



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

OLD PALACE OF JOHN WHITGIFT SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	Old Palace of John Whitgift School
DfE Number	306/6082
EYFS Number	EY376554
Registered Charity Number	312612
Address	Old Palace of John Whitgift School Old Palace Road Croydon Surrey CR0 1AX
Telephone Number	020 8688 2027
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Email Address	jthomas@oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk
Head	Mrs Carol Jewell
Chair of Governors	Mrs Rosemary Jones
Age Range	0 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	783
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (Girls 0 to 18; Boys 0 to 4)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 39 5-11: 129 3-5 (EYFS): 89 11-18: 526
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Rachel Rhodes
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	12 Nov 2013 to 13 Nov 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection occurs over a period of two continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in October and November 2010.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. 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 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 Education (DfE) 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, although inspectors 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.

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 their judgements.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted informal discussions with children and examined samples of work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Richard Balding

Mrs Cheryl Macnair

Early Years Lead Inspector

Team Inspector for Early Years
(Headmistress, ISA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Old Palace of John Whitgift School is a day school in Croydon, Surrey, for girls aged 3 months to 18 years and boys aged 3 months to 4 years. The school was established in 1889 and is on three distinct sites. The senior school is accommodated in the Old Palace, once the residence of Archbishops of Canterbury, whilst the Nursery, Reception and Years 1 to 5 are accommodated in refurbished buildings at the preparatory school, some two miles away. The school's governing body is composed of members of the Court of the John Whitgift Foundation and school governors. The school aims to equip pupils with the confidence, skills and knowledge needed to lead independent, successful and happy lives in an ever-changing world. It seeks to create a secure atmosphere in which the values of mutual respect and understanding can flourish, and where diversity and individuality are celebrated.
- 1.2 The Nursery for children up to the age of three and a half is open for fifty-one weeks of the year. It is in a separate building from the preparatory school, which accommodates the oldest Nursery and Reception classes, with outdoor areas available to each setting. Boys are prepared for entry to other local independent schools in the oldest Nursery class and girls transfer to the Reception class.
- 1.3 A total of 128 children (55 boys and 73 girls), are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school supports thirty-five children identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and two who receive extra support for English as an additional language (EAL). One child has a statement of special educational needs. The varied cultural and ethnic mix of the school reflects the population of the local area.
- 1.4 Since the previous inspection, a new school head was appointed in 2011 and a new head of EYFS in 2013. The oldest Nursery group has been divided into two groups using the new garden room facility. Closer links exist now between Nursery and Reception. Greater use of specialist teaching has been introduced and information and communication technology (ICT) facilities have been developed.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Baby room	Nursery (3 to 15 months)
Toddler room	Nursery (15 to 24 months)
Kinder room	Nursery (2 to 3 years)
Transition room	Nursery (3 to 3½ years)
Pre-school	Nursery (3½ to 4 years)
Reception	Reception (girls only)

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with statutory requirements

- 2.1 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement:
1. Implement plans to develop the wooded field in order to enhance children's outdoor experiences.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

3.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 3.1 In meeting the needs of the range of children who attend, the provision is outstanding. All staff know the needs of each child extremely well, and planned, detailed educational programmes enable children to become increasingly more articulate and independent. The school works closely with parents and outside agencies to support those children with SEND or EAL. For children under the age of three, the curriculum is based on the three prime areas of developing personal, physical and communication skills. For children over the age of three, the curriculum embraces all seven areas of learning, and introduction to specialist teaching in ICT, music and physical education enables children to be ready for their next stage as they gain a variety of skills and a greater capacity for learning.
- 3.2 Easily accessible excellent outdoor areas enable all children to engage in imaginative role play, as well as supporting all areas of their learning and physical development. The school has identified a need to develop a nearby wooded field in order to enhance the development of children's outdoor adventure experiences.
- 3.3 All children benefit from the setting's welcoming rooms, which are well lit and thoughtfully resourced. Throughout the EYFS, an excellent balance exists between child-initiated and adult-led activities, often with children's suggestions changing a planned activity, as seen in an older Nursery class activity involving building a pirate ship. Children respond to the high expectations of the staff as they enthusiastically take part in all activities. Careful staff observations enable individual children's profiles to be produced, which inform staff and parents about each child's progress and help to plan the next steps. Regular and strong contact with parents helps the children to settle in and their subsequent development. In response to the questionnaire, almost all parents were highly supportive of the school. A few parents express concerns about the lack of information on children's progress. The inspectors judged that parents receive excellent information on their children's progress. The school provides termly reports, consultation evenings, daily contact and a 'contact book' that enables easy two-way written communication.

3.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 3.4 Provision for the children's well-being is outstanding. Those under the age of three form secure bonds with their carers, and all children have a key person who establishes strong relationships with both the children and their parents, to promote the children's well-being. This enables children to develop their independence as they learn to explore their surroundings, using their imagination. Children are happy in the setting. They work and play enthusiastically both individually and co-operatively, and achieve high standards of courtesy and behaviour. They listen well, act upon instructions and become increasingly articulate as they talk happily to each other and to adults. Children learn about healthy eating and have access to healthy snacks and appetising cooked lunches. They are encouraged to develop personal hygiene skills and learn about keeping themselves safe. This adds to the good personal skills they develop to prepare for the next stage in their education. Children over three are assisted in their educational transition by mixing with older children at playtimes and participating in joint activities with classes in the year above.

3.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 3.5 Leadership and management are outstanding. Direct, knowledgeable involvement, together with plentiful resources, is evidence of the excellent support and oversight provided by the governors, ensuring that children are well cared for in a welcoming and safe environment. Recruitment and vetting processes are appropriately followed, and all staff receive regular training in child protection and first-aid procedures. Risk assessments and fire practices are carried out regularly. A high level of importance is given to welfare across the setting. Regular evaluation of the setting by the collaborative, caring staff results in targets being set to enhance the children's learning experiences and personal development. Comprehensive appraisal and supervision procedures strongly support staff and enable them to take every opportunity to attend training as part of their professional development. The setting's close links with parents and external agencies ensure that appropriate interventions are secured for children to receive the support they need.

3.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 3.6 The overall quality and standards are outstanding. All children, including those who require additional support, are happy in the setting and enjoy their learning, making substantial progress from a wide range of starting points. They develop fine motor skills, learn to make choices independently, and listen to and act upon instructions. Children under the age of three begin to become independent as they learn to do more for themselves. They behave well, learn to take turns and increase their social skills as they play together. Singing songs as they learn to count helps with their development of speech. By the end of the Nursery, children can recognise and order numbers up to ten and begin to recognise two-dimensional shapes. They demonstrate creative and manual skills as they paint pictures and learn to use computers to solve problems. At the end of Reception, profile scores show that most children have exceeded the Early Learning Goals. Children deal confidently with numbers up to 20, adding or subtracting single-digit numbers. Most children are able to read at a level above their chronological age, and they write stories independently using simple sentences. Their developing creative skills are demonstrated in the imaginative computer-generated coloured Christmas cards they are producing. At all stages, children with SEND are identified and extra support is given. The children's personal and emotional development is outstanding, and children make friends readily, relating extremely well to their peers and to adults as they willingly share, and show genuine care and respect for each other. All staff understand the requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare, and these are effectively being implemented in practice. Regular evaluation by management, alongside discussions of the setting and the development of future plans, demonstrate strong commitment to continuous improvement.