



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**DAVENIES SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Davenies School

Full Name of School	<b>Davenies School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>825/6004</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>313120</b>		
Address	<b>Davenies School Station Road Beaconsfield Buckinghamshire HP9 1AA</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01494 685400</b>		
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Email Address	<b>office@davenies.co.uk</b>		
Head	<b>Mr Craig Watson</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Scott Dodds</b>		
Age Range	<b>4 to 13</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>320</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys</b>		
Numbers by Age	4-5 (EYFS):	<b>40</b>	5-11: <b>192</b>
	11-13:	<b>88</b>	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>320</b>	
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Jennifer Rush</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Boys</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>09 Nov 2010 to 10 Nov 2010</b>		
	<b>06 Dec 2010 to 08 Dec 2010</b>		

## 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 November 2004.

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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 Davenies School is a day school for 320 boys from the ages of four to thirteen. Its main aim is to realise each boy's full potential through high expectations and by nurturing his talents. It strives to achieve this by providing a broad, stimulating and challenging curriculum both in and out of the classroom. It also seeks to create a school which is friendly, caring, safe yet purposeful, in which each boy is expected to be well-behaved, courteous and respectful, enabling each to strive for the common good.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1940 as a privately owned boys' boarding school, and became a charitable trust in 1962. The school is situated in the Buckinghamshire town of Beaconsfield. The original building was a farm house, around which buildings have been added, most significantly for the pre-preparatory department and sports and performing arts. The school is owned by the Beaconsfield Educational Trust, whose trustees govern the school. Since its previous inspection in November 2004, a new head and deputy head have been appointed, and a new chairman of governors has been elected. An all-weather surface and a playground for pupils in Years 3 and 4 have been installed, and a medical centre created. The new building, opening this summer, will provide space for dining, design and technology and a library. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is situated in the main school building and comprises two reception classes for children aged between four and five. The forty children on the roll in the EYFS attend on a full-time basis.
- 1.3 Pupils are admitted to the school after assessment for suitability, including academic testing of those aged above seven. The ability profile of the school, as indicated by standardised tests taken in Year 4, is above the national average. Pupils who leave at the age of eleven proceed to local, selective grammar schools; those pupils who leave at the age of thirteen attend a range of senior independent schools, both boarding and day, in the south-east of England. The majority of pupils are of white British origin, with a significant minority of other ethnicities. Most belong to families in professional occupations. Sixty-seven pupils have been identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), of whom twenty-nine receive learning support from the school. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs (SEN). Ten pupils are classified as having English as an additional language (EAL), of whom none currently requires or receives support.
- 1.4 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 Pupils are highly successful in their achievement and personal development. The school fulfils its aim of enabling each boy to develop his potential. Pupils achieve well across the curriculum and exceptionally well in extra-curricular activities. Standards are high and in advance of national expectations, particularly in core subjects. Pupils have responded positively to the increased use of information and communications technology (ICT) since the previous inspection, and the amount of homework is now appropriate to their age. Pupils' learning is supported by good quality teaching so that pupils of all abilities make good progress in relation to their ability profile, which is above the national average. However, many lessons do not begin punctually. Frequently lessons lack opportunities for independent learning or critical thinking. In response to the previous inspection the school has broadened its curriculum, devoting more time to the creative arts. At 11+ or at 13+ the vast majority of pupils achieve places through competitive entrance examinations to selective secondary schools.
- 2.2 Pupils develop into well-rounded personalities, and their personal development is excellent. Their welfare, health and safety are well provided for. Pupils' spiritual development is good and is seen clearly in their self-esteem and self-confidence. Their moral development is exceptional and they live according to a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils develop excellent social qualities. Pupils have an excellent understanding of their own and other cultures. The pastoral care offered to pupils is outstanding. Detailed personal attention is given by the form tutors supported by the pastoral team. The school effectively puts into practice its comprehensive policies for welfare, health and safety; all aspects of the school are thoroughly risk assessed. Risk assessments have been completed throughout the school.
- 2.3 The quality of governance, leadership and management, including links with parents, is good. The governors share with the staff a clear vision for the school. The governors' prudent husbandry of the school's finances has enabled it to improve steadily the quality of facilities. Management at all levels is energetic in advancing the boys' education and the quality of their personal development. Although the school failed to meet the regulations for the checking and recording of staff appointments, a robust system is now in place. The school maintains close relations with its parents, who have many opportunities to be involved in its work. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents and pupils indicated that they value highly the majority of aspects of the school, but some parents were critical of the information they received on their child's progress. Inspection evidence supports this view.

## **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 did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it was required to:

- ensure that the standards for checking the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors are met [Part 4 paragraph 19(2)(a) and (c) and paragraph 21(6)(a)(ii) and (6)(b)(i) under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors] and that the single central register is kept correctly [Part 4 paragraph 22(3)(b), (c), 4 and 6 under Single central register of appointments].

2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified all of the above shortcomings, as noted in the text of the report.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Provide more opportunities across the curriculum for independent learning and critical thinking.
2. Ensure that the timings of lessons allow pupils to benefit from the full time for teaching and learning.
3. Address the frequency of written reports to parents on the academic achievement and progress of the pupils.
4. Improve the arrangements in EYFS for the transfer of children to their parents at collection time.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills**

- 3.1 Pupils are exceptionally well educated in accordance with the school's aim of realising every boy's full potential through high expectations and the nurturing of his talents. Their knowledge, understanding and skill in curricular areas are good, and in extra-curricular activities outstanding. Pupils communicate very effectively both in speaking and writing; they listen carefully to others and they are particularly avid readers. When given the opportunity they generate their own independent ideas and think logically and imaginatively. Their art displays their creativity. Their prowess across a variety of physical activities is strong.
- 3.2 In recent years pupils have performed very successfully in competitive entrance exams to local grammar schools at 11+, with over three quarters of those entered achieving a pass. In recent years nearly all candidates at 13+ have been offered places at the senior school of their choice, on their performance in the Common Entrance examination. Pupils have won scholarships for music, art and sport as well as academic ability. Pupils have acquitted themselves creditably in national history competitions and in mathematics challenges. Pupils' levels of participation in school activities are very high, and the quality of their achievement is exceptional in activities ranging from cookery to chess, Cubs, Mandarin and cycling. Many older pupils rise to the challenge of the Davenies Award Scheme. The number of pupils and the level of their achievement in musical instrumental examinations, often with merit or distinction, is significant. The school orchestra and choirs perform for both internal and external audiences. Individuals have appeared in national orchestras, choirs, professional musicals and television productions. Almost every pupil takes part annually in a drama production. School teams and individuals perform at a very high standard across a wide range of sports, particularly rugby, football, swimming, athletics and cricket.
- 3.3 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. They make good progress in their studies. The pre-preparatory department provides a very thorough grounding for future work. Pupils follow a curriculum which is broad in subjects covered and high in the standards demanded, particularly in English, mathematics and science, history and geography. Inspection evidence, including observed performance in relation to national targets, confirms this judgement; pupils in Year 6 are reckoned to be working well ahead of national targets for their age.
- 3.4 This level of attainment as judged in relation to the school's ability profile and from the school's own standardised measures of progress, indicates that all pupils, including those with LDD, make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar above average ability. A particular feature is the progress made by pupils who join the school in Year 7. On leaving Davenies almost all pupils proceed to academically selective, independent or maintained senior schools. Pupils' learning is supported by good quality teaching which provides them with well-planned and carefully delivered lessons, although opportunities for open ended problem-solving and independent learning are infrequent. Pupils' attitudes to their work are most positive; they organise themselves well and enjoy their lessons. They study with



perseverance, using the school's resources well, and are effective learners individually or in groups.

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

- 3.5 The curriculum is good and much enriched by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, reflecting the school's aim of providing breadth, stimulation and challenge both in and out of the classroom. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has been further developed and an appropriate amount of time is now devoted to the performing arts, religious education and ICT across the age range. The personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme extends throughout the school and thinking skills have been introduced in Year 4. The physical education and games programme remains strongly represented on the timetable, and forms an important part of the pupils' education. Love of reading is encouraged throughout the school by daily practice. The introduction of a part-time librarian and a robust system for the monitoring of borrowing have increased the effectiveness of the library since the previous inspection.
- 3.6 The curriculum covers all the requisite areas of knowledge. In addition to national curriculum subjects, pupils study a modern foreign language, art, design, music and drama and, from Year 5, Latin. Pupils are given broad exposure to physical education in lessons, and an extensive games programme; up to the end of year five swimming is included. The curriculum has been thoughtfully designed with the age of the pupils in mind; particular emphasis is given in Year 1 through to Year 4 to the acquisition of skills in literacy and numeracy, including handwriting, while in the top two years it reflects the requirements of the Independent Schools Examination Board (ISEB) Common Entrance syllabus.
- 3.7 Pupils with LDD, including those with statements are enabled to access the curriculum effectively. They receive support through individual or small group tuition, and, additionally, for both literacy and numeracy in the classroom. The length of lessons has been chosen with the concentration span of boys in mind. However, there is no travelling time between lessons which frequently start late and then may overrun.
- 3.8 The curriculum is supported by an exceptional range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils have a wide selection from which to choose every day after school, totalling over fifty activities per week. The scope of these activities is ambitious, and boys respond to these opportunities by taking part with great enthusiasm, gaining considerable skills and experience. The activity programme in Years 7 and 8 is coordinated into the Davenies Award Scheme in which pupils complete modules across a range of disciplines to achieve the award. The leavers' programme for Year 8 is a series of challenging courses designed to enhance boys' development and prepare them for life in secondary school. These older pupils are imaginatively involved in their local community through working in a school for pupils with SEN and a residential home for the elderly. The curriculum is also enhanced by an extensive and imaginative programme of educational trips, including residential trips for pupils in Year 4 and above. A range of visitors inform the pupils about the opportunities of life beyond school.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.9 Good quality teaching effectively supports the school's aims of helping each boy to realise his potential. Teachers display a strong knowledge of their subject; they plan their lessons conscientiously, with realistic aims and objectives, taking into account the individual needs of their pupils. Resources are well used and help to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. Lesson time is used effectively but a significant number of those observed did not start on time because of the late arrival of pupils. Nearly all teachers manage their lessons to ensure that pupils of all abilities make appropriate progress. Lesson planning displays awareness of pupils with specific needs. In many lessons, however, pupils of all abilities did the same work rather than being provided with tasks matched to their abilities; this was confirmed by scrutiny of the pupils' books.
- 3.10 The best lessons challenged pupils to think for themselves, pursue their own lines of thought or produce their own solutions. In many lessons pupils were not challenged to take responsibility for their own learning, nor given sufficient opportunities to demonstrate original thinking. The school intranet has been developed as a source of information and educational exercises to support pupils' learning; its possibilities are increasingly appreciated by pupils. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' learning is challenged by days in which all work is focused on the interpretation of a particular theme. Similarly, pairs of year groups have been combined to encourage co-operative learning and problem-solving for a morning or a day to study a particular topic.
- 3.11 The work of the learning support department has been enhanced by an emphasis on the advantages of ICT for its pupils and the appointment of an additional support teacher specifically for mathematics. The school is conscious of the need to respond to the specific learning needs and styles of young males. Since the previous inspection the school has made great strides in the provision of resources for ICT, including interactive whiteboards. The application of ICT to support pupils' learning still varies considerably in its effectiveness across the curriculum. In the best lessons, it is used to excellent effect to promote learning but in others its benefits are not exploited.
- 3.12 The requirements of the homework policy reflect the age of the pupils, and increase in demands as they progress through the school. The school has addressed the criticisms of the previous report of too sharp an increase in the amount of homework expected in Year 5; however, expectations of volume increase in Years 7 and 8 in preparation for external examinations. Pupils' work is usually conscientiously corrected and graded, using systems that the pupils understand well and which help them to make progress. They are further encouraged by personal comments written by the head of the pre-preparatory department. Short-term target setting is used to guide further progress, especially in core subjects, and longer term targets are recorded in each pupil's school book. Pupils are assessed regularly across the curriculum and the results are used along with nationally standardised tests to monitor the progress of pupils and inform planning decisions.

## **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 pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and fulfils the school's aim of expecting every boy to be well-behaved, courteous and respectful, enabling pupils to live out the school motto, "Each striving for the common good." Pupils display good spiritual development; they use their confidence and self-esteem to form sensible and supportive relationships with their peers and staff alike. They are also conscious of their own position in the world and have an appreciation of lasting values. Pupils use the opportunity of residential trips from Year 4 upwards to increase their self-confidence and independence.
- 4.2 Pupils' moral sense is highly developed. Pupils in the pre-preparatory department know the six golden rules and delightfully demonstrate understanding of these when teaching their puppets, Barney and Betty, how to behave. The code of conduct which applies to older pupils was drawn up, with the boys' involvement, to be deliberately short and memorable. Boys behave well both in and out of class; they are polite and considerate to others. Pupils display good sportsmanship on the playing field and learn the importance of winning with grace and losing with dignity.
- 4.3 Pupils' social development is excellent and they are mature for their age. They are keen to accept responsibility, whether helping with the organisation of the younger boys' classrooms, or acting as Leaders, a category of senior pupil marked out for particular responsibility. Pupils are energetic in their involvement in school life in all its aspects; they contribute willingly to its initiatives, for example the setting up of an eco-committee. Senior boys are particularly proud of the leadership programme, which provides them with opportunities to learn about responsibility and working as a team. They are enthusiastic about completing the Davenies Award Scheme. Pupils contribute to the running and development of the school through the democratically elected school council. Boys show initiative in organising their own fundraising events for charity. Pupils show good awareness of current affairs during form time, which is generally used effectively for tutorial purposes.
- 4.4 Pupils display excellent cultural development. They are conscious of Christianity and other world faiths; they celebrate religious festivals with enjoyment. Whilst they have a pride in their own cultural tradition, they have gained a broad experience of other cultures and traditions in lessons, assemblies and travel. Year 5 pupils displayed a sensitive understanding of the functions of various parts of a mosque which they had visited. Pupils of all backgrounds mix happily and harmoniously within the school community. Responses from the pupil questionnaires indicated concerns with regard to fairness and favouritism. However, during the course of the inspection no evidence of this was found, and boys specifically said that their teachers were kind and fair.

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

- 4.5 The pastoral care of the pupils is excellent and the quality of their welfare, health and safety is good. In recent years, the school has reorganised its pastoral care system to ensure it now fulfils its aim to be friendly, caring, and safe yet purposeful. Pupils are quick to acknowledge the care provided by members of staff. All form teachers spend time with their classes daily to enable them to keep abreast of each pupil's personal development. Meetings of the pastoral committee, chaired by the deputy head and attended by the heads of schools and the matron, are held weekly

to discuss pupils. The progress of individual pupils is raised through a referral system, 'the pastoral desk', to which any teacher may contribute and careful decisions are then made on support and monitoring. Record-keeping is thorough and enables pupils' progress to be tracked.

- 4.6 Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and positive, giving pupils confidence to meet their educational challenges. Relationships between the pupils themselves are happy, active and gregarious. The school has very effective procedures for promoting good behaviour, based largely upon positive encouragement and reward but also with clearly understood sanctions. Severe sanctions rarely have to be applied, because pupils understand the need to obey the rules for living harmoniously in a community.
- 4.7 Whereas in the past the school failed to check thoroughly the appointment of its staff in accordance with the regulations, it now carries out all aspects of staff appointments and their record-keeping with diligence. The school uses its strong relationship with the local social services safeguarding team to support its training and monitor appropriately any individual pupils who may be at risk. All staff have been trained in child protection measures and those nominated as child protection officers have had inter-agency training.
- 4.8 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire; regulation notices and warnings are all in place and equipment is regularly tested. Relevant members of staff are trained in fire procedures and control and practice drills are regularly carried out. A thorough health and safety policy is implemented and regularly reviewed. All areas of the school, including those of particular risk, such as the swimming pool and practical classrooms, have been thoroughly risk assessed. The facilities and staffing for pupils who are sick or injured are of a very high standard and many staff hold first aid qualifications, including where relevant paediatric first aid. The school has an up-to-date plan to improve access for those with disabilities; it acted upon this as part of its latest building project. The school provides pupils with nutritious midday meals and healthy snacks at break. Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy eating and revel in the many opportunities to take physical exercise. The admission and attendance registers are properly drawn up and maintained. Both are now kept in electronic form and records are securely stored for the previous three years.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good and contributes effectively to the school fulfilling its aims for its pupils. Members of the board, many of whom are parents of current or former pupils, bring a range of professional expertise to the service of the school. New governors are provided with a mentor and familiarisation briefings. The board recognises the need for all governors to be trained for their roles and responsibilities. The full board meets every term; the three sub-committees time their meetings so that they may submit their proposals to the main board. The board is informed by a termly report from the headmaster and bursar on their areas of responsibility, which facilitates detailed discussion of all aspects of school life including finance. Presentations given by senior members of staff have provided further understanding.
- 5.2 The chairman and deputy chairman maintain close contact with the management of the school; school leaders feel well supported, yet appropriately and professionally challenged. The board is conscious of the need for all governors to have first-hand experience of the day-to-day running of the school to enable them to carry out their monitoring role effectively. School policies are reviewed or revised on a rolling three-year programme. Governors and management share a common vision for the school; both groups were involved in the writing of the school's new aims, ethos and mission statement and in drawing up the school development plan. All governors have received child protection training and two are trained in safer recruitment techniques to enable them to contribute to the appointment of staff. The board employs external consultants to ensure that health and safety policies and security procedures are maintained at a high standard. Failures to make the necessary checks on the suitability of staff appointed have been redressed. Recently, the governors have carried out their responsibilities for child protection vigorously; for example, they now receive a termly report on the efficiency of the school's safeguarding procedures from the child protection officer.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management**

- 5.3 The school's leadership and management are of good quality. The management structure and responsibilities are thoughtfully organised to ensure that they support the aims of the school. A broadly representative senior leadership team meets weekly, to maintain an effective overview of the school's work. The leadership team promotes a consensual style of management, which is reflected in the recently created wider management team, which many heads of department attend and to which any member of staff may contribute. This inclusive approach encourages staff commitment to the school to which they respond by giving their time and expertise generously. At all levels, the administration of the school is very efficient and school policies and documentation are clear and thorough.
- 5.4 The new aims, ethos and mission statement clearly defines the school philosophy. The school leadership ensures that the committees responsible for the academic work and personal development of the pupils are carefully structured to provide support and monitoring. Responsibility for the staff appraisal system is delegated across the leadership team. All members of staff are thoroughly appraised on an eighteen-month cycle and the leadership team are appraised alternately as teachers and managers. The outcomes of appraisal contribute to both training possibilities

and the school development plan. The school development plan, 'Seeing Round Corners', addresses all areas of school life in a structured manner. It is used as a point of reference by staff in meetings. Monitoring of the quality of teaching, both through lesson observation and through the checking of planning and pupils' books is established as part of the appraisal process. Peer observation by staff has encouraged the sharing of best practice in teaching techniques.

- 5.5 New staff are effectively inducted and supported by both a professional and personal mentor. The staff code of conduct emphasises the professional approach expected to ensure the welfare of children in all areas of the school. Management had failed to make the necessary checks on the appointment of staff and to maintain correctly the centralised register of staff appointments. However, it is now rigorous in carrying out its responsibilities for pupils' safeguarding and welfare. All members of staff are regularly trained at the expected frequency in child protection and the child protection officers have received training in inter-agency work with the local authority. The child protection officer forwards her governors' reports to the local children safeguarding committee.

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

- 5.6 The school has established good quality links and maintains constructive relationships with its parents, contributing to the fulfilling of the school's aims for its boys. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed that the parents were highly satisfied with both curricular and extra-curricular education, the quality of communication and the school's governance and management. Parents are kept well informed through many channels using both paper and electronic means, including access to areas of the school's intranet. Parents of pupils in most years are invited to meetings where the school's curriculum and educational approach are explained. Workshops are held on topics of relevance and interest to parents. Each pupil in Year 3 and above is issued with a school book which acts as his personal record, facilitating communication between staff and parents. Members of staff maintain informal contact with boys' families at arrival and departure time.
- 5.7 Parents have good opportunities to be involved in the life and work of their children. They are invited to the school's public events and to accompany school trips. Parents may inform pastoral staff about any relevant aspects of their son's life at "You Tell Me" meetings. A group of over thirty volunteer parents has been trained to support pupils' daily reading practice. Parents representing each form meet regularly with the headmaster to discuss school issues. An informative parents' handbook explains the school's procedures. Parents may attend two consultation evenings each year; they receive one annual written report on their child's progress which is clear and constructive. Parents expressed their concern that they did not receive information on their children's academic work as frequently as they would like, especially in the upper years. Inspectors endorsed this judgement. Some parents were also concerned about the level of support given to children with special educational needs, especially in relation to mathematics. However, inspectors judged that pupils are well supported through individual tuition and in-class assistance. The school has an appropriate procedure for handling parental complaints and manages their concerns both efficiently and sensitively.

**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 effectiveness of the provision in meeting the needs of all children is outstanding, enabling it to fulfil its aim to provide an environment in which every child feels secure, valued and confident. Enthusiastic staff work extremely well together. The setting recognises the importance of the individual child; careful tracking confirms the rapid progress that children make in learning and in the development of their personal qualities. Planning and formal systems to monitor and evaluate the provision are outstanding, enabling the staff to ensure that no child is disadvantaged. Staff use good links with the wider community, including the local authority, to improve the quality of education and care.

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

6.2 Leadership and management of the setting are outstanding. It is well led, and staff co-operate effectively to realise their common vision for the school. Staff are suitably qualified, and all necessary checks have been made to safeguard children. The necessary policies, risk assessments and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety and promote equality. Four staff are trained in paediatric first aid. Children are thoughtfully supervised to meet their individual needs but the handover of children to their parents at the end of the day is crowded and confusing. Partnership with parents is outstanding and staff consciously involve them in their children's learning. Curriculum and pastoral meetings, informal contact and two written reports keep parents well informed. Staff regularly attend courses, including a cluster group of local schools, for professional and curriculum development. Development planning includes all staff sharing best practice and setting professional targets.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding and supports extremely well all six areas of learning and development. Children benefit from a broad curriculum which is enriched by lessons in swimming. Staff have developed very effective procedures for observing children's learning and play to evaluate their progress. These assessments clarify what each child needs to learn next and if necessary support is available from the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). An excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities gives children an opportunity to develop their creative thinking and independence. Pupils now have access to an extended outdoor play area following the recommendation in the previous inspection. The indoor and outdoor environments stimulate children's role play and exploration in all weathers. The setting is well provided for with resources which staff use most effectively. The teaching staff are the key persons who guide and support children well, providing safe and clear routines for them. Children enjoy healthy snacks provided for them and a nutritious lunch.

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

- 6.4 Children make outstanding progress in their learning in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Literacy and numeracy are strongly promoted with emphasis on independent learning. Children demonstrated counting up to twenty as they put construction toys together and two boys read their books confidently to a teaching assistant. Children choose their own activities, are creative and think sensibly in order to solve problems. They can use the interactive whiteboard well, for example with a phonics program. Their knowledge and understanding of the world, developed through first hand experiences, are excellent. Excellent relationships provide the confidence to respond positively to all that is on offer. Boys are exuberant, yet polite and friendly to their classmates and, through use of golden rules, circle time and class puppets, understand how to share, be kind and stay safe. The children have developed an understanding of the benefits of keeping healthy and taking exercise. They respond well to praise and encouragement, find learning fun and are happy in the setting.

**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 and deputy chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mr Peter Lee-Smith	Reporting Inspector
Mr Adrian Morris	Former Head, IAPS school
Mr Henry Phillips	Head, IAPS school
Mrs Gillian Proctor	Deputy Head, IAPS school
Mrs Deborah Buckenham	Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector