



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BRIGHTON AND HOVE HIGH SCHOOL GDST

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Brighton and Hove High School GDST

Full Name of School	Brighton and Hove High School GDST		
DfE Number	846/6014		
Registered Charity Number	306983		
Address	Brighton and Hove High School GDST Montpelier Road Brighton East Sussex BN1 3AT		
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Email Address	enquiries@bhhs.gdst.net		
Head	Mrs Lorna Duggleby		
Chair of Governors	Ms Juliet Smith		
Age Range	3 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	662		
Gender of Pupils	Girls		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 194
	3-5 (EYFS):	39	11-18: 429
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	662	
EYFS Gender	Girls		
Inspection dates	18 Jan 2011 to 19 Jan 2011 16 Feb 2011 to 18 Feb 2011		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. The inspection 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 February 2007.

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 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 Standards 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 Brighton and Hove High School, one of twenty-six schools owned by the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST), is an independent day school for girls aged three to eighteen. It is governed by the Council of the GDST and, in addition, has a local governing body.
- 1.2 It seeks principally to provide a high quality, broadly based education, a happy stimulating and safe environment, and a strong pastoral system with emphasis on the individual and on social responsibility. It aims to generate hard work, enthusiasm, self-confidence and commitment so that each individual can fulfil her potential.
- 1.3 Established in 1876, the senior school continues to occupy an early-nineteenth century building in a conservation area of central Brighton. The junior school is situated a mile away in a residential area of Hove. The junior school houses the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) within its own wing with adjacent play area for girls aged three to four. Pupils in Years 12 and 13 are accommodated in a separate building, the sixth-form centre, on the senior school site.
- 1.4 Since the school was previously inspected in February 2007 there have been several major changes. The head of senior school, who has overall responsibility for the whole school, took up her post in January 2010. She appointed a new head of junior school who started at the school in January 2011.
- 1.5 The number of pupils on roll is 662. Almost a third, aged from 3 to 11, are in the junior school which comprises: 39 in the EYFS, and 194 in Years 1 to 6. Senior school girls, aged 11 to 18, number 429, of whom 66 are in Years 12 and 13.
- 1.6 The ability profile of pupils in the junior school is slightly above the national average, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented. The ability profile of the senior school, and in the sixth-form, is above the national average with most pupils having an ability that is at least above average.
- 1.7 One pupil has a statement of special education need and is funded by the local authority. In addition, the school has identified sixty-two pupils as having a learning difficulty or disability (LDD). No pupil has English as an additional language, although some are bilingual. The ethnicity of pupils is predominantly white British, but pupils from other backgrounds are also represented. The pupils' home backgrounds are predominantly professional.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its aims to provide a high quality, broadly based education for girls in a happy, stimulating and safe environment, supported by a strong pastoral system. From the EYFS onwards pupils of all ages and abilities show good achievement in both curricular work and extra-curricular activities such as dance, music, drama, and netball. The standard of artwork displayed around the school is exceptional in quality. Pupils throughout the school learn well. They are highly motivated, effective learners who enjoy their work. They focus fully in lessons and in tasks undertaken independently. They display proficiency in all subject skills and demonstrate good subject knowledge. Pupils from the EYFS to the sixth-form are articulate and express themselves with confidence. Teaching in both junior and senior schools is good, and sometimes, excellent. Pupils are inspired by their teachers to achieve success. In many subjects provision is made to extend the more able but this good practice is not extended to all areas. Assessment and marking are good in the junior school but marking requires greater consistency of approach in the senior school.
- 2.2 The quality of pastoral care is excellent. Pupils thrive in a happy, safe and caring environment which instils in them a feeling of self-worth. They are friendly, courteous and supportive of each other. They show respect towards others and the environment. Their level of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- 2.3 Exceptional governance and senior leadership and management secure the school's success in relation to its aims. Regular audits and monitoring ensure that the school complies with legal requirements. Rigorous self-evaluation informs development planning for continuous improvement. The recommendations of the previous inspection report have been implemented although the use of data to track pupil progress is not yet fully developed. Parents express strong support for the school and a high level of satisfaction with the education provided. They consider that the school promotes worthwhile values and achieves high standards of behaviour. A small number of parents said that they do not have sufficient opportunities to be involved in the school's life and work. Inspectors found that parents are offered a range of ways in which they can contribute to the school's activities. Pupils speak highly of the school and feel well cared for.

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 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

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

1. Embed the recently established procedures for the identification of gifted and talented pupils, and ensure that there is suitable provision in all areas that meets their needs.
2. Achieve greater consistency in marking in the senior school so that all pupils receive clear guidance in all subjects as to how to achieve the highest standards.
3. Develop further opportunities to enhance children's independent learning skills in the EYFS.

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 overall achievement of the pupils is good and they are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. Pupils of all ages develop good knowledge, understanding and skills, and express themselves clearly both orally and in writing. They produce extended pieces of writing using a wide range of vocabulary. Senior pupils were articulate when engaging in textual analysis in English. All pupils demonstrate well developed and, in some cases, excellent reasoning skills. Pupils throughout the school show good scientific knowledge and understanding and the ability to apply mathematical principles effectively. Junior and senior pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently to produce documents and charts. Senior pupils make good use of software in their presentations. Students of photography display excellent ability to use ICT to manipulate images. Pupils of all ages show highly developed creative skills as seen in art, dance, music and drama. Pupils in both junior and senior schools demonstrate good ball skills in games lessons.
- 3.2 Good achievement is shown in the wide range of activities outside lessons. For example, particular success has been demonstrated in sports such as netball, and in music examinations, maths challenges, Young Enterprise and poetry competitions. The junior school has been awarded an Eco Green Flag award. An impressive number of senior students gain the St John Ambulance first-aid certificate. Most pupils proceed from Year 6 into the senior school. Year 11 pupils mostly continue into the sixth-form. The great majority Year 13 leavers are successful in gaining places at higher education institutions of their choice.
- 3.3 The following analyses use the national data for the years 2007 to 2009. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. In national tests at the age of eleven pupils perform far above the national average for maintained primary schools. Their results are high in relation to their abilities, indicating that their progress to the age of eleven is exceptional when compared to the average for pupils of similar ability.
- 3.4 Results in GCSE have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and similar to that for girls in maintained selective schools. These results are good in relation to the pupils' abilities, indicating that their progress in Years 7 to 11 is above the average for pupils of similar ability. The GCSE results in 2010 were the best ever for the school, with a high proportion of grades at A* or A.
- 3.5 Results at A level have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and in maintained selective schools. The majority of the grades awarded in 2010 were at A* or A and were also the best ever in the school. In the absence of ability profile data in the sixth-form, progress was judged, in the light of the evidence available, to be good. Achievement has improved in many areas since the previous inspection. High standards have been achieved in new creative courses such as dance at GCSE and A level.
- 3.6 Much of this good achievement and progress results from the excellent attitudes to learning shown by girls throughout the school. Pupils settle quickly to their studies and apply themselves wholeheartedly, working with the teachers to make the most of their lessons. They participate well, listen attentively and work co-operatively

when necessary. They are conscientious and well-organised and the standard of presentation of their work is high. They are articulate and can reason and discuss effectively. They show a mature self-confidence and speak with pride of the school and their teachers. Their enthusiasm and sense of enjoyment is palpable; indeed, girls interviewed unanimously declared that they were excited each day about going to school.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good, with many excellent features; the range of extra-curricular opportunities is outstanding. The school provides a curriculum in both the junior and senior schools that supports its aims and has a positive effect on pupils' achievements and their personal development.
- 3.8 The curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. The introduction of the EYFS has created a positive platform for independent learning throughout the school. The "Creative Curriculum" in the junior school, based on a thematic approach, is excellent and has been successful in enhancing standards and pupils' educational experience. In the senior school there is a broad core curriculum, enhanced by distinctive features such as separate sciences and a good choice of modern languages as well as Latin. Option blocks are based around pupil choices and there is an excellent range of choices at A level. There are many opportunities to use and develop ICT skills at all ages.
- 3.9 Pupils with LDD are identified well in both the junior and senior schools and are given suitable educational plans, which are monitored and communicated to staff. The school's provision for pupils who are gifted and talented is limited at present, although plans are in hand to improve matters.
- 3.10 There is a comprehensive programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) throughout the school which focuses on the development of pupils as individuals, and includes good provision for citizenship, health-related issues, relationships, safeguarding, study skills and financial awareness. Formal careers education begins in Year 9, although Year 6 pupils are introduced to aspects such as writing letters of application. Pupils are provided with effective guidance when selecting GCSE and A level options and with their higher education applications. Events such as the biennial careers fair are successful in preparing pupils for the next stage of their education.
- 3.11 At every stage, the curriculum is enriched by an extensive range of high quality extra-curricular activities and links with the community. Levels of attendance are good and all members of staff are involved in running these activities. In the senior school, sport, music and drama all feature prominently, with an extensive programme of matches, concerts and plays, some of which are organised around the house system. Other activities include debating, politics, gardening, a range of clubs linked to other academic subjects, as well as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and Young Enterprise. Senior school pupils comment favourably on the opportunities for residential trips each year. World Challenge expeditions provide adventure as well as excellent opportunities for team building in unfamiliar environments.

- 3.12 Pupils contribute in many ways to their school and local communities, as well as those further afield. The school has an excellent tradition of fundraising dating back to the 19th century when the guild for social services was set up. Its existence continues through the Guild. A school charity is chosen annually and various events are organised by forms throughout the year. The sixth-form pupils organise a very successful fashion show for charity and senior citizens are invited for an enjoyable tea at Christmas. The connection with a school in Afghanistan provides an excellent opportunity for girls to communicate with, and offer support to, Afghan pupils through their fundraising.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 Teaching is good overall across the school; some is excellent. It is appropriate to the needs of the pupils, enabling real progress to be made in keeping with the school's principal aim to provide a high quality and stimulating education.
- 3.14 In the junior school the teaching is focused, lively and imaginative. Well-planned lessons are challenging, vibrant and engaging for all pupils. The needs of those with LDD are carefully met ensuring that opportunities for learning are universal. The extent of opportunities offered for independent learning is impressive. Target setting and pupil self-evaluation are excellent, allowing effective monitoring of progress. The quality of marking is high with thorough assessment and constructive feedback. Teachers use assessment effectively to plan future learning to suit individual needs.
- 3.15 In the senior school the teaching is well-planned with clear objectives and a good variety of activities. Effective use of the question and answer technique was seen in Latin where pupils developed their understanding of the imperative, and in English, where pupils were encouraged to think independently about the texts studied. Students are given the opportunity to work together co-operatively and productively in oral activities in modern foreign languages to increase fluency. Well chosen tasks and project topics give pupils scope to develop creative ability and initiative in technology, music, art, and drama. Lessons are clearly directed and well-paced.
- 3.16 Teachers have good subject knowledge. Subject material is delivered in a way that is readily understood. Pupils' questions are dealt with effectively. Teachers establish and maintain an excellent rapport with their pupils. Effective classroom management promotes excellent behaviour. Awareness of pupil needs assists the teachers in providing helpful individual support. This was evident in a mathematics lesson where the teacher responded well to individual difficulties and adapted the lesson accordingly. In many subjects, teachers provide helpful extension materials for high achieving pupils. However, this practice is not yet fully implemented in all subject areas. The school is aware of this and is planning improvements. Teachers deliver their subjects enthusiastically with the desire to inspire. Good and effective use of ICT serves to enhance this process. Teachers lose no opportunity to highlight or disseminate exemplary work by pupils.
- 3.17 Pupils' work and progress is regularly assessed. The quality of marking is good in the junior school, and satisfactory in the senior school, where standards of marking are inconsistent. In some senior departments, criteria for assessment are clear and teachers give specific guidance as to how to improve, whereas in others, assessment criteria are less evident and teachers do not always include advice or targets for improvement. The school is in the process of developing a common marking policy.

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. The school has created a warm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils grow up happily and form good friendships. Throughout the school, pupils are articulate, confident, courteous, friendly, supportive of each other, and show compassion to those less fortunate than themselves. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary and their punctuality to lessons is commendable. Pupils comment on the positive relationships they have with their teachers.
- 4.2 Spiritually, the pupils demonstrate a high level of development. They are confident young women who demonstrate strong self-esteem in their discussion with adults and their peers. They show great sensitivity to the needs of others in their involvement with charitable fundraising through the Guild and in their poetry and creative writing in religious education (RE). The outstanding artwork in evidence around the school is inspirational and reflects a heightened sense of spirituality.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. Junior school pupils' work shows strong ecological awareness and a clear understanding of issues such as fair trade and racial discrimination. Senior school pupils debate topics such as the role of conscience with a high level of moral and philosophical insight. In their study of the set text in English, Year 11 pupils show excellent moral awareness when discussing the conflict between good and evil. Pupils throughout the school have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and fairness.
- 4.4 Pupils develop very well socially. Through participation in house events and taking on positions of responsibility, they demonstrate leadership skills as well as the ability to work as effective team members, for example sixth-formers lead the training orchestra and coach sports through the Junior Sports Leaders Award. Year 10 pupils offer excellent support to younger girls through the Best Listeners of Brighton Scheme. In the junior school, Year 6 liaison pupils and "Magic Monitors" play an important part in the community. Pupils continue the strong tradition of fund-raising in the school through enthusiastic and well-planned events.
- 4.5 The cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. Drama, music, dance and art are strong and enrich the cultural development of the pupils involved. The calibre of performance is high; pupils participate in events both in school and outside, thus providing valued links with the local community. The art department's involvement in the Brighton Open House project is an invaluable opportunity for the local community to view the excellent work produced by pupils. Pupils show excellent insight into other cultures in their work in modern languages, RE and English where they analyse differences in cultural attitudes to dress or the role of women. They demonstrate sensitivity to cultural differences through their work with schools in India, Kenya and Afghanistan. In the senior assembly seen Year 9 pupils demonstrated awareness of different approaches to celebrating birthdays around the world.

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

- 4.6 Procedures to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent, and are in accordance with the school's aims. The excellent pastoral care noted at the previous inspection remains a key strength of the school.
- 4.7 Teachers know their pupils very well and work together to provide outstanding pastoral care which successfully meets the individual needs of the pupils. All pupils feel there is someone to whom they can turn if they have concerns. The junior school thoughts and feelings books allow the younger pupils to express any worries in a private manner and are an outstanding feature of the welfare provision. Relationships between teachers and pupils and between the pupils themselves are excellent. Pupils of all ages told inspectors they enjoy coming to school: they feel happy, safe and well cared for. They take great pride in their school and its beautiful environment and demonstrate a strong community spirit.
- 4.8 The school has secure and highly detailed safeguarding policies and effective procedures. All members of staff are trained regularly and those with designated responsibilities receive more specific training at least every two years.
- 4.9 The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour and dealing with any unacceptable conduct are highly efficient. Pupils show respect, kindness and care for each other both in and out of lessons. The school has a clear policy to prevent bullying which ensures pupils know what to do should any incidents occur. Information is readily available and prominent around the school. Pupils say that bullying, including cyber bullying, is rare and any incidents are addressed promptly and resolved effectively if necessary.
- 4.10 The school takes seriously its responsibilities for health and safety. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Risk assessments are comprehensive and thorough. Fire practices are held regularly. Health and safety audits of the premises take place annually.
- 4.11 The school nurse, assisted by a sufficient number of first aiders, provides suitable care for those pupils who are ill or injured. The access plan for people with mobility or other disabilities is appropriate and demonstrates the school's commitment to continuous improvement to cater for likely need.
- 4.12 Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for welfare provision. In the senior school, they feel able to influence, through consultation, beneficial developments. In their questionnaire responses, some younger pupils in the senior school commented that they receive an excessive amount of homework. The inspection found the workload to be appropriate and that there was satisfactory monitoring in place.
- 4.13 Pupils learn how to lead a healthy lifestyle through a variety of activities particularly in PSHE, science, physical education (PE), and sport. Healthy eating is promoted through the curriculum and pupils enjoy a wide choice of nutritious and tasty food. The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored for the requisite period of time.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The governance of the school is excellent. The GDST, as proprietor, has developed highly effective systems for maintaining an oversight of the school to support it in meeting its aims of providing a high quality, broadly based education for girls in a happy, stimulating and safe environment together with a strong pastoral system. The GDST has devised a valuable programme of induction and training to ensure that both trustees and local governors are fully aware of their responsibilities, and suitably equipped to assist and monitor the school to good effect. Relationships between the local governors and the GDST are strong.
- 5.2 The GDST has developed centralised procedures which enable the school to establish worthwhile links between staff professional development and its development planning so that the school can continue to innovate and improve.
- 5.3 The local governing body has selected members representing a range of different skill areas whose expertise is beneficial to the school. They are kept well informed about key areas such as finance, safeguarding, health and safety and marketing by members of staff who report to them regularly. Their attendance at school functions is highly valued. Individual governors establish and maintain effective links with different areas of the school.
- 5.4 The GDST's fulfilment of its statutory role in monitoring welfare, health and safety and safeguarding is excellent. It provides the school with model policies and regular audits ensure full compliance with all requirements.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.5 Excellent leadership and management are evident at all levels throughout the school from the EYFS to the sixth-form, enabling the school to meet its aims with a high degree of success. Members of the senior leadership team, who meet regularly, work with drive and commitment to provide pupils with an educational experience and pastoral care of the highest quality. The new and dynamic leadership of the whole school, and of the junior school, has made an excellent start in identifying areas for improvement and changes are being implemented rapidly.
- 5.6 The school has developed self-evaluation procedures which enable it to have a realistic view of its strengths and weaknesses. These, in turn, are conducive to systematic development planning. Clear priorities for improvement are set, based on input from staff, parents and governors alongside the results of rigorous monitoring and review by members of the senior leadership team.
- 5.7 Recruitment procedures are exemplary, designed to ensure the safeguarding of pupils, and include all recommended arrangements for conducting and recording checks made on appointment. A strong emphasis is placed on the selection of high calibre staff. Induction of new staff includes appropriate training in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The professional development of staff is well managed and advantage is taken of the high quality training offered by the GDST.
- 5.8 The heads of year, in conjunction with the deputy and assistant heads, effectively oversee the welfare arrangements which are responsive to individual needs.

Members of the pastoral leadership team show outstanding commitment to the care of their pupils.

- 5.9 Monitoring by heads of department is effective in evaluating the school's work, and includes lesson observations, data analysis and review of pupils' work so as to constantly develop and improve teaching and progress.
- 5.10 The recommendations of the previous inspection report have been implemented, although best practice in the use of data to track pupil progress has not yet been fully adopted in all areas.

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

- 5.11 Throughout the school good relationships with parents are maintained. The school actively encourages parents to be involved in their children's education and in the life of the school.
- 5.12 In their responses to the questionnaire, completed before the inspection, parents indicated their overwhelming support for the school and expressed great satisfaction with the overall quality of the education and pastoral care provided for their children. They believe the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and values.
- 5.13 Communication with parents is good from the start with thorough and helpful information being provided for parents and prospective parents. Since the previous inspection the school has increased the avenues of communication with parents through the introduction of emails and informative weekly newsletters and, in the junior school, the parents' forum. A small minority of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the information they were given about their child's progress. However, inspectors found that arrangements to inform parents were most helpful, including the issuing of regular written reports which are detailed, informative and constructive, as well as parents' consultation evenings.
- 5.14 Parents have good opportunities to attend events, ranging from plays, matches and concerts to presentations on internet safety and a junior school 'maths for parents' evening. Parents contribute to career days in senior school, help in the junior school library and accompany outings. Those parents wishing to be more fully involved may do so through the active and committed parent teacher association which organises social events and raises funds for the school.
- 5.15 The school takes seriously any concerns. Complaints are rare and are handled correctly. Almost all parents consider that the school is good at listening to their concerns. They receive timely responses to questions and any issues are handled well in accordance with its published procedures. They express a high level of satisfaction with the governance and management of the school and are extremely pleased with the overall quality of the education which their children receive at the school.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

6.1 The overall effectiveness of the setting is outstanding. High priority is afforded to meeting the needs of each child in a nurturing and caring environment which promotes high levels of independence in learning and well-being. Staff members have a very positive approach to continued improvement. They actively seek the views of parents and children in order to improve provision. The EYFS is fully supported by the new head of junior school who has already identified key areas to address in the coming months.

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

6.2 The leadership and management of the setting are outstanding. Extremely positive relationships exist with parents who in discussion showed an appreciation and satisfaction with the provision and their children's progress. All records, policies and procedures necessary for the efficient management of the setting, for the promotion of equality and elimination of discrimination, and for ensuring the safety and safeguarding of the children are in place, and implemented well. Excellent relationships exist with external partners and staff work closely with the local authority in improving teaching and learning. The quality of self-evaluation is excellent and the recently appointed head of junior school has a clear vision for the setting and is consulting colleagues to ascertain their ideas and views. A willingness to refine and improve practice is demonstrated by the impact of staff training and the development of assessment and planning strategies and systems. The use of resources is generally effective and, in some instances, outstanding and creative in promoting learning.

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

6.3 The quality of provision is outstanding. Curriculum planning, geared to the needs of the unique child is of an exceptional quality. Observation and assessment are used very well to guide practice. There is an excellent balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities with a high priority given to learning through play both in and outdoors. Both Reception and Nursery have access to their own outdoor areas although essential building works prevented observation of the latter. However, it is evident from the continuous provision planning that outdoor learning is afforded the same emphasis as that of indoors. The school is rightly aware that some resources are dated and worn. The "cosy corner" is used well although on some occasions insufficient use is made of this area to develop fully children's independent learning. Children are taught about good health and hygiene and this is embedded in practice. Lunch and snack time are sociable occasions when good healthy food is provided. However, there are insufficient opportunities available for pupils to demonstrate choice and independence in serving food. Children's welfare is effectively promoted across the setting. A nurturing and caring staff team provides a safe and secure environment in which children are listened to and valued. The children themselves contribute to each other's welfare by their caring attitude and approach to one another.

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

- 6.4 The outcomes for children are outstanding. Children make very good progress in the Early Learning Goals from a wide range of starting points and capabilities. They are active, independent, creative and enthusiastic learners who are confident to make choices. They are articulate and engage effectively and competently in discussion with peers and adults. Children are keen to use their knowledge and skills to write and were fully involved in writing and illustrating their own books, The children were also observed applying their knowledge of number effectively in a range of practical tasks. They use computers confidently. Excellent relationships exist between staff and children. The children's opinions and ideas are valued and incorporated into the provision which impacts positively on well-being and personal development. Achievements and contributions at all levels are recognised. Children feel safe in this secure, caring environment. Healthy meals and snacks are enjoyed and children show an understanding of good hygiene and safety practices. Opportunities exist to develop an understanding of the benefits of physical activity through the routines of the setting. Children are very well behaved, friendly and kind and show respect for each other's differences.

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.

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 Christine Mannion Watson	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Carole Adler	Former Deputy Head, IAPS school
Mrs Caroline Bateson	Head, GSA school
Mr Nicholas Faux	Director of ICT, GSA school
Mr Michael Holder-Williams	Head, SHMIS school
Mrs Rosalynd Kamaryc	Head, GSA school
Mrs Susan Kwok	Head of Science, IAPS school
Mr Jim Turner	Head, IAPS school
Ms Jane Fraser Short	Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector