



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BELMONT GROSVENOR SCHOOL

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Belmont Grosvenor School

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Full Name of School | Belmont Grosvenor School |
| DfE Number | 815/6017 |
| EYFS Number | EY340593 |
| Registered Charity Number | 962198 |
| Address | Belmont Grosvenor School Swarcliffe Hall Birstwith Harrogate North Yorkshire HG3 2JG |
| Telephone Number | 01423 771029 |
| Fax Number | 01423 772600 |
| Email Address | admin@belmontgrosvenor.co.uk |
| Head | Mrs Jane Merriman |
| Chair of Governors | Mrs Frances Trowell |
| Age Range | 0 to 11 |
| Total Number of Pupils | 200 |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (96 boys; 104 girls) |
| Numbers by Age | 0-2 (EYFS): 24 5-11: 123 3-5 (EYFS): 53 |
| Head of EYFS Setting | Mrs Julie Dent |
| EYFS Gender | Mixed |
| Inspection dates | 11 Nov 2014 to 12 Nov 2014 |

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection occurs over a period of two continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2011.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State 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. 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 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 Education (DfE) 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, although inspectors 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.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted informal discussions with children and examined samples of work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Chris Manville

Early Years Lead Inspector

Ms Diana Green

Team Inspector for Early Years (Pre-Prep Head,
IAPS school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Belmont Grosvenor School is a co-educational preparatory day school, founded in 2000, for pupils from the ages of 3 months to 11 years. Located in the village of Birstwith, just outside Harrogate in North Yorkshire, the school opened as a result of the amalgamation of two preparatory schools. The main school building, Swarcliffe Hall, dates from 1850 and stands in twenty acres of countryside overlooking the Nidd Valley. The school is run as a charitable trust and administered by a board of governors.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a rich, diverse, supportive learning environment, where happy children learn and grow; develop as effective communicators, become independent critical thinkers and decision makers; accept challenges; appreciate and respect differences; and live as informed, concerned and responsible members of society.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, a new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Co-ordinator has been appointed, and an area of the school grounds has been developed to provide an outdoor natural classroom.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection the school had 200 pupils on roll; 77 were in the EYFS, of whom 24 were under the age of three. In the EYFS, four children have English as an additional language (EAL) and all are fluent in English. No children in the EYFS have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), although four children were being monitored at the time of the inspection.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

| School | NC name |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Nursery | Nursery (birth to 2 years of age) |
| Tree Tops | Nursery (2 to 3 years of age) |
| Pre-reception | Nursery (3 to 4 years of age) |
| Reception | Reception (4 to 5 years of age) |

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with statutory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement:
1. Extend opportunities for the use of technology in learning, teaching and assessment throughout the EYFS.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

3.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 3.1 The setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Throughout the EYFS, practitioners succeed in fulfilling their aim of creating an environment where happy children can learn and grow. Carefully planned classrooms allow independent access to the high quality resources. Direct availability of a variety of outdoor areas, the school's extensive grounds and a woodland environment provides many opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom.
- 3.2 Adults use their excellent knowledge of how children develop to support learning through an excellent balance of adult-led and child-directed activities that engage children's interest and motivate high levels of involvement allowing children to follow their own ideas and use their imaginations. For example, children in Reception used a wide selection of natural materials gathered on a woodland walk to create original pieces of art.
- 3.3 An outstanding programme of enrichment activities, including swimming, French, music and movement, and dance, significantly enhances the early years' curriculum. Skilful questioning by staff promotes children's thinking, communication and language skills, problem-solving and creativity. Information and communication technology (ICT) provision is good, but is not fully embedded in teaching, learning and assessment throughout the EYFS. Carefully timed, individualised help provides highly effective support for children of all ages and abilities, including those with EAL and the more able, ensuring all children make excellent progress in relation to their various starting points, reaching and often exceeding the expected levels of development for their age. As a result, all children are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- 3.4 Links with parents, based on an open two-way dialogue, are excellent. Regular newsletters, detailed reports and parents' evenings keep them up to date with events within the setting and their child's progress. Parents are actively encouraged to participate in children's learning, for example through 'stay and play' sessions in the Nursery, and regular suggestions are given on supporting learning at home. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and in conversation with inspectors, parents expressed very positive views about all aspects of the provision, particularly how well children are looked after and the range of extra-curricular activities. Parents stated overwhelmingly that they would recommend the school to others.

3.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 3.5 The early years' provision makes an outstanding contribution to children's well-being. Children, including the very youngest, settle quickly and develop close, affectionate relationships with key people due to the sensitive personal care they receive. High expectations and consistent role-modelling by adults result in excellent standards of behaviour, consideration for others and co-operation throughout the EYFS. Adults support children's understanding of how to stay safe, setting clear boundaries as they encourage children to lead the way to the woodland

classroom. They develop the children's independence through small tasks such as laying tables and serving food at snack time.

- 3.6 Outdoor areas are used throughout the year to promote a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle, and regular physical activity introduces children to the benefits of exercise. Children are encouraged to become aware of the importance of healthy eating as they enjoy the freshly prepared lunches and begin to understand the importance of personal hygiene, for example washing their hands independently before eating.
- 3.7 Transitions within and beyond the EYFS are carefully planned ensuring children are securely prepared for their move to the next stage of their education. EYFS children regularly mix across age groups and have many opportunities to interact with pupils further up the school at shared assemblies, or when planting flowers in the nursery garden with older pupils.

3.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 3.8 The leadership and management of the early years provision are outstanding. Governance is strong, ensuring all regulatory responsibilities, including for safeguarding and checking the suitability of staff, are met. A dedicated EYFS governor maintains close links with the senior managers, and provides feedback to the full board. A comprehensive induction and training programme ensures staff know, understand and implement rigorously all policies and procedures relating to children's welfare and well-being. The very experienced senior management team are instrumental in ensuring the effective running of the setting.
- 3.9 Thorough risk assessments result in robust procedures for the prompt identification, reporting and rectifying of potential hazards, creating a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment.
- 3.10 Continuous self-evaluation, a commitment to reflective practice and detailed analysis of attainment data ensure any shortcomings in the educational programme, or other aspects of the provision, are quickly identified and action taken to improve. Opportunities for professional development training, identified through regular staff appraisal and supervision meetings, allow staff to continuously update and extend their knowledge and skills which have a positive impact on children's development.
- 3.11 Strong links with local agencies help to secure appropriate support, training and guidance for the benefit of all children including those with additional needs. Support for children with EAL is well-planned, with home languages valued whilst adults work closely with parents to support children's language development in English.

3.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 3.12 The overall quality and standards of the EYFS provision are outstanding. Children are happy and motivated to learn, ably supported by adults who know them extremely well. Children of all ages and abilities, including those with EAL, make consistently excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities, with the majority reaching and often exceeding expected levels of attainment by the age of three, and at the end of the EYFS.
- 3.13 Children under the age of three enjoy music and movement sessions, responding enthusiastically to action songs. Ample space and supportive staff allow the

youngest infants to explore the environment as they progress from crawling to walking. Older children in Nursery confidently share their thoughts and ideas through imaginative play, and develop secure fine motor skills manipulating a range of tools and mark-making instruments. In Reception, children appreciate the natural world, understanding that different seeds will grow into different plants.

- 3.14 In literacy, the oldest children form letters with increasing accuracy as they write phrases for a poem in response to autumn leaves. They use their developing numeracy skills to solve simple number problems such as finding one more or one less than a given number, or using mathematical language to compare the length of jellyfish tentacles.
- 3.15 Children of all ages are co-operative, share, show consideration for others and demonstrate an awareness of behaving safely. They feel safe, secure and happy due to the individualised care provided by the attentive staff.
- 3.16 Welfare and safeguarding procedures are clearly understood by all staff and rigorously implemented ensuring a safe, secure and welcoming environment for all. The leadership and management are very successful in evaluating practice and provision, and reflective practice is evident throughout the setting. As a result there is a shared vision for future development and strong potential for continued improvement. The setting has taken positive action to address the recommendations of the previous inspection. Planning now clearly identifies targets and next steps in children's learning, and excellent use is made of children's interests to ensure a meaningful context to learning.