



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**WAVERLEY SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Waverley School

Full Name of School	<b>Waverley School</b>
DfE Number	<b>872/6003</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY335472</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>309102</b>
Address	<b>Waverley School Waverley Way Finchampstead Wokingham Berkshire RG40 4YD</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01189 731121</b>
Fax Number	<b>01189 731131</b>
Email Address	<b>waverleyschool@waverley.wokingham.sch.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Nigel Woolnough</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Blair Jenkins</b>
Age Range	<b>3 months to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>141</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (73 boys; 68 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>0-2 (EYFS): 29    5-11: 62 3-5 (EYFS): 50</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Ms Lianne Hopkins</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection dates	<b>20 Sep 2011 to 21 Sep 2011 17 Oct 2011 to 19 Oct 2011</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 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 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 Waverley School is an independent school for boys and girls aged from three months to eleven years. Founded in Crowthorne in 1945, it became a charitable trust in 1975. The school moved to purpose-built accommodation on its present site at Finchampstead in Berkshire in 1997, and shares its playing fields and sports pavilion with the local community. The present headmaster has been in post since 2008. Since the last inspection, the school has opened a Nursery for babies from three months upwards. The school has recently undergone a period of significant change. It was purchased by a large educational trust in 2006, but became independent in May 2011, when it became an independent charitable trust governed by three trustees who are current parents.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, the school had a total of 141 pupils, of whom 73 were boys and 68 girls. Of these, 79 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), some of whom attend on a part-time basis, and 62 were in Years 1 to 6. The majority of pupils come from families who live in surrounding towns and villages, often from business and professional backgrounds. The school does not select pupils by ability and children enter after an informal taster day. Pupils are prepared in equal proportions for entry into local grammar schools, independent schools and state schools.
- 1.3 The ability profile of pupils, as indicated by standardised tests, is above the national average overall. Pupils demonstrate a fairly wide spread of abilities, although most are of at least above average ability. At the time of inspection, 23 pupils were identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), requiring learning support, although none has a statement of special educational needs. These pupils all receive specialist learning support in school. Sixteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) but none require additional support.
- 1.4 The school's vision is to provide education of the highest quality. It aims to do this by creating a positive and stimulating environment and offering a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum. The school seeks to encourage all children to fulfil their potential through rigorous personalised learning, which takes place in small classes, and to nurture the development of good relationships based on traditional values and tolerance. It places a high priority on maintaining a strong and honest relationship with parents.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

### ***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Cuddly Cubs	Nursery
Bouncing Bears	Nursery
Cheeky Chimps	Nursery
Crazy Crocs	Nursery
Reception	Reception

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 Pupils in all parts of the school are very well educated. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained and built upon its strengths, and pupils' achievement is now excellent. In national tests at age eleven, pupils consistently attain results which are good in relation to their above average ability. Their overall good progress is the result of teaching which is predominantly good and often excellent. Literacy and numeracy are strong throughout the school and give pupils a secure foundation of key skills to apply across the broad curriculum. Pupils are successful in gaining entry to maintained and independent senior schools of their choice. They are given many opportunities to fulfil the school's aim of extending all pupils to achieve their full potential. Pupils gain considerable success in speech and drama and music examinations, and successfully compete in sports fixtures against local schools. Arrangements to ensure that those with SEND and EAL make suitable progress according to their abilities are implemented effectively, and the school is developing enhanced provision for those who are able, gifted and talented.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is outstanding and, from the EYFS onwards, is well supported by excellent pastoral care and good health and safety arrangements, which ensure that pupils are safeguarded well. Pupils are self-confident, with high self-esteem, and say that they feel secure and valued in their school community. Through being given appropriate positions of responsibility, and their activities in support of charities, they demonstrate a particularly well-developed standard of moral and social responsibility. Pupils' high achievement owes much to their excellent attitudes to learning and exemplary standards of behaviour.
- 2.3 The new governing body has made a purposeful start and provides good governance. Strong leadership has supported the governors in successfully negotiating the recent transfer to independence, and in developing awareness of their responsibilities in regulatory and educational matters. Deficiencies in relation to staff appointment checks during the previous ownership, have been rectified and a robust procedure for staff appointments is now in place. Both governors and the leadership demonstrate a clear vision and commitment to progress and improvement, which is shared by the strongly cohesive staff team. The school has successfully met the recommendation of the last inspection to develop the role of subject leaders. Links with parents, who are highly satisfied with nearly all aspects of the school's life and work, are excellent. Pupils' comments are also very favourable to and proud of their 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 did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it was required to ensure that:
- the necessary checks are always carried out in advance of staff appointments and the single central register of appointments contains all the necessary entries [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(a), (c) and (3), and 22.(3)(b) under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraph 7.(b), under Welfare, health and safety].
- 2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified all of the above shortcomings, in so far as is possible, as noted in the text of the report.
- 2.6 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

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

- 2.7 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Further develop existing good practice in planning, to ensure that all teaching provides sufficient challenge for the most able pupils.
  2. Develop cohesion and continuity of practice throughout the EYFS.
  3. Produce a comprehensive EYFS development plan.

### **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 quality of pupils' achievements is excellent, and the strengths identified in the last inspection have been maintained and built upon. In accordance with the school's aim to develop and extend each pupil to enable them to fulfil their potential, pupils of all ages, including those in the EYFS, demonstrate enthusiasm for learning and motivation to achieve. Every pupil who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that they were making good progress supported by their teachers.
- 3.2 Pupils continue to develop a secure grounding in knowledge, understanding and skills, supported by the broad curriculum and good range of optional activities. In lessons, pupils' achievement is generally good and often excellent. Most pupils listen attentively and express their ideas fluently in discussions, often offering thoughtful responses to one another's opinions. Their literacy skills are strong and applied successfully in other subjects, such as history and religious education (RE). Pupils' proficiency in mathematics is applied well in investigations, as well as in subjects such as science and information and communication technology (ICT). They confidently use their ICT skills for research across the curriculum, and for making presentations, such as when leading assemblies. Pupils' scientific knowledge and skills are strong, and in investigations they demonstrate assured planning and well-organised participation. Their creative abilities are well developed through opportunities to write imaginatively, as well as through art, music and speech and drama. Pupils develop insightful reasoning skills because teaching frequently encourages them to think for themselves.
- 3.3 Achievements of all kinds are valued and celebrated and make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. They achieve well in grade examinations for music and speech and drama, many gaining merits and distinctions. The choir and individual pupils have a fine record of success in local music festivals, and sports teams compete successfully against local schools. Older pupils are highly successful in gaining entry to senior schools, including those whose entry is by academic selection.
- 3.4 In national tests over the past three years to 2010, pupils aged 11 achieved results which overall were far above the national average. These results, alongside evidence from lesson observation and their work, indicate that their progress is above the average for pupils with similar abilities. Assessment results and samples of work indicate that pupils with SEND and EAL make good progress according to their abilities, through efficient identification, appropriate interventions and conscientious support by all staff teaching them. Pupils who are particularly able or talented also make good progress, but on a few occasions advance less rapidly in lessons, due to more limited opportunities for enrichment being offered.
- 3.5 Pupils' excellent attitudes towards their work contribute significantly to their overall achievement. They settle quickly to work and take part in lessons enthusiastically, applying themselves with equal success to independent and cooperative activities. For example when working with talking partners they show considerable initiative, receptivity and concentration. They enjoy learning and their progress is supported by exceptionally good relationships with their teachers and peers, which motivate them to work hard. Their excellent behaviour in and out of the classroom supports their good progress.



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

- 3.6 Curricular and extra-curricular provision is of good quality and fulfils the school's aim to provide a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum which meets the needs of children of different abilities. The curriculum is broad, and in addition to National Curriculum subjects, includes lessons in French and swimming. It is generally well balanced, although the popularity of speech and drama, when groups of pupils are withdrawn for tuition, results in some disruption to the timetable, less so when remaining pupils engage in a reading or library activity. The curriculum is supported by suitable resources, including the well-stocked library and the ICT suite. Since the last inspection, the role of subject leaders has provided a sharper focus to planned provision.
- 3.7 The curriculum supports the pupils' intellectual, creative and physical development well. At all stages it provides for appropriate emphasis on literacy to develop the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Similarly, the teaching of mathematics provides for the acquisition of numerical and calculating skills, whilst allowing pupils to develop an investigative approach to problem solving. Learning is enhanced through the use of cross-curricular themes and the opportunity for older pupils to complete extended projects, for example on data handling and explorers. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in subjects such as physical education (PE), music, French and art and the timetable includes sufficient time for physical activity. Art, music and drama are pursued to a high standard and provision is enhanced by opportunities to learn a musical instrument. The school stages two theatrical performances each year, in which all pupils participate. These opportunities make a positive contribution to their self-esteem and confidence.
- 3.8 The learning success programme is well organised and offers good levels of support for pupils with SEND. Detailed individual education plans ensure effective interventions for pupils who receive additional help outside of the classroom. Strong communication between the learning success team and class and subject teachers is a key strength of this provision. A suitable policy for meeting the needs of the most able pupils has recently been developed. Extension programmes and extra-curricular activities are available to all pupils due to school's inclusive ethos. In its action plan for gifted and talented pupils, the school has identified the need to augment resources for extra challenge to the level of those available for mathematics and science.
- 3.9 A good programme of extra-curricular activities enhances the educational experience and enjoyment of pupils at the school. These range from chess, scholarship preparation, mathematics games and Mandarin, to judo, computing, tennis and ballet. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in competitions, such as spelling and mathematics challenges and, for ICT, Animation12 organised by Manchester University. The curriculum is usefully supplemented by a range of visits, for example to the Globe Theatre, Reading Museum and the Isle of Wight. Visitors such as authors and a 'Mathemagician' are regularly welcomed into the school.
- 3.10 A number of beneficial links exist with the community. Most notably, the school shares its playing fields and adjacent pavilion with community organisations, such as local sports clubs. This facilitates a number of links including a holiday club, which is open to all local children. Pupils' horizons are extended through the school's active charities programme.

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

- 3.11 From the EYFS onwards, teaching of good quality, a significant proportion of which is excellent, strongly promotes pupils' learning and attainment and fully supports the school's aims. Pupils are highly confident that their teachers help them learn, and those spoken to appreciate the individual support that they are given. The quality of lesson planning is good overall, and generally indicates the skills, understanding and knowledge that different groups of pupils will be expected to learn.
- 3.12 The needs of pupils with SEND and EAL are met well through an effective policy which is implemented by an enthusiastic group of staff who are well trained for their role. They communicate targets and helpful information to all staff efficiently, so that provision in lessons, through the employment of strategies such as individual questioning, modified tasks or additional adult support, contributes effectively to the pupils' good progress. Some pupils benefit from withdrawal for additional individual and small group support. A policy to support pupils identified as particularly able is at an earlier stage in its implementation, and consequently teachers' planning and expectations are not always sufficiently challenging to fully meet these pupils' needs.
- 3.13 Many lessons are characterised by brisk and confident teaching. Lesson objectives are clearly explained and their success evaluated with pupils at the end of the session. Teachers display secure knowledge and use a variety of imaginative approaches and resources to engage pupils' interest. They are prepared to adapt their planning to reflect emerging needs and interests and manage time effectively. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations and use well-judged individual questioning to challenge the most able to think more deeply. This technique is also used effectively to clarify the understanding of those with SEND. It allows these pupils to demonstrate their learning orally, and enables them to approach written tasks more confidently. In many lessons, electronic whiteboards are used effectively to encourage pupils' participation, for example in a poetry lesson in Year 4 where pupils categorised poems of Christina Rossetti. On the few occasions when teaching is less successful, lesson planning does not take sufficient account of information from assessment, nor evaluation of progress in prior teaching. Planning therefore does not make suitable provision for pupils' individual needs. As a result more able pupils have to cover work which does not challenge them before being given an extension task, whilst others rely heavily on adult support to complete the task.
- 3.14 Work is marked regularly in accordance with the school policy, and often includes suggestions for further improvement, as well as encouraging remarks. This is most consistently the case in English, mathematics and science. Older pupils are involved in self-assessment, which ensures they are fully aware of their strengths and areas for development. The school has made good progress in using the results of assessment to enable staff to make early identification of individual needs and to track the progress of all pupils. As a result, pupils are set individual targets to assist their progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Results are recorded on the electronic database to ensure that all staff have access to them for planning.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, in accordance with the school's aims to develop tolerance and consideration for the needs of others and to value honesty, courtesy and kindness, whilst developing a commitment to personal responsibility.
- 4.2 The spiritual awareness of pupils is extremely strong. Pupils of all ages show a high level of emotional maturity and older ones, self-knowledge. They are confident, courteous and friendly when dealing with adults and each other. Kindness and friendship are a regular focus in assemblies, which frequently include reflection on care and respect for one other, and consequently reinforce the school's values. A 'Praise Assembly' attended by the whole school community each week, promotes self-esteem most effectively, and lunchtime prayers which are led by pupils in Year 6 encourage pupils to be mindful of their good fortune. Pupils are proud of their school and say that they feel valued and respected.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral development is excellent. The high standards of behaviour seen both inside and outside of the classroom, are a reflection of their capacity to distinguish right from wrong. In lessons and interviews they listen to and respect the views of their peers. All members of the community are aware of their role in caring for other pupils. The playground buddy system and friendship bench are viewed as significant responsibilities by senior pupils, and as a key way of helping their peers when they are unhappy. Classrooms display codes of conduct suggested by the pupils which help to remind them of moral and social expectations.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate an excellent social awareness. The school council is highly valued. Awareness of the democratic process is developed as pupils vote for representatives, discuss issues arising from meetings and raise suggestions, which they were seen to do most sensibly. Pupils in Year 6 who sit with younger peers at lunch were observed to be kind and helpful in their approach. They fulfil the tasks they are given to take responsibility and develop leadership most conscientiously, so that in the pre-inspection questionnaire all pupils said that they are given appropriate responsibilities. All older pupils have the opportunity to represent the school in sport if they so wish, whilst awareness of their roles as citizens is developed when they take their performing arts out into the local community. Pupils develop a strong awareness of social issues through activities in support of charities, which are led by their older peers.
- 4.5 Pupils' appreciation of, and respect for, other cultures, is outstanding and enriched by the range of backgrounds in the school. They play and work together harmoniously. Their knowledge is deepened through talks by parents and pupils about their cultural backgrounds, as well as through personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) lessons. Pupils are knowledgeable about world faiths as a result of their RE lessons, and displays about other religions and cultures are highly visible around school. Their cultural experience is fostered through activities such as history visits to Bath, drama workshops, as well as their French lessons. Pupils' art work, which is of high quality, reflects their familiarity with famous artists such as Mondrian and Monet.
- 4.6 Pupils' self-confidence and their tolerance, respect for, and kindness towards other members of the community, are an outstanding feature of the school.

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

- 4.7 The quality of provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good and makes a significant contribution to their personal development. The pastoral care afforded to pupils is excellent and they thrive in this warm and supportive school community. In accordance with the school's aims, staff place a high priority on individual needs. They therefore develop pupils' confidence most effectively and respond quickly to any emerging concerns.
- 4.8 Measures to promote good behaviour are extremely successful, with the result that pupils behave in a considerate and sensible manner both in and outside of the classroom. Consistently high standards are confirmed in the lack of recourse to serious sanctions in recent years. Relationships at all levels are extremely positive and staff are good role models in encouraging kindness and friendliness. The supervision of pupils at lunch and breaktime is effective. Older pupils are particularly caring towards their younger peers, and pupils of differing ages enjoy playing together. Pupils are confident that although there are arrangements such as the 'ABC box' to report bullying, they rarely need to use them, and say they can approach any member of staff for support should they need it.
- 4.9 The school has a robust safeguarding policy in line with guidance from the local safeguarding board. This is reviewed each term with the governors to ensure that it remains effective. Under the previous ownership, checks on staff were not always made in advance of appointment, and records in the single central register are incomplete in some cases. However, correct and robust procedures are being applied to a forthcoming appointment. All staff have been appropriately checked to work with children, and the school arranges child protection training for all staff, including the designated persons. Excellent induction arrangements ensure that new staff are made fully aware of the school's safeguarding procedures and policies.
- 4.10 The school has effective arrangements to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills are held and all staff undergo fire training. The health and safety committee ensures that all matters relating to this area are reviewed each term. Each area of the site has a suitable risk assessment and any maintenance issues are dealt with swiftly. Thorough risk assessments are undertaken before any visits outside school.
- 4.11 The medical room has suitable facilities for pupils who are ill or injured, and sufficient staff are trained in first aid at the appropriate level for their duties. Correct records of medication and first aid administered are kept and communicated to parents. The accommodation affords good access for any pupils with disabilities, and an appropriate policy and three-year plan guides physical and curricular provision for pupils with special needs or disabilities.
- 4.12 Topics within the PSHCE programme promote pupils' awareness of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils enjoy a nutritious lunch and they understand the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. Good provision is made for physical activity through the curriculum and optional activities. The admission and attendance registers are all correctly maintained and available for the previous three years.

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

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

- 5.1 The recently constituted governing body is providing good governance. Governors are keenly committed to the success of the school through the maintenance and development of high standards in pupils' academic and personal development, together with their pastoral care. They have used their experience and expertise in finance, marketing and business to successfully negotiate the requisite legal and financial steps to fulfil the parents' vision for the establishment of the school as a separate trust. To achieve this, they have formulated a prudent strategic plan with clear objectives for the consolidation and development of the school, the first phase of which has been completed. The governors attach great importance to maintaining the high standard of accommodation and resources, and to ensuring the appointment of an appropriate quality and level of staffing. Whilst in educational matters they are currently advised by the headmaster, they have identified the need to recruit additional members to the board, to complement existing skills and further the range of educational and other expertise.
- 5.2 As current parents, the governors hold a uniquely close insight into the life of the school through their frequent contact with staff and pupils. Governors view accessibility as of high importance, and are therefore individually available to parents through email. A member of staff presents on a key area of the school at each governors' meeting to enable them to be well informed on educational matters. The chair meets the head formally every fortnight, and governors attend all school events. Governors are committed to undertaking further training to assist their effectiveness, for example, in monitoring educational standards. They are mindful of their responsibility to ensure appropriate performance management for the head, and have therefore made arrangements for support and appraisal for the head-designate.
- 5.3 The previous governing body did not exercise sufficient oversight of regulatory matters in relation to staff appointments. The new governing body is well aware of its responsibility for child protection, welfare, health and safety and ensures robust arrangements. Two governors have completed training in child protection and safer recruitment, and governors review the regulatory policies each term.

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

- 5.4 Leadership and management are of good quality and most effective in promoting the school's aims. The head is supported by a small senior management team who understand their responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, and who ensure that policies are correctly implemented. The leadership has been extremely successful in ensuring that the school's transfer to independence has not impacted adversely on the life and work of the pupils. To achieve this, a meticulous programme, which details all the elements necessary to effect the change, is being systematically worked through. A purposeful and clear sense of direction prevails within the entire school. This is given focus in the comprehensive development plan, which starts from the school's core values and is discussed by all staff before it is translated into detailed action plans, such as those drawn up for each subject or area of the school. However the EYFS does not yet have a development plan which is integrated into that for the whole school.

- 5.5 The school has ensured that the recommendation of the last inspection, to develop the role of subject leaders, has been fully met. Subject leaders now monitor provision and pupils' progress effectively, and are well supported in this task by senior managers. The learning success team makes a significant contribution to the success of pupils with SEND and EAL. The school has a useful action plan to develop its provision for its most able pupils. The staff work as an exceptionally cohesive team, and their strong communication relating to academic and pastoral matters, underpins pupils' success and well-being.
- 5.6 Staff undergo appropriate training to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities, supported by an excellent induction programme for newcomers, which is carefully monitored and recorded. Subject leaders feed information from their monitoring into the efficient appraisal scheme, which is operated annually. Staff are given regular opportunities to attend courses to further their personal professional development.
- 5.7 Prior to the transfer of the school to its current status, there were shortcomings in the recruitment checks on staff. As soon as this was realised, the leadership made strenuous efforts to rectify these deficiencies, and the single central register of appointments is now much improved and meets requirements. A rigorous procedure for staff appointment has now been drawn up and implemented. Both parents and pupils overwhelmingly express their liking and support for the school, and parents are highly positive about its leadership and management.

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

- 5.8 The school has built on the quality of links with parents found at the last inspection. From the EYFS upwards, links are now excellent, in accordance with the school's aim to maintain an honest and open relationship with parents. Parents overwhelmingly supported the decision to achieve independent status. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed high levels of support for almost all areas of school life. Particular areas of satisfaction include the curriculum offered, pastoral care, the standards of behaviour, and the attitudes and values taught in school. Parents express confidence in the new governing body and the leadership.
- 5.9 Parents have very good opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children, and appreciate the family feel of the school. They are invited to termly class assemblies and performances, as well as to sporting fixtures. The parents' association actively supports the work of the school. It organises many social events, some for parents, some for families and others for pupils, which enhance the feeling of community and help to integrate newcomers. These events also raise useful funds for the school and charities.
- 5.10 The website provides parents and prospective parents with all the necessary statutory information together with other school policies. It includes useful information, such as weekly newsletters, menus and photographs of school events, which ensure that parents are kept well informed about school life. Ease of communication is facilitated by the use of email and a text service for urgent messages. Parents are well informed of their children's progress. Each term they are provided with information about the curriculum being covered. Meetings to discuss progress are held termly, and reports sent out in the summer term are detailed and indicate key areas for improvement. Parents of children with SEND are fully involved in determining their targets and reviewing their progress with staff.

- 5.11 In the pre-inspection questionnaire, every parent praised the swift handling of concerns through informal discussion. They particularly appreciate the strong communication afforded by the availability of the head and teachers, who greet parents and pupils each day, and in so doing, clearly demonstrate the school's open-door policy. Parents say that this enables them to resolve any academic and pastoral concerns quickly, and also helps families new to the school to feel welcome. The school has an appropriate procedure to deal with any concerns.

**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 good, and significantly outstanding in some areas. Staff are wholeheartedly committed to meeting children's individual needs. Interesting age-appropriate experiences are planned, particularly in the Nursery, where planning for the very youngest children is highly personalised. The staff have created an environment where both academic progress and pastoral care are well balanced. Processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning are developing, but are not yet consistent across the EYFS.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are good. Exemplary partnerships between providers, parents and other agencies ensure that children's needs are met and their safeguarding assured, including those to promote equal opportunities. Children's safety takes high priority, with stringent risk assessments, strengthened since the last inspection. The rapid extension of the provision in order to include babies, has been managed with enormous success. Staff share an excellent vision of high quality provision that guides everyday planning and practice. The team working with the younger children is co-ordinated exceptionally well. However, the Reception class is at present co-ordinated separately with the school, often resulting in a lack of cohesion and common practice across the EYFS. Staff organise resources for the indoor and outdoor areas extremely well, including activities for the babies. Close attention to their individual learning needs and an atmosphere of mutual respect ensures that all children feel included. Parents value the excellent communication with staff.

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

6.3 Provision is outstanding. Children learn and develop exceptionally well through stimulating play and valuable first-hand experiences. The classroom environments, particularly for the babies and younger children, are clean, attractive, welcoming and well resourced. The outdoor learning environments are outstanding. The next stage of learning for each child is clearly identified through initial and continuing assessment procedures, based on regular observations and target setting. There is an effective balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities, giving children the opportunity to develop their critical thinking and independence. The well-planned curriculum reflects rich, varied and imaginative experiences. High priority is given to children's personal and social development through good reward systems. Key people promote consideration for others through clear expectations of safe and sensible behaviour. Additional needs are identified early and support is provided. The provision of healthy lunches and good hygiene practices is a priority. Daily procedures to promote children's welfare, safeguarding and well-being are robust.



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

- 6.4 Outcomes for the children are outstanding. Babies exhibit curiosity and make rapid progress because of the exceptional care they receive. Toddlers are confident and socially well adjusted and have excellent physical skills. They make rapid progress and show high levels of independence in their learning. Younger children begin to recognise letters and by the end of Reception confidently use their phonic knowledge to write independently, and recognise and use numbers to twenty and beyond. Progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is highly promoted; children develop excellent observational and investigative skills and use computers and programmable toys with confidence. Their independence shines through and they diligently take responsibility for various tasks asked of them. Behaviour is exemplary and is effectively managed through gentle reminders and the underlying rules and expectations.

#### **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 Jan Preece	Reporting Inspector
Mr Henry Phillips	Headmaster, IAPS School
Mr Mark Potter	Deputy Head, IAPS School
Mrs Linda Donowho	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mrs Sara Robinson	Early Years Team Inspector (Former Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)