement. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils usually make rapid progress in relation to pupils of similar ability elsewhere. Less able pupils and those with SEND or EAL make excellent progress as they are extremely well supported and their progress is carefully monitored. More able pupils are quickly identified, suitably challenged in lessons and consequently make excellent progress. The school has developed a tracking system which carefully assesses the progress of all pupils in mathematics and English. This system of monitoring enables the school to specifically track new pupils' progress for whom English is not their first language, and to provide support where required. It ensures that pupils throughout the school are appropriately challenged in their learning with carefully planned tasks, resulting in most pupils making rapid progress. The tracking system is currently developing to ensure that progress in other subjects can also be regularly monitored, and targeted support provided.
- 3.4 Pupils achieve high standards due to well-planned lessons which ensure that they have full access to a wide and stimulating range of subjects and activities, in fulfilment of the school's aims. The development of communication skills is a strong focus throughout the school. Pupils enter the school at various times in their education from a wide variety of countries, and the school is highly successful in providing them with the skills to communicate and access all areas of the curriculum.
- 3.5 Children in the EYFS achieve levels at least appropriate to their ability. They thoroughly enjoy their learning and are gently challenged and motivated to always do their best. Children make good and often rapid progress in their learning and development relative to their individual starting points, abilities and needs. From the Nurseries through to Reception, they gain a thorough knowledge of the sounds that make up words through an interactive and fun learning scheme which underpins their good progress in reading and writing. At the end of Reception most children reach the Early Learning Goals set for this age group, particularly in literacy skills and social development. Progress in other areas is less rapid as the school recognises the need to concentrate on language and social development, as English is not the first language for most children.
- 3.6 In the Nurseries, children are gently encouraged to express themselves. Staff model language for children and help them build their vocabulary, particularly for children who have EAL. Reception children have secure factual recall; they can make predictions as part of a scientific experiment. They are not always encouraged to ask questions and challenge each other's ideas. Younger pupils demonstrate their understanding of language and can relate this to the wider world. They understand that wind forces can be destructive. Through an interactive discussion, they quickly understood the relationship between this and the story of *The Three Little Pigs*.

- 3.7 As pupils move through the school they build on their experiences and acquire excellent linguistic skills. They are extremely articulate and expressive in their language, engaging in discussion cogently and confidently. All lessons encourage pupils to discuss, co-operate and share ideas. An English lesson for older pupils had a strong focus on the development of vocabulary when discussing a novel about a refugee boy. Pupils delight in the extension of their vocabulary and actively use this in conversation and in their creative writing. They readily question, possess a thirst for knowledge and have an infectious interest in the world around them. Pupils' increasing language abilities allow them to hypothesise and analyse, which they readily do. They do not have regular opportunities in lessons for independent thinking and independent study. This results in missed opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning.
- 3.8 Throughout the school, pupils enjoy mathematics and achieve excellent standards. In the EYFS, excellent provision of resources and activities with skilled adult intervention and support ensure children's progress, although children are not always challenged to think for themselves. Older pupils display a strong knowledge and understanding of mathematical principles and apply these well in problem solving, this is due to well-planned teaching which is sympathetic to all abilities and needs.
- 3.9 Pupils quickly apply their knowledge to other subjects, as observed in a history lesson where pupils began to understand why the Romans invaded other countries and then used atlases and their mapping skills to find the modern names of the places invaded. They understand and apply the principles of scientific investigation and are confident in estimating and predicting their findings, as observed in their work.
- 3.10 From an early age, pupils are confident and able in their use of ICT and they have an enthusiastic approach to using interactive resources. Older pupils successfully develop their skills through curricular ICT lessons. Their independent research skills are not highly developed due to limited opportunities to practise these in other subjects.
- 3.11 When provided the opportunity, pupils have a mature and diligent approach to study skills. They receive sensitive and effective focused support from staff. The subject areas are occasionally too prescriptive and do not afford pupils' natural curiosity free reign. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of current affairs; older pupils contribute their thoughts to the schools 'week magazine' and are proud of doing so. Strong, thoughtful, mature responses and opinions were expressed by pupils when asked to consider the statement 'if the only thing that I know is I know nothing, do I still know something?'. Modelling of appropriate language and sensitive questioning strongly supports pupils' study skills.
- 3.12 Pupils achieve well in a wealth of sports and activities due to the wide range of opportunities provided and as a result of their enthusiasm and determination. These successes include representation in a variety of sports resulting in gold medals in swimming, skiing and athletics. Pupils are successful in fencing, ballet and sailing, and many achieve notably high standards in speech, drama and music examinations. Pupils are frequently awarded scholarships in sport and other areas at ages 11 and 13 to selective London schools and boarding schools.

- 3.13 Pupils are enthusiastic and eager to participate in all activities that are available. Younger children have extremely positive attitudes to learning and participate in activities with great enjoyment and enthusiasm. Children in the EYFS demonstrate independence when set group tasks and happily work and talk together, developing their fine motor skills whilst decorating crowns by sticking shapes and sequins on, practising tracing over patterns and finding treasure in modelling clay. Adults often lead activities without providing the children opportunities to develop their own ideas.
- 3.14 Older pupils display an enthusiastic interest in the world around them and have an infectious attitude to their learning. They strongly appreciate the support that they receive, and relish the opportunities to explore and research when provided the opportunity.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' personal skills are excellent. They know their strengths and their weaknesses, and staff ensure that each child is rewarded frequently and their particular strengths are highlighted. The school has a culture of self-evaluation; pupils regularly celebrate their own achievements and those of their peers. Pupils' high self-esteem is promoted through the variety of reward systems in place and they value this recognition. Pupils are confident in putting forward their ideas and unafraid of being wrong, knowing that this is a way of improving their work. In an ICT lesson, they were able to decide on two key improvements to their work at the end of the lesson after lively discussions about research information. Peer marking helps pupils to appreciate the work of others and promotes discussion.
- 4.3 Resilience and self-esteem are regularly encouraged on the older year groups' residential trips. Pupils grow in confidence; they gain independence and work well within a team, sharing responsibility for various tasks. In interview, they said that the numerous residential trips encourage collaboration as well as helping them to become more organised and take responsibility for themselves.
- 4.4 Decision making is regularly encouraged across all age groups. In the EYFS, children are generally able to choose their own activities confidently and display determination in solving problems; a child persevered in making a slide using a construction set after deciding on the best method following trial and error. Children confidently speak in front of their peers and share their news, and do so with great enthusiasm. They are proud that they make sensible decisions at snack time and independently pour their own drinks. Praise and encouragement are key features and children happily respond to these. On occasions, Reception children carefully follow their teacher's instruction, but lack the confidence to experiment and try out their own ideas. Children enjoy making their own choices during outdoor play and take full advantage the excellent range of resources provided, with clear guidance and support, as they use them to play and explore.
- 4.5 Pupils enjoy the challenge of working together to make decisions; pupils in a physical education lesson had to design their own gymnastics routines in groups of four which required them to discuss, decide and come to an agreement. They take part in these activities with confidence and enthusiasm, and demonstrate great respect for the opinions of their peers.
- 4.6 Pupils gain resilience and positive attitudes through the regular sports activities; they appreciate that losing is not a negative result as long as they have tried their best. In lessons they strive to try their best and persevere even if they are finding work challenging. In a Latin lesson, pupils new to the subject displayed great tenacity during the lesson even though they found it difficult. Pupils demonstrate an awareness of the need to succeed and be prepared for the next stage in their education. They have a mature approach and are determined to improve and put in their best effort at all times.

- 4.7 The quality of the pupil's spiritual development is evident throughout the school. Pupils are confident and self-aware. They regularly reflect upon their own achievements and can offer mature, self-critical observations of their behaviour and work. Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of reflection on non-material aspects of life following assemblies in the church, which they say they appreciate as they feel like one big family. They have a strong sense of self-esteem as a result of the recognition they receive for their successes, both in class and in assemblies. Many pupils perform music to a high standard, and pupils display confidence in performing and enjoy sharing their music with others which thus forms a significant element in their spiritual development. The high quality of art on display around the school reveals the pupils' appreciation of beauty and their capacity to think beyond day-to-day issues. The meditation room in the pre-prep and the 'well-being club' in the prep school are regularly used by pupils to reflect and consider.
- 4.8 Pupils know how to stay safe. From an early stage Nursery children learn the importance of road safety, which is an essential part of their education as they regularly cross roads on their way to outdoor play. They are confident in their knowledge and happily explain the rules and the reasons for them. Older pupils are awarded with a badge if they display the maturity to walk to school by themselves, of which they are very proud. Online safety is taken seriously by all age groups and pupils are confident that they know how to keep safe. Pupils understand the need to stay fit and healthy, and believe that the personal, social and health education programme is informative and offers many opportunities for discussion. A few pupils commented in their questionnaire responses that they did not like the food in school, inspection evidence does not support this view; the food it was found to be plentiful and nutritious.
- 4.9 From the EYFS onwards, pupils take great responsibility for their behaviour and understand that their actions may affect others and that poor behaviour has consequences. For younger pupils, the 'wheel of choice' is used to help them independently solve and identify solutions to conflicts. The school's moral code of conduct known as 'RESPECT' is valued and well known by all pupils. Pupils have a keen understanding of right and wrong; a sense which goes beyond a simple notion of rules and is grounded on a sense of mutual and collaborative responsibility. Pupils in many instances were observed carrying out acts of simple, genuine courtesy in an unforced fashion.
- 4.10 Pupils make an exceptional contribution to the life of the school through their roles as head boy and head girl, sports captains, house captains and school council representatives. The pupils recognise that their school council allows their views and aspirations to be aired and considered in a democratic fashion. The 'greeters' who are assigned to each class allows pupils to fulfil expectations of good manners, respect and politeness. Older pupils' interaction with younger pupils further fosters the notion of responsibility, such as when they act as chaperones to church.
- 4.11 Pupils are very aware of the needs of others beyond their school, and the whole school actively contributes to those in society who are less fortunate than themselves. A wealth of charities and good causes have benefited from the school's fundraising activities, many of which pupils have chosen themselves.

- 4.12 The school has a culture of mutual respect and the school's high expectations of its pupils are implicit in school life. Pupils behave extremely well, work collaboratively and display respect for each other. They find that they are treated with care and respect within school, and they in turn express kindness to others spontaneously. The pupils have an excellent appreciation and respect for their own and each other's faith and cultures. Pupils and staff celebrate the diversity of the school's members, enabling all pupils to develop an insight into the values and beliefs of others and to develop harmonious relations with them. Pupils delight in this diversity and eagerly explain the benefits of having friends from different cultures and faiths. They are proud that everyone gets on well together and happily share their differences. In their questionnaire responses, a significant majority of parents felt that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 4.13 Pupils feel that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. By the time they reach Year 8 they are independent thinkers and confident in their approach to learning.