



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**WESTBROOK HAY SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Westbrook Hay School

Full Name of School	<b>Westbrook Hay School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>919/6021</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>292537</b>		
Address	<b>Westbrook Hay School Westbrook Hay London Road Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire HP1 2RF</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01442 256143</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01442 232076</b>		
Email Address	<b>westbrookhay@westbrookhay.co.uk</b>		
Head	<b>Mr Keith Young</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr John Stevens</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 13</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>290</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (212 boys; 78 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>67</b>	5-11: <b>186</b>
	11-13:	<b>37</b>	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>290</b>	Capacity for flexi-boarding: <b>14</b>
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>0</b>	
	Full:	<b>0</b>	Weekly: <b>0</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Rebecca Summers</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>24 May 2011 to 25 May 2011</b>		
	<b>22 June 2011 to 24 June 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 May 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 boarding was not carried out in conjunction with the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills, and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education and development in general. The full Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) report refers to an inspection in November 2004 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) under Children's social care/Boarding school.

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 Westbrook Hay School is a day school for pupils from the age of three to thirteen. Occasional boarding is offered to give older pupils the experience of boarding life. The school is co-educational until Year 6 with boys only until Year 8. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) takes children aged from rising three. The school aims to set high expectations and offer high standards of learning for all pupils, in a lively and stimulating environment which is also caring and secure.
- 1.2 The school was founded as a privately-owned boarding school for boys in 1892 in Bedford. The school moved to its current rural site between Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted in 1963 and in the 1983 became a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. The school occupies a neo-Georgian mansion which has been adapted to school use with a number of modern buildings, including purpose built facilities for middle and lower schools. The most recent development is the new suite for information and communication technology (ICT) which was opened in 2010, to provide a specialist teaching room and a separate non-specialist computer room for general use.
- 1.3 The school currently has 290 pupils. Lower school includes 95 pupils in the EYFS and Year 1, of whom 67 are in EYFS with 29 attending part-time. There are 93 pupils in middle school (Years 2, 3 and 4 ) and 102 in upper school (Years 5, 6, 7 and 8)
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school measured using standardised measures of ability is above the national average with a wide spread of abilities represented, including a proportion of pupils of far above average ability.
- 1.5 Pupils come from a range of family backgrounds, including the professions and business, and from a number of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds are represented. There are currently no pupils with statements of special educational needs. Forty-one pupils have been identified as having a learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD) and of these 29 receive specialist support from the school. Fifteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and of these one pupil receives support, the others being assessed as fluent users of English.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the Nursery and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

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

School	NC name
Robins	Nursery
Swallows	Nursery

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

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

- 2.1 The pupils' overall achievement is excellent, well supported by a broad and very well planned curriculum and good teaching. Pupils make excellent progress through the school, including the more able and those with LDD. Pupils become independent learners with the ability to think creatively. They greatly enjoy their work and take a great pride in their achievements. The broad curriculum offers a wide range of subjects which develops as pupils move up the school. For the younger pupils excellent topic work includes all areas of learning. The development of three science subjects for older pupils is a strength as is the opportunity to learn Latin or have a taster of Spanish. The best teaching is characterised by very clear planning, and excellent delivery of lessons. Very occasionally less succinct planning or delivery limits learning opportunities for the pupils.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent; pupils' spiritual development is strong, they develop self confidence and self esteem through their life in the school. Participation in thought-provoking assemblies and services stimulates their reflective attitudes and supports strong understanding of moral issues. Pupils respond to the high expectations and examples of the staff and absorb the values which are at the heart of the school's ethos. Social development at all ages is excellent, resulting in helpful attitudes, strong relationships and awareness of the less fortunate. Pupils of all ages are happy to take responsibility; and contribute to the smooth running of their school. Pupils live very happily and compatibly in this multicultural community. They respect each other's faiths and cultures and enjoy sharing celebrations and festivals. The school offers excellent pastoral care, fully supported by policies and procedures and the pupils feel cared for and safe. All the regulatory requirements for health and safety, and safeguarding, including safe employment procedures, are in place.
- 2.3 Governance is good; the governors fulfil all their legal responsibilities and have effective knowledge and oversight of the school. Governors are developing ways of becoming more closely associated with the day-to-day work of the school. The management and leadership of the school are excellent, and the team has significant strengths, in particular in bringing to life the aims and ethos of the school and the development of independent learners who are excited about their learning. As yet development planning does not include a detailed plan to identify whole school educational objectives. The school has fully addressed the recommendations of the previous inspection report. The school has built excellent links with parents who are highly supportive of the education, activities and care offered by 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. To formulate a development plan to identify areas for whole school improvement and to coordinate the work of departments.
  2. Develop the outside areas for the EYFS so that they can be used in all weather conditions, and more frequently and effectively, to promote child-initiated activities.



### **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' achievement is excellent and they are very well educated in accordance with the school's aim for pupils to realise their intellectual, social and physical potential. Pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skill in both curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- 3.2 Written work throughout the school is well presented and all pupils show pride in their exercise books. Their high-quality work is displayed throughout the school, for example Year 6 history projects, which were exemplary in the standard of presentation, research and use of ICT skills. Excellent creative writing was seen in work from the EYFS onwards. Pupils of all ages showed the ability to communicate articulately and to ask challenging questions. They read and listen actively using these skills to gather information which they are able to apply to their learning. Pupils have excellent mathematics skills and understanding which they use to solve problems in other subjects, fostering independent learning. Information and communication technology is used skilfully across the curriculum. Their physical skills are well developed as a result of the physical education and games programme. Both individuals and teams achieve much success in local and regional sports competitions. Year 6 pupils won the 2011 local independent schools' science challenge and every year pupils are successful in a wide range of ballet, music and speech and drama examinations.
- 3.3 Pupils' attainment cannot be judged in relation to average performance against national tests, but on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent. This is based upon the evidence of work seen in books and in class, from discussions with pupils at curriculum interviews, viewed in conjunction with standardised test data collected by the school. Although pupils no longer do national tests, in years up to 2009, results were in general far above the national average for maintained schools. Pupils are successful in gaining places at their chosen senior schools at the ages of eleven and thirteen, some winning places at highly selective senior schools. Each year a number of pupils win awards including academic, music or sporting scholarships. Pupils make excellent progress, as judged from the evidence seen during the inspection. The school uses regular standardised testing to evaluate progress, and this evidence also supports the judgement of excellent progress. Progress is excellent for pupils of all levels of ability. More able pupils are challenged well through the valuable variety of experiences offered, both in and out of lessons including extra-curricular activities. Perceptive questioning is used to extend learning and encourage pupils to think independently and to assess how well pupils are learning. As a result, they show excellent progress. Those with LDD are very well supported individually and by appropriate implementation of detailed individual education plans.
- 3.4 Pupils thrive in lessons; they work hard and greatly enjoy the wide range of opportunities provided. Pupils work well together and collaborate effectively and efficiently. They concentrate and apply themselves with enthusiasm, showing considerable interest in their work and activities and taking great pride in their school and their achievements. The pupils' success owes much to the positive attitude of the whole school community towards all areas of school life.

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

- 3.5 The school provides an excellent curriculum which covers all the requisite areas of learning and which creates independent learners, well prepared for their senior schools. The extra-curricular provision enriches the curriculum well, providing opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills which add to pupils' confidence and their sense of achievement.
- 3.6 Throughout the school the needs of the pupils are met. For example the transition between EYFS and Year 1 is managed very well. In Years 1 to 4, carefully planned cross-curricular work provides opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of skills and to see the links between subjects. Thus opportunities are given to learn and to apply literacy and numeracy skills to projects in other subjects. Science is taught throughout the school, and as separate science subjects for older pupils. There is good provision of languages, pupils learning French from Reception onwards, whilst scholarship groups have the opportunity to learn Latin, and pupils in Year 8 experience a taster Spanish course. This is part of a valuable programme of enrichment activities for Year 8 following their examinations. The imbalance in provision for music noted in the previous report has been fully redressed. Sport is a strength and it gives pupils of all abilities the opportunity to participate and to enjoy their sport and to recognise the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The new ICT facilities enhance the curriculum, and the two rooms now available give ample opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to other curriculum subjects. The provision for pupils with LLD is excellent. Individual needs are met and pupils learn the skills they need to become more confident learners in the classroom. Challenging work is planned for pupils who are gifted and talented, and they become independent and creative thinkers.
- 3.7 The extra-curricular programme offers excellent opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of activities. This has been successfully developed since the previous inspection. Activities range from archery, creative writing and dance to skiing. The programme is inclusive and makes good use of facilities at the school and in the area. Pupils clearly enjoy and engage in the varied activities offered. Since the previous inspection the music within the school has been enriched by many groups and ensembles including an orchestra and wind ensemble as well as a middle and upper school choir. Links with the community are excellent including links with the local church and a special educational needs class in a local school. The visits programme is extensive, including theatres, museums and places of worship and it supports the curriculum very well, whilst contributing to pupils' learning. Opportunities are given for pupils to be introduced to democracy and government. In Year 7, pupils visit the Houses of Parliament and Year 8 pupils take part in a stock market and financial awareness challenge enabling them to develop their financial understanding and skills. Pupils actively support a wide range of local and national charities. All the older pupils took part in a sponsored walk during the inspection which raised a considerable sum for a local charity.

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

- 3.8 Teaching is excellent overall, successfully promoting the pupils' progress and supporting the school's aims. The proportion of good and excellent teaching seen has increased since the previous inspection.
- 3.9 Teaching fosters intellectual interest, articulate responses, excellent behaviour, and a positive attitude to learning in the pupils. Teachers know their pupils very well indeed and cater appropriately for the needs of individual pupils. Most of the teaching is characterised by the outstanding rapport between teacher and pupils, excellent planning, and informative marking all of which leads to high-quality learning. Staff have strong subject knowledge and make effective use of the good range of resources available. In many lessons interactive whiteboards are used skillfully to involve pupils in the lesson and provide challenging and exciting sources of information, for example pictorial evidence in a history lesson. The Spanish starter course in place for Year 8 used an interactive language programme to fully involve pupils in the new language. The extensive grounds are also a valuable resource and were used during the inspection as a stimulus for painting in an art lesson, the resulting work showed the pupils' appreciation of their surroundings. Most teaching is planned with care, resulting in imaginative lessons, which capture the pupils' interest. Very occasionally less successful planning and delivery of lessons restricts the scope of pupils' learning. The respect and loyalty felt by the staff for the school is a highly effective role model and mirrored by the pupils in their attitude to their work and the school.
- 3.10 Marking is effective, giving pupils a clear indication of their progress and targeting areas for further development. Occasionally marking did not give enough guidance on how work might be improved, but considerable oral feedback is given in lessons. Reports and effort and attainment grades both help to give the pupils a clear idea of their progress, and they usually know the areas they need to work on. Assessment is managed well providing a successful system for tracking pupils, so that standardised data are used in conjunction with test and end of unit results to monitor the progress and learning of individuals and of groups.

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

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

- 4.1 The personal development of pupils is excellent. The school reaches out to all its pupils by achieving its aim to develop a caring and secure environment. There is a strong sense of community within the school which nurtures pupils' self esteem.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual development is strong. They become self-confident individuals who support and encourage others. They are proud of their school and their own and other people's success in it, yet they are sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils listen carefully in assemblies and respond thoughtfully to the messages being given. Pupils sang beautifully and from the heart in a hymn practice, enjoying being together as a community. Pupils interviewed said that they loved the opportunity to take part in a weekly evensong service to which parents are invited: they volunteer gladly to read.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral development is excellent, they have a clear understanding of right and wrong which is fostered by the very high expectations of staff and many opportunities to discuss moral issues; pupils' writing in response to a world disaster showed their sense of responsibility and understanding of world-wide moral and ethical issues.
- 4.4 The social development of the pupils is outstanding. They are aware of each other's needs and high standards of behaviour ensure that all feel safe and secure. They enjoy taking responsibility from an early age; younger pupils are reliable in their responsibilities within their forms. Through the work of the charities committee pupils have an excellent understanding of the needs of others and they take a lead in fundraising. The school council has given pupils a real voice in the school, and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development from an early age. Many pupils are committed to their work to gain eco-schools recognition. Senior pupils value the opportunities to take responsibility offered by the roles of prefects and head boy and girl and enjoy contributing to the life of the school. The house system is highly effective in promoting self worth and co-operation with each other.
- 4.5 The cultural awareness of pupils is excellent. Pupils from many cultures learn together harmoniously in the school community. They learn to understand and to value the cultures and faiths of their classmates and enjoy taking part in a range of celebrations of religious festivals. The multicultural community of the school is proudly recognised in displays of work relating to the Chinese New Year and in pupils' interpretations of the vibrant patterns in Islamic art. The charity programme enhances understanding of the wider community, providing excellent opportunities for pupils to make a contribution to the lives of those less fortunate than themselves.

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

- 4.6 The pastoral care of pupils is excellent. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed substantial structures for the recording and monitoring of the needs of all its pupils. The school has carefully prepared policies and procedures which place pastoral care at the heart of the school's ethos. Pupils' needs are carefully monitored, concerns communicated and appropriate support is offered.
- 4.7 All staff work together to ensure that the pupils feel safe, secure and happy. The staff know their pupils extremely well and it is evident in all areas of school life that pupils have confidence, and a real desire to do their best, and to succeed. During interviews and in the questionnaire, pupils said that they felt valued by their teachers and spoke about how much they enjoy school. Form tutors have daily contact and support them well in form time. Pupils value their friendships and relationships between pupils of all ages are very positive. They help each other unselfconsciously in class and are courteous members of the community.
- 4.8 The school has highly effective policies and procedures to promote good behaviour, to guard against harassment and bullying, and to deal constructively with the very occasional instances of unacceptable behaviour. In personal social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn both to think about how to behave and also how to get help if they need it. Pupils say that little bullying takes place and that staff deal with any issues effectively. The school's safeguarding policy meets requirements and is implemented successfully. All staff have received appropriate training in child protection and welfare matters. All necessary measures have been taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Arrangements to ensure health and safety are excellent and highly effective and the medical room makes comfortable provision for pupils who are ill. The school has prepared a three year plan in response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act and the plan to improve educational access for pupils with disabilities has been implemented in the most recent buildings.
- 4.9 From EYFS onwards, pupils learn about healthy eating and the importance of a varied diet, they are encouraged to make healthy choices. Posters about healthy eating are on display in the school and pupils learn about the importance of exercise. Pupils take exercise both in and out of doors in lessons and free time; outdoor play at break times and games practices is heartily enjoyed. Pupils have an exciting wooded outdoor area for adventurous and imaginative play as well as traditional play areas. Pupils learn to swim at school and in summer greatly enjoy the outdoor pool. The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years.

#### **4.(c) The quality of boarding education**

- 4.10 The experience of occasional boarding is very positive for the groups of pupils from Years 5 to 8 who stay in school for two nights every half-term. The school makes appropriate arrangements for the care and safeguarding of these flexible boarders and they enjoy the experience very much. The bedrooms and common room available are adequate for the limited use of occasional boarders and work is in progress to refurbish the bathroom facilities. Responses to the questionnaire showed that pupils felt that boarders get on very well together and that there are enjoyable activities in the evenings. When interviewed, these pupils discussed their experiences thoughtfully; their main comment was that they value boarding as time with their friends and that friendships were strengthened. They also observed that they got to know other pupils from other year groups very well when they stayed at school and that they learned useful new skills, especially in looking after themselves. The pupils spoke very enthusiastically about the regular Wednesday evening outings; they enjoyed being consulted about where they would like to go. None of the pupils included in the discussion were planning to move on to boarding schools but valued the increased independence they felt resulted from their boarding experience. The school has tackled all the recommendations made in the previous boarding inspection report.

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

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

- 5.1 The governance of the school is good, and fully supportive of the aims of the school. The governors gain an effective oversight of the school through well attended meetings, with regular headmaster's reports. They provide appropriate support to the leadership and management of the school. The governors offer a wide range of highly appropriate skills which are well used in the four committees and which further contribute to the insight and information available to the governing body. This committee structure ensures that the governors fulfil their responsibilities for educational standards, for financial planning and for investment in staff, accommodation and resources. Prudent financial planning and management has enabled the school to complete a building programme to provide first class purpose-built accommodation for two of the three age groups of the school. The school has invested appropriately in well-qualified staff and useful resources.
- 5.2 The governors have a good view of the working of the school from a number of sources including the work of the education committee. This committee reviews policies and areas of the school such as the destinations of leavers, the provision for pupils needing learning support and for the gifted and talented and has included discussion of the strategic plan and broad development plan. Individual governors have taken on links with individual departments for example EYFS and are forging useful relationships and understanding of the work being done. In the past year a number of the governors have visited the school in the morning to meet staff and to visit lessons. This has provided a picture of the work going on in the school but has not been developed into a monitoring role, as no formal reports are made on the visits although informal discussion takes place.
- 5.3 All statutory requirements are met. The governors are effective in discharging their responsibilities for child protection, welfare, health and safety throughout the school. The safeguarding policies and procedures are appropriately reviewed annually and the required annual report on safeguarding matters is received by the governing body.

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

- 5.4 The leadership and management of the school are excellent, in particular in realising the school aims and in the great care which is taken to implement policies and to safeguard pupils. Whilst new management systems have been successfully developed in most areas resulting in many improvements in the school, the work of heads of department remains as yet uncoordinated, resulting in occasional inconsistencies.
- 5.5 The senior team has developed a clear ethos, which puts both high educational standards and the happiness of the pupils at the heart of the school. This is fully supported by the staff, who are deeply committed to the school and its pupils. As a result of this leadership both the overall quality of the pupils' education and the standard of their personal development have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Considerable work has taken place to develop a comprehensive programme of assessment, which is used successfully to monitor the pupils' progress and to record both pastoral concerns and the work done to

support pupils. These two systems are now fully available to staff on the school intranet and are used successfully at a number of levels in the school.

- 5.6 The strategic plan, drawn up in conjunction with the governors identifies the major developments, primarily in buildings and facilities, needed. Although the senior team have identified some educational priorities these are not formally set out in a school development plan. As a result department development planning is not drawn together to support co-ordinated initiatives for improvement throughout the school. The heads of department undertake self-evaluation, curriculum reviews and produce departmental development plans which identify priorities including training needs with costings. In general long and medium term planning is clear and ensures good progression in subjects through the school. The appraisal process, which now includes all who work at the school, is undertaken by members of the senior team, and training needs and targets are identified. Monitoring by heads of departments is not yet co-ordinated with the appraisal outcomes to ensure that all teaching reaches the standard of the best through fully identifying best practice and identifying whole school areas for development. The result is occasional inconsistency in the quality of teaching.
- 5.7 The management of the school has been successful in recruiting and motivating high quality staff and is developing systems to support and develop them. Staff are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all children, including training in safeguarding and welfare health and safety.

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

- 5.8 The school has excellent links with parents, fully in accordance with its aims to develop a partnership with parents and to involve them in school life. The responses to the parental questionnaire show that parents are highly supportive of the school. In particular they indicated that they are pleased with the progress their children make, that the school offers an excellent range of subjects and areas of experience, including extra-curricular activities, that they can communicate easily with the school and that they receive timely responses to questions. Parents also appreciate the values and attitudes promoted by the school and the accessibility of information and policies. Very few negative responses or comments were received at any level in the questionnaire and there was no common theme to these responses.
- 5.9 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school and to support the work and progress of their children. Diaries are used to pass daily information about the work of younger pupils. Parents are able to offer their experiences to pupils, for example through giving talks about religious festivals. The parents' association and the form representative system gives many opportunities to take part in social events and fund raising to support the school; parents, pupils and staff enjoyed a golf tournament followed by a barbeque which took place during the inspection.
- 5.10 Parents and prospective parents of pupils receive all the required information, much of which is available on the school website. The parents' log-in area and the school intranet give access to details of the curriculum and resources available for pupils. Email is used to send full curriculum information before the start of the new school year and termly newsletters to parents. Parents' views are elicited in a leavers' survey and help to guide developments. All parents receive two full reports at Christmas and in the summer and a shorter report at Easter, and in addition, for pupils in the middle and upper school, two interim reports each term. A parents'



consultation evening takes place each year for each age group. Parents are able to email staff directly allowing quick and easy communication; parents said that they appreciated this easy, direct contact.

- 5.11 The school has a suitable complaints policy and the procedures set out are followed carefully. The school handles the concerns of parents with care. The quality of the links with parents has improved since the previous inspection.

**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. The aim for children to acquire good social skills and confidence is well met through the excellent knowledge staff have of all aspects of each child's development and their positive encouragement. The children achieve extremely well in all areas. Staff ensure that parents are actively involved in their children's education. Improvements since the previous inspection, including a purpose built department, increased management time, and the strong staff team show that the setting has good capacity for future developments.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are outstanding. The united team ensures that comprehensive policies, procedures and risk assessments work efficiently to safeguard children, promote equality, respect diversity and eliminate discrimination. Appointment checks confirm that adults are very suitable to work with children. The strong partnership with parents, useful relationships with local schools and outside providers contribute significantly to the learning experiences of the children. Pre-inspection questionnaires highlighted the parents' appreciation of the attitudes and values promoted by the school. The school seeks to improve what it does very thoroughly. Staff appraisal, team self-evaluation and regular meetings contribute to the successful identification of needs, such as outdoor improvements, and a clear vision for the future. Very effective use is made of the excellent resources to support learning.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. Through excellent understanding of differing developmental stages and careful observations, staff plan challenging and enjoyable work for each child across all learning areas. Dance, physical education and French are enhanced by specialist teachers. The welcoming and stimulating learning environment enables children to learn and make progress, they are proud of their work on display. Children do not have enough opportunity to make use of outdoor areas. In fine weather the adjacent outdoor areas encourage active, child-initiated learning, but the use of these areas is constrained by the timetable at present. Planning is very detailed for whole class teaching and directed activities, children respond very positively when making their own choices. Visitors to the school, such as a dentist, and outings, enhance learning. Key staff and outstanding relationships result in the children being exceedingly well cared for, during the day, in out-of-school care and as they progress to Year 1. Staff set high standards and provide excellent role models for considerate and healthy behaviour. All areas are checked regularly for safety.

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

- 6.4 The outcomes for the EYFS are outstanding. Children clearly enjoy their learning and many exceed the Early Learning Goals in all areas. Progress is excellent. All the children are very articulate, answering questions with much enthusiasm. Reading, writing and number skills are well developed and all use ICT very competently. The children are all very confident and inquisitive learners who enjoy working independently and ask pertinent questions. The children share and cooperate with each other sensibly yet participate enthusiastically in activities. They help each other, make appropriate choices and solve problems, responding to the high expectations set by staff. Children are happy to turn to an adult for comfort and support. During lunch, a happy social occasion, children show an excellent awareness of healthy eating. They demonstrate independence in personal hygiene.

**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 boarding houses and 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 Gwen Caddock	Reporting Inspector
Mr James Barnes	Formerly head, IAPS School
Mr Nicholas Parsons	Head of Department, IAPS School
Mrs Susan Sunderland	Head Mistress, IAPS School
Mrs Ann Stranack	Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector