



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

## **FULNECK SCHOOL STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Fulneck School

Full Name of School	<b>Fulneck School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>383/6117</b>		
EYFS Number	<b>EY2040380</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>5086581</b>		
Address	<b>Fulneck School Fulneck Pudsey Leeds West Yorkshire LS28 8DS</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>0113 257 0235</b>		
Fax Number	<b>0113 255 7316</b>		
Email Address	<b>principal@fulneckschool.co.uk</b>		
Principal	<b>Mr Trevor Kernohan</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Les Everett</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 18</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>423</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (223 boys; 200 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>0</b>	5-11: <b>104</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>28</b>	11-18: <b>291</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>356</b>	Capacity for flexi-boarding: <b>10</b>
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>67</b>	
	Full:	<b>61</b>	Weekly: <b>6</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>5 Oct 2010 to 6 Oct 2010</b>		
	<b>1 Nov 2010 to 3 Nov 2010</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. The inspection consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2004.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010\*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

\*These Standards Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31<sup>st</sup> August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of boarding was not carried out in conjunction with the Children's Directorate of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), 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 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 Fulneck School is a co-educational school which provides day and boarding education for pupils between the ages of three and eighteen. Founded by the Moravian Church in 1753 as separate boys' and girls' schools, it was merged into one co-educational establishment in 1994. The school is located within the Moravian settlement in Pudsey in West Yorkshire. The four members of the Provincial Elders Council of the Moravian Church, based in London, are the trustees of the school, although the school is governed by a local governing body.
- 1.2 The school aims to help pupils acquire knowledge, academic and social skills, and an enjoyment of learning designed to enable them to become responsible citizens and achieve economic well-being. It seeks to promote Christian values, and to encourage each pupil to adopt a healthy lifestyle and to feel safe. It strives to encourage pupils to make a positive contribution to the life of the school community and to society as a whole.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection the school had 423 pupils on roll, of whom 200 were girls and 223 were boys. There were 28 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), comprising Lambs Hill Nursery at Fulneck and the Reception class, 104 in Years 1 to 6 and 291 in the senior school, of whom 62 were in the sixth form. The school had 61 full-time boarders and 6 weekly boarders.
- 1.4 Pupils are from a range of cultural and economic backgrounds. Informal assessments are given to pupils entering the school up to Year 4; from Year 5 upwards they are given entrance tests. On average, up to one-fifth of the pupils in Year 10 are new, a number of whom are from overseas, mainly the Far East. The overall ability profile of the junior school is slightly below the national average. The ability profile of the senior school to GCSE is slightly above the national average; in the sixth form it is in line with the national average. A total of 35 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and 68 have learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). Of the latter, 26 are categorised as being on the School Action programme and 42 on School Action Plus. Virtually all Year 6 pupils transfer to the senior school annually, and make up half of the intake into Year 7.
- 1.5 Generally, from between under a half and three-fifths of pupils progress into the sixth form, to be joined by several new entrants to the school. At the age of eighteen virtually all go to university, securing places at their first choice.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

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

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

- 2.1 The school is providing an excellent educational experience for its pupils, fulfilling its aim to prepare them for their future lives. Pupils make excellent progress in the EYFS and the senior school, and good progress in the junior school. Most achieve high standards in relation to their abilities. They achieve results above the national average at the age of seven and roughly in line with the national average at the age of eleven. Results at GCSE are above the national average and at A level they are similar. Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. They excel in the excellent range of extra-curricular activities, reaching high standards in music, sport and a range of other activities. The overall quality of teaching in the EYFS and senior school is excellent and in the junior school good; it contributes effectively to pupils' progress, achievements and personal development. Teaching benefits from clear planning and well-managed classes, though information and communication technology (ICT) is not yet fully used to support the curriculum. An excellent assessment system provides first-rate information on pupils' progress and is used effectively by teachers. Marking is extremely helpful.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is outstanding throughout the school. Their excellent spiritual and moral development is clearly expressed in their relationships with one another and the staff, and their growing self-awareness. Pupils are prepared to take on responsibilities that introduce them to political and social commitment, and working for the common good. They realise the importance of understanding and respecting the beliefs and customs of those from different cultures. The levels of care, health, welfare and safety are outstanding, as is boarding provision.
- 2.3 The excellent governance and the management teams have worked hard and have provided the school with a strong teaching and learning ethos. Significant progress has been made since the last inspection but recent developments are not yet fully integrated into the work of all the staff. In response to the last inspection, they have introduced an excellent performance management system. There is now a development plan, though the education plan for the senior school does not yet provide clear indicators of time, cost and responsibilities. The junior school has an effective management structure and a suitable range of resources. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires indicate that parents are supportive of what the school does for their children and in discussion with inspectors, pupils affirmed that they enjoy being at 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. Organise the senior school educational development plan so that it clearly identifies priorities, how they will be achieved and evaluated, and the costs likely to be involved.
2. Continue extending the resourcing of ICT, and encourage the pupils' use and application across the curriculum.
3. Strengthen further the work already being done to improve the quality of teaching and achievement in the junior school.
4. Ensure that the newly developed outdoor area in the EYFS is fully used.

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

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

- 3.1 In the EYFS and the senior school pupils reach exceptional levels of achievement in relation to their abilities; in the junior school achievement is good. The school is making outstanding progress towards achieving its aims of helping pupils to acquire knowledge, academic skills, and an enjoyment of learning designed to enable them to become responsible citizens and to achieve economic well-being.
- 3.2 Pupils are confident in their knowledge, understanding and skills. In both the junior and the senior school, written work is extremely well presented and pupils produce some extended writing of good quality. Pupils are articulate and communicate their ideas effectively. In science and mathematics they develop good investigative skills, as seen in a junior school science lesson, and effective problem-solving techniques. Pupils demonstrate good skills in the use of ICT, as seen in a science class where they discussed using the Bradford Robotic Telescope based in Portugal. High quality practical work was observed, both in a sixth-form design technology lesson and in the inter-school technology day. Pupils demonstrate good command of subject-specific vocabulary and draw on previous learning effectively.
- 3.3 Pupils also achieve excellent results in extra-curricular activities, which contribute effectively to their personal development. Individuals and teams from both the junior and the senior school perform well at county and national level in different sports, while a sports scholarship to an American university has been won in Year 13. Pupils have also enjoyed success in London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art examinations, the World Challenge and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.
- 3.4 Attainment and progress in the EYFS are excellent. Results in national tests at the age of seven have been above the national average for maintained primary schools from 2007 to 2009, the last three years for which national averages are available, reflecting the good progress made. Results in national tests at the age of eleven over the same period have been below the national average for maintained primary schools, though in 2009 results in English and science were above the national average, indicating recent good progress in these subjects. Performance at GCSE is above the national average and shows good progress in relation to pupils' abilities, though performance is influenced by the arrival of new pupils from overseas at the end of Year 9, with about one-third of pupils achieving A\* to A and the great majority of pupils gaining A\* to C. At A level, results, similarly influenced by a new influx of pupils mainly from overseas, have been slightly above the national average, showing good progress. Just over a half of pupils achieve A to B grades.
- 3.5 In lessons and written work pupils apply themselves well, are keen to learn and respond willingly to the excellent teaching. They generally show a high level of learning, working in groups and individually effectively. Throughout the school, behaviour is exemplary and pupils enjoy extremely good relationships among themselves, with their teachers and with non-academic staff.



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

- 3.6 The excellent curriculum and extra-curricular activities fully meet the needs of the pupils. The school fulfils its aims to help pupils acquire academic and social skills, Christian values, and a willingness to make a positive contribution to the life of the school community and to society as a whole.
- 3.7 From the earliest years pupils have an outstanding curricular experience, designed to help them to become responsible citizens and to achieve economic well-being. In the junior school this experience is centred on the National Curriculum and enriched with swimming, French, drama, religious education and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). In the senior school Year 7 pupils continue to study the National Curriculum subjects, but with three sciences, Spanish instead of French, and food technology, drama, religious education and PSHCE. In Years 8 and 9 they can add either French or German. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 study a suitable core of subjects and choose one subject from each of the four option blocks on offer. The sixth-form pupils make their choices from up to twenty A-level subjects and take games and general studies. English and mathematics are available for GCSE re-sits if necessary.
- 3.8 The school has excellent provision for the different abilities and ages. In the junior and the senior school most classes are small and where it is thought advisable, pupils are placed in ability groups, which contribute to the often excellent progress that they make. The school has also introduced the Comenian gifted and talented programme for the most able pupils. The learning support unit effectively provides well for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through first-rate individual tuition, the production of appropriate learning materials and the guidance offered to staff. The department for English as an additional language also contributes well to the school's aims by providing guidance for teachers and individual or in-class support for pupils. In Years 10 and 11 some pupils choose EAL instead of a GCSE option and in the sixth form some pupils with EAL attend an international English language preparation course.
- 3.9 Excellent provision is made for pupils in readiness for the next stage of their lives. Transfer for pupils from the EYFS to the junior school and then on to the senior school is smooth. Pupils speak highly of the almost seamless passage from one school to the other. A well-organised careers structure in the senior school enables pupils carefully to consider the choices open to them. Carefully monitored work experience for Year 10 pupils, a comprehensive careers library, guidance on higher education possibilities in the sixth form and PSHCE are central to helping the school meet its aim to enable pupils to achieve economic well-being.
- 3.10 The excellent range of activities and visits contributes strongly to pupils' personal development. In the junior school activities include music, chaplaincy, a variety of clubs and sports, including martial arts. Junior pupils can learn Chinese, which is coached by sixth formers. Activities in the senior school range from music, sports and various clubs to The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and Chinese for beginners. Pupils' personal development is furthered by the excellent range of visits and joint events with other schools.
- 3.11 The school has extensive links with the community, furthering pupils' social and cultural understanding. Choirs contribute to local events, various open tournaments are held and the school has connections with various local sports clubs. The school

takes part in a consortium of state and independent schools with the local authority and Year 10 pupils participate in a regional quiz in geography. A seismometer in the physics department links with a university, and other schools in the UK and overseas. Senior pupils contribute to junior school art and modern foreign languages clubs.

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

- 3.12 Excellent teaching in the EYFS and the senior school, and good teaching in the junior school ensure that pupils make first-rate progress. This reflects a marked improvement in the junior school since the last inspection and the school's determination to fulfil its aim to develop academic and social skills.
- 3.13 In the junior school teachers plan effectively, building on what has been taught previously and matching work to the different abilities of the pupils. Lesson objectives are clear and shared with pupils. Teachers are knowledgeable. They provide opportunities for pupils to work in groups or independently, thus challenging them effectively, and explain ideas and procedures clearly. Less successful teaching results from rushed explanations and the failure to ensure that pupils have consolidated their learning. In the senior school planning is thorough, resources are used effectively and pupils are skilfully encouraged to be involved in their learning through the different techniques used. The arrangement of classes into ability sets enables teachers to pitch learning at the right level and ensure that pupils with EAL or LDD make progress commensurate with their peers. Opportunities beyond normal lessons successfully challenge pupils identified by the school as gifted and talented. Little use of ICT was seen, though it was used in specifically timetabled lessons for ICT and imaginatively in a Year 9 and a Year 13 lesson. Pupils also referred to using computers for research for their homework.
- 3.14 Teachers are aware of the individual difficulties of pupils with EAL or LDD and some good examples of work being tailored to their needs were observed. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and resources are used well. The best lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and include effective questioning techniques that encourage pupils to think for themselves and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively. Praise and encouragement help the pupils to enjoy the subjects studied. Pupils are often given opportunities to develop their independent learning through carefully set tasks.
- 3.15 The school has spent much time in developing an excellent assessment policy. In the EYFS, effective observation and recording techniques ensure that children's needs are met. In both the junior and the senior school excellent records are kept of pupils' progress. In the junior school, target setting is contributing to pupils' good progress, especially in English and numeracy. This is supplemented by knowledgeable self-assessment by pupils indicating how well they think they are progressing. Use of the 'traffic light' system is helpful. Though less prevalent than in the junior school, short-term target setting is also becoming common in the senior school. The excellent use of standardised tests means effective identification and support for those pupils who require it, enabling them make good progress. Detailed records are kept of pupils' performance and used to help teachers' planning. Marking throughout the school is of high quality and teachers use perceptive comments to help pupils make progress.

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

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

- 4.1 Pupils' personal development is excellent and signals the school's success in meeting its aims to promote Christian values and encourage pupils to make a positive contribution to the life of the school community and to society as a whole.
- 4.2 Pupils are fully aware that they are studying within a community strongly influenced by Christian values. Although some senior pupils show a detached appreciation of the school's religious dimension, they have no hesitation in recognising and accepting its values. Pupils of all ages, including those in the EYFS, benefit from the school's Christian ethos, which helps them distinguish between spiritual and secular values. Their recognition of the achievements of others indicates that they value the diverse qualities found in their community. Pupils willingly express their views, demonstrating confidence and self-esteem, though with due humility. Their involvement in assemblies and the junior school chaplaincy team reflect commitment to the school's values.
- 4.3 Pupils have high moral standards. In the junior school this includes appreciation of right and wrong and in the senior school, an understanding of economic and political morality through discussing minimum wages, free markets, central planning and the competing claims of countryside and city. From the EYFS to the sixth form, pupils recognise the importance of truth to themselves and others, living by the rules and their moral responsibility to those who are less fortunate through charity.
- 4.4 Pupils' social development is excellent. Throughout the school pupils take on responsibilities willingly. In the junior school, they act as class monitors, help younger pupils at playtimes and contribute to the junior school council. They use the 'pupils' voice' responsibly to encourage change in the school's practices. In the senior school, pupils willingly take on responsibilities as form captains, team and house captains, head boy and head girl, and members of the pupil council. Boarders also have a committee, as does the sixth form, where pupils exercise responsibility and value the chance of securing change. Throughout the school pupils praise and encourage the success of others, recognising how each contributes to the greater good. Through such activities and the issues they discuss in PSHCE, pupils in the senior and junior schools gain a good grasp of civic duties and responsibilities as well as the need for economic well-being.
- 4.5 The school's intake is culturally diverse, and pupils respond to this extremely positively. Pupils further develop their understanding of other cultures and their own heritage through subjects such as geography, history and music. In religious education, they learn of the different world religions and in PSHCE, of the importance of understanding and respecting those from different backgrounds. The range of visits to different countries and commitment to overseas charities broaden their perspective. Pupils' presentations observed in a senior school assembly reflected their respect for others and the importance of making the best of their own talents in the interests of all.

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

- 4.6 The overall quality of welfare, health and safety is excellent, enabling the school to fulfil its aim to encourage each pupil to adopt a healthy lifestyle and to feel safe. The pastoral care which pupils receive is outstanding, and in the EYFS and both the junior and senior school, pupils benefit from exceptionally close relationships with staff and each other. Strong features of this care are the management structures, the pastoral team's detailed knowledge of each individual pupil, and the role form tutors play in personal and academic mentoring. The house system in the senior school also contributes well.
- 4.7 The pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were highly positive in nearly every respect; they appreciate the help they are given both personally and in the classroom, and know that they have adults to turn to should they have difficulties. A small minority of pupils raised concerns about bullying and the fairness of sanctions. There was no evidence of these concerns in the course of the inspection. Pupils value the closeness of the school community, especially the friendships they form in their own and across year groups, and the opportunities they find for helping one another academically and socially. Positive behaviour has been promoted in the senior school by the merits system, now in its second year of operation. Since its introduction, the number of sanctions pupils receive has fallen significantly. The star system in the junior school runs on the same principles as the senior school's merits system. In this way expectations of behaviour remain consistently high.
- 4.8 The safeguarding policy meets all requirements and is implemented successfully. Child protection training for all members of staff is effective, and forms part of the induction process. Health and safety procedures are good and measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Comprehensive risk assessments cover buildings and grounds, subject areas and external visits. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the care of unwell pupils and staff are informed fully about individual needs and conditions. An accessibility plan has been written which is well designed to improve the educational provision for pupils with disabilities. The admission and attendance registers are accurately maintained and stored.
- 4.9 Pupils are encouraged to be healthy by developing good eating habits and by taking regular exercise. The catering department provides a good range of food options that are freshly prepared on a daily basis. Many pupils are engaged in extra-curricular sport, in addition to their timetabled physical education lessons.

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

- 4.10 The boarding experience plays a valuable part in the pupils' education and personal development, and makes an excellent contribution to the achievement of the school's aims. The relationships between house staff and boarders are strong, and pupils value the support of the staff and the efforts they make to create a secure and happy environment in the houses. The house staff take a real interest in their charges and work hard on their behalf.
- 4.11 The boarders have good relationships with one another. They enjoy their fruitful contact with day pupils in lessons, activities and house events. The boarding committee is actively engaged in broadening the boarders' recreational activities. The boarders enjoy their after-school and weekend activities: local shopping trips; bowling; and outings to football matches and an entertainment centre. These

contribute well to their social and cultural development. Boys and girls mix well at breakfast and dinner. The girls have responded positively to the provision of a later breakfast on Saturday morning.

- 4.12 The school has responded well to the boarding inspection recommendations of Ofsted in 2008. It now promotes knowledge of child protection systematically and issues relating to medication have been resolved. The reduction in the number of teachers undertaking boarding duties and the recruitment of new boarding staff have improved relationships, and the needs of overseas boarders to converse in their mother tongue have been carefully considered.
- 4.13 The accommodation for girls is more welcoming than that for boys. The décor in the girls' house is brighter and newer than that in the boys' house. Many of the bedrooms in the girls' house are single rooms or studies shared by two girls, whereas the boys are obliged to share in larger numbers. The boys, however, show no sense of grievance.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent and is a key factor in the school's success. Central to this are the academic and resources committees. Governors have a wide range of relevant skills and expertise. They are strongly involved with the financial stability of the school and their strategic planning aims to ensure effective educational provision within the means available.
- 5.2 Governors are fully aware of their responsibilities, carefully considering reports from the school's senior management, listening to parents, and making informal visits to aid their evaluation of the school's performance in relation to pupils' achievements and personal development. The bursar and the health and safety governor meet regularly and the chair of governors is a frequent visitor. Designated governors liaise with the learning support unit and the boarding houses, where two governors act as 'independent listeners', and oversee child protection, health and safety, and the EYFS. A small staff-governor liaison committee contributes to good collaboration.

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

- 5.3 Leadership and management are outstanding and successfully fulfil the aims of the school. The senior management team has a clear vision for the school and is working successfully towards it. The changes within the management structure in both the junior and senior schools since the last inspection have resulted in greater devolution of responsibility. This is working well. The junior school has a clearly defined structure for pastoral and subject responsibility which mirrors that of the senior school. Leadership and management are effective at all levels and have resulted in the excellent curriculum, the wide range of extra-curricular activities and the strong personal values of the pupils. Management has ensured that subjects have appropriate resources and suitably qualified staff. The centralised register of appointments is in order and the school follows national guidelines for the induction of newly qualified teachers.
- 5.4 The process of development planning is thorough, sets appropriate goals and is reviewed regularly through pastoral and curricular meetings and strong monitoring systems. The senior school education plan, however, lacks clear indications of timescales, costing, required actions and evaluation processes. Consultation on whole-school planning involves a broad range of stakeholders, including parents.
- 5.5 The system for performance management is excellent. It consists of a rigorous annual cycle of self-assessment, lesson observations and monitoring. This is supplemented by the examination of pupils' books and, in the junior school especially, teachers' planning. The excellent in-service training and induction provision is successfully impacting on teaching and learning, and on pupils' welfare. An effective process of safeguarding and safer recruitment exists which, along with a commitment to welfare and safety, ensures that the pupils feel well cared for and safe. Links between the EYFS, junior and senior school are excellent, greatly benefiting the pupils. Furthermore, administrative procedures ensure that the school runs smoothly and is kept extremely clean and tidy.

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

- 5.6 The school has a very effective close and co-operative relationship with parents and guardians, which is totally in accordance with its published aims. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents indicated that they are extremely pleased with the progress made by the pupils, the pastoral care given by the staff and the promotion by the school of worthwhile values.
- 5.7 The EYFS, junior and senior schools provide informative handbooks for parents. Newsletters are sent out regularly and recently the school has experimented with sending them by email. Many parents, including those overseas, indicated in the questionnaire responses that they welcome the new email and texting communication system. The officially required information, including policies and procedures, is posted on the school's well-presented website. The parents of boarders are also kept well informed. The school has an attractive prospectus and lively magazine.
- 5.8 Parents of pupils in the junior school receive five written reports a year and those in the senior school, two. Full reports provide comments on progress and include targets for the pupils to achieve. They contain, for pupils from Year 1 upwards, self-assessment and target setting. The reports give specific and helpful information on pupils' attitudes, their progress in subjects and their contribution to school life. The recording of targets on reports is welcomed by parents and pupils. Interim reports provide a briefer, but still informative, snapshot.
- 5.9 An active parents' forum exists in the junior school, and a similar scheme for parental involvement in the senior school is close to fruition, with a number of parents already volunteering to be members. The parents' and friends' association, covering both sections of the school and actively supported by members of the school's senior management, is thriving. It has recently given funds for sixth-form leadership training and financed a trip out for the form that has achieved the most merit awards.
- 5.10 Parental concerns are almost always dealt with informally through direct contact with parents. There is a well-structured formal complaints procedure. Any complaints that are raised by email or in writing receive detailed and sensitive treatment. Parents commented in the pre-inspection questionnaires on the speedy responses they receive from the heads of both the junior and the senior school.

**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 EYFS is outstanding. Staff create a stimulating place to learn, where children's safety and well-being are central to practice. Staff are committed to meeting children's individual needs. Meticulous planning, along with keen observations and sensitive, yet challenging relationships, ensures children thrive and achieve highly throughout the EYFS. The outstanding links with parents are a key strength and create a true partnership in learning. Staff constantly develop their practice through well-established links with the local authority and other schools. Robust systems for reviewing the practice guarantee continuing improvement. All issues have been addressed from the previous inspection.

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

- 6.2 Leadership and management are outstanding. They inspire a dedicated team to reflect on and develop their practice. Stringent policies, procedures and risk assessments safeguard the children effectively. Staff share an excellent vision, which guides their planning, practice, and the longer-term development of teaching and learning. They organise the indoor areas efficiently and imaginatively to provoke children's thinking and learning. The attractive outdoor areas inspire creativity and problem solving, although the stimulating newly developed area is under used. High staff ratios and a successful key person system, along with excellent adult-child relationships, ensure that all children fulfil their potential. Parents highly value the wealth of information they receive about their children's development and the opportunities to share in daily learning.

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

- 6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. Staff expertly and sensitively support children's learning. They challenge children's thinking, show a genuine interest in their ideas and value their achievements. The classrooms are bright and imaginatively equipped. The Nursery is organised extremely well and enables children to choose freely and become independent learners. Staff prompt exciting learning experiences in the well-resourced outdoor areas when they are used and through a range of interesting trips. Exceptional planning is based on insightful observations of children's achievements and interests. It ensures a stimulating and relevant curriculum, and targets individual needs successfully. Staff are consistent, calm and positive in their management of behaviour, and take every opportunity to reinforce children's understanding of safety. A major strength of the EYFS is the ease of transition between classes. Flexible learning arrangements and excellent familiarisation processes ensure that children move confidently to the next stage.



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

- 6.4 Outcomes for children are outstanding. Children reach exceptional levels of achievement in all areas of learning by the end of the EYFS. They become absorbed in their chosen activities, have fun acting out stories and learn through creative, practical experiences. Their literacy and numeracy skills develop rapidly through a well-structured, active approach. Children are introduced to ICT, and helped towards an increasing knowledge of the world in a wide range of role-play scenarios. They explore the natural world with curiosity as they dig, plant and experience the changing seasons. Children develop a strong sense of keeping themselves safe as they move about the school grounds. They make healthy eating choices and develop good hygiene practices. Children develop competent physical skills during focused physical education sessions and on challenging outdoor climbing equipment, although they have limited times in which to choose to climb and balance. Children's polite, caring and friendly qualities reflect the strong school ethos, and the excellent example provided by staff.

**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

Mr Terry Dillon	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Jane Priestley	Assistant Headteacher, IAPS school
Mr Philip Skelker	Headteacher, HMC school
Mrs Anne Wood	Former Head, SHMIS school
Mr Neil Jones	Headteacher, IAPS school
Ms Joanne Blank	Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector