



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

DUNOTTAR SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Dunottar School

Full Name of School	Dunottar School		
DfE Number	936/6078		
EYFS Number	EY405119		
Registered Charity Number	312068		
Address	Dunottar School High Trees Road Reigate Surrey RH2 7EL		
Telephone Number	01737 761 945		
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Email Address	info@dunottar.surrey.sch.uk		
Headmistress	Mrs Nikki Matthews		
Chair of Governors	Miss Joy Buchan		
Age Range	2 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	327		
Gender of Pupils	Girls		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	3	5-11: 84
	3-5(EYFS):	20	11-18: 220
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	327	
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Catriona Macleod		
EYFS Gender	Girls		
Inspection dates	01 Feb 2011 to 02 Feb 2011		
	02 Mar 2011 to 04 Mar 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 2005.

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 Dunottar School is a day school for girls aged from two and a half to eighteen. It was founded in 1926 to provide a high quality education for girls and moved to its present site in 1933. It acquired charitable status in 1961 and is governed by a board of trustees. The school is located in a Victorian mansion, with other purpose-built accommodation, in fifteen acres of ground in Reigate, Surrey. The junior school and nursery are housed in a separate building adjacent to the senior school. Since the previous inspection a new headmistress has been appointed.
- 1.2 The school aims to identify and develop the strengths of each individual girl in order to develop confidence and enable each girl to achieve her potential and to take her place as a responsible adult in society. It seeks to make each girl feel valued both as an individual and as a member of the school community.
- 1.3 There are 327 pupils in the school of whom 220 are in the senior school. There are 84 pupils in the junior school and 23 in the Early Years foundation Stage (EYFS). The pupils are drawn from the local area and come predominantly from professional or business backgrounds. There is little ethnic diversity. Pupils of all faiths and none are admitted to the school. Seven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and one of them receives support for her English. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN) and the school has identified a further 44 as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). Three pupils receive specialist learning support from the school. Those who do not receive additional specialist help are given such support as they need in class.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the junior school is above the national average with a fairly wide spread of abilities. The ability profile of the senior school to GCSE is above the national average. Most pupils are of at least average ability, and very few are below. The school does not carry out ability tests for the sixth form.
- 1.5 Since the previous inspection the school has extended its operations by the expansion of the nursery provision and the development of the breakfast club and after-school care. A photographic studio has been added and the netball courts have been floodlit.
- 1.6 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 overall achievements of the pupils are excellent. From the EYFS onwards, the school meets its aim of identifying and developing the strengths of each individual girl. Pupils gain good public examination results and are helped to do so by excellent and sometimes inspirational teaching, and by their own positive and determined attitudes. At all ages pupils are well known to their teachers, who are aware of individual needs and who freely give their time to provide extra help when it is needed. There is a stimulating enrichment programme for all pupils which gives opportunities for the ablest pupils. They receive encouragement to participate in challenges beyond the classroom. The outstanding curriculum supports pupils' achievements at every age. Extra-curricular successes are of a high quality. The previous inspection report recommended that the junior school should arrange for subject co-ordinators, which it has now done. The report also recommended that the school should improve the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. The improvement has been comprehensive and successful to the extent that the ICT systems cannot now always fully support the use which staff and pupils would like to make of them.
- 2.2 The pupils' excellent personal development fully meets the school's aim of making each girl feel valued both as an individual and as a member of the school community. From an early age pupils are encouraged to develop good relationships with one another and to learn the benefits of negotiation. They develop self-confidence and self-awareness in an environment which nurtures support for others. Successes and achievements are praised and publicised. Older pupils have a number of opportunities to help the younger ones, and the house system which runs through all age groups from Reception onwards enables the youngest pupils to learn from the example of older ones. Pupils are enthusiastic fund-raisers for charity and their own sense of community leads them to address the needs of others. The school's excellent pastoral care and arrangements for welfare, health and safety are strong contributors to pupils' sense of security.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are outstanding. The trustees are active in their support of the school's aims and are very aware of their responsibilities with regard to regulatory requirements. Leadership and management are highly effective with a dynamic new senior leadership team (SLT) working to achieve the best outcomes for the pupils. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires pupils expressed confidence that they were making good progress and that their teachers showed concern for them as people. In response to the questionnaires some parents suggested that provision for pupils with LDD was inadequate, but the inspection team observed much support for these pupils. Parents were, however, unanimous in their opinion that the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and views. They were happy with the pastoral care and ease of communication with the school.

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. Ensure that the ICT system throughout the school provides effective support for teaching, learning and administration.
2. Ensure that all staff in EYFS fully understand and implement systems for identifying and assessing LDD.
3. Provide opportunities for children in EYFS to develop independence through involvement in activities that provide appropriate and acceptable risk.

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 quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills is excellent. At all ages pupils are well educated and the school achieves its aim of identifying the strengths of individual pupils in order to develop confidence and enable each individual to achieve her potential. The pupils display high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in lessons. They speak with confidence, expressing their ideas cogently and they are good listeners, responding thoughtfully to the opinions of others. They are literate and their written work is usually assured, showing their ability to organise ideas logically. High quality displays and accomplished art work demonstrate creativity and stimulate the appreciation of aesthetic values. Pupils can apply mathematics competently and they are assured users of ICT. They have good skills in physical activity.
- 3.2 Pupils achieve excellent levels of attainment in national competitions and awards. A number of pupils do well in national mathematics competitions but individual successes have also been notable in art and poetry. The school deserves its excellent reputation for the breadth and standard of its music. Many girls are successful in music examinations in both junior and senior schools in a good range of instruments and at a high level. The choirs, chamber groups and orchestra enter local music festivals with good results and perform outside the school. In 2010 the junior school choir won their class in the Youth Competition of the Leith Hill Music Festival. During the inspection, inspectors heard accomplished solo string players performing baroque music and excellent singing in a junior class. Pupils are successful in dance and drama examinations and in sport pupils do well both in team and individual events, including national and international representation. All pupils who applied to university in 2010 gained places at their chosen universities, almost all at their first choice.
- 3.3 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2007 to 2009. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at age 11 have been consistently above the average for maintained primary schools. The school's GCSE performance has been above the national average for girls in maintained schools. At A level, results have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and are similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. Nationally standardised measures support the positive view that pupils of all ages up to Year 11 make good progress in relation to their ability, above the average for pupils of similar ability. At A level, close monitoring of the pupils' work and high levels of individual support ensure that this rate of progress continues in the sixth form. Girls with LDD are well supported so that they make good progress, and pupils of higher ability are suitably challenged and extended.
- 3.4 This level of success arises from the pupils' hard work and perseverance and from the quality of teaching and sports coaching. The pupils use lesson time well; they develop good habits of work and enjoy learning. The overwhelming majority of pupils are keen to learn and respond enthusiastically to the challenges they are offered. They work co-operatively in pairs and groups and respond positively to innovative techniques from their teachers. They have respect for the views of their teachers and many are confident enough to challenge them with their own opinions.

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

- 3.5 The curriculum provision of the school is outstanding and suitable for all ages, needs and abilities of pupils. Together with its excellent extra-curricular programme it strongly assists the school in meeting its aims. In the junior school the curriculum covers all subjects in the National Curriculum, with the addition of French taught from the nursery upwards. Junior pupils benefit from specialist teaching in a number of areas such as swimming, design and technology (DT) and physical education (PE). Good provision is made for pupils with LDD, who are well supported in the classroom by teachers and teaching assistants, with extension work to ensure that able pupils are suitably challenged. Such attention to individual needs helps the pupils to become confident learners.
- 3.6 Since the previous inspection a learning support specialist has been appointed to strengthen provision. All Year 7 pupils are screened to identify, at an early stage, those who would benefit from extra help, as well as those who require greater intellectual challenges. A comprehensive personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) is central to the curriculum in all year groups and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development.
- 3.7 From Year 7 pupils are able to study three languages, which not only makes them willing and capable speakers but also considerably enhances their ability to make useful linguistic connections, as seen in a Year 7 Latin lesson. In Year 8 pupils benefit from an innovative thinking skills programme, and this extension to purely subject-based examination work continues throughout the school and exceptionally up to Year 13 where an eclectic enrichment programme offers, amongst other things, car maintenance and psychology as well as a varied general studies programme. Pupils enjoy this wider experience which helps to foster their positive attitudes to learning beyond the scope of examinations.
- 3.8 The curriculum is further enhanced by an extensive and varied range of outstanding extra-curricular activities. Field work takes pupils to a range of interesting destinations at home and abroad: junior school pupils to a kitchen museum; the Year 9 astronomers to an observatory; the home economists to food shows and sixth form sociologists and students of business studies and economics to a theme park overseas. Clubs and activities flourish around music, drama, sport and numerous other interests including gardening and archaeology. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is undertaken by many pupils, with some achieving the gold award each year. It creates situations where team-working and personal responsibility predominate, and where self-confidence and support for others are developed.
- 3.9 Links with the community are strong. Through the voluntary community service scheme in the sixth form, pupils work in local nursing homes, help in charity shops, assist in a riding for the disabled scheme and staff a phone helpline for people with eating disorders. The musicians perform locally and all pupils are committed to raising money for charitable causes.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.10 The quality of teaching is excellent, contributing successfully to the school's aim of enabling each girl to achieve her true academic potential. In the significant number of lessons where teaching was outstanding, it was characterised by meticulous planning, with considerable care taken to match tasks to individual levels of ability, lively pace and a variety of teaching methods. The pupils' success in many areas of endeavour is strongly promoted by teaching that focuses on responding to the needs of individual pupils throughout the school. In the junior school teachers are knowledgeable about the curriculum and through their own enthusiasm motivate pupils to aim high. The best lessons ended with a plenary session in which the teacher assessed what pupils had learnt and then told them what they could look forward to in the next lesson.
- 3.11 Teachers possess strong subject knowledge and have high expectations for their pupils' success. Praise and encouragement are used liberally and effectively, as are teachers' questioning skills which are good and encourage pupils to think critically. This commitment to challenging and engaging teaching results in exemplary classroom behaviour as pupils clearly value and enjoy their learning. Teachers know their pupils well and consistently work to foster their confidence, understanding and commitment. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and, as well as creating a pleasant atmosphere for learning, greatly enhance pupils' willingness to seek help out of class, which is readily and frequently given. In interviews held during the inspection pupils were able to talk with pride and discernment about their work in particular subjects. They valued the contribution made by their teachers and appreciated the way in which they were encouraged to be independent learners. In responses to pre-inspection questionnaires pupils were almost unanimous in acknowledging that their teachers help them to learn.
- 3.12 Teachers use a range of good resources to support their teaching including ICT, although no use of the interactive whiteboards was seen during the inspection. The previous inspection report recommended the improved use of ICT throughout the school and teachers have embraced this recommendation wholeheartedly, although weaknesses in the ICT systems can waste valuable lesson time. There are many high quality resources for teaching and learning, such as the sports centre, grounds and pitches.
- 3.13 Marking of work is generally thorough and helps understanding, making frequent use of praise, target-setting and advice. However, in a small number of books and files scrutinised, marking was less thorough, with sparse comments and little advice on how to improve. Assessment data are well compiled to monitor progress and work is in progress to increase the ways in which the data are used.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 The pupils' personal development is excellent. The school's aims to enable the girls to possess self-awareness and show social responsibility are well met. The pupils are busy, articulate, confident young people who show a maturity beyond their age and who are ready for the challenges of life. They are justly proud of their school and talk readily and warmly of their own achievements, those of others, their extra-curricular activities, charity fund raising and their time in school.
- 4.2 Pupils in the junior school have a realistic awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses, as revealed in their books 'All About Me' and in their pupil profile books, which are part of their newly introduced PSHE scheme. The high standard of music and the beautiful grounds foster their sense of the spiritual. Older pupils reflect maturely on matters beyond the material. Two sixth-form pupils had recently returned from a visit to Auschwitz, of which they spoke very movingly. They had spoken about it to the rest of the school in assemblies. Many of the assemblies are not religious in nature but do invite pupils to think about ideals; for example, an assembly on 'Treasure' moved from personal and financial treasure to the more abstract ideas of love and freedom. A music assembly by the scholars was an uplifting experience. Pupils display empathy and compassion, as seen in form time where there is a respectful atmosphere and a true sharing of experience.
- 4.3 The pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They are given many opportunities to reflect on moral issues, as was seen in a Year 9 lesson on prejudice and discrimination, a Year 13 lesson on stem cell research and a Year 9 geography lesson discussing fair trade. Their moral development is shown in their personal relationships. They are well behaved, respect each other and work together in harmony.
- 4.4 The pupils' sense of social responsibility is very well developed. From the junior school on, they realise that they are privileged, comparing their opportunities to those of the less well-off and the homeless. Reflections about this in assemblies have led to many fund-raising efforts for local and worldwide charities. From a young age they help with tasks in the classroom and the older pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given. Year 12 act as 'buddies' to Year 7 and Year 13 are mentors to Year 11 to help them to manage the pressures of their GCSE year. Sixth-formers help with reading in the junior school and with sport; there is a head girl team and positions as house or sports captains, and they can help with the homework club. All sixth-formers have ample opportunity to explore their leadership skills. From the junior school on, pupils can contribute to the student council.
- 4.5 Girls have an excellent awareness of their own and other cultures. They participate in music and drama productions and visit theatres and museums. The school grounds themselves are valued by the girls for the sense of history that they bestow and the opportunity for discovery, as seen in the nature club looking for indigenous badger and deer prints. The pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own is developed through the curriculum where, for example, they learn about a variety of religions in religious studies, as well as through assemblies, through celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year, and through school trips abroad.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is outstanding. From EYFS onwards the excellent pastoral care ensures that girls are valued and cared for. All form tutors know their pupils very well, assisted by daily form time which gives sufficient opportunity for the development of supportive and helpful relationships. Form tutors give guidance to their pupils in both academic and pastoral matters, and help them to set regular targets. They also take them for their PSHE lessons which offer further time for guidance and discussion. An additional sense of belonging to a community is developed by the house system in which pupils from Reception to Year 13 mix with one another. Relationships between all staff, teaching and non-teaching, and pupils are positive and friendly. The high level of academic support available to the pupils manifests the concern that staff have for the success and fulfilment of their pupils who, in turn, appreciate the attention they receive. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires pupils affirmed that teachers showed concern for them as people and that they help them to learn. Among the girls themselves kindness, concern and friendship are evident in the way they behave towards each other and in what they say.
- 4.7 The school has effective procedures for promoting good behaviour, based on much praise and encouragement. It has robust policies to guard against harassment and bullying, and the pupils report that any such difficulties are rare but, if they occur, they are promptly and firmly dealt with. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire some pupils expressed the opinion that the school does not listen to their views, but the inspection team found in interview and in their observations in the school that the pupils are very clear about how to make their views known, through formal and informal channels.
- 4.8 Safeguarding arrangements are secure and have regard to official guidance. All staff are appropriately trained in this area. Health and safety on educational trips and visits are most rigorously monitored and there are excellent procedures in place to protect the welfare of the pupils.
- 4.9 All aspects of health and safety are given very high priority and risk assessments are carried out wherever and whenever necessary. Those members of the non-teaching staff who are responsible for maintaining the safety of the site take great pride in their high standards and help to reinforce the caring community to which the pupils belong. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. There is appropriate provision for pupils who are ill or injured or who have LDD. A well-equipped medical room is available to the pupils. The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.
- 4.10 Pupils are very well educated in the benefits of healthy eating, both through the curriculum and through attractive wall displays. Although not all senior pupils were enthusiastic about school meals, the inspection team noted that they were healthy, varied and nutritious. The benefits of exercise are also well understood by the pupils who, in addition to physical education, enjoy the advantages of the site.
- 4.11 Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance of the school is outstanding. The trustees have a very clear commitment to the aims of the school and to the educational experience of each individual girl. Their oversight of the school is informed by their understanding of the importance of providing an environment in which each girl can develop her strengths and become a responsible adult. A strategic committee consider how the school's income may be best matched with investment for the benefit of the pupils, and a finance committee have careful scrutiny of the school's budget. The trustees have recently thoroughly reviewed and updated the memorandum and articles of association. A new committee structure has been implemented and there is an annual comprehensive risk assessment. Every trustee has a specific role, either individually or serving on a committee, and a skills matrix is being developed for current trustees. In addition to the committees, there are also occasional joint working parties with the SLT where trustees and staff have an equal voice.
- 5.2 Trustees use both external measures of success, like examination results, and more intangible and less easily quantified indicators, like meeting girls and parents, to evaluate their performance. They monitor educational standards by scrutiny of results and by reports from the headmistress and other members of staff. The headmistress and bursar report to the trustees on a termly basis to ensure that they are aware of all relevant matters.
- 5.3 The trustees are diligent in fulfilling their responsibilities for child protection, welfare, health and safety throughout the school, including ensuring that recruitment procedures are applied correctly. A number of them have successfully undertaken a safer recruitment course. All are trained for their role as trustees and several of them have undertaken other training for their particular responsibilities. The chair of trustees meets regularly with the headmistress and provides her with wise guidance and support. Trustees are supportive of school events and attend them regularly.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Although the SLT are relatively recent appointments, they have set clear educational direction and provided dynamic leadership, achieving much. They have excellent systems of self-evaluation and are aware of any existing pockets of weakness in the school. They have already instituted procedures to strengthen those areas. A number of important initiatives have been undertaken in key academic and pastoral areas, with a strong focus on teaching and learning and on the PSHE programme for all the girls. Although not all these processes are yet fulfilled in full, they are already taking effect, as in LDD and provision for the most able pupils. The SLT have been particularly successful in disseminating their priorities to the staff, who have contributed fully to consultation and have taken responsibility for parts of the school development plan. The plan is comprehensive and detailed, clearly identifying courses of action to follow. Departmental minutes are always sent electronically to the SLT and discussed at their regular meetings, thus establishing good communication between different layers of management. Regular training helps the teaching staff to develop their professional expertise for the benefit of the pupils. A shared sense of purpose and excitement is very noticeable amongst the staff and the strength of the community is enhanced by a unity of spirit.

- 5.5 The aims of the school provide the starting point and benchmark for all discussions and decisions about policy and procedure. The SLT is meticulous in the discharge of delegated responsibilities, particularly those for policy implementation and the safeguarding of pupils. They evaluate their own performance and encourage other staff to do the same. There is an annual departmental review and a professional review cycle for all staff. Not all plans and initiatives in teaching and learning are yet fully implemented but the foundations have been laid and middle management have begun the work of improving practice which was already good, as reflected in the pupils' performance.
- 5.6 At all levels management is successful in appointing and developing high quality staff and in training them for their roles in meeting the needs of all children, safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The school has thorough arrangements for checking the suitability of staff, supply staff and trustees.

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

- 5.7 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were extremely positive and almost all parents were very pleased with the academic and pastoral provision on offer for their daughters. The school has a suitable complaints policy and also deals promptly with any concerns of parents in an informal way, by telephone, e-mail or interview. Last year no complaints went to a formal panel hearing.
- 5.8 A weekly Dunottar newsletter, available online, provides a lively account of recent events with contributions from both staff and pupils. It also lists forthcoming events, performances and diary dates for parents. A new high quality website provides both current and prospective parents with relevant information and policy documents.
- 5.9 A rolling programme of parents' meetings and reports is in operation for all years and gives a termly written or oral update on pupils' progress and in the senior years gives specific advice on strategies needed to maximise examination success. An information evening in preparation for the sixth form is held for Year 11 pupils and excellent information booklets are provided for each year to advise girls and their families about the changes to school life as pupils progress up the school. For sixth-formers and their parents, university representatives visit the school to advise on the intricacies of the UCAS system and university life, and all parents are regularly updated on the frequent changes to the public examination process. All these initiatives serve to foster and strengthen the positive links between school and home, and the pupils benefit from the inclusive nature of the school's approach in line with the school's aims.
- 5.10 The use of e-mail to communicate with parents has grown considerably since the previous inspection and the innovative use of text messaging to advise pupils of school closure owing to heavy snow was much appreciated.
- 5.11 The Friends of Dunottar parents association provide a significant contribution to the life of the school, both by way of social events for parents and by fund-raising events such as the annual Christmas Bazaar which provide much appreciated extras for the community which are evident around the cherished campus.

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 EYFS is outstanding overall. Children's learning and development needs are well met, ensuring that every child makes at least good and often outstanding progress. Staff, supported by senior management, work very well as a team and have a shared vision for the continued improvement of the setting. Recommendations from the previous inspection, including closer co-ordination between Nursery and Reception staff, have been implemented and an Early Years development plan is in place.

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

6.2 The effectiveness of leadership and management in the EYFS is outstanding. Safeguarding is excellent, and very positive relationships between staff and parents create a supportive and caring environment for the children. Rigorous recruitment procedures, a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular risk assessments ensure staff are suitably qualified and children are extremely well safeguarded. Recent senior appointments have had a very positive impact and sound self-evaluation provides an excellent basis for continued improvement. Equality of opportunity is strongly promoted, but procedures for identifying and assessing LDD are in the early stages of development. Parents express very high levels of satisfaction, although a significant proportion are unaware of school policies and would like to see outside areas improved. Resources are plentiful and used well by staff, who work closely to ensure a smooth transition between Nursery and Reception. Staff have developed a good relationship with Surrey Early Years advisors, benefiting from the support offered.

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

6.3 The quality of the EYFS provision is good with some outstanding features. This applies to pupils below the age of three years, as well as to those aged three and over. The Reception classroom is bright and colourful, providing a stimulating, richly resourced environment. The Nursery is equally inviting with staff utilising well the available space. Although outside access is limited, particularly for Reception, staff endeavour to use the wider school grounds to extend children's learning. An outstanding child-centred approach provides an excellent balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities through which children are encouraged to think creatively. However, adult-led activities can be over-managed, reducing children's opportunity to develop independence and responsibility. Detailed observations, expertly evaluated, inform planning which reflects the children's interests and needs. Assessment, involving contributions from staff, parents and children, is outstanding. The welfare needs of the children are met. Caring, affectionate staff help under-threes to settle quickly, and key people ensure that children feel safe and secure.

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

- 6.4 For children under the age of three years, as well as those above this age, outcomes in the EYFS are outstanding. Children are self-motivated, engaging enthusiastically with a wide range of structured play activities. In the Nursery, mathematical knowledge and emergent writing are evident in role play, and in Reception children make rapid progress in all areas of learning, particularly communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development. By the end of Reception most children are working consistently beyond the early learning goals. Children form strong friendships, treating each other with kindness and respect, resolving minor disagreements with great maturity. Children think creatively and solve problems, for example fixing bells to a mask for Chinese New Year. They develop excellent speaking and listening skills, sharing news and retelling familiar stories expressively. Confidence with ICT is good; in the Nursery children use a mouse confidently and, in Reception, access a range of programs independently. Children can explain the importance of food, water, exercise and rest for a healthy lifestyle and have an excellent understanding of health, hygiene and safety.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.5 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Complaints since the last inspection

- 6.6 Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required any action to meet national requirements.

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 Deborah Forbes	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Lynn Clarke	Head, GSA school
Mrs Carole McCulloch	Head, GSA junior school
Mrs Valerie Goode	Former Head, IAPS school
Mr Tony Woolstone	Former Deputy Head, HMC school
Mr Chris Manville	Early Years Lead Inspector