



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**THE MAYNARD SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

**FINAL VISIT**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## The Maynard School

Full Name of School	<b>The Maynard School</b>
DCSF Number	<b>878/6034</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1099027</b>
Address	<b>The Maynard School Denmark Road Exeter Devon EX1 1SJ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01392 273417</b>
Fax Number	<b>01392 355999</b>
Email Address	<b><a href="mailto:office@maynard.co.uk">office@maynard.co.uk</a></b>
Headmistress	<b>Ms Bee Hughes</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Geoff Myers</b>
Age Range	<b>7 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>419</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): <b>0</b> 7-11: <b>84</b> 3-5 (EYFS): <b>0</b> 11-18: <b>335</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>419</b>
Inspection date/EYFS	<b>12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> January 2010</b>
Final (team) visit	<b>8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> February 2010</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2004.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government 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 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.

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
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(a) Main findings</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(b) Action points</b>	<b>3</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommended action	3
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	4
(c) The contribution of teaching	5
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>7</b>
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	7
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>9</b>
(a) The quality of governance	9
(b) The quality of leadership and management	9
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	10
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>11</b>

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

- 1.1 Founded in 1658 and located in central Exeter, The Maynard is the third oldest girls' school in the UK. It is a selective independent day school for girls aged seven to eighteen. It comprises a junior school for girls aged seven to eleven and a senior school for those aged eleven to eighteen, with a smooth transition between the two. The range of ability of the pupils is above the national average; it barely falls below the national average and in the senior school over a quarter of pupils are far above this. Its governing body is drawn from the local community, but its pupils come from a wide area. In addition to those from Devon, girls travel from north Cornwall, Somerset and Dorset to attend the school. Most girls join at the age of seven or eleven, though some enter at other ages in most years. There are currently 84 pupils in the junior school and 335 in the senior school, almost all of whom are white native English speakers.
- 1.2 The Maynard School aims to be a dynamic, supportive community providing excellent learning opportunities which inspire and challenge its pupils. The school aims to be forward looking whilst cherishing the traditions of its history. It seeks to help its students to develop their love of learning, demonstrate creativity and curiosity, be socially responsible and compassionate, become independent and reflective learners, be culturally aware and confident with challenge and change. The school has a commitment to extra-curricular activities, outdoor education and community service in addition to a broad academic curriculum. Since the last inspection the school has appointed a new head of junior school (September 2006), a new headmistress (January 2009) and a new chair of governors (January 2009). In 2008 a new building, The Murdin Link, was opened. This unites girls from both sections of the school, providing accommodation for Year 6, textiles and food and nutrition and a range of senior girls' lessons.
- 1.3 The school has identified 29 pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and seven for whom English is an additional language (EAL). One pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

***Junior School***

School	NC name
Lower 1	Year 3
Upper 1	Year 4
Form 2	Year 5
Lower 3	Year 6

***Senior School***

School	NC name
Upper 3	Year 7
Lower 4	Year 8
Upper 4	Year 9
Lower 5	Year 10
Upper 5	Year 11
Lower 6	Year 12
Upper 6	Year 13

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The pupils' achievements are excellent. Girls are proficient in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Their work is well presented and they find it interesting. Pupils enjoy their learning and they are able to work effectively both independently and with others. They ask questions, challenge ideas, focus well on the given tasks and take care with the presentation of their work. Girls of all ages aim high and work hard to achieve their goals. They act on advice and are keen to succeed.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent. Girls are courteous, confident and enthusiastic, keen to respond to challenges and to have new experiences. They are sensitive to the needs of others and raise money for charities. Older girls work closely with those younger, acting as mentors or helping to stage dramatic productions. They appreciate the opportunities to become involved and are appreciative of the support provided by their teachers. Questionnaire results indicate strong support for the school by both pupils and their parents. This is a happy school, in which pupils are encouraged to become successful and confident independent young women.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are good. The governing body takes its responsibilities seriously and discharges its duties effectively, liaising closely with the headmistress and taking an active interest in the workings of the school. The headmistress and the head of the junior school provide excellent leadership and have set in progress many initiatives to help the school to develop further. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the provision of both ICT and the library, though there remain inconsistencies in the monitoring of teaching and learning across the school and in the use made of assessment data.

### **2.(b) Action points**

#### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school met all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended.

#### **(ii) Recommended action**

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement(s):
1. ensure that school policies and procedures are implemented fully and consistently in all departments;
  2. ensure that the tracking and monitoring of pupil progress is applied more consistently throughout the whole school.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills**

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills is excellent. Pupils receive a good, broad and well-balanced education. The school's bold mission statement is to "Imagine, aspire, achieve", a target which is successfully attained in very many respects.
- 3.2 Pupils make good progress, gaining high results in public examinations in relation to their ability. Results in GCSE examinations over the last three years for which nationally comparative data are available have been excellent when compared with the average for girls in all maintained schools, and high when compared with the average for girls in maintained selective schools. The pupils' performance in A-level examinations has been high when compared with the average for girls in maintained schools and also high when compared with the average for girls in maintained selective schools.
- 3.3 Many pupils enjoy significant individual and team success in both county and national awards. These have included several top student awards in a range of subjects at GCSE and A level. A very high percentage of pupils are successful in gaining places to their first choice universities, including Oxbridge. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme flourishes with nineteen gold awards gained in the past three years. Results in the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art examinations in verse, prose and acting and Associated Board examinations in music show many candidates achieving the highest grades.
- 3.4 The pupils are confident and articulate learners. They speak enthusiastically about their school which they believe supports them well. Their general knowledge and understanding of the world around them is impressive. In lessons they speak, listen, read and write with self-assurance. In a Year 10 English literature lesson, for example, pupils deployed all of these skills very successfully when discussing a GCSE poem. Pupils apply logical, mathematical and creative skills effectively. They enjoy working on their own or sharing their ideas with others in pairs or groups. In a classical civilisation lesson, for example, Year 12 pupils collaborated very well in devising a board game to support their work on The Odyssey. Pupils demonstrate good skills in their use of computers, and further opportunities exist to practise these skills outside dedicated ICT lessons.
- 3.5 The pupils display very positive attitudes towards their learning and many show a genuine delight in being in the school environment. It was a pleasure to witness their obvious enjoyment in activities as diverse as playing in the jazz band and participating in Greek club.

#### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)**

- 3.6 The quality of the school's curricular and extra-curricular provision is good; it is being developed to meet the school's objective of being world class. Girls are provided with opportunities to experience linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education. The needs of pupils with LLD are met well. Appropriate extension work for able pupils was observed in a number of lessons. Pupils study six core subjects for GCSE supplemented by up to

- four they choose themselves. A free choice from 24 subjects exists at A level. The breadth of the junior school curriculum prepares the girls well for their future studies.
- 3.7 The learning support department has been expanded, with assessment of pupils taking place on entry, primarily at the start of Years 3 and 7.
- 3.8 Cross-curricular opportunities are available with days off timetable, for example the forensics day in the junior school. The curriculum is further enhanced by a range of extra-curricular opportunities during the lunch break and after school, with clubs for musicians and sportswomen every day. Junior girls benefit from assistance from senior girls, as seen in the cookery club. Green teams are active, raising awareness of environmental issues. Articulate Year 9 pupils had researched climate change for whole class participation in a chemistry debate.
- 3.9 Educational visits include regular excursions abroad and particularly impressive outdoor education programmes, with older pupils enjoying the Ten Tors Challenge. A high proportion of older girls also participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Pupils in Year 9 benefit from the Devon Connexions careers fair and The Maynard's alternative annual careers fair, 'Jobs for the Girls'. Year 11 enjoy a wide range of work experience placements after GCSEs and older students have links with the Universities of Plymouth and Exeter, along with local business for Young Enterprise and the Connexions Challenge.
- 3.10 Involvement in charities is an expectation for pupils throughout the school and individuals are encouraged to deliver assemblies about their work. Year 7 host an afternoon for senior citizens whilst sixth formers provide musical support for patients with Alzheimer's disease.
- 3.11 A popular component of life in the sixth form is the weekly extension studies programme consisting of a selection of four-week modules in topics selected by the pupils covering a range of skills from international politics to magic.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.12 The overall quality of teaching in the school is good with some outstanding features. The quality of teaching is consistent with the school's aim of providing excellent learning opportunities which inspire and challenge. Both pupils and their parents believe correctly that teaching helps the pupils to make good progress. In all subjects, teaching enables pupils of all abilities to acquire new knowledge, make good progress, increase their understanding and develop their skills well. Pupils with LDD are supported effectively, enabling them to achieve as well as their peers in relation to their ability.
- 3.13 Teaching fosters in pupils the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, an interest in their work and the ability to think for themselves. A group of Year 7 pupils, for example, were so enthused in a lesson studying religious art that they drove forward the question and answer session on their own, taking the topic to new heights.
- 3.14 The good teaching encourages pupils to behave responsibly and enjoy their learning. Lessons are well planned and the best employ effective teaching methods with a good variety of activities which meet the needs of pupils and promote good learning. Pupils are well managed and time is used effectively, with a brisk pace, in many lessons.

- 3.15 Information on the pupils' abilities is transferred between teachers as pupils move up through the school. However, there is not yet a consistent tracking system to cover all ages. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and their enthusiasm is clearly evident in lessons.
- 3.16 Teaching employs a suitable quality and quantity of resources and these are generally used effectively, although the plentiful ICT resources are not used sufficiently well in some areas of the curriculum.
- 3.17 Systems for assessment have been reviewed thoroughly since the last inspection and valuable data to monitor progress and inform future planning are available, though not all departments currently make full use of them. Similarly, the good practice of some subjects when marking the pupils' work is not being promoted elsewhere.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils develop into confident and responsible young people who combine fairness, trust and honesty in their dealings with others.
- 4.2 Pupils develop an excellent sense of spiritual awareness through the curriculum, charitable work, assemblies and the general ethos of the school. They show excellent spiritual development, for example in their capacity for reflection and quiet thought, which is assisted by the provision of quiet spaces, such as the garden of reflection. Pupils gain knowledge and insight into world religions and faiths through the wide-ranging religious studies curriculum.
- 4.3 Pupils show compassion for others and readily involve themselves in charitable activities, responding immediately to a crisis such as the Haiti earthquake with initiatives to raise money. They discuss moral and social issues in lessons and, in conversation, reveal a sensitivity to the feelings of others. In the junior school, pupils develop their social and emotional skills through the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme and through circle time. Pupils understand what is fair and just. They accept responsibility for their behaviour and treat others with respect and courtesy.
- 4.4 Pupils develop leadership skills and the ability to work in teams through participation in extra-curricular activities and holding posts of responsibility. They develop their social skills and awareness of the needs of others by working in mixed age groups when, for example, older girls help those younger in some extra-curricular activities. Pupils can suggest, and run, new clubs if they wish. In a small minority of cases in the questionnaires, some pupils suggested concerns about the school listening to their views, but those pupils questioned during the inspection said they felt that their opinions were listened to, in the school council, in lessons or in meetings with teachers.
- 4.5 Pupils develop their cultural understanding both through the curriculum and trips abroad. They are provided with opportunities to develop awareness of other cultures through the school's emphasis on internationalism, with links with many countries. The junior school pupils learn about life in Africa and India and the new personal, social and health education and citizenship policy encourages them to become involved in the community and to embrace challenges.

### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

- 4.6 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good overall, with some excellent features that ensure that school's aims in this area are met. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are excellent and the school provides a very good quality of care for its pupils. This is a caring school where pupils feel valued and happy. Heads of year and form tutors provide pupils with firm foundations on which to build their futures. Year 10 peer mentors are also on hand to help pupils in Year 7. Effective procedures are in place to guard against harassment and bullying and pupils feel confident to report problems. Girls say that bullying rarely occurs, and there is a system for reporting it anonymously; in interviews, pupils of all ages said that any bullying was dealt with effectively.

- 4.7 The health & safety committee meets termly, with a school governor in attendance, to ensure that all necessary procedures to promote health and safety are in place. The school prioritises the safety of pupils on the school site and on visits out of school. It has effective precautions against fire and for areas of possible risk, such as laboratories. There is good provision for pupils who are unwell and there are plans to improve access for those with disabilities. The safeguarding policy meets all requirements and is implemented successfully. Child protection training for all members of staff is effective, and forms part of the induction process. The school maintains strong links with outside agencies and a governor has a designated responsibility for overseeing the safeguarding policy. Admissions and attendance records are well maintained and proper back-ups are kept.
- 4.8 Pupils are encouraged to be healthy by developing good eating habits and by taking regular exercise. The catering department provides a good range of food options which are freshly prepared on a daily basis. Regular exercise is encouraged and many pupils are engaged in extra-curricular sport in addition to their timetabled lessons.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The governance of the school is good. The governing body is committed to the school and members maintain a keen interest in it. They share the aspirations of the headmistress and provide her with encouragement and support. They successfully discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. Governors bring to the school a range of expertise and experience of great benefit to its success and development.
- 5.2 Governors are actively involved in strategic planning and liaise closely with the senior management team and, in particular, the headmistress, head of junior school and the bursar. Many live close to the school and visit regularly, which enables them to have a detailed understanding of issues. Included on the governing body are members of the teaching staff, which greatly enhances their awareness of issues affecting the school. Their sub-committees oversee key areas of the school and review policies and their implementation. Governors have a clear financial understanding and are aware of their legal obligations. They discharge their duties with regard to child protection, welfare, health and safety in the school. However, not all monitoring has been sufficiently rigorous.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management**

- 5.3 The quality of leadership and management is good. Dynamic leadership from the headmistress and the head of the junior school is driving forward improvements. The school's development plan clarifies aims and objectives and helps all members of staff to understand them. Heads of departments are clear about the educational direction of the school and are supportive of the changes, managing their own areas of responsibility very effectively. Development planning provides the opportunity for all to reflect on current practice and helps to maintain a focus on the school's central aims.
- 5.4 High quality staff are attracted to the school. Their suitability for employment is checked appropriately, and a comprehensive induction programme is followed, which places proper emphasis on the safeguarding of pupils.
- 5.5 Those with responsibility for leadership and management are united in having high expectations of the pupils. The excellent personal development of the pupils and the high quality of the education provided are attributable to their effectiveness. There are also some examples of excellent department documentation and successful monitoring practices. However, there are inconsistencies in the way whole school policies are implemented at subject level, for example allowing different methods of assessment, tracking and monitoring to co-exist in the school. This does not ultimately best serve the needs of the pupils.

### **5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.6 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is good. The school maintains constructive relationships with parents. In their questionnaires, parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school. Almost all of those who responded said that they felt that the school helped their child to make progress and that the school provides worthwhile attitudes and views. Most also reported that information about the school, and the progress made by children, is readily available. Parents are positive about the education and support provided for their children. The overwhelming majority of those who responded to the questionnaires said they felt they could communicate easily with the school.
- 5.7 The website is also a good source of information for current parents to access key policies and other relevant information. There is even a headmistress's blog. Parents and prospective parents receive a variety of high quality documents from the school, with many designed for particular age-groups.
- 5.8 Most parents reported that they have good opportunities to be involved with the work and progress of their children. Parents can accompany trips out of school or serve on the governing body. One parent runs Public Speaking in which pupils prepare topics to present to audiences and enter competitions. Others help with initiatives such as the school cookbook, or with careers advice or work placements. The school has a thriving Maynard Parents' Association. In addition to fundraising and social activities there are Year representatives who meet the headmistress and staff three times a year to discuss school matters.
- 5.9 School reports are well structured, positive and detailed; they give parents a clear and detailed account of their daughter's progress, effort and attainment. Most parents expressed satisfaction with the information they received about their daughter's progress.
- 5.10 Complaints by parents are extremely rare and are usually resolved informally. They are handled with care according to clearly described procedures and most parents felt satisfied with the way in which the school deals with their concerns.

**What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.**

## **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**

Mrs Patricia Taylor	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Claire Delo	Junior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS)
Mr Tony White	Junior Team Inspector (Head, IAPS)
Mrs Liz Robinson	Senior Team Inspector (Head, GSA)
Mrs Susan Jones	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA)
Mr Stephen Holroyd	Senior Team Inspector (Head of Dept, HMC)