

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

The Yehudi Menuhin School

Full Name of the School	The Yehudi Menuhin School
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Registered Charity Number	312010
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Chairman of Governors	Sir Alan Traill
Age Range	8 - 19
Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	1st to 4th October 2007

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 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 as amended with effect from January 2005 and May 2007.

The inspection was carried out in conjunction with Ofsted, Children's Directorate. The Ofsted report is available separately at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

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.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 The Yehudi Menuhin School was founded in 1963 by the world famous musician to provide tuition within a suitable environment for musically gifted children. He envisaged the school as “providing the environment for such pupils from all over the world to pursue their love of music, develop their musical potential and achieve standards of performance on stringed instruments and piano at the highest level”. The most significant change since the last inspection is the addition to the facilities of The Menuhin Hall, a very well equipped performance hall for concerts, seating 315.
- 1.2 The school places emphasis on providing an education which develops a pupil’s musical potential within an academic environment that supports and develops their social, emotional, aesthetic and physical needs. It aims to do so through intensive musical study which takes up roughly half a pupil’s working day, alongside an individually-planned academic programme combined with physical and aesthetic activities. The school is governed by a board of governors, who are trustees of the charity and are also directors of Yehudi Menuhin School Ltd.
- 1.3 The school moved to its present site in Stoke d’Abernon in 1964. It is set within spacious grounds, with a variety of buildings for academic teaching and musical activity. Most pupils are boarders, living in one of two boarding houses. Ten pupils whose homes are near enough are day pupils, but stay at school for the extended school day.
- 1.4 The school currently has 58 pupils aged 8 to 19 (32 girls and 26 boys), including four pupils who have stayed for a third year in the sixth form to complete their musical training. Entry to the school is solely by a three-stage audition process finishing with a rigorous three-day residential audition which seeks to assess musical ability and identify potential. Pupils enter the school at all ages except Years 11 and 13. Since each pupil has been selected from up to 200 applicants, the pupils regard selection itself as an achievement. Some academic tests are taken, but these are used to provide information on academic ability and do not determine whether or not a place is offered. The school does not use standardised tests as an indicator of academic ability: it considers that most pupils are of average academic ability or above, with some pupils well above average. If pupils are performing in line with their abilities, their results will be in line with or above the national average for all maintained schools.
- 1.5 Pupils come from all over the world. All those who are resident in the United Kingdom receive financial assistance under the government-funded Music and Dance Scheme, enabling pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds to enter the school. Just under a quarter of pupils come from families where English is not the principal language. Currently no pupil has a statement of special educational need. Almost all pupils proceed to further instrumental study at a conservatoire in the United Kingdom or abroad and almost all past pupils are in the music profession.

- 1.6 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 table.

School	NC name
D	Year 4
D	Year 5
D	Year 6
C1	Year 7
C2	Year 8
C3	Year 9
B1	Year 10
B2	Year 11
A1	Year 12
A2 (age 18) A3 (age 19)	Year 13

2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The Educational Experience Provided

- 2.1 The school provides an excellent range of educational opportunities very well suited to the interests, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, in music and in a wider sense. The education as a whole is fully consistent with the school's declared aims and philosophy.
- 2.2 The school is faithful to the ideals of its founder and aptly fulfils his aims of providing the environment for musically gifted children from all over the world to pursue their love of music, develop their musical potential and achieve standards of performance on string instruments and piano at the highest level. The ideals and ethos of the founder permeate the school. In the French room, a picture of Yehudi Menuhin - in fact, a French poster advertising his CDs - says, "*J'aime faire jouer les autres*" – "I love to enable others to play music." The school forms a model international community. An exceptional feature of the school is the way that the individual learning of a musical instrument to a very high level is integrated not just into a broad musical education but also into a wider general education. The pupils learn how to learn and are used to taking an active and independent part in extending their mastery of a musical instrument under expert tuition. This transfers to other subjects and activities, and a characteristic of the school is the high regard that everyone places on learning and aesthetic development. Thus on most days the pupils have individual lessons in their instruments and learn to strive for the very highest standards in all that they do.
- 2.3 The individual instrumental lesson (in two instruments) - together with the sedulous practice required - is the most important daily activity for the pupils and is at the heart of the school. The school has priorities quite different from most other schools: everything else is organised round the instrumental lessons. Nevertheless, the education as a whole gives pupils experience in, and contributes effectively to, linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative development, and makes provision for acquisition of skills of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. The non-musical subjects have to be fitted into a time that is less than in most schools, even allowing for the extended day of the boarding school. However, the school does this well with a sufficiently broad curriculum and enough time for the different subjects, bearing in mind that the numbers in groups are always small, rarely more than six. A very firm foundation is given in Years 4, 5 and 6. During these years, the basics are very thoroughly covered and pupils learn to enjoy learning for itself. Pupils normally take seven subjects at GCSE including mathematics, English language, English literature, science, a modern foreign language and, of course, music, and usually history. Languages are strong and French, German, Spanish and Japanese are taught for their own sake and also as practical necessities for those intending to move on to study abroad. Information communication technology (ICT) is not taught as a separate subject, but the facilities are good and teachers encourage pupils to use them relevantly.
- 2.4 Pupils' experiences are enriched by extra-curricular activities, links with the community, and provision for voluntary service and musical work experience; all things musical are very strong. Recreational activities are sparse although sporting activities are compulsory twice a week. The school is aware that the facilities could be improved and is addressing deficiencies by its well-developed plans for an indoor swimming pool and a fitness studio. Pupils have free access to the library each day, for study, or reading for pleasure.

- 2.5 Due attention is given to preparing pupils for the next stage of education, training or employment and for adult life; almost all pupils become professional musicians and the school prepares them for this excellently. Good connections with the music colleges and conservatoires are a help to the pupils. From the earliest age in the school, pupils are very well prepared to perform publicly. They do so with excellence in performance, but also with the highest standards of decorum and with confidence in their ability to appear in public.
- 2.6 The curriculum is very effectively planned, provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, and promotes participation in a wide range of activities and interests. The school meets the curricular requirements of all those pupils requiring special provision, including those for whom English is an additional language (EAL). The provision for these pupils is exceptionally strong and they are very well catered for not just with a general musical education but with a wide general education.
- 2.7 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

Pupils' Learning and Achievements

- 2.8 Pupils are outstandingly well educated considering their age, ability, need, and circumstances. They achieve excellent levels of knowledge, skills and critical and creative understanding in all their subjects, not just music, and learn to apply them most effectively.
- 2.9 In musical and other aesthetic activities such as art, their standards are high. In sport, the standards are not high but the school guards its pupils from the hurly-burly of certain sports such as rugby, hockey, and even cricket because of the risk to the hands. The numbers in any age group are rarely up to 11 and so team games have to be across the age groups and involve both girls and boys. The school has very few sports fixtures. Sports performances are not very competitive. Occasionally, the school plays football against another specialist music school.
- 2.10 Pupils are well grounded in knowledge, skill and understanding in the subjects and activities provided, can apply these and think and act critically and creatively at a high level in relation to them. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson on geometrical surfaces and vertices the pupils supplied examples of the different geometrical shapes, with enthusiasm, accuracy and imagination.
- 2.11 No significant differences exist in relative attainment between different groups of pupils, between subjects or curricular areas, except that all things musical are of a standard that is far beyond what is normally achieved by pupils of these ages. Pupils for whom English is an additional language reach a very high level of attainment, as evidenced by their results in external assessments. Such pupils are indistinguishable from others not just in their attainments, but in their daily life in the school. The pupils below Year 6 achieve very high standards in all their subjects giving them a very secure foundation for future work. They also experience the delight of learning and this carries on right through to the post-A-level year.
- 2.12 Pupils do well in national assessments. The national tests at age 14 and the A-level examinations have overall numbers that are too small for comparisons with maintained schools to be reliable. As might be expected, results in A-level music are excellent. The GCSE results, including those in the International GCSE examinations in history and mathematics, are well above the averages for all maintained schools. In music performance, the school does not use the normal music grading tests, regarding them as not suitable for its aims and objectives.

- 2.13 Throughout the school, pupils' achievement is outstanding, both in solo, ensemble and orchestral performances. Even pupils as young as eight years old can perform the most difficult musical works not just with a perfection of technique, but with a mature artistic interpretation way beyond their years.
- 2.14 In the wider life of the school pupils also achieve high standards, as evidenced by the standards of art on display and in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme in which eight pupils recently achieved the silver award and ten the bronze, a high proportion of the school. Pupils have also enjoyed success in such diverse fields as writing competitions (where prizes were gained by pupils for whom English is an additional language) and in the UK Maths Challenge, in which, last year, pupils in Year 8 achieved bronze, silver and gold awards.
- 2.15 Throughout the school, pupils' essential skills and attitudes for work and study are usually outstanding. They are exceptionally articulate, speaking with an easy and natural assurance that belies their ages. They converse well with each other, with teachers and with visitors. They speak clearly in formal and informal situations. They have great social adroitness. In lessons, they listen well to their teachers and to each other, they read intelligently and write fluently and effectively. They apply mathematics and mathematical concepts effectively, as seen in a Year 11 music lesson on the fugue where pupils could show clearly and accurately, using mathematical techniques, the progressions involved.
- 2.16 Where pupils are given the opportunity, they make effective use of ICT. However, their actual use is uneven since the requirement to use ICT is uneven. They are equipped with the skills required for word processing, data handling, communication and presentation, though most have not learned an organised and consistent system of keyboard fingering.
- 2.17 Pupils demonstrate that they are able to reason and argue cogently, and think for themselves. Frequently, in their individual instrumental lessons, they are required to provide and explain solutions, both in practical matters, such as when a pupil was asked to suggest better fingering for a passage of a piano piece by Fauré; and in matters of interpretation, as when a pupil was led to work out and justify a personal interpretation of a late Mozart piano concerto. The pupils display a keen intellectual eagerness to learn.
- 2.18 Throughout the school, building on the excellent grounding they receive in Years 4 to 6, pupils' work shows that they are able to take notes, study and organise their work independently. They can study and work effectively both on their own and co-operatively with others and in teams, as evidenced by the high level of support they give to each other in their various music groups.
- 2.19 In lessons and activities, pupils settle and apply themselves, and persevere in and enjoy their work. They are used to learning at a very high level in music and this carries across to their other subjects. Concentration levels are very high. They take a delight in their learning. They are very polite and have excellent manners in the classroom and tuition room and elsewhere.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- 2.20 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Strengths of the school are the quality of the relationships between pupils and staff and among the pupils themselves, and also the relations between pupils of different nationalities and backgrounds. All this is very much in accordance with the school's aims.
- 2.21 Pupils develop spiritually to a high degree in their self-knowledge, self-respect and self-confidence, and in relation to any personal faith, personal belief or observance. Through their confident approach, pupils illustrate both their own self-esteem but also a deep awareness of the rights and needs of others. A programme of personal, social and health education makes a sound contribution. The high quality relationships between pupils and their teachers enhance pupils' self-esteem and their self-confidence, as do the many opportunities they have to perform in front of a variety of audiences.
- 2.22 The school does not seek to inculcate religious beliefs or those of any faith. Morning Meetings (the school's name for its assemblies), which are non-denominational, are largely secular but have spiritual and moral elements, and have periods for reflection. Pupils who wish to do so are supported in attending places of worship of their choice. Pupils also have many opportunities to develop their spirituality through their music, through art and from their school environment, though little attention is given directly to metaphysics or the transcendental.
- 2.23 The school's strong ethos and the example set by staff enable pupils to develop morally, in their ability to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the law. Moral issues are debated within the curriculum: for example in a science lesson where pupils considered the ethics of stem cell research. The pupils understand not just the school rules but the reasons for them, since the rules are not peremptory. This is apparent with the attention given to the way that pupils dress. The school has no school uniform but a dress code to which all pupils, should, and do keep; and they look smart. Then, for internal concerts, the pupils have another dress code, requiring more rigorous standards. For full public concerts, each pupil is required to have the appropriate musician's wardrobe: black tie, or full evening dress. Thus the pupils show a sensitive understanding about dress. The pupils are also aware of deportment and demeanour: to stand and walk properly is something that they practise. At the school concerts, the pupils walk properly onto the platform, bow with decorum and introduce their pieces; then they play with rapt concentration. The whole performance demonstrates verve and *bravura*. The pupils call staff by their first names but this does not lead to any lack of respect. The school is an orderly community.
- 2.24 From the start of their time in the school, pupils develop a deep awareness of their social responsibilities. Older pupils mentor younger pupils and offer each other a high level of support, as seen in lessons and in the school concerts where the pupils make up a critical but very supportive audience. This message was seen being explicitly presented in a junior tutor time session when pupils were being encouraged to consider the nature and effects of bullying. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss important issues through the school council.
- 2.25 Pupils readily accept responsibility for their behaviour. They show high levels of initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life, acquiring a knowledge of public institutions and services in England. The daily musical life of the school gives the pupils much scope for developing self-discipline and for working with others.
- 2.26 The international nature of the school provides an environment where pupils naturally acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions. They relate very well to one

another, regardless of any cultural differences; cultural diversity is accepted as the norm. The curriculum also offers formal opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures, as do the many international visitors to the school and the overseas trips in which pupils participate. The school is a centre where pupils from all over the world live together and share their love of music. The exceptional quality of relationships within the school between the different cultures is testament to the school's ethos and to Yehudi Menuhin's vision of an international community living and working together in harmony.

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

The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)

- 2.28 The teaching throughout the school is always good and often excellent and it effectively enables pupils of all abilities, including those for whom English is an additional language, to acquire new knowledge, make good progress according to their ability, increase their understanding and develop well their skills. The last inspection praised the quality of teaching and this has been maintained and even improved. A strength of the school is the knowledge teachers have of individual pupils and the response they make to the individual's needs.
- 2.29 Teaching fosters in pupils the application of intellectual and creative effort, interest in and enjoyment of their work, and the ability to think and learn for themselves. The teachers encourage all pupils to contribute. This is helped by the small numbers in each teaching group. Teaching provides stimulus for intellectual activity. In a Year 8 French lesson, pupils were required to apply in a new situation previous knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. In history, the teaching ensures that pupils have a firm grasp of the context, significance and chronology of historical events. Lessons are good humoured.
- 2.30 Teaching employs effective teaching methods, suitable activities and wise management of class time. The teachers make every effort to involve and enthuse their pupils and this leads to a high level of interest and engagement from pupils. Teachers encourage pupils to put in maximum effort to each task, and pupils are then well motivated to work conscientiously: this was particularly noticeable in all instrumental lessons.
- 2.31 Teaching shows an exceptional understanding of the needs and prior attainments of pupils and this was especially well demonstrated in instrumental lessons and EAL. Because the teachers know the pupils so well, teaching at all levels is adroit in making subtle adjustments to the individual aptitudes and attainments of pupils. Teaching demonstrates excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught and this was apparent across the whole curriculum. Teachers are well-qualified specialists who show great enthusiasm for their subjects, particularly, but not exclusively, in music. This overall expertise leads to confident teaching aimed at the appropriately high level for the school's pupils. Almost all the modern foreign language teaching is carried out by native speakers of the language concerned.
- 2.32 Teaching is supported by a good quality, quantity and range of resources and generally good use is made of them. Occasionally unusual equipment for a subject was observed. For example, in one history lesson a microscope was used for showing the pupils what the tuberculosis bacillus looked like. Sometimes teachers make good use of ICT, as in the well-equipped music technology room which has many computers all with software to aid composition. Interactive white boards are used well in many rooms especially with the pupils in Years 4 and 6. The school has made improvement in the provision and use of ICT since the last inspection. ICT facilities are often used well in subjects such as mathematics,

- science and music, and with the pupils in Years 4 to 6. Nevertheless, the use of ICT is still uneven.
- 2.33 Teaching includes regular and thorough assessment of pupils' work. All subjects use end of term assessments and with subjects such as science good use is made of end of topic tests to chart pupils' progress. Every half term, the school formally reviews the progress of each pupil in each subject. Instrumental lessons use daily continuous assessment of pupils' progress. The teachers know their pupils exceptionally well and can thus monitor daily and on an individual basis the progress of each pupil. For example, the teacher of Years 4 to 6 keeps detailed daily records of pupil progress, including what books he or she has read.
- 2.34 Teaching encourages pupils to behave responsibly and with respect through the teachers' calm and measured approach. No unruly pupil behaviour was observed. Teachers insist on high standards and these are met. The teaching is well planned to keep pupils involved at all times. Often a great deal was put into the hour-long classroom lessons and the pupils were not allowed to stagnate. The teachers convey their delight in their subject and lessons have an air of shared enjoyment.
- 2.35 The school has in place good arrangements for pupils' performance to be evaluated by reference to the school's own aims, through concert performances, which are recorded, and evaluation of lessons, and also through GCSE and A-level examinations. The school has great expertise in selecting exceptionally gifted and talented pupils. Admission is based on a rigorous three-day residential audition programme. Thus as well as taking musical tests and auditions, the prospective pupils experience something of the life of the school and the school is able to judge whether it offers what any particular pupil needs. For those pupils for whom English is not the first language, very thorough testing identifies needs and is directly used to provide individual programmes. Regular performances at lunchtime and evening concerts aid evaluation.
- 2.36 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 The quality of pastoral care provided by staff at The Yehudi Menuhin School is outstanding and is in keeping with the aims of the school “to provide that care and understanding and that sense of security which is the essence of a supportive family”.
- 3.2 The staff provide excellent support and guidance for all pupils, who are able to speak freely to members of staff as and when the situation might demand. The staff know and understand the pastoral arrangements and the aims of the school state that “everyone in the community has a responsibility to care for and encourage each other, and we expect all staff, because of their concern for the pupils, to be involved in pastoral care”. Thus, though boarding staff are most important, all members of staff see themselves as having a pastoral responsibility. This is true of the individual instrumental tuition staff who by developing a close relationship with the individual pupil can, and do, offer help in various ways. Staff and pupils work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, creating a safe and caring environment.
- 3.3 The relationships between staff and pupils, among the pupils and within the staff body are excellent. Pupils are well known to staff and a mutual respect is very apparent when going around the school. Staff relate to their pupils extremely well and support their needs both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils feel comfortable and relaxed with their teachers and know they can turn to them at any time if they need to discuss any concerns or problems they may have. Praise and encouragement are given freely in lessons and outside. The school has a definite “family feel”, emphasised by the tiny numbers: pupils are rarely in a group of more than six. Peer support is very good and was especially noticed at the lunchtime concert given during the inspection. Older pupils mentor younger ones. Teachers and pupils are jointly aware that the school has aesthetically pleasing buildings, well-kept grounds and a fine environment. Pupils and staff care for their environment so that neither graffiti nor litter is seen. The pupils keep the school rule that forbids the picking of flowers.
- 3.4 Measures to promote good discipline and behaviour, including procedures to guard against harassment and bullying, are very effective and deal constructively with unacceptable behaviour when it occurs. Pupils respond positively to the success of their peers, as seen most evidently in the applause given to soloists in concerts, and are genuinely supportive and helpful to each other.
- 3.5 The provision for pupils’ health and safety is highly effective, with all staff receiving appropriate training. Safe recruitment procedures are undertaken and all necessary checks are made on staff who have contact with children. All necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards are being taken. A professionally undertaken fire risk assessment has been carried out. Fire fighting equipment and alarms are regularly checked by outside agencies and all staff are familiar with fire drill procedure. Fire practices take place on a regular basis and are appropriately recorded. Fire and emergency exits are clearly marked with all classrooms displaying fire drill procedures.
- 3.6 Arrangements to ensure health and safety are effective and the school has due regard for the health and safety requirements. Care of sick children, boarders and day pupils, is well provided for. The sick bay is staffed by a matron, who is a qualified nurse and has assistance. First aid arrangements are satisfactory following a sound policy. Most of the staff are first aiders. The school maintains its attendance registers efficiently. School meals are nutritious and meals are a pleasant, social experience. The pupils have excellent table

manners and see conversation at the table as a part of civilized living. A very small number of pupils, in their questionnaires and in conversation with inspectors, found fault with the food but the inspectors do not believe that this is justified. The cuisine is international, in line with the ethos of the school and the choice offered is wide ranging and in line with current ideas for healthy eating.

- 3.7 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

- 3.8 The school has developed a strong partnership with parents and very interesting and worthwhile links with the wider community. Parents are very pleased with the education and support provided for their children in musical and in other matters. In a questionnaire sent out to all parents 38 replied. Their responses indicated that they were largely happy with all aspects of the school. They professed strong support for the education provided by the school, with an overwhelming majority of positive comments. Especially noteworthy was the immensely strong support for the school's attitudes and values, for the teaching, for the curriculum, for the pastoral care and the provision and support for boarders. Inspectors endorse these positive views.
- 3.9 The involvement of the parents in the activities undertaken by their children and in their work and progress is limited since so many live abroad or at some distance from the school. However, they are welcome at all public concerts.
- 3.10 Parents are provided with good information about the school and their children's progress and receive helpful and informative reports three times a year. In addition the parents have an opportunity to attend parents' evenings on an annual basis. Pupils are encouraged to keep in touch with their parents daily by email. The school has an effective and proper complaints procedure. In recent years this has rarely gone beyond the informal stage and the school has handled complaints in accordance with the procedures in place at the time.
- 3.11 The school promotes excellent contacts with the wider community. It sees itself as having a duty to help to spread the love, appreciation of and participation in music to the local and, indeed, international community. The school confers considerable public benefit, not just by providing a high standard of education for its pupils and so giving more music to the world, but by specific links and other ways of beneficial involvement with the community.
- 3.12 Many of these are through the school's outstanding "Outreach" programme. The school has appointed a person specifically to manage and promote this. Activities include "inreach" where the public is encouraged to come into the school to use its facilities and work with pupils. During the inspection week, pupils were rehearsing for a concert where they would provide the orchestral accompaniment for Vivaldi's *Gloria*, while an immense choir made up of members of the public would join them, the whole under the baton of the director of music. This was part of the national "Voices for Hospices" campaign. Also, the school takes part in the "Right to Music" initiative which allows pupils to perform with professional musicians (this year with the London Mozart Players) and to give recitals and public concerts to over 1,400 people aged from 5 to 90. The composing strand allows local school pupils to attend workshops at the school on composing. These pupils from other schools can return to the school later in the year and perform their pieces in the magnificent Menuhin Hall where they are recorded and can be used for part of their coursework. Another strand is the "Music Hub" wherein music departments from local maintained schools meet and discuss ways of helping each other. Ideas planned include the "World Music Workshops" in which different kinds of music are studied. Pupils from the school go into local maintained schools and give

masterclasses. A mums' and toddlers' group uses the school twice a week. The school is important to the local community and the facilities, especially the Menuhin Hall, are readily available for the communities' use.

- 3.13 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].

The Quality of Boarding Education

- 3.14 The quality of the boarding experience excellently supports the pupils' education and development. The relationships between pupils and house staff are outstanding - positive and supportive. Pupils say that the staff are friendly and approachable. The relations among the pupils themselves are also very good. Pupils of all ages interact in a very positive way. As in the whole life of the school, the boarding houses are communities of diversity with no discrimination. The boarding house and other staff organise social events for the pupils and help to create a family-like atmosphere where each pupil is known, valued and cared for. The two houses have good atmospheres and great care is taken of the pupils. The boarding staff are very aware of the risk of the potential pressures on the pupils and they take care to see that the pupils lead a normal childhood without neglecting to develop their exceptional musical talents. Staffing levels and staff training are good. All staff are actively involved in promoting the health and safety of the boarders. Good and open dialogue takes place between staff and pupils, with relationships based on mutual trust. The induction of new boarders is very good.
- 3.15 The school offers boarders an outstanding range of musical activities out of school time and at weekends and a satisfactory range of other activities. Pupils have full access to the school's excellent musical facilities and can use for practice the many fine pianos. House staff report that their biggest problem is to stop the pupils from practising too much. Activities other than musical ones are limited, especially purely recreational ones including sport to which the attitude is a perfunctory one. Many pupils are generally happy with the arrangements and appreciate their free time at the weekend to, "chill out, watch television and practise". However, in their questionnaires and in interviews, several pupils voiced a request for more recreational sport. The inspectors agree with this pupil voice. So, too, do the governors and staff of the school and plans are well advanced to provide an indoor swimming pool to replace the existing outdoor one, together with a fitness studio. Pupils at weekends are allowed into the local town and senior pupils, with sufficient safeguards, may even go in groups to London.
- 3.16 The boarding accommodation is adequate, secure and comfortable. It is very well maintained. Pupils say that they feel safe. Pupils have a sufficient degree of privacy and the school is working to phase out the sharing of rooms by three pupils, though this practice is mitigated by the active involvement of pupils in allocating rooms.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Quality of Governance

- 4.1 The governing body helps in an excellent way to set and secure appropriate aims and values for the school and provides very effective oversight and guidance. The structure and management arrangements related to the governing body are well defined and support careful oversight of the school. Through useful sub-committees, the governors plan the strategy of the school and support the headmaster in his running of it. The governors have a wide, and helpful range of background and interests, a number of them at very high levels. They are committed and take a long-term interest. The chairman of governors and headmaster have an excellent relationship based on trust and respect.
- 4.2 The governing body is well aware of its responsibilities and is appropriately involved in educational development and financial planning, strategies to ensure effective educational provision, and investment in people material resources. The governors are constantly striving to provide the school with resources and facilities, the most obvious recent example being the Menuhin Hall and the planned additional buildings. The governing body exercises properly its oversight of duty and care in such matters as child protection and health and safety. They guard the ideals and aims of the founder and support the headmaster and staff in maintaining those ideals and aims. For example, all are determined that despite the most intense pressure on places, the school shall remain a small one with a family atmosphere.
- 4.3 The governing body has a good insight into the working of the school and provides advice, support and stimulus for growth and improvement. The school has a functional development plan.

The Quality of Leadership and Management

- 4.4 The quality of leadership and management by the headmaster and others with delegated responsibilities is excellent. Clear educational direction and leadership are provided by those with management responsibilities, as reflected in the quality of education, the care of pupils, and the fulfilment of the school's aims and ethos; this is a school which knows what it is about. The headmaster gives leadership of the very highest order. He sets an example and is largely responsible for the school's outstanding ethos and the tone which pervades all that the school does.
- 4.5 Those with management responsibilities are effective in analysing the school's needs, setting priorities, planning to meet those priorities, and putting decisions into practice. The director of music, number two in the management hierarchy, is directly responsible for all things musical - performance and teaching both individual and overall. He fulfils this role with efficiency and style and always shows his commitment to the values of the school. The last inspection report recommended the extension of the senior management team and this has been done by the addition of a director of studies. At the time of the inspection, the person appointed had been in post for only a matter of weeks. The leadership of the boarding houses is very effective and plays a large part in the excellent relationships that appertain.
- 4.6 Management at all levels is successful in drawing up and implementing appropriate procedures and policies and in checking and reviewing their effectiveness. It secures, supports, develops and motivates sufficient high quality staff: teachers appreciate the extraordinary nature of the school and many stay for a long time. Finances are well managed to secure appropriate resources, in support of educational aims, and to meet the needs of the

school's pupils. The bursar exercises very effective stewardship of the school's finances and of the maintenance of the buildings and grounds.

- 4.7 The administration of the school is very efficient. The school office is at the heart of the day-to-day life of the school. The staff are cheerful and helpful and very welcoming to visitors. The school environment is a particularly pleasant and appropriately aesthetic one. The estate manager is heavily involved and keeps the buildings in very good order. The ground staff maintain beautiful gardens. One pupil, when asked what she liked best about the school answered, "the trees."
- 4.8 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].

5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 The Yehudi Menuhin School provides an outstanding musical and all-round education to its exceptionally talented pupils. The school is faithful to the ideals of its founder and totally fulfils his lofty aims. The pastoral care of the pupils is excellent with outstanding relationships among the pupils themselves and between pupils and teachers. The pupils are exceptional in their well-developed musical talent and their ability to learn, but are also remarkably secure, well balanced and very pleasant. The school is also outstanding in the moral, spiritual, cultural and social development of its pupils, and provides a model of an international community. All this is achieved by excellent leadership and teaching. The school has no serious weakness but there is some lack of provision for recreational activities, especially sports.
- 5.2 The report of the last ISI inspection in 2001, said that the school lacked a suitable hall for performance. This is no longer true as the school now has in The Menuhin Hall a magnificent auditorium to do justice to the very high standard of performance achieved by its pupils. The school has also improved its assessment and recording since the last inspection and its initial assessments in particular are a model of how to assess very talented pupils including those for whom English is an additional language. The school has implemented a recommendation from the last report to extend the senior management team. The last report also mentioned that although the facilities for ICT were good, full use was not made of them. Improvement has certainly been made but the use of ICT is still not universally effective, as the school is aware. The facilities and opportunities for sports and games are limited but there are plans to remedy this.
- 5.3 The school meets all the regulatory requirements.

Next Steps

- 5.4 The school has no major weaknesses but it should give attention to the following so that its high standards are raised even further:
1. extend the facilities and opportunities for sport and games - the school is aware of this and is addressing it through a well-developed plan for, among other items, a new indoor swimming pool and fitness studio;
 2. review the use of ICT for pupils' learning across the curriculum to enable more efficient use.
- 5.5 No action in respect of regulatory requirements is required.

6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

6.1 The inspection was carried out from 1st to 4th October 2007. 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 Morning meetings (assemblies). Inspectors visited boarding houses and the sick bay. 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.

6.2 National Minimum Boarding Standards were inspected by an Ofsted inspector over two days.

List of Inspectors

Mr Eric Hester	Reporting Inspector.
Mr Geoffrey Hill	Director of Music, HMC school.
Mr Robin Humphreys-Jones	Head of Department and Head of Year, HMC school.
Mrs Jean Marsland	Headmistress, GSA school.