



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**MALTMANS GREEN SCHOOL**

**INTERIM INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Maltman's Green School

Full Name of School	<b>Maltman's Green School</b>		
DCSF Number	<b>825/6020</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>310633</b>		
Address	<b>Maltman's Green School Maltman's Lane Chalfont St Peter Gerrards Cross Buckinghamshire SL9 8RR</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01753 883022</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01753 891237</b>		
Email Address	<b>headmistress@maltmansgreen.com</b>		
Head	<b>Mrs J R Pardon</b>		
Chairman of Governors	<b>A M J Frost</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>414</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	5-11:	<b>347</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	67	11-18:
Number of Day Pupils	<b>414</b>	Capacity for flexi-boarding:	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>0</b>	
	Full:		Weekly:
EYFS Gender	<b>Girls</b>		
Inspection Dates	<b>16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Nov 2009</b>		

## 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 totally 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 January/February 2006.

The 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 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Maltman's Green School aims to provide a broad and stimulating education within a caring environment for all of its girls. It seeks to foster personal qualities such as self-reliance, confidence and respect for others. The ethos of the school includes a clear moral framework, within which the pupils have a strong sense of purpose and enjoy working together happily towards common goals. The school is non-denominational, but strong Christian values are maintained and pupils from a variety of beliefs are welcomed.
- 1.2 It is a non-selective day school for girls aged three to eleven situated in Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire. The school was founded in 1918 as a boarding school for girls to the age of eighteen, but became a preparatory school in 1958. It was registered as a charitable trust, administered by a board of governors, in 1967. The school retained boarders until 1995, when the Nursery was established, and since then has been purely a day school. The ten-acre site was originally a malting house and subsequently a country estate. The original house now forms the offices and the Nursery, together with a small number of classrooms and the library.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection in 2006 several changes have been made. Bursaries have been available to new entrants since 2008, subject to means testing. Information and communication technology (ICT) has been enhanced, and communication with parents has been improved through the school website and e-mail. Additional pastoral appointments have been made. The Nursery and outdoor play equipment and facilities have been improved. The school now has a focus on sustainability and has constructed a Discovery Garden.
- 1.4 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is attended by 67 children. The preparatory school for pupils in Years 1 to 6 has 347 pupils. Standardised tests indicate that the ability of the pupils covers a wide range; however, most of the pupils are of above average ability. If pupils perform in line with their abilities their examination results should be above the national average for maintained primary and secondary schools. The school reflects the diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the area. Most of the pupils come from professional or business backgrounds.
- 1.5 The school has identified 68 pupils as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) for whom it provides learning support; one pupil has a statement of special educational needs (SEN). All pupils have English as their first language or are fully bilingual. Most pupils proceed to selective or independent schools when they leave at the end of Year 6.
- 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 Pupils enjoy learning, work hard and achieve high standards. They read and write well, they listen attentively and are highly articulate. They use their skills with number well in other subjects and are confident users of ICT. Results in national tests at age eleven over the last three years for which comparative data are available are excellent when compared with the average for all maintained primary schools. Pupils therefore make good progress over time in relation to their ability profile, which is above the national average. Many are successful in senior school selection examinations, and some are awarded scholarships.
- 2.2 Pupils excel in gymnastics, and do very well in rounders, netball, music and swimming competitions. Pupils achieve well in graded musical instruments, and in speech and drama and ballet examinations. The school has been awarded Silver Eco School status for its outstanding work on sustainability.
- 2.3 The school provides a first-class education. The curriculum is diverse and caters well for all pupils. Generous time is allocated to physical activity through sport and games. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) supports the pupils' development and contributes to an atmosphere of care and respect. Setting arrangements work well. Provision for pupils with LDD is well organised, but the learning support register provides only limited guidance for teachers. Pupils with specific learning difficulties have thorough individual education plans which guide provision well. The requirements for pupils with SEN are met. Good provision is made for the more able through providing additional challenges. The provision of extra-curricular activities is outstanding and offers broad opportunities for all pupils including those that excel in sport and music, such as the gardening and RSPB Explorers Club.
- 2.4 Teaching is of a consistently high standard. Lessons are planned thoroughly, with a wide variety of activities which engage the pupils' interest. Relationships are warm and constructive, and pupils are given plenty of helpful guidance. Teachers are knowledgeable and use the excellent resources well. They foster the pupils' evident enthusiasm for learning.
- 2.5 The teachers' marking is outstanding; it is thorough, constructive and sets realistic targets for pupils to achieve. Some use of data is made to assess progress and identify areas for improvement.

### **The quality of the pupils' personal development**

- 2.6 The pupils' personal development is outstanding. They demonstrate high degrees of spiritual awareness and show self-confidence and self-reliance. Pupils know right from wrong and relate positively to each other and to adults. They perform their duties as leaders and playground buddies responsibly and efficiently. Cultural awareness is widely evident in the arts and pupils show knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Charitable work abounds.
- 2.7 Pastoral care is outstanding. An updated reward system of 'star bars' has been introduced for pupils in Year 3 and above; this motivates pupils well. Social and emotional aspects of learning are now included in PSHE and assemblies and is

beneficial. Anti-bullying arrangements are effective. Form teachers know their pupils well. Pupils are encouraged to take exercise through daily sport, and healthy eating is promoted well.

- 2.8 Welfare, health, and safety are well provided for. Fire precautions and health and safety arrangements are applied carefully. Catering is of high quality and appreciated by the pupils. Attendance and admissions registers are well maintained and proper back-ups are kept. Provision for pupils who are ill is effective.

### **The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management**

- 2.9 The governing body is supportive and oversees the work of the school effectively in almost all respects. There is a wide range of expertise and they have attended relevant training. The committee structure is effective and ensures strategic planning. Policies are ratified by the governors. They review the child protection policy annually and ensure the promotion of health and safety throughout the school, but checking and recording of staff appointments have not always been thorough enough.
- 2.10 The school benefits from high quality leadership and management. A clear vision of the school's mission is evident and morale is high. A clear sense of direction is underpinned by robust development planning at all levels. Policies and procedures are thorough and are adhered to. Sufficient, suitably qualified staff are employed and suitably deployed. Performance, review and development whereby teachers identify areas they wish to develop is beneficial. Teachers attend relevant in-service training. Accommodation is outstanding, with excellent outdoor play spaces and sports facilities. Generous provision of resources throughout the school supports learning well.
- 2.11 Links with parents are strong, and there are many opportunities provided for them to meet with staff. There is a parent partner forum, a parental survey, parent e-mail and an eco-newsletter. The parents receive all of the required information and the prospectus, website and newsletters are of high quality. Reports to parents are thorough, constructive and helpful. Links with the community are strong, and include a close link with a local old people's home and with a school project in Africa.
- 2.12 The response to the parents' inspection questionnaire was overwhelmingly positive, although some parents were concerned about the quality of the information they are given about their child's progress. However, inspection findings indicate that the school provides high-quality information. The school handles parents' concerns sensitively; there have been no formal complaints in the current school year.
- 2.13 Pupils expressed similar positive views although some were concerned that some teachers have favourites. Inspectors could find little evidence of this. The school is aware that some of the more competitive sports tend to involve the most able and are providing more sporting opportunities for other pupils.

### **3. MAIN SCHOOL: ACTION POINTS**

#### **(a) 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 2003 as subsequently amended, with the exception of those indicated below.

Under Standard 4 (The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors) it must:

- ensure that appointment procedures are accurately recorded in the central register [Regulation 4.(2)(a), 4A.(4) and (5), 4B.(4)(c), 4C.(2)(c), 4C.(3);
- under Regulation 4.(c) of the requirements in force from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003, the school must carry out checks on staff appointed before 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007 to confirm medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, professional references.

#### **(b) Recommended action**

- 3.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement:

1. ensure that the learning support register provides more detailed guidance for teachers as to how to support pupils with LDD.

#### **4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

- 4.1 The EYFS department consists of a Nursery and three Reception classes. The classrooms are spacious, well planned, and have access to dedicated outdoor areas. There are 67 children in the EYFS, all of whom receive Nursery funding
- 4.2 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS in meeting the needs of the children is good with some outstanding features. Staff recognise, and provide for, the uniqueness of each child through a key worker system in the Nursery, and small class sizes in Reception. Children are offered a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated, developmentally-appropriate activities. Classroom resources are excellent and well planned, offering a wide range of choice. However, the outdoor environment provides fewer opportunities for independent learning. Progress is very good in all areas. Opportunities for staff development are good, with training needs being identified by senior management and by staff themselves. All EYFS staff have recently undergone child protection training. Links to the wider community are very good, with outings to local shops and a group of mothers coming in to help celebrate Diwali.
- 4.3 Leadership and management of the EYFS are good. The Early Years school development plan sets out an ambitious vision for continued improvement, although this plan has not been shared fully with all staff members. Some of the required checks are made on new staff, but procedures for recording these have not been consistently implemented. Staff hold appropriate qualifications and staffing ratios are very good. Policies are detailed, reflecting the particular needs of the EYFS. All policies are widely available to parents and staff. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated, ensuring that all facilities are safe. Additional risk assessments are carried out before outings. Resources and staff deployment are well managed. Excellent partnership with parents allows staff to respond to the individual needs of each child, for example adjusting the settling-in procedure for children who need more time. An audit of the parents' skills encourages parents to become involved in the setting. Parents are very happy with the information and support they receive when their daughter starts the EYFS, and with the level of feedback they receive regarding progress throughout Nursery and Reception classes.
- 4.4 The quality of provision in the EYFS is good with some outstanding features. Support for the children's learning is excellent. Teachers make good use of spontaneous and planned observations to ensure that planning is tailored to the individual needs of each child. Assessment of learning is good, but is managed inconsistently from class to class. Excellent use is made of self-assessment of learning by the children, for example when printing out activities that they have completed on the computer or whiteboard. Individual learning needs are identified by staff, including special needs specialists, ensuring that every child receives the necessary support. Children have many opportunities for purposeful play and exploration, particularly in the Nursery but the outdoor areas are underused as learning environments. Specialist teachers in physical education, drama, music, and dance provide the children with an excellent extended curriculum.
- 4.5 Outcomes for the children in the EYFS are outstanding. Children are eager to attend and all children are working securely within all assessment areas. Many are reaching a good or very good level of overall achievement. Most children

demonstrate outstanding progress in developing skills that will help them in the future, such as the high level of ICT competence. They are articulate, offer ideas, and respond to challenges with enthusiasm. Children are imaginative and creative. They show high levels of independence, concentration and motivation. Children show a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy, making good food choices at lunch and being proactive in their personal hygiene. Children also understand the importance of keeping safe, as exemplified by their behaviour in the swimming pool and moving around the school.

## **5. EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE: ACTION POINTS**

### **(a) Compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements**

5.1 In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the school must:

1. ensure that all recruitment procedures are implemented and recorded in the central register.

### **(b) Recommended action**

5.2 To improve further the good quality of its provision, the setting should:

1. develop planning for continuous provision in outdoor learning across all areas of the curriculum;
2. implement a consistent system for monitoring learning and development across the EYFS;
3. introduce measures to ensure that the EYFS communicates and develops as an integrated unit.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' 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 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 John King	Reporting inspector
Miss Penelope Kirk	Junior Team Inspector (Head, IAPS)
Mr Chris Manville	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mrs Pauline Bennett-Mills	Early Years Team Inspector (Head, IAPS)