



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

## **CHANDLINGS**

### **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	<b>Chandlings</b>
DfE Number	<b>931/6117</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY394338</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>309639</b>
Address	<b>Chandlings Bagley Wood Kennington Oxford Oxfordshire OX1 5ND</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01865 730771</b>
Fax Number	<b>01865 735194</b>
Email Address	<b>saj@chandlings.org.uk</b>
Head	<b>Mrs Sophia Ashworth-Jones</b>
Principal	<b>Mr Adrian Richardson</b>
Age Range	<b>2 to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>479</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (294 boys; 185 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>0-2 (EYFS): 21    5-11: 361 3-5 (EYFS): 97</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Helen Kay</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>13 May 2014 to 14 May 2014</b>

## 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 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 principal, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mr Chris Manville

Miss Victoria Plenderleith

Early Years Lead Inspector

Team Inspector for Early Years

(Former Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)

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

- 1.1 Chandlings was founded in 1994 in Oxford, by the board of governors of Cothill House School, as a co-educational day school to complement the boys' boarding school, with whom the school continues to share a board of trustees. The Cothill Educational Trust currently consists of six schools in the UK, and a further two schools in France. Governance at Chandlings is provided by the principal, supported by the board of trustees.
- 1.2 The school buildings are at the centre of a large estate, with playing fields, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, stables and a riding arena. The original large house has been expanded over time and, since the previous inspection, the dedicated Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) section has been further extended to accommodate children over the age of two.
- 1.3 The EYFS setting aims to provide an effective and nurturing early education, tailored to encourage individual skills and to help children develop into confident, independent and happy individuals, keen to grasp life's opportunities.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were a total of 479 pupils on roll. Of these, 118 were in the EYFS. In the EYFS, two children have been identified by the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and receive support. Twenty children in the EYFS speak English as an additional language (EAL), receiving support as necessary. Most pupils come from a variety of local business and professional families and represent the ethnic diversity of the area.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **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. Promote opportunities for children to develop independence in activities beyond the classroom throughout the day.

### **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 The setting makes outstanding provision to meet the needs of the range of children who attend. Throughout the EYFS, staff are successful in their ethos 'that if something is worth doing it is worth doing well'. Adults use their excellent knowledge of how children develop to support their learning through carefully planned, imaginative activities, and a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Direct access to a variety of outdoor areas and excellent use of the extensive school grounds, including a woodland area, allow all children many opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom. For example, a group of children under the age of three were able to find worms, snails and daisies in the woodland area, studying these with magnifying glasses and photographing them.
- 3.2 An outstanding programme of enrichment activities, including swimming, French, music, tennis and yoga, significantly enhances the EYFS curriculum. Adults have high expectations for children's learning and development. Skilful questioning, imaginative teaching strategies and highly effective support for those with SEND or EAL and the more able promote thinking, communication and language skills, problem solving and creativity. For example, a puppet was used in Reception to encourage children to describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes.
- 3.3 Detailed observations allow staff to plan meaningful next steps in children's learning, utilising the high-quality, plentiful resources and involving imaginative classroom themes, often suggested by the children. As a result, all children, including those with SEND or EAL, reach and often exceed levels of development typical for their age.
- 3.4 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and in conversation with inspectors, parents expressed overwhelmingly positive views about all aspects of provision, particularly that children are happy, feel safe, and receive appropriate support and challenge. Parents are very happy with the opportunities to be involved in school life, and appreciate the detailed, regular reports and other information which keep them updated on events within the setting and their children's progress.

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

- 3.5 The early years provision makes an outstanding contribution to children's well-being. Children settle quickly due to the excellent key person system, which ensures that all, including the very youngest, develop close relationships with the adults who care for them. As a result children feel safe and secure, readily seeking support or comfort from familiar adults.
- 3.6 Consistently high expectations of good behaviour, supported by gentle reinforcement, result in excellent standards of behaviour, consideration for others and co-operation throughout the EYFS. Adults actively support children's understanding of risk and how to stay safe, for example, when using small saws to make a paddle-boat. They encourage independence around the classroom, but opportunities elsewhere, for example at snack and lunchtimes, are limited.
- 3.7 The woodland area is used very effectively to encourage exploration of the natural world. Children have many opportunities throughout the setting to engage in self-directed play, following their own ideas and using their imaginations, for example through a rich variety of role play. Outdoor areas are used throughout the year to promote a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle. Outstanding provision for physical education, games and swimming helps children to understand the importance of physical exercise. Children become aware of healthy eating as they enjoy the freshly prepared lunches and selection of fruit and vegetables at snack time. They begin to understand the importance of personal hygiene, for example washing their hands independently before eating. Consistent routines and reminders reinforce these habits.
- 3.8 Children throughout the EYFS mix freely, forming strong bonds across age groups. They are exceptionally well prepared for transitions within and beyond the EYFS, as they interact with older pupils and staff further up the school. For example, Year 6 pupils visit the Nursery for a weekly play session, and 'mystery reader' sessions are arranged, when an adult from another part of the school comes to read to children.

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

- 3.9 The leadership and management of the early years provision are outstanding. The principal and board of trustees provide highly effective governance, and clearly defined, well-organised management structures ensure the smooth running of the setting. Rigorous procedures for undertaking recruitment checks and recording the details are in place to ensure the suitability of new staff. A comprehensive induction and training programme ensures that staff know, understand and implement rigorously all policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding and well-being of children.
- 3.10 Risk assessments are thorough and reviewed regularly, although changes are not communicated to staff promptly. Robust procedures are in place to enable the swift identification, reporting and rectification of potential hazards, promoting a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment.
- 3.11 Continuous self-evaluation and a commitment to reflective practice ensure that any areas for development in the educational programme, or other aspects of the provision, are quickly identified and action taken to improve. Staff share a vision for the continued development of the setting and are highly supportive of their

colleagues. Regular appraisals underpin professional development and staff are actively encouraged to undertake further qualifications and attend training to update and extend their knowledge and skills. Staff appreciate and benefit from the support and supervision provided by managers.

- 3.12 The setting is outstanding in securing appropriate support for children with SEND or EAL and those who are more able due to the positive relationships formed with parents and local agencies, and the quality of training provided to staff to ensure that the individual needs of all children are met.
- 3.13 The recommendations of the previous inspection have been successfully addressed, particularly extending the use of the outdoor provision for child-initiated activities.

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

- 3.14 The overall quality and standards of the EYFS provision are excellent. A high level of progress is consistently made by all children, including those with SEND or EAL and the most able, in relation to their starting points and capabilities, with the majority reaching and often exceeding expected levels of attainment by the age of three, and at the end of their time in the EYFS. As a result, all children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- 3.15 Children under the age of three exhibit confident communication skills and move with increasing agility as they climb on outdoor play equipment. Older children begin to write independently, and in Reception, read with fluency. They add and subtract numbers up to twenty and identify how many tens and units there are in a given two-digit number.
- 3.16 Children are happy and motivated, participating in all activities with enthusiasm, ably supported by adults who know them extremely well. Children at all ages are exceptionally well behaved. They are co-operative, share and show consideration for others. For example, those under the age of three readily shared magnifying glasses in the woodland area.
- 3.17 The leadership and management are very successful in evaluating practice and provision, resulting in a shared vision for future development and strong basis for continued improvement.