



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL

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**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL  
(ISC)**

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**INSPECTION OF**

**LEWES OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

**By the**

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE  
(ISI)**

**on**

**November 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

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**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## SUMMARY INSPECTION REPORT ON

### Lewes Old Grammar School

Full Name of the School	<b>Lewes Old Grammar School</b>		
DfES Number	<b>845 6032</b>		
Address	<b>140 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XS</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01273 472634</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01273 476948</b>		
E-mail Address	<b>bursar@logs.uk.com</b>		
Name of Headmaster	<b>Mr Robert Blewitt</b>		
Chairman of Governors	<b>Mr Roger Johnston</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 18 years</b>	Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Number of Pupils	<b>357</b>	Number of Boarders	<b>None</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2005</b>		

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 163(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, 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.

## **MAIN FINDINGS**

### **Overall Summary**

Lewes Old Grammar School is a small town-centre school offering good teaching in academic subjects to boys and girls aged 3 to 18. The school benefits from the dynamic leadership of the head, who carries heavy responsibility. Staff teach well and offer good pastoral care, so that pupils achieve test and examination results that are good in relation to their abilities. Equipment and facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) are very good, but the senior library does not yet provide sufficient support for teaching and learning. The rooms in which much teaching takes place are small, and the restricted nature of the school's two sites limits opportunities for pupils to congregate and play.

### **What the School Does Well**

The school benefits from strong leadership and the expertise of its staff.

- The head provides strong leadership, to which staff, pupils and parents respond positively
- The quality of teaching by well-qualified and experienced staff is good.
- The school has very good equipment and facilities for information and communication technology (ICT).
- Staff give very good pastoral care, which contributes to a growing feeling of community and pride in both sections of the school.
- The assessment and recording of pupils' academic performance is good in the Junior School and very good in the Senior School.
- The school has many constructive links with the local community.

### **What the School Should Do Better**

As the school has grown, responsibility for leadership and management in both the Junior and the Senior schools has not been widely and evenly distributed.

- The size and composition of the senior management team (SMT) inhibits its ability to support the head effectively.
- The school does not pay sufficient attention to the appraisal, professional development and training of staff, especially to ensure that they make the most of the very good provision for ICT.
- Staff in both sections of the school who teach the same subject do not have close links with each other.
- Despite recent extensions, the premises and accommodation are only just sufficient to meet the needs of an expanding school.
- The senior library does not provide sufficient support for teaching and learning, and pupils do not use it widely for reading and research.

### **Standards of Attainment and Progress in Subjects**

Pupils' attainment and progress in the Junior School and in the Senior School are good. The attainment of a significant minority of pupils, in the Senior School especially, is very good,

and the progress of a similar proportion is rapid. Pupils in both sections of the school achieve results in national tests and examinations that are good in relation to their abilities. They have good standards of literacy and good numerical ability; their computer skills are very good.

### **The Quality of Pupils' Learning, Attitudes and their Behaviour**

The quality of pupils' learning and behaviour is good. They are competent learners who are well motivated and respond positively in lessons. Many have a capacity for personal study. They have very good relationships with each other and with the staff. They show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Generally, they behave well, in class and around the school.

### **The Quality of Teaching**

The quality of teaching is good overall. In almost all lessons, teaching meets the needs of almost all pupils, including those who receive learning support tuition. Staff maintain good discipline, they display secure subject knowledge, they have clear objectives, and they set a variety of tasks that challenge and maintain pupils' interest. They use time and resources well.

### **Other Aspects of the School**

#### **Attendance**

The level of pupils' attendance is high, enabling them to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the school. The level of unauthorised absence is negligible. Most pupils arrive at school on time, but those who have far to travel are sometimes delayed by transport problems. Office staff check unexplained pupil absence efficiently.

#### **Assessment and Recording**

The assessment and recording of pupils' attainment, progress and special needs are good in the Junior School and very good in the Senior School. Staff monitor pupils' progress thoroughly and use this information to set targets for pupils, collectively and individually. Teachers in both parts of the school mark well.

#### **Curriculum**

The school provides a sound curriculum for pupils of all ages and abilities. A full range of subjects is taught. Many pupils in Years 10 and 11, however, do not have a balanced science programme. Most subjects follow comprehensive schemes of work, although curricular planning varies considerably, especially in the Junior School. School activities and visits support the timetabled curriculum adequately.

#### **Teaching and Non-teaching Staff**

The overall quality of the teaching and non-teaching staff is good. Staff are sufficient in number, qualifications and experience. They make a strong contribution to the quality of education provided and the educational standards achieved. Staffing ratios are very good and most staff are well deployed. Policies and procedures for the induction, appraisal and professional development of the staff are in place, but have not yet been fully implemented.

### **Resources for Learning**

In general, the quality, quantity and organisation of resources for learning in the school are good. In both sections of the school, ICT provision is very good, although staff have not been trained to take full advantage of this. Most classes and subjects have adequate supplies of books and other teaching materials.

### **Libraries**

Library provision is sound overall. The Junior School library is good, but the Senior School library is unsatisfactory. The Senior School library has adequate stocks of fiction, but it has too few reference books to support the curriculum and to encourage private study. The library is often used as a classroom and senior pupils use it little for private study.

### **Premises and Accommodation**

The buildings, accommodation and other facilities are sound and suitable overall for the numbers, abilities, ages and genders of the pupils. They make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. They are, nonetheless, inadequate in some important respects. Very little of the school's accommodation is purpose-built. The Junior School hall is small and dark, and in many areas of the Senior School space is at a premium. Within these constraints, the school does well to teach the curriculum and to provide an effective learning environment.

### **Links with Parents and the Community**

Links with parents and the community are good overall. The school has a good partnership with parents, and it has very good links with the community, locally and further afield. The majority of parents support the school strongly, as they did in the questionnaire distributed in advance of the inspection. In turn, parents receive a good range of information from the school, which also sends detailed reports on pupils' progress. Many parents are involved in the life of the school, some through membership of the active parent-teacher association (PTA). The links with the community, which include strong support for local and national charities, greatly enrich pupils' personal development.

### **Pupils' Personal Development**

The school provides good opportunities by which pupils develop a system of spiritual beliefs and a moral code, as well as developing appropriately personally, socially and culturally. Staff promote the importance and self-worth of each pupil. Pupils learn about other cultures and they develop good relationships, with each other and with adults.

### **Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care and arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are good overall. The quality of pastoral care, including the school's tutorial systems and careers guidance, is very good. Pupils report that bullying is rare. The school has good procedures for pupil welfare and child protection. It takes appropriate and satisfactory measures to guard against fire, and to meet health and safety requirements.

### **Governance and Management**

The governance and management of the school are sound overall. Governance ensures the provision of adequate resources to enable staff to provide a good quality education for the pupils. The head gives a strong, dynamic lead. His senior management team, however, is large and not ideal for providing the initiative and additional leadership the school needs.

Middle management varies in quality. Not all subject co-ordinators and heads of department fully understand the role they need to play if the school is to develop its curriculum and its procedures for staff development.

### **Achievement and Quality in Activities**

Achievement and quality in the activities provided are sound for the ages, aptitudes and abilities of the pupils concerned. The quality of provision results in the appropriate personal development of pupils participating. In addition to the activities that take place within the timetable and the programme of games organised by PE staff, a good number of pupils attend voluntary meetings in the lunch break and a few remain for activities after school.

### **Progress Made by the School since its Last Inspection**

The school last had a full inspection in November 1998, when a previous head applied for accreditation to the Independent Schools Association (ISA). Inspectors reported that teaching and learning were sound, pastoral care was effective, and relationships were excellent. Nonetheless, they made 11 recommendations. In particular, the school should take steps to: maintain its buildings better, improve the match between teaching and staff qualifications, extend appraisal and in-service training (INSET), enhance the role of subject heads, and provide training for the senior management team, who were encouraged to adopt a "more interventionist approach". The head's application for accreditation was deferred. A follow-up inspection in January 2000 reported that in the previous 14 months the school had made a determined effort to meet many of these recommendations. In 2001, the same headmaster successfully applied for membership of ISA.

In the five years since then, the school has made sound progress towards meeting several, but not all, of these recommendations. The present head has done well, despite obvious constraints, to improve the premises and accommodation, although these remain only just adequate for expanding numbers in both sections of the school. He and his predecessor have been able to strengthen the staff and to extend INSET. The SMT, however, remains as large as it was, and in some respects does not intervene to take responsibility in support of the head, who continues to carry a heavy burden. Staff appraisal has yet to be implemented.

### **Compliance with the Regulations for Registration**

DfES Standard		Does the school meet the regulatory requirements?
1. Quality of education:	1.(2) Curriculum	Yes
	1.(3)-(5) Teaching	Yes
2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils		Yes
3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils		Yes
4. Suitability of proprietors and staff		Yes
5. Premises and accommodation		Yes
6. Provision of information		Yes
7. Manner in which complaints are to be handled		Yes

### **Actions Required for Compliance with the Regulatory Requirements**

No action is required.

In addition to the actions set out above, the school is asked to address any issues highlighted in *What the School Should Do Better*. These are set out as recommendations for the school in Section 2 of the report.