



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**BISHOP CHALLONER SCHOOL
INTERIM INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Bishop Challoner School

Full Name of School/College	Bishop Challoner School		
DfE Number	305/6003		
Registered Charity Number	235468		
Address	Bishop Challoner School 228 Bromley Road Shortlands Bromley Kent BR2 0BS		
Telephone Number	020 8460 3546		
Fax Number	020 8466 8885		
Email Address	office@bishopchallonerschool.com		
Headmistress	Ms K Barry		
Chair of Governors	Canon Jack Madden		
Age Range	3 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	420		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (287 boys; 133 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 128
	3-5 (EYFS):	44	11-18: 248
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	420	
Number of Boarders	Total:	0	
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs G Collings		
EYFS Gender	(Mixed)		
Inspection dates	28 Sep 2010 to 29 Sep 2010		

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 totalling 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 September 2006.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (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 2010*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

*These Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, 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 31st 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 of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will 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.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Bishop Challoner is a day school for boys and girls between the ages of three and eighteen, situated in the centre of Shortlands in Kent.
- 1.2 The school is a Catholic Foundation established in 1950. It is owned by a board of trustees on behalf of the Archdiocese of Southwark and the Archbishop is the principal trustee and president of the school. The trustees appoint the board of governors who are responsible for the governance of the school.
- 1.3 The school is founded on Catholic principles but welcomes and respects all faiths. Through a partnership of family and staff it seeks to foster the education of the whole person in preparation for adult life, within a positive and caring environment. It aims to recognise each pupil as unique as well as developing a social conscience towards all members of society. Since the previous inspection in September 2006 there have been major staff changes in management and the current headmistress has been in post since September 2008.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 420 pupils on roll with 287 boys and 133 girls, of whom 44 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In line with the ethos of the school 96 pupils have been identified who would benefit from extra learning support, 61 of whom receive specialist learning support funded by the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 The EYFS provides care and education in one Reception and three Nursery classes. Three children have English as an additional language but none need or receive additional support.
- 1.6 The school does not select by ability for the EYFS and the junior school, and the ability range of these pupils varies widely from below to well above the national average. Standardised tests indicate that overall pupils' ability is above the national average. The ability profile of the senior school is above the national average but the school has provided data indicating that the A-level ability profile is slightly below the national average.

- 1.7 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.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Rainbow (youngest)	Nursery
Dolphin	Nursery
Butterfly	Nursery
Reception	Reception

Junior School

School	NC name
J1	Year 1
J2	Year 2
J3	Year 3
J4	Year 4
J5	Year 5
J6	Year 6

Senior School

School	NC name
7	Year 7
8	Year 8
9	Year 9
10	Year 10
11	Year 11
12	Year 12
13	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills

- 2.1 Overall, the level of pupils' achievement is good. Pupils are successfully educated in line with the school's aims and make good progress in relation to their ability. The experience of children in both the Nursery and Reception classes provides a very firm educational foundation.
- 2.2 The school successfully provides a broad and well-balanced curriculum that caters for all abilities, including pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and those who are gifted and talented. Pupils have excellent speaking and listening skills and are keen to develop sensible arguments. The quality and presentation of written work are good and formal grammar is used and understood to enhance descriptive writing. Mathematical skills are well used to investigate and solve problems, and other subject-related skills are effectively used in subjects such as science and geography. The outstanding art displayed throughout the school is evidence of the encouragement of creativity. All pupils take religious studies up to GCSE level. The quality of personal, social, health and citizenship education is outstanding, with a strong Catholic ethos. Pupils' achievements are rooted in their exemplary attitudes to learning. Behaviour is excellent throughout the school and pupils work well together and show a genuine thirst for knowledge, working with enjoyment, application and perseverance. The number of sixth formers is small, and these pupils benefit from a wide range of subjects on offer and are able to argue cogently. In many cases their English skills were outstanding and mathematical concepts well understood.
- 2.3 The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including a debating society, a whole-school production and an urban dance club. The teaching of fencing is outstanding. Some pupils and parents would like more sport-related activities to be offered and the inspection team agree with that view. There are many educational visits such as a recent one to China. Choral groups have had considerable success, in particular taking part in *Voice in a Million* at a major performance arena in London. Individuals have been accepted for professional football sporting academies and for county representation at rugby.
- 2.4 Pupils' attainment in the junior school cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be above national age-related expectations and indicates that they make appropriate progress when compared with those of similar above average ability. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Although there are occasions where lessons are fast-paced and very effective, there are times when the pace is slow and does not always provide sufficient challenge.
- 2.5 Using the national data for the years 2007 to 2009, which are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available, results at GCSE have been above the national average for all maintained schools. One-third of pupils achieved A*/A grades and results for A*-C grades are virtually in line with the national average when compared with maintained selective schools. These results are good in relation to pupils' abilities, indicating that their progress from Year 7 to 11 is above the average for pupils with similar above average ability. A-level results are slightly below the national average for all maintained schools, particularly in

relation to A*-B grades, but are similar to A*-E results for all maintained schools. Given that the average ability level for sixth-form entry is slightly below the national average, this level of attainment is judged to be good and pupils make good progress, particularly as most are successful in obtaining their first choice of university. In the senior school, good teaching supports pupils' attainment. Knowledgeable practitioners know their pupils very well and maintain sympathetic relationships that create an atmosphere in which all can learn with confidence. At best independent thinking skills were promoted and a suitable level of challenge obliged pupils to exchange ideas and work hard on their own account. Throughout, programmes of support for pupils with additional learning needs are well organised, and an imaginative programme of activities for the most able ensures that teachers' aspirations for their pupils are backed by well-conceived and thoughtful strategies. Assessment of pupil performance is deployed to very good effect to ensure that the curriculum is matched closely to the needs of each cohort passing through the school and a start has been made with the setting of targets for pupils. A common marking policy ensures that in general pupils have a good understanding of progress achieved but not all feedback in exercise books is appropriately diagnostic in quality. The introduction of a policy on presentation has led to very positive change in the organisation of exercise books and in the structure of note taking.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.6 The personal development of all pupils is excellent, both in the EYFS and in the rest of the school, and results in confident, articulate individuals who care for each other and their school. The school is most successful in its aim to foster the education of the whole person within a framework of Catholic principles that welcomes and respects all faiths.
- 2.7 Pupils have a well-developed sense of the spiritual. They have good levels of self-esteem, self-knowledge and self-confidence, resulting from the widespread support available from staff. They are appreciative of the wonders of nature and of the achievements of others and develop a reflective attitude, as was seen during junior assembly in a discussion about the role of angels in the Bible. Prayer is an every day part of the school and pupils benefit from spiritual support from the Chaplaincy team.
- 2.8 Moral awareness is high. Pupils show great understanding of right and wrong. Behaviour in class and around the school is exemplary. Older pupils are well aware of moral issues in their own country and in the world generally. They show enthusiastic commitment to raising money for many and various charities.
- 2.9 Pupils' social development involves strong respect for others. Pupils enjoy their widespread responsibilities, whether as prefects, house captains or simply undertaking a small errand. Pupils benefit greatly from the excellent relationships in the school and from the real 'family' atmosphere. Pupils gain an increasing knowledge of public institutions and services in England.
- 2.10 Pupils have a keen awareness of other cultures and they celebrate cultural diversity. They make the school a welcoming community to those from other faiths.
- 2.11 The welfare, health and safety of pupils are very well looked after. Pastoral care is outstanding and pupils flourish in the environment of care and respect provided for them. Older pupils take every opportunity to help younger ones and those in Year 7 are keen to reassure Year 6 pupils that the senior school is a friendly place. Pupils

feel safe, respected and valued. Rewards and sanctions are well understood and pupils appreciate the 'star' system and credit marks.

- 2.12 Staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding pupils and in first aid. Fire precaution, safeguarding and recruitment policies are well maintained, and all registers are appropriately kept. The school has a three-year access policy for pupils with disabilities. The pupils show they understand how to keep fit but although the quality and quantity of the school meals are generally adequate these do not necessarily provide sufficient choice to encourage healthy eating.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.13 Governance is excellent overall. The governors have a wide range of professional expertise and are totally committed to the school's success. Appropriate committees have been formed to monitor more efficiently the development of the school. A joint curriculum committee includes members of staff, as well as governors, enabling a clear and detailed understanding of what is happening in the school. Regular reports, received from the headmistress and the bursar, enable informed decisions about planning and resources. Governors maintain a clear oversight of pupils' welfare, health and safety, especially on child protection matters, with some taking an active part in courses relating to safe recruitment of staff and safeguarding of children. Governors are regularly found in school and support open days and other school functions, as well as celebrating the end of term with staff at Christmas and summer lunches.
- 2.14 Leadership and management are good at most levels. Areas for improvement in the Junior School have begun to be identified with regular monitoring of teaching and learning. The leadership vision is clearly set out and supported by governors. There has been a major restructuring of management posts to reflect the need for more efficient monitoring of both academic and pastoral matters and with a determination to drive improvement within the school. Appraisal and review are effectively used to identify professional development, with agendas and detailed minutes of meetings serving to focus review and development. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively by the leadership, for example to track pupils' progress. Leadership and management, and governors, have all been energetic in fulfilling virtually all of the 'next steps' required in the last report.
- 2.15 Comprehensive safeguarding arrangements are in place; due regard is paid to health and safety and all appropriate checks on staff and governors are made and recorded in a centralised register.
- 2.16 Although the grounds are limited, the main building, which is listed, is attractive and well used. The off-site facilities available for physical education (PE) and games are good and adequate resources support the overall achievement of pupils, with many teachers using ICT effectively.
- 2.17 Strong links exist between the school and parents from the EYFS upwards. The school is rightly proud of its achievements and these are valued by the parents. Current and prospective parents are provided with sufficient information and policies to meet regulatory requirements. All parents are welcomed into the school with an open door policy from EYFS upwards. The use of the pupil planner and 'parent mail' ensure effective communication. Detailed reports provide good information but some parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire commented that they would like

more information on pupil progress and the school is currently reviewing its arrangements.

- 2.18 The vast majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated strong support for the school and its achievements, and offered one hundred per cent support for the school's promotion of worthwhile attitudes and values. A small number expressed dissatisfaction with the help being given for pupils with LDD or those that are gifted and talented but the inspectors noted considerable evidence of good quality provision during the inspection and do not support that view. Some parents raised concerns about too much homework being set. Inspectors found that some pupils had as many as four subjects set on some nights and on those occasions the work load would be difficult for some pupils. A number of parents were dissatisfied with the range of sporting activities provided and inspectors agree. The inspectors considered the range to be satisfactory but there are too few opportunities for sporting activities. The pupils' pre-inspection questionnaire showed all respondents agree that the school helps them to learn. Nevertheless, a significant number of pupils believe that teachers do not always treat them equally. Given the school's outstanding pastoral care, together with the evidence noted both in and out of lessons, the inspection team does not agree.

3. ACTION POINTS

(i) 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 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 3.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Review the quality of teaching in the junior school, with a focus on the pace and challenge offered.
2. In the senior school review the homework timetable to ensure that it is balanced.
3. Widen the range of extra-curricular activities, particularly with regard to sporting provision.
4. Continue to investigate the possibilities for providing a designated outdoor play area for Reception, and enhance the provision of knowledge and understanding of the world by developing the use of the outside area.
5. Continue to develop links between Nursery and Reception to encourage sharing of good practice and facilitate the transition between these classes.
6. Increase opportunities for use of ICT in the Nursery.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

4.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.1 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is good with outstanding features, notably the caring and detailed pastoral support given to each child. The excellent knowledge of all aspects of each child's development by staff, and imaginative use of the accommodation, ensure that the aim of providing a positive and caring environment is fulfilled within a secure and welcoming family atmosphere. EYFS profiles show that children achieve well irrespective of gender or ethnicity, and results are used effectively to inform planning for the next stages. Strong links with parents and outside agencies help to provide a good start to children's education. The vision for the whole school includes proposals to extend the opportunities for outdoor experiences and to develop further links between Nursery and Reception.

4.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.2 Leadership and management of the setting are good with strong features. Regular review and the effective implementation of policies and procedures ensure that all children are safeguarded. Appointment checks ensure that adults are suitable to work with children. Staff meet regularly and flexibly respond to child-initiated activities, such as when there was concern that a doll was dirty and children were shown how to bath a baby. Staff benefit from regular training and support from outside agencies, and appraisal is being developed.
- 4.3 Good quality and carefully organised resources are used imaginatively to provide a range of experiences for all children. Parents are well informed of school activities and their support is reflected in the responses to the questionnaire. Use of the key person system and regular reports and meetings ensure that parents are kept informed of their children's progress. A group of parents waiting to collect their children spoke highly of the family atmosphere in the school and they appreciate the continuity of staff.

4.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.4 The quality of the provision is good with some outstanding features. There is a careful balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff know the children very well, greet each as an individual and have a brief discussion with them on arrival, so that the children are confident to share any concerns. Regular assessments record the progress of each child and are used to guide children to reach their potential in achieving the Early Learning Goals. Liaison between classes ensures that progress is maintained and provision for children's different learning needs can be planned. The Nursery has an outdoor area with provision for physical activities and purposeful play that is shared with Reception on Friday afternoons. The area includes a lily pond where frogs are carefully observed, photographed and recorded but is limited in what can be achieved to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. A range of toys and exciting role play areas provide opportunities for imaginative play and promote co-operation. Visitors to the school such as the fire brigade and outside visits to the Polka Theatre and London Zoo enrich the learning

experiences. Additional learning needs are identified and supported by outside agencies if required.

4.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.5 The outcomes for children are good. They make good progress in relation to their ability. They are enthusiastic and self-assured learners who are encouraged to work and organise themselves independently. Children in Reception move confidently from group discussions to written work and those with emerging reading skills are able to work with greater independence. Reading records are carefully maintained, and achievements in numeracy and literacy are recorded on the EYFS profile. The end-of-year profiles reflect the good progress made. This is reinforced by comments from moderation. Children are encouraged to behave in ways that are safe and repeated routines reinforce good hygiene practices. Those who have school lunch are encouraged to eat a balanced meal and water is readily available, but there is little choice available. ICT skills are beginning to develop well with pupils learning how to take photographs and record their experiences. They used the interactive white board confidently to sequence numbers one to five and chose objects beginning with the letter 's'. Nevertheless, the provision of ICT facilities in the classrooms is limited but children in Reception use the computer suite in the main school, where they were able to design and print patterns. Children enjoy their PE lessons and use climbing equipment confidently.

Section 3 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed a small sample of 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 Terry Fawell

Miss Patricia Griffin

Mr Stephen Jefferson

Mrs Gillian Bilbo

Reporting Inspector

Deputy Head, IAPS school

Director of ICT, GSA school

EYFS Co-ordinating Inspector