



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

SHREWSBURY LODGE SCHOOL

INTERIM INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Shrewsbury Lodge School

Full Name of School/College	Shrewsbury Lodge School		
DfE Number	936/6161		
Registered Charity Number	297656		
Address	Shrewsbury Lodge School 22 Milbourne Lane Esher Surrey KT10 9EA		
Telephone Number	01372 462781		
Fax Number	01372 469914		
Email Address	gill.hope@shrewsburylodge.com		
Head	Mrs Gillian Hope		
Chair of Governors	Mr Andrew Weiss		
Age Range	3 to 7		
Total Number of Pupils	128		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (114 boys; 14 girls;)		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	82	5-7: 46
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Lucy Lawless		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	14 Jun 2011 to 15 Jun 2011		

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 31st 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 Shrewsbury Lodge School, formerly Milbourne Lodge Junior School, traces its origin to 1912, moving, in 1914, to its present site. This much extended and adapted Victorian house, situated in a residential quarter of Esher, is surrounded by its own grounds and facilities including a swimming pool. A sports field lies a short walk away. Over the years the school and its governance have passed through a number of changes. It became a charitable trust in 1986. In 2009 it merged with Shrewsbury House Preparatory School thereby forming, in large effect, its pre-preparatory school. The two schools are run separately but are part of one charitable trust, sharing the same trustees and one governing body.
- 1.2 The school aims to develop each child's uniqueness within a secure, purposeful environment of academic excellence. It sets out to achieve this through a planned blend of traditional and modern teaching that will encourage children to be enthusiastic, independent learners who all develop positive attitudes, self-confidence and respect for others.
- 1.3 The school is co-educational, with 128 day pupils aged from three to seven years. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has 82 children of whom 45 attend full-time. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 total 46. In both the EYFS and these year-groups boys considerably outnumber girls. Pupils come from business and professional families and represent the locality's wide ethnic and cultural diversity.
- 1.4 Entry is non-selective and the school does not participate in the national tests. Other standardised tests indicate that the school's ability profile is above the national average although there is a wide spread of abilities. The school has identified twelve pupils with learning disorders and/or disabilities (LDD) of whom four are receiving specialist support from the school. Five pupils have support in English as an additional language (EAL). Whilst a large number of pupils move from Year 2 to Shrewsbury House, a significant proportion enters Year 3 at local and more distant independent and local authority, co-educational or single sex schools.
- 1.5 Since the last inspection and in addition to the merger, the school has appointed a new head, phased out Year 3, introduced a termly intake of children who have reached their third birthday, constructed a new teaching block and undertaken a number of adaptations to enable young children more easily to access the facilities.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

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. This strongly fulfils the school's aim to develop the whole child within an environment of academic excellence. From the earliest age, all groups, including those with LDD, especial gifts and talents and EAL needs, develop particularly mature listening skills which enable them to apply themselves with great efficiency. Pupils are highly articulate, expressing themselves with precision, understanding and clarity, and reading aloud with expression and confidence. They write extremely well and demonstrate excellent numeracy skills. Computers are used with alacrity. Pupils work extremely well together, talking through problems to reach sensible conclusions. Music is much enjoyed and many learn individual instruments, succeeding well in instrumental examinations.
- 2.2 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but, on the evidence available from standardised tests, it is judged to be high in relation to age-related expectations. On leaving, the majority proceed to local schools many of which have selective intakes. These factors, coupled with inspection evidence from, for example, work scrutiny, indicate that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability nationally.
- 2.3 The curriculum is broad and well balanced, being most carefully thought out to address the needs of all abilities and to ensure smooth transfer from the EYFS to Year 1. Years 1 and 2 use the dedicated art room, the information and communication technology (ICT) suite and the library, benefitting strongly thereby. Specialists teach music and physical education; these lessons, including swimming in summer, are keenly anticipated by pupils. Co-ordinators and senior managers monitor planning termly. Findings and the results of the pupils' assessments are well used to make improvements. Voluntary after-school activities offer good choice and extend opportunities in, for example, chess and short tennis, whilst drama and participation in football matches further enrich the pupils' experience. A wide variety of local links, including joining events such as 'Claygate in Bloom' and visits, for example, to museums, give pupils a good view of outside life and are particularly popular.
- 2.4 Teaching was generally good and frequently excellent in the lessons observed. The best teaching presents especially strong challenges, encourages hard work and unusually strong focus, and pupils respond enthusiastically. In a science lesson, for example, following a practical investigation of a small flowering plant's structure, pupils were challenged to write descriptions using words such as germination, reproduction and generation. Those who might find this difficult were encouraged to use their own words. As a result, much praise was given to pupils with LDD who wrote clearly, explaining that roots 'punched' through the soil. Personalised teaching is especially enabled by small classes so that teachers and the particularly well deployed teaching assistants spend significant time with each child. This individualised attention ensures formal and informal observation and assessment is frequent and pertinent, giving staff exceptional understanding of their charges. Not all teaching consistently demonstrates these high qualities, nor does it always fully focus pupils' attention. Occasionally, for example, group sessions are lengthy and pupils lose concentration as a result. Staff discuss all pupils regularly and formally with concerns being immediately addressed, if appropriate through formal

assessment and creation of an individual educational plan. These are well used. Highly able pupils receive equally effective support through strong extension work and extra challenges. As a result, learning support is especially strong, this being an improvement since the last inspection.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.5 The pupils' personal development is of excellent quality. Pupils are confident and happy at school, feeling secure and knowing what is expected. Staff members have consistently high expectations of behaviour. Pupils understand what to do if in difficulty and readily approach any adult for help. The excellent personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme supports their development strongly. The pupils' spiritual development is excellent, reflected in their response to a wide range of class and whole school activities, including, in particular, assemblies and class discussion. Pupils demonstrate, at age-appropriate levels, reflective, thoughtful responses to their experiences. They show self-awareness and sensitivity. Religious education (RE) lessons reinforce these attributes through giving an appropriately wide understanding of different religions and faiths.
- 2.6 The pupils' moral sense is excellent. They are able to distinguish right from wrong effectively and show considerable thought and care for one another. The school's 'golden rules' are well understood and recognised as fair. They learn quickly how to make careful choices and think hard before making decisions. The pupils' excellent social development is strongly nurtured by most positive relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves. Whilst keen to contribute, pupils nevertheless give others time to air their own opinions; the presence of those with particular articulacy serves to encourage the efforts of those less talented in these areas. As they mature, the pupils' appreciation of their own privileges evolves well and, as a result, they increasingly understand the need for charitable giving and other acts of generosity. The pupils' cultural development is excellent. Their awareness of diversity is fostered by the school's cultural breadth. At their own levels they show tolerance and respect for other cultures and this helps build the high quality of self-esteem and confidence seen in the harmonious school community. The pupils' enthusiastic enjoyment of art, music and drama, all at levels appropriate to their maturity, contributes strongly to their breadth of cultural experience.
- 2.7 Pastoral care of pupils is excellent and supports their personal development highly effectively. Staff willingly share understanding of and responsibility for the pastoral care of all pupils. Strong communications between staff support their close knowledge of the developing skills and current interests of the pupils. Thorough policies comprehensively underpin welfare, health and safety. These are consistently backed by highly effective procedures which all staff, including the particularly approachable supporting staff team, operate conscientiously.
- 2.8 The school's safeguarding policy and procedures are excellent. Clear policies and procedures include those for fire prevention, risk assessments and first aid. Risk assessments are outstanding; staff most carefully anticipate and minimise hazards whilst ensuring that pupils become aware of areas where they may care for themselves. In the pool, for example, the safety rules are adhered to scrupulously with clear explanations as to why such rules exist. All teachers, teaching assistants and a number of support staff hold current first aid qualifications; a significant proportion, including all EYFS staff, have paediatric first aid certificates. Appropriate plans meet the needs of those with specific physical and learning needs. Pupils of

all ages are well aware of the importance of exercise and healthy eating. They much appreciate the imaginative lunchtime variety, many accepting second or even third helpings. Crops harvested from the school garden are eaten when suitable; Year 2's new potatoes, for example, being much enjoyed.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.9 Governance is excellent. Its structure has changed since the last inspection, due to the merger, and a wider range of professional expertise has become available to the school. Governors have undergone considerable training enabling them yet more strongly to undertake particular responsibilities, for example, child protection and various committee memberships. Legal responsibilities are successfully fulfilled. Safe employment procedures are followed and all requirements to safeguard pupils are properly implemented. Governors have ensured strong finances so that the school may plan and develop successfully; the recent new building is testimony to this success. The board knows the school well yet is strengthening further its knowledge of staff and procedures to enhance its role of critical friend.
- 2.10 Leadership and management are excellent overall. The senior management team (SMT) sets a particularly clear educational direction whilst exemplifying clearly the school's aims. Senior leaders monitor planning whilst regular staff meetings thoroughly review policies and procedures and discuss pupils. From these events, subject co-ordinators and others have formulated comprehensive teaching and organisational plans to individualise support and care. An evolving appraisal system sets each teacher developmental targets. It is reinforced by extensive training with the result that staff are better able to support pupils. All appropriate policies and procedures are in place to ensure staff and governors' suitability. The information is fully documented and recorded in the central register of appointments.
- 2.11 The school's suburban site has been most carefully developed to support the pupils' needs. The main buildings and grounds are well-cared for; maintenance receives rapid attention. The school's nearby playing field is much used, and the pupils' frequent, regular and enthusiastically anticipated visits strongly enhance their all round experience.
- 2.12 Links between parents and school are excellent. Staff are available daily for informal discussions, and parents receive all the required information and much beyond, through the school's website, regular newsletters and formal parent-teacher meetings as well as social events and performances. The small number of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated overwhelming support for the school's provision. They showed appreciation of their children's progress, the pastoral care and the promotion of worthwhile attitudes, views and good behaviour. Inspectors' findings did not substantiate the contention of some that insufficient all-round information is provided, nor that worthwhile help is unavailable to LDD pupils. The school's complaints procedure is appropriate and always used carefully although very rarely called upon.

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. Monitor teaching to ensure the excellence frequently seen is consistently applied across classes and year groups.
 2. Ensure relative length of group and individual activities in lessons is balanced in order to maintain pupils' focus.
 3. Ensure the consistent application of good practice across the EYFS including reporting to parents, planning, recording and assessment procedures.
 4. Further enhance EYFS topic work through the incorporation of more outside visits.

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 effectiveness of the EYFS is outstanding. The school's aim to share and celebrate the love of learning is firmly embedded in planning and contributes to the success of all children. Staff have strong knowledge of the children and their safety is assured. Effective partnerships with outside agencies and annual self-evaluation have identified areas for development, including strengthening observation procedures and introducing outside visits. Since the previous inspection, exceptionally well designed new classrooms have been built and the interactions between classes strengthened to improve learning. Results of parental questionnaires indicate their strong support for the setting.

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

4.2 Leadership and management are outstanding overall. Regular review of policies and procedures, including risk assessments and staff employment checks, ensure that children are safeguarded well and equality is promoted. Adults are suitably deployed and annual appraisal identifies staff needs with precision and ensures that constructive professional development is provided. Staff work together closely, planning strongly for every child's needs, although planning systems are not yet consistently used across the setting. Detailed development plans and active links with the local authority have provided further opportunities for self-evaluation, staff training and made funding available for outside play equipment. School-initiated and pre-inspection questionnaires indicate strong parental support. An information afternoon and regular feedback ensure parents are fully informed about their children's learning and progress, although the format of reports across the setting is inconsistent and, as a result, their helpfulness is lessened. High quality resources support the six areas of learning and are particularly well used.

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

4.3 Provision is outstanding overall. Exceptional systems are in place for planning and assessment to identify starting points for learning and to record individual children's progress. Not all year groups use these consistently but nevertheless all pupils are challenged to reach their full potential, with extra support being provided as appropriate. Adults have a secure knowledge of the requirements of the EYFS but this is not always fully applied in their recording of observations. Preparation for the next class is thorough. The setting's innovative design promotes free flow between activities and daily plans provide a balance of adult-led and child-initiated tasks. Curriculum themes are well enhanced by visitors. Currently, opportunities for outside visits are limited. Outdoor play equipment promotes all round development of motor skills; excellent fine handling skills, for example, were observed in a fishing game. Physical education and music are taught by specialist teachers. Good behaviour and hygienic practices are encouraged. Nutritious lunches are provided and water is always available. Medical facilities are good.

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

- 4.4 Outcomes for children are outstanding. Most reach and many exceed the Early Learning Goals. They plan their activities independently and enjoy applying thinking skills in investigations and role play. In Nursery, children demonstrate emergent literacy skills. Most count accurately to 10 and they use computers confidently. In Reception, children produced their own information books. Skilful questioning in a numeracy lesson strongly promoted individual challenge so that some children worked accurately with numbers to 100. Children listen exceptionally well and respect each other's opinions in work and play. They are proud of their rewards for good behaviour and work, understanding well the importance of staying safe and leading a healthy lifestyle.

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 governors' representatives, 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

Mr Robin Lewis

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Susan Rix

Former Head, SHMIS Junior school

Mrs Gill Bilbo

Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector