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2 March 2018

Mrs Jane Cooper
Chief Inspector
School Inspection Service
The Clock Tower, 5 Farleigh Court
Old Weston Road
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Bristol BS48 1UR

Amanda Spielman
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector

Dear Mrs. Cooper

Annual report on the quality of inspection work by the School Inspection Service in the academic year 2016/17

Please find enclosed a copy of the 2016/17 annual report of the School Inspection Service, which I have today sent to the Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon. Damian Hinds MP. The annual report will also be published on Ofsted's website. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your professionalism during the year.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Spielman

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Her Majesty's Chief Inspector

2 March 2018

The Rt Hon. Damian Hinds MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Dear Damian,

Annual report on the quality of inspection work by the School Inspection Service in the academic year 2016/17

I have pleasure in presenting my annual report on the quality of the inspection work carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS). The report will be published on Ofsted's website.

During 2016/17, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned Ofsted to monitor two SIS inspections and to review two SIS inspection reports. The on-site monitoring could not be scheduled in 2016/17 because the commission was received from the DfE too late in the academic year, so was deferred to 2017/18. Ofsted's role this year has therefore been limited to the evaluation of two inspection reports.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Spielman

Amanda Spielman
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector

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Introduction

The School Inspection Service (SIS) is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to inspect selected registered independent schools that are members of:

- the Focus Learning Trust
- the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship
- the Cognita Group, where its schools do not belong to an Independent Schools Council Association.

Under section 107(1) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) has a duty to prepare and send a report to the Secretary of State about the inspectorates for independent schools, at intervals of no more than a year. Under section 107(2), HMCI must have regard to matters that the Secretary of State may direct about the form and contents of the report.

The Secretary of State's directions to HMCI are set out in Annex A of the 'Memorandum of understanding for Ofsted's monitoring of the independent inspectorates for independent schools in England' (internal, June 2016).

The School Inspection Service's inspection activity for 2016/17

SIS carried out 23 standard inspections during the academic year 2016/17.

Ofsted's monitoring of the School Inspection Service in 2016/17

Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) reviewed two published inspection reports. The DfE also commissioned Ofsted to monitor two inspections on site, but monitoring visits could not be scheduled because the commission was received from the DfE late in the academic year and there were too few remaining inspections from which to select.

Findings

- The two inspection reports closely follow the inspectorate's guidance.
- Both reports contain detailed summaries of the main findings of the inspection, including the school's strengths and the areas of the provision that require improvement.
- The recommendations for improvement in each report draw directly from the report summary. This was a recommendation in HMCI's annual report for 2015/16.
- The reports exemplify how the schools meet the independent school standards.

- Both reports provide detailed information about the schools' safeguarding procedures and how the schools care for pupils' welfare.
- The reports provide examples of how the schools prepare pupils for life in modern society. In particular, both provide detailed information on how effectively the schools promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Recommendations

Owing to the limited evidence from monitoring activity in 2016/17, Ofsted is not able to make any recommendation as to SIS's suitability for continued approval as an independent inspectorate.