

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL
(ISC)**

INSPECTION OF

CHANDLINGS MANOR SCHOOL

by the

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE
(ISI)**

on

27th – 30th November 2006

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

Chandlings Manor School

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Full Name of the School | Chandlings Manor School |
| DfES Number | 931/6117 |
| Registered Charity Number | 309639 |
| Address | Bagley Wood, Kennington, Oxford OX1 5ND. |
| Telephone Number | 01865 730771 |
| Fax Number | 01865 735194 |
| Email Address | jogoddard@chandlings.com |
| Headmistress | Mrs Judy Forrest |
| Chairman of Governors | The Rt. Hon. Lord Wakeham D.L. |
| Age Range | 3 - 11 |
| Gender | Co-educational |
| Inspection Dates | 27th – 30th November 2006 |

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 162A(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2005, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

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.

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| 1 INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 2 THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION | 2 |
| The Educational Experience Provided | 2 |
| Pupils' Learning and Achievements | 3 |
| Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils | 5 |
| The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment) | 6 |
| 3 THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS | 8 |
| The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils | 8 |
| The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community | 9 |
| 4 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT | 11 |
| The Quality of Governance | 11 |
| The Quality of Leadership and Management | 11 |
| 5 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS | 13 |
| Overall Conclusions | 13 |
| Next Steps | 13 |
| 6 INSPECTION EVIDENCE | 14 |

1. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 Chandlings Manor was founded in 1994 by the governing body of Cothill House, with the intention of it being a co-educational day school which would complement the boys' boarding school of Cothill. It started with nine pupils and grew rapidly to reach its present size of over 400. A few boys transfer to Cothill each year. The schools share the governing body as well as bursarial and ground staff.
- 1.2 Since the last inspection, new specialist rooms and classrooms, together with a new library have been built, and a nursery has been established. The school is situated in a large house, in countryside a few miles from Oxford. It stands in extensive grounds with woods and lakes, playing-fields, tennis courts and both indoor and outdoor swimming pools. Plenty of hard playground and courtyards allow pupils to play outside in most weathers. Nursery and Reception have their own fenced playing areas.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, the school had 422 pupils including 16 in the Nursery, with a boy to girl ratio of 5:3. In Reception there were 66 children, with 114 in Years 1 and 2, 137 in Years 3 and 4 and 89 in Years 5 and 6.
- 1.4 Pupils come from a wide geographical area with many from Oxford. The parent profile is varied and includes many professionals, some of whom are first-time buyers of independent education.
- 1.5 Entry to Nursery and Reception is non-selective. A few pupils join further up the school and simple tests are given to ensure that they will be able to benefit from the education provided. Ability on entry is thus very wide although baseline tests suggest that this ability is above the average for all maintained primary schools. The school has identified 46 pupils who receive some form of learning support, either in the classroom or in one-to-one lessons. No pupil has a statement of educational need. Of the 17 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), none needs special provision at present.
- 1.6 Pupils transfer to a variety of selective day and boarding schools at the age of 11, with some gaining academic, music and all-rounder awards.
- 1.7 The aims of the school are to provide pupils with a high quality education in which each child is treated as an individual. The development of the whole child is fostered by providing a well-balanced education with a variety of educational activities, reinforced with exciting, stimulating teaching. Pupils are encouraged and expected to work hard and to develop a sense of self-worth with positive attitudes.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The Educational Experience Provided

- 2.1 The school provides an excellent all-round education, consistent with its declared aims and philosophy. All aspects of a pupil's needs are extremely well-catered for, resulting in pupils achieving high academic standards in a caring environment where each is treated as an individual.
- 2.2 Since the last inspection, the library has been relocated to a central position in the school, and now provides a splendid resource for pupils with a large selection of books; further specialist teaching rooms have been built giving greater flexibility to the curriculum.
- 2.3 The school provides a wide-ranging, stimulating curriculum across the school, which allows every pupil the opportunity to develop their full potential in language, mathematics, science and technology. Their creative, aesthetic and physical development is carefully nurtured throughout the school and is considered a vital part of their education.
- 2.4 In the Early Years, children experience a broad programme of activities giving them a thorough grounding in the basic skills for learning and study. Linguistic development is particularly emphasised and as a result, pupils answer and ask questions confidently. As pupils progress through the school, the broad curriculum, based on an enhanced National Curriculum, is enriched by French, drama, and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), all taught from Reception, together with optional Latin in Years 5 and 6. Suitable time allocations for each subject ensure that the curriculum is balanced as well as broad. Music, drama, games, art, information and communication technology (ICT), and particularly design and technology (DT) play key roles in pupils' creative and aesthetic development and standards are high.
- 2.5 The curriculum is enhanced at every stage by an exciting programme of visiting speakers, school visits, and expeditions to provide the pupils with an insight into the wider world in which they live. An excellent range of extra-curricular and sporting opportunities in which pupils participate enthusiastically, provide for individual interests and contribute strongly to the pupils' educational experience and personal development. High-quality instrumental tuition complements an orchestra, choir, and exceptional brass, harp and string ensembles. In addition to the sports clubs other activities include ballet, judo, riding and golf. More creative activities occur on a Wednesday afternoon and include marionettes, pottery, drama, chess and the construction of bird boxes. Drama and dance productions are highly polished and creative. All children are also able to participate in imaginative form assemblies which involve drama. Care is taken to ensure that those of lower ability have equal access to specialist coaching and tuition.
- 2.6 Younger pupils are well prepared for their transition from the pre-prep (Nursery to Year 2) to the prep (Years 3-6) through visits to Year 3, specialist teaching in French, music and physical education (PE) and contact with teachers. Parents commented favourably on this smooth move.
- 2.7 In the summer term of Year 6, pupils participate in a variety of activities which include the topic 'Health for Life' in science. Mathematical investigations and writing radio plays allow pupils to use their skills in an exciting way. Preparation for the next stage of education is thorough; both boys and girls are provided with a secure platform upon which to build for the future. In Years 5 and 6 parents are able to talk with heads of senior schools, and pupils receive an insight into their future school as old boys and girls return to talk about their

experiences. The headmistress entertains small groups of Year 6 pupils for breakfast when animated discussion on a variety of topics helps prepare for interviews.

- 2.8 Thorough curriculum planning throughout the school enables pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding. It is particularly explicit from Nursery to Year 2. The majority of teachers plan their work to match pupils' differing abilities and amend their plans in light of frequent assessments. This ensures continuity, progression and consistency in the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as they move up the school.
- 2.9 Exceptionally well-managed provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is in place, with clear procedures and early intervention. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works in close conjunction with teachers to allow all pupils access to the full curriculum through individual education plans (IEPs) where appropriate, and additional support. Outside specialists are brought in if necessary.
- 2.10 The few pupils who have EAL are identified by the school and those who need it are given support in lessons. Future plans involve a more targeted approach by withdrawing pupils for linguistic support if necessary.
- 2.11 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

Pupils' Learning and Achievements

- 2.12 Chandlings very successfully develops skills and attitudes for work and study and is continuing to progress since the last inspection. The school's aims are fulfilled, particularly that of focus on the development of the whole child.
- 2.13 Pupils learn exceptionally well, with high achievement in academic, sporting and creative subjects, fulfilling the aims of the school in providing an excellent all-round education. In their early years at school, children quickly and successfully learn basic skills. From Year 1 upwards, pupils are well-grounded in knowledge, skills and understanding and can apply these in a variety of academic contexts. Literacy and linguistic skills become progressively well-developed, with children reading and speaking fluently. This was shown particularly in history lessons when older pupils discussed wars and the reasons for them. Numeracy skills are built upon firm foundations, and pupils can both think and act critically and creatively. In DT, pupils evaluated the practical skills involved in textile work and in science, when making 'cotton reel racers', they analysed the performance of their models and suggested ways to improve them. ICT skills, including logo investigations, are well-developed and these are applied to other areas of the curriculum. Reception and Nursery children showed good mouse control and understanding of their programs.
- 2.14 No significant differences in relative attainment occur between different groups of pupils or between boys and girls. This also applies to LDD and EAL pupils. The school does not take part in national testing but, in standardised measures of progress in English and mathematics, pupils of all ages achieve high standards in relation to their abilities. Boys and girls attain very good results at Common Entrance at 11+, and a number achieve scholarships each year. In the Early Years, almost all children achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals.
- 2.15 High achievement in sport, music and other activities, clearly indicates the breadth of the school's achievements. Teams are very successful in school tournaments and county events. A number of all pupils have gone on to represent their county in cricket, hockey, football, athletics, netball, rugby, judo and tennis. Chandlings pupils perform gymnastics and dance to a high standard, measured against the national award schemes.

- 2.16 In recent years, pupils have achieved high standards in the Prep Schools' general knowledge and history competitions, and in the Primary Mathematics Challenge. Music scholarships have been won at senior schools, and good results have been achieved in music and ballet examinations. Recently some pupils have been chosen to play in a professional production at an Oxford theatre. Chandlings has also been recognised by the Soil Association for its commitment to environmental and health issues, including its gardens as well as being highly placed in a Healthy Eating competition.
- 2.17 Pupils' development of the essential skills for work and study is very successful in all areas. They aim to work hard and their hard work is rewarded, resulting in a very positive response to the high expectations of their teachers.
- 2.18 Pupils are highly articulate throughout the school. For example, Year 4 pupils demonstrated their confidence and command of vocabulary as well as different accents in drama, when they improvised a role play on a story. During interviews, pupils of all abilities made their points clearly and listened attentively to what each had to say. They listen well to their teachers, and demonstrate a diverse range of vocabulary and high-level reading skills. During the Victorian Day which took place during the inspection, Year 1 pupils read out a number of unfamiliar nursery rhymes with little time to prepare. A group in Year 2 fluently read out a list of scientific terms. Well-developed writing skills are put to good use in all curriculum areas; the standard of creative writing is very high.
- 2.19 Chandlings pupils apply mathematics and mathematical concepts to their problem solving. Year 6 pupils showed advanced mental and reasoning skills in applying their knowledge of factors to area and perimeter. Reception children, when using scales in their cookery class, were able to discuss and demonstrate the need for even amounts on both sides.
- 2.20 Pupils use ICT confidently. All pupils from Year 4 upwards, have the opportunity to learn touch-typing as an extra activity and those skills are used as part of the curriculum. Those in Year 6 used word-processing, desk-top processing and presentational software in their detailed projects on the Victorians, and pupils use spreadsheets in mathematics. The internet is used widely to research data, and pupils know that information they download must be checked using several sources and then put into their own words.
- 2.21 On many occasions pupils reason and argue a point cogently. Pupils think for themselves and are challenged to make choices. Chandlings pupils take a pride in their work and are able to take notes and organise them. The high quality of their independent work is evident in such things as enquiry work in geography and family tree investigations. Pupils were observed working co-operatively enabling high achievement in English lessons, in textile work, in gymnastics and in cookery. Pupils learn from each other. A pupil told his parents: 'it's cool to work hard at Chandlings'.
- 2.22 Pupils settle quickly to their tasks; they are motivated, encouraged by staff, and want to get on with the challenges that face them, however difficult. They support each other and in interviews they emphasised the support they receive from their teachers.
- 2.23 Due to the firmly embedded Chandlings values, there is mutual respect between adults and pupils and responsible behaviour is much in evidence. Pupils are articulate yet reflective, ambitious yet considerate. Co-operative working starts in Reception and continues throughout the school. This is very obvious in practical lessons such as science and DT but also in drama and more academic lessons such as when Year 3 were working together to find out about Roman houses.

- 2.24 Chandlings pupils show an evident sense of purpose; they are determined to make the most of the opportunities presented to them and consequently strive to achieve their best for themselves and their school.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- 2.25 Pupils' personal development is of a high quality. This aspect has improved since the last inspection and achieves the school's aim of its pupils having positive attitudes and developing a sense of self-worth. The school offers a variety of ways in which to develop these qualities and takes pride on its commitment to this aspect of education.
- 2.26 Pupils' spiritual development is strong. Christian values are very important to the school and pupils have the opportunity to develop their personal beliefs through religious education, a Bible club, PSHCE and circle time, as well as through the very popular assemblies. Other faiths are studied and celebrated which promotes tolerance and understanding amongst the pupils. The ethos of the school allows many opportunities for spiritual experience in the classroom, in the grounds and in many day-to-day activities particularly through music, dance, art and poetry which are celebrated throughout the school. One pupil spoke eloquently of her pleasure on seeing the beautiful grounds as she entered the school each morning.
- 2.27 Self-esteem and self-confidence are considered to be very important and everyone celebrates each other's successes. The younger children are encouraged to 'have a go' and the older pupils to 'get real, get right, get going'. Staff praise and inspire the children and there is mutual respect for everyone. Pupils talked fluently of their outdoor adventure activity in Year 5, when different challenges had to be faced, which often involved conquering fears.
- 2.28 As a result of their excellent moral development, pupils learn to distinguish between right and wrong and to respect the law from an early age. They appreciate the Chandlings Values, which the school as a whole are exploring in depth this year, and which provide a valuable structure for behaviour. They realise that the school rules and sanctions are fair and they can apply these to the rights and responsibilities of living in a democratic society.
- 2.29 Pupils have extremely well-developed social skills. They are polite and respectful to both staff and to peers. All staff lead by example and show respect for colleagues and pupils alike. Pupils are articulate and enjoy talking about the many opportunities for them to contribute to community life. These include taking responsibility as monitors and house captains in Year 6, class pairings where older pupils read and talk to the younger children and house loyalty. Knights of the classroom are chosen to help and welcome newcomers. Teamwork is particularly encouraged. Pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour and understand how they can contribute to community life. They have a well-developed awareness of others' needs and feelings, both in school and the wider community. One Reception child said: 'some African people don't have any food or water; that makes me sad'. This desire to care and to help is shown by pupils' enthusiastic approach to the large-scale charity events that take place every year and which those in Year 6 help to co-ordinate. In the Early Years the children are introduced to those who help outside the school, such as the police, the fire service and the helicopter rescue service.
- 2.30 A high standard of cultural development is the result of plentiful provision. Pupils learn about and celebrate traditional British festivals such as Shrove Tuesday, Saint Valentine's Day, Easter and Christmas. They experience the diversity of French, Egyptian, Hindu, Jewish and Swahili cultures and festivals, amongst others. Cultural awareness and appreciation is covered in many areas of the curriculum particularly in dramatic art and textile wall displays and in art, DT, dance and music lessons and workshops such as the

Egyptian day. Numerous visits are arranged throughout the year and the Year 6 pupils attend an annual residential trip to France. An outing to the Tower of London was particularly enjoyed. Such visits help pupils appreciate the culture of their own country as well as that of others.

- 2.31 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)

- 2.32 Almost all teaching is good with a sizeable proportion that is outstanding, and has improved since the last inspection. Chandlings aims to create an environment where the individual child receives a strong educational foundation through inspired teaching, challenging work and where a love of learning is fostered. This is achieved by the appropriate deployment of well-qualified and highly motivated teachers and by support staff.
- 2.33 Pupils are strongly encouraged to take a pride in everything they do, and to become independent learners. Through skilled questioning, praise and encouragement, pupils are enabled to expand their knowledge and make good progress. Creativity is valued in drama, music and in practical subjects such as art, music and DT where pupils show a considerable degree of concentration, enabling high achievement. This was also observed in dance, gymnastics and games throughout the school.
- 2.34 From an early age, pupils are taught to ask questions and find things out for themselves. For example, Year 2 pupils were observed researching information for a history project on Egyptian dress. Year 4 pupils showed great pride in their personal profile project 'All About Me.'
- 2.35 Evidence of good planning for differing abilities was seen in all years and particularly in the Early Years and Years 1 and 2, with evidence of excellent extension work seen in Year 3. Lessons are well-planned and move at a brisk, but appropriate, pace; learning objectives and individual targets are clear and teachers take account of IEPs where necessary. A variety of teaching methods is employed to support a range of learning styles: auditory, visual and kinaesthetic. This was particularly seen in French and mathematics in the upper years. Because pupils are interested and motivated, they behave well. The very few less-effective lessons observed had unclear aims or expectations and proceeded at a slower pace.
- 2.36 Lessons build on previous teaching, supported by information from previous planning files. In history and Latin lessons children enjoyed talking about their visits to Sulgrave Manor and to Bath and could relate what they learned during the visit, to their current studies. In some lessons, pupils benefit from division into groups; in others pupils work successfully in pairs.
- 2.37 Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and teach confidently and competently, often using ICT to present or edit material. At an individual level, teachers know pupils well and are aware of their prior attainment through thorough records passed through the school. Previous work is built upon and pupils showed how well they remembered work from last term.
- 2.38 Teaching is supported by a range of quality resources, including an attractive well-stocked library, interactive whiteboards in all classrooms from Year 2 upwards, well-equipped ICT suites, other specialist teaching rooms and extensive playing fields. Up-to-date text books are available in each department. Staff are appreciative of these resources which help pupils' learning.

- 2.39 Thorough and regular assessment includes Foundation Stage profiles, and the use of national and standardised tests for internal assessment and information, in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, school and standardised tests, as well as informal assessment are in most cases used to inform planning. Particularly in Early Years and Years 1 and 2, planning is constantly being adapted and updated to facilitate pupils' progress. Marking is generally good but not totally consistent. Written comments are usually very helpful but do not always show pupils how to improve. The school is aware of this, and has firm plans for even more stringent monitoring of subjects to ensure total consistency throughout the school. The 'traffic light' system enables teachers to know if pupils have understood new concepts and is used very effectively in subjects where it is relevant.
- 2.40 Excellence is encouraged and the school has in place arrangements, such as regular internal reports to evaluate and track academic performance. Academic and pastoral issues are discussed by the headmistress and staff each week in staff meetings.
- 2.41 Younger pupils describe their teachers as kind and caring; older ones appreciate the support they receive and comment that they really enjoy their stimulating lessons.
- 2.42 The school meets the regulatory requirements for teaching [Standard 1].

3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils

- 3.1 Christian values permeate the high quality of care and support which pupils receive. The school is outstanding in achieving its aim of giving children the best pastoral care in a safe, happy environment. Staff work together with parents to create a strong partnership for the benefit of pupils. This has been continued since the last inspection and is a special quality of the school.
- 3.2 Formal arrangements for pastoral care are known and understood by all members of the community, including the support staff. Pastoral care enables all pupils to feel safe and protected and to thrive, whatever their abilities or needs. They feel they are known and valued as individuals. An ethos of happiness and high self-esteem is apparent throughout the school from the youngest to the oldest. Pupils know they can rely on their teachers to help them. They also commented on the strong element of mutual respect between themselves and the staff. This was evident at mealtimes, in lessons and around the school.
- 3.3 The form teacher has the main responsibility for pastoral care, with senior staff and the headmistress always available if necessary. Pupils said there would always be a variety of people to turn to if they needed help and that their teachers, and also the headmistress, would always listen to their problems. Pupils' folders and academic notes, including those of LDD and EAL children, are thorough and staff have a well-defined system to communicate with other teachers about a child's difficulties. This is in addition to informal conversation, ensuring that no child goes unnoticed.
- 3.4 Relationships between all members of the community are open and outgoing. In the playground, in lessons and in activities, pupils interact as good friends. Pupils value highly the opportunities to discuss problems with their peers and teacher in circle time. Pastoral issues are well documented in the incident books and parents are contacted if it is felt necessary. In turn, parents feel that they can talk to staff about their children and that they will be listened to, knowing that if necessary, action will be taken.
- 3.5 Behaviour policies emphasise the positive and staff are quick to praise. The recent emphasis on Chandlings Values has been enthusiastically welcomed by pupils who felt them to be helpful in encouraging the right behaviour. They underpin the philosophy of the school, by outlining in simple terms, the key aspects of a happy and supportive community and giving pupils responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff are good role models and make sure that they are seen to emphasise these values. Golden and Privilege Times are appreciated and understood by all pupils, as are the sanctions for older children. Emphasis on a reward system with a wide range of badges and certificates means pupils are motivated and encouraged. They look forward to the celebration assembly when these are presented.
- 3.6 Pupils trust their teachers and, as a result, thrive both in and out of the classroom. They are confident that the staff will deal effectively with bullying should it occur and they have made their own contributions to the behaviour policy. Pupils generally move around the site quietly and play together sensibly in the playground, often in mixed age and gender groups. Pupils are well supervised in the various playgrounds for different ages.
- 3.7 Pupils' health and well being are in the capable hands of the matron who is a qualified nurse. Staff follow the clear child protection policy and they, together with the child protection officer, have had relevant training. First aid is sensibly administered and records kept; sick children have a comfortable room in which to rest. The school encourages healthy eating and

provides well balanced, tasty meals and snacks which are enjoyed by children. Catering staff welcome the opportunity to create themed meals to fit in with the curriculum; Shropshire Fidget Pie was enjoyed on the Victorian day during the inspection. Meals are well organised and orderly. All health and pastoral matters are well documented, and health and safety are extremely well supervised by the headmistress and domestic bursar who is the health and safety officer. Parents commented on the safe environment.

3.8 Registers, risk assessments both in and out of school, fire safety and staff checks are all thorough. The school is a safe, happy place where pupils can grow and develop in accordance with its aims.

3.9 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils [Standard 3].

The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community

3.10 Throughout the school, there are strong links with both parents and the community, in line with the aim of developing a partnership with parents. This has been further developed since the last inspection.

3.11 Three-fifths of parents returned the pre-inspection questionnaire and, overall, gave a very positive response about almost all aspects of the school's provision. Parents particularly appreciate the quality of teaching, the approachability of the staff, the range of the curriculum, the guidance their children receives and the attitudes and values the school instils. They feel that Chandlings Values have considerably enhanced their children's education and moral values.

3.12 A small number of parents felt that too few matches were arranged for boys of lower sporting ability. Inspectors felt that a wide range of football matches for boys of all abilities from Year 3 upwards has been arranged this term. Games staff ensure that as many pupils as possible, of whatever ability, play in at least one match. A few parents were not satisfied with the range of activities available, particularly for younger children, but again inspectors felt that the selection was good, especially now that an activities co-ordinator has been appointed. If children are not able to participate in a particular activity in one term, then they have priority for the next. The school feels strongly that small children should spend their playtimes playing and socialising rather than in organised activities.

3.13 Parents have frequent opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children and in the life of the school. Form assemblies are well attended, as are matches, concerts and drama activities such as the Christmas plays. Help is given with outings and some parents talk to children about their interests or professions. Reception children learnt much from the talk given by a parent in the medical profession.

3.14 The Chandlings Update newsletter is sent out fortnightly and gives dates and reminders. Assemblies are now to be included in the newsletter so that all parents know when their child's form assembly will be held. To help working parents the school endeavours to provide alternative times for meetings. Curricular information is varied and detailed, and parents feel they are kept well informed with welcome booklets given out at the beginning of each school year. Frequent newsletters, notice boards and a most informative, pictorial annual magazine keep all parents fully in touch with events and celebrate the successes of their children.

3.15 Introductory parent meetings occur early in the year, with academic parent evenings in the autumn and spring terms. An open afternoon is also held each term and a Next Steps evening

is held at the appropriate time for parents of children who will be moving on. Prep diaries provide easy contact if parents cannot get into school. Parents feel they are made very welcome and appreciate the school's open door policy, which helps ensure that teachers are kept informed of any problems. Staff will also contact parents if they have any concerns about a pupil. The school emphasises that education is a two-way process between school and parents, and values their help. Detailed reports on progress and achievement are sent home twice a year, in which pupils are given both encouragement and guidance on how they can improve.

- 3.16 A very active parents' association arranges social events for parents and children. Parents' representatives offer help and support to new parents and help them to be involved in the school. The school librarian also runs a reading group in the library when parents can read and discuss books suitable for their children.
- 3.17 Parents are very happy with the way in which their concerns are addressed and commented on the general helpfulness of the staff. The school complaints policy is available for inspection.
- 3.18 Links with the local community are extremely strong in spite of the relatively isolated position of the school. Harvest services are held in the local church and the choir sings at a local day centre. A pre-school music group for local children is held at the school. Nursery staff visit other local day nurseries and also hold an open afternoon to enable staff from other feeder nurseries to see how 'their' children have developed. Visitors from police and other services come into school. The school has a link with a local maintained school whose pupils spend a day at Chandlings, and Reception children visit a local nursing home to share their songs and poems with residents.
- 3.19 Chandlings initiated the successful annual French festival which is held with other schools, both independent and maintained, providing a chance to meet and work with other children. The school encourages work experience placements for students. Environmental projects such as a tree planted by every member of the school along a public footpath, and an organic gardening club, have been very successful. Charities are very well supported and the school supports the education of a Tibetan boy. Many charitable events are organised by the children, often with help from parents, and co-ordinated by Year 6 charity monitors.
- 3.20 These activities add breadth to pupils' personal development and help them to understand citizenship through community and service to others.
- 3.21 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the provision of information and the manner in which complaints are to be handled [Standards 6 and 7].

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Quality of Governance

- 4.1 The school is well governed by the Cothill Educational Trust which owns Chandlings Manor. The governing body of the trust is shared with Cothill House. It is committed to the aims of the school and to its continuing development. Since the last inspection the governors have approved considerable building and refurbishment development of the school which has been appreciated by staff, parents and pupils.
- 4.2 The principal of the Trust of Cothill House has a key role, both as an employee responsible for overall management of the Trust, and also a governor. The governors and principal take a full part in the management and strategic planning of the Trust, whilst giving full autonomy to the headmistress who is responsible for its running. The governors are committed to providing high quality educational provision but their input into educational development is limited. Academic and other information is always included in the headmistress's report which is presented at the termly meeting and to which governors give their full support. Some staff now have occasional opportunities to meet with governors but would welcome more.
- 4.3 Governance is supported by appropriate structures and properly minuted meetings. However there is no education committee which could be used to develop a system of communication, to enable governors to have more involvement with the school. Through astute financial planning, the governors ensure that the fabric, and human and material resources of the school are of the best possible quality. Governors are fully aware of their financial and legal responsibilities. Chandlings Manor has its own budget and the headmistress and bursar, who is based at Cothill House, meet regularly.
- 4.4 The full school development plan is detailed and includes building development and finance, with an overview of health and safety, and child protection.

The Quality of Leadership and Management

- 4.5 Leadership and management are extremely successful in fully supporting the school's aims, particularly those of providing a high quality, all-round education with every pupil treated as an individual. The headmistress provides excellent, well-informed and enthusiastic leadership and this is reflected in the dedication of the senior management team and staff, and consequently the high quality of education and care of the pupils. Since the last inspection the management structure has been redefined and restructured so that all staff have some responsibility and an input into the running of the school. They feel that this is recognised and valued.
- 4.6 The leadership of the school is highly regarded by parents, as stated in their questionnaire. All members of the senior management team make a significant contribution to the management of the school, are clear about their responsibilities and constantly strive to make things better. Heads of subject departments in each age group are responsible for the monitoring, development and effectiveness of their subject, liaising with each other and the Year 3 link. Monitoring is to be further developed to ensure consistency in all subjects.
- 4.7 The extremely thorough school development plan covers all areas of school life. Appropriate policies are drawn up with full staff consultation and are regularly reviewed; these include those for child protection and welfare, health and safety.

- 4.8 The school is very well resourced and these resources, together with the extensive DT, ICT and games facilities make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning experiences. Throughout the school, teaching staff and the competent classroom assistants are well deployed and the high staffing levels and small classes enable full support to be given to all pupils. Well-qualified staff are successfully recruited and the required Criminal Records Bureau and other checks are made, and good records kept. Induction procedures for those new to the school and the profession, are thorough and staff are well satisfied with the support they receive. In-service training is plentiful and linked to development planning. Staff appraisal is effective and the dedicated and hardworking staff feel valued for what they achieve.
- 4.9 The administration of the school is very efficient. The friendly, and involved administrative, catering, ground and cleaning staff work together to provide high quality assistance upon which the efficient running of the school depends. Communication within the school is good.
- 4.10 The school is a very welcoming place which provides a secure, happy environment for pupils. The beautiful grounds are appreciated by children and adults alike. Colourful and skilful displays create a stimulating and attractive learning environment; since the last inspection, the buildings have been even more imaginatively and effectively developed from the original house. Pupils and staff are clearly proud of the school.
- 4.11 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].
- 4.12 The school participates in the national scheme for the induction of newly qualified teachers and meets its requirements.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 Chandlings Manor provides a well-integrated, broad and stimulating education for its pupils. It is highly successful in several important areas: in the educational experience it provides, pupils' learning skills and personal development, the quality of pastoral care, links with the community, and the leadership of the school. Children in the Early Years receive an excellent start to their education. Pupils are proud of their school and behave responsibly. They are well cared for and, as a result, their personal development is outstanding. Relationships across the community are very strong and the sense of purpose is tangible.
- 5.2 The school fully meets its aims to provide an academic education in a happy atmosphere in which all children are treated as individuals. Achievement levels are high in academic, practical, creative and physical activities. These achievements across the board are the result of successful leadership and management, high quality and often outstanding teaching, the dedication and commitment of the staff and the wide ranging opportunities available to pupils.
- 5.3 Many of the strengths of the last inspection have been built upon and the recommendations have been responded to. The school is aware that it needs to develop the role of subject leaders even further to ensure that all standards are as good as the best.
- 5.4 The school meets all the regulatory requirements.

Next Steps

- 5.5 The school has no major weaknesses but to continue to improve its present high quality of educational provision it should:
1. continue to develop the roles of subject co-ordinators to ensure that all teaching and marking reaches the predominantly high standards.
- 5.6 No action in respect of regulatory requirements is required.

6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 27th – 30th November 2006. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

List of Inspectors

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Margaret Smallwood | Reporting Inspector |
| Caroline Archer | Director of Studies, IAPS school |
| Linda Hudson | Former Head, ISA school |
| David Kendall | Deputy Head, IAPS school |
| Harry McFaul | Head, IAPS and HMC Junior school |