



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

HIGHFIELD PRIORY SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Highfield Priory School

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| Full Name of School | Highfield Priory School |
| DfE Number | 888/6009 |
| EYFS Number | EY312963 |
| Registered Charity Number | 532262 |
| Address | Highfield Priory School Fulwood Row Fulwood Preston Lancashire PR2 5RW |
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| Email Address | dwilliams@highfieldpriory.co.uk |
| Headmaster | Mr David Williams |
| Chair of Governors | Mr David Preston |
| Age Range | 2 to 11 |
| Total Number of Pupils | 243 |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (138 boys; 105 girls) |
| Numbers by Age | 3-5 (EYFS): 94 5-11: 149 |
| Number of Day Pupils | 243 |
| Head of EYFS Setting | Mrs Karen Boardman |
| EYFS Gender | Mixed |
| Inspection date/EYFS | 18 May 2010 to 19 May 2010 |
| Final (team) visit | 21 Jun 2010 to 23 Jun 2010 |

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 March 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 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard is as follows.

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

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

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

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Highfield Priory School is a registered charity run by a board of governors, the majority of whom are current parents. They are also trustees of the charity. The governors' aim is to provide an environment in which each child develops their talents and aspirations and achieves their full potential. The core values that are the basis of the school's aims are tolerance of others' beliefs and opinions and an open and honest approach in all that is done. On a daily basis, the school aims to provide a high quality education tailored to individual need.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1938 as a co-educational preparatory school. Following expansion it located to its present eight-acre site, two miles from Preston, in 1970. In 1973, a parents' consortium purchased the school and established it as an educational trust and limited company. In 1990, provision was extended to cater for boys and girls from two years of age. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children are based in their own accommodation within the newer part of the school.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, provision and resources for ICT, design and technology (DT) and science have increased, the range of extra-curricular activities has grown significantly and a number of new policies have been implemented. Provision for the EYFS, in particular the facilities for nursery children, has been refurbished and outdoor resources for all EYFS children have increased significantly.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there was a total of 243 pupils on roll, of whom 138 were boys and 105 girls. The EYFS consisted of 94 children, comprising 46 boys and 48 girls. Of these, 32 attended full-time and 62 part-time. The pupils' ability profile is above the national average. The pupils are mainly from Preston and the surrounding areas. Most are from professional and business families and they represent a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures.
- 1.5 One EYFS child has a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and ten have English as an additional language (EAL); however all are fluent in English. In the remainder of the school no pupils have English as an additional language and twenty have been identified as requiring support with aspects of their learning. An offer of a place at the school follows interviews with parents and a taster day spent at the school to assess a pupil's general ability.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils in all parts of the school, including the EYFS, receive an excellent education. The school achieves its aim that all pupils develop their talents and aspirations and fulfil their potential. The high quality and effectiveness of the teaching significantly contribute to excellent standards, and to progress that is good, and on occasion rapid, in relation to pupils' abilities. Standards in art and design throughout the school are excellent. Pupils achieve extremely well in a wide range of sporting areas both regionally and nationally. Their successes in musical, dramatic and artistic extra-curricular activities are shared with the school during various performances and exhibitions. Pupils' confidence, eagerness to discover and willingness to share ideas are common factors of fast-moving lessons in which their behaviour is exemplary.
- 2.2 The high quality of pastoral care makes a significant contribution to pupils' excellent personal development. The school meets its aim to nurture pupils' self-confidence, integrity, moral judgement and consideration for others. The valuable academic support and guidance of teachers significantly influences pupils' standards. Across all ages thoughtful pupils reflect carefully upon their actions. Their strong sense of environmental responsibility is reflected in the institution of various recycling procedures. The extremely courteous pupils are sociable and take pride in their contributions to school life. Across the school they live harmoniously together, respect each other and celebrate the diversity of nationalities within their midst. In conversation, pupils displayed their confidence and expressed their enjoyment of learning. Their affection for their school is clear.
- 2.3 Governance of the school is good overall and enables the school to meet its aims. Governors understand their school and ensure that plentiful, high quality resources support teaching and learning effectively within a well-kept and regularly refurbished environment. The pupils are suitably safeguarded. Until recently, governors did not oversee the implementation of appointment procedures. This has now been rectified. Governors' wide range of skills does not include educational experience. Senior leadership is excellent overall. By the time of the main inspection visit senior managers had rectified administrative errors in the appointment of non-teaching agency staff. The senior team manage the school very efficiently. They have extremely high expectations and clear vision. Excellent relationships exist with parents who are strongly supportive of almost every aspect of school life, especially the success their children have in gaining entry to the senior schools of their choice. The school has successfully met the recommendation of the last inspection to improve the consistency of marking. Regular marking is now complemented by provision of detailed, monthly progress reviews and individual performance targets for each pupil.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended, and therefore it was required to:
- implement all parts of the safeguarding policy correctly [Regulation 3.(2)(b), under Welfare, health and safety and, for the same reason, Regulation 4(2)(d), under the Appointment of Staff and Regulation 4C(2)(b) under the Central Register of Staff];
 - ensure that the ratio of hand-basins to WC's in the girls toilets meets the requirements [Regulation 5(k), under Premises and Accommodation].
- 2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified the above shortcomings, as noted in the text of the report.
- 2.6 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

(ii) Recommended action

- 2.7 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that administrative procedures for the appointment of non-teaching agency staff continue to be implemented correctly by senior managers, and overseen rigorously by governors.
 2. Finalise and implement plans for a governor with educational experience to join the governing body.
 3. In relation to the EYFS, further develop the outdoor provision for reception children.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The pupils are well educated and have a real sense of pride in their achievements; they continue, as at the previous inspection, to develop their particular skills and talents to the full. The EYFS children have an excellent start to learning, demonstrating high levels of enjoyment, imagination and creativity. Throughout the rest of the school, the thorough grounding provided in all subjects promotes excellent standards and facilitates progress which is at least good and on occasion rapid in relation to pupils' ability.
- 3.2 High quality literacy and numeracy skills are applied well. The pupils are articulate and use their excellent subject vocabularies to good effect, especially in DT where references to design processes, materials and tools use accurate terminology. Imaginative descriptions of Tudor explorers' journeys by Year 5 pupils demonstrated the effective application of creative writing skills to illustrate historical facts. Pupils' ability to read fluently, listen effectively and reason logically is particularly evident as they work on their 'simmering activities', a range of individual problem-solving tasks for which there is no definitive solution. In all areas of mathematics high quality skills are applied well. Year 6, for example, presented their findings from a range of geographical field work using accurate graphs, charts and tables. Whilst involved in scientific investigations and experiments pupils use their extensive subject knowledge effectively as they work safely on their own and in groups, recording their results clearly. Competence with ICT is evident across the school. Working on the Year 6 Gazette, pupils used graphics, various fonts and digital photography imaginatively, and the excellent research and desktop publishing skills used by Year 4 resulted in high quality advertising posters and holiday brochures. Outstanding work in all areas of art demonstrates pupils' ability to use all mediums to maximum effect, and their large scale sculptures are imaginative and creative.
- 3.3 Numerous achievements in extra-curricular activities illustrate the breadth of pupils' success in a number of areas. They regularly represent the county in a range of team and individual sports, and are highly successful in swimming, athletics and chess championships both regionally and nationally. Many gain the highest grades in a wide range of individual instrumental and speech and drama examinations.
- 3.4 Results in national tests at the age of eleven over the last three years for which comparative data are available have been excellent when compared with the national average for maintained primary schools. Pupils make good progress over time in relation to their ability profile, which is above the national average.
- 3.5 Throughout the school, the quality of learning is excellent. Pupils exemplify the school's success in fulfilling its desire to create confident, self-motivated and independent learners. The excellent listening skills, attentiveness and concentration exhibited in a Year 3 games lesson ensured that pupils were clear about their learning objectives and advanced their progress. Pupils evaluate their work regularly and know exactly what they need to do to improve further.

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

- 3.6 Excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision from EYFS to Year 6 covers all areas of learning effectively and meets the school aim to ensure each pupil has access to a wide, high quality selection of activities in and out of the classroom. Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted imaginatively across all subjects and ages. The school nurtures scientific and technical skills extremely well. The high value placed by the school on creativity is evident in the wealth of imaginative and visually stimulating displays that strongly support academic study. For example, the scientific dissection of flowers in Year 5 science was complemented by the study of Georgia O'Keefe's work that inspired high quality, large scale original flower paintings. Resources such as the library are used effectively to augment learning, encourage research and as a quiet area for reflection. ICT makes a significant contribution to recording and illustrating work, for research and to store information. For example, digital photography and word processing were used effectively by Year 1 pupils to record their investigation of forces on playground equipment in Withy Park. Curricular provision is supported by comprehensive, detailed planning.
- 3.7 A wide range of outstanding experiences enliven learning for EYFS children. Because the school successfully adapts provision to challenge, support and enable all pupils from Years 1 to 6 whatever their needs or ability, they achieve their potential. Effective provision for pupils requiring specific learning support is well documented, carefully monitored and regularly reviewed. Pupils understand what is expected of them in each subject because they discuss individual targets for their learning with their teacher each half-term.
- 3.8 Classroom learning is significantly enriched by an extensive and imaginative range of high quality activities, which are appreciated by parents and well-supported by pupils. Visits to specific workshops, museums and places of historical interest enhance understanding. Field trips enable pupils to apply wide-ranging geographical and ecological skills on site. The chess club challenges pupils intellectually. Sporting skills are enhanced in a wide array of sporting clubs, and art and ballet clubs expand pupils' creative techniques successfully. Over half of the pupils in the school enjoy participating in the wide range of musical activities on offer.
- 3.9 Pupils' good understanding of their locality is heightened by productive community links, including the eco club which led to Year 2 assisting with clearing litter from local areas. The understanding that pupils have of those needing help locally is raised through strong support for local charities. Sporting links with local schools broaden pupils' social experiences effectively. Year 6 pupils had excellent experiences of life in the world of work when they applied for posts on their newspaper; they composed CVs, completed application forms, attended interviews and were given job descriptions, all of which they thoroughly enjoyed.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.10 The quality of teaching identified at the previous inspection has been improved upon and is now outstanding in both the main school and the EYFS. Teaching contributes significantly to pupils' progress and meets the school's aim to enable each pupil to reach their potential. Teachers' skills in using ICT have increased further since the last inspection.
- 3.11 Throughout the school, teachers use their extensive knowledge of pupils' needs to adapt work so that it challenges, motivates and sustains the interest of all. For example, when Year 4 pupils were constructing a large-scale coral reef collage the teacher's exceptional guidance for each pupil resulted in rapid progress and excellent results. The requirements of individual education plans are met both in planning and in lessons. The effective use of strategies from such plans during a Year 5 ICT lesson, when both individual and group targets were amended accordingly, ensured that provision matched needs and encouraged progress.
- 3.12 The high expectation of teachers and the successful balance of teacher-directed and independent learning tasks, together with use of a wide range of methods, motivate pupils effectively. Excellent, detailed daily lesson planning shows clearly how skills and knowledge are introduced over time. Planning for the longer term is clear, well presented and indicates the wide range of approaches and resources used over time. The clear discussion of learning objectives at the beginning of lessons ensures that pupils understand what is expected of them. Perceptive and challenging questioning, as in a Year 1 lesson about time, assists teachers to move pupils forward individually in their learning. Excellent group and paired activities capture pupils' imagination and sustain their interest.
- 3.13 Behaviour is exemplary because lessons move quickly and interest pupils. Teachers' extensive subject knowledge, high quality guidance and skilled support are significant factors in promoting progress and, in physical education across the school, in extending and refining various individual and group sporting techniques. The efficient use of excellent resources enhances learning experiences. In particular, the use of interactive whiteboards, especially in mathematics, encourages pupils to solve problems together and share their reasoning with the group.
- 3.14 The quality of marking for older pupils has improved since the previous inspection. A significant amount of excellent marking offers clear advice on why work is judged good, offers further challenge and provides guidance tailored to individual need. Teachers provide high quality support as they assess progress and mark books during lessons. The individual targets and effort grades discussed with pupils each half-term complement marking in books well. Teachers make excellent use of the analysis of assessment information gathered over time to adapt learning and monitor progress. Details from the assessment of pupils with specific learning needs contribute to individual learning programmes, which are used regularly to ensure that provision matches need. In their questionnaire responses, parents expressed their view that teaching promoted progress, worthwhile values and attitudes.

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, demonstrating that the school achieves its aim to ensure a secure level of self-confidence, integrity, good moral judgement and consideration for others. The pupils relate extremely well to each other and their teachers, and by Year 6 they are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and are confident in managing their learning.
- 4.2 From the EYFS to Year 6 spiritual development is excellent. EYFS children readily share their feelings and ideas with teachers, whom they trust. From Year 1 to Year 6 pupils' high self-esteem and self-confidence are nurtured well by staff. This is further raised through the communal acknowledgment of achievement of all types. Consideration and appreciation of matters of importance in religions such as Buddhism are enhanced through studies in religious education. Whilst reflecting carefully on their reactions to different situations and matters of the moment during assemblies, pupils are mature and thoughtful. Pupils discuss and identify the values they hold important during PSHE lessons.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral development is excellent. EYFS children and younger pupils have a clear view of right and wrong and a strong sense of fair play. Older pupils understand the importance of rules in school and in society. Their informed views on the environment have led to them instituting a range of recycling measures throughout the school and the local area. Year 5 studies of the concept of fair trade led them to devise their own perceptive fair trade logos. Older pupils are well informed and speak knowledgeably about issues affecting them and society such as drugs, alcohol and smoking. Their clear views on such matters are guided well during PSHE discussion. Pupils share and expand their strong moral views when they participate in special workshops during visits from the Preston Life skills Centre.
- 4.4 Pupils' excellent social development is apparent in their easy interaction with each other, which is characterised by courtesy and politeness. During recreational times pupils of different ages mix together happily, and older pupils are keen to care for their younger counterparts. Younger pupils' identification of the qualities they look for in others is highlighted on their class 'friendship trees'. Pupils' pride and enjoyment in their work as school council representatives is evident as they voice their views and opinions maturely. They feel that their views are heard, valued and acted upon, especially their suggestions for their favourite foods to be included on the school menus. Prefects and monitors perform their duties extremely well around the school and are keen to talk about their work. Social awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves is highly developed and enhanced through their charitable giving. Pupils are socially confident and practise these skills often when they meet other schools for various sporting and competitive events.
- 4.5 Pupils' excellent cultural development and appreciation of cultural diversity are enriched by the range of cultures in the school. They are respectful and sensitive toward their different beliefs. Their understanding is deepened through visits to local places of worship such as the church, mosque and Hindu temple. An extensive understanding of world cultures is significantly enriched through curriculum studies such as Year 2's work on world homes and Year 5's studies of Africa. Pupils' taste for world cuisine was increased during the recent international food week when, each day, they enjoyed menus from different parts of the world. Knowledge of literary culture is wide across the school, developed through visits by authors and

participation in a Shakespearian workshop. Knowledge of art and music is wide and demonstrated in the excellent range of art, sculpture, textile designs and musical performances throughout the school.

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

- 4.6 Pastoral care is excellent. The systems in place foster pupils' standards and progress, and support their personal development effectively throughout the school, including the EYFS. The school pays good attention to pupils' welfare, health and safety and meets its aim to improve facilities in order to provide pupils with a safe and well-maintained environment.
- 4.7 In conversation, pupils of all ages say they are supported extremely well. In their questionnaire, many parents commented on the high quality of pastoral care the school offers to both pupils and parents. The systems in place to support pupils are implemented effectively. Academic support is closely linked to individual need and promotes progress. Each half term individual effort grades and targets are discussed with pupils and shared with parents, which enables both to understand present progress and what is required to improve further.
- 4.8 Personal support for all age groups, together with good role-play opportunities in PSHE, is caring and sensitive and helps pupils to deal with a range of situations they encounter. The weekly discussion of pastoral issues by senior managers ensures close monitoring of concerns and enables support to remain effective. Pastoral records contain details of the strategies used to assist pupils and the effect of these over time. Electronic records, which are monitored weekly by senior managers, list pastoral concerns and allow staff to access and add information at any time. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent.
- 4.9 From the EYFS to Year 6 pupils know exactly what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They understand what bullying means and how it can affect the community. They know to whom they can turn if bullied, and are confident that matters will be dealt with speedily. The classroom posters reminding pupils of the high expectations of staff regarding attitudes ensure that behaviour remains high profile. Pupils are safeguarded suitably and staff checked appropriately for safe access to children. All staff are trained in protecting children. At the time of the initial visit administrative errors had occurred in the appointment of non-teaching agency staff. These were rectified by the time of the main inspection.
- 4.10 Health and safety documentation is thorough. Appropriate measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. The guidelines for the assessment of risks throughout the school and grounds, and for school visits, are implemented correctly and any findings dealt with swiftly. Medical needs are suitably met, with satisfactory facilities for pupils who become ill during the school day. Sufficient staff are first-aid trained, including paediatric first aid for EYFS children. The school's accessibility plan details appropriately how those with learning or physical disabilities will be catered for, in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA).
- 4.11 Pupils understand what constitutes good health. They study health issues thoroughly in science, enjoy healthy menu choices and contribute ideas to the school menu plans. They have regular exercise and are fit. The admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governance of the school is good overall. The governors are committed to the school ethos, the care and development of pupils, the standards they achieve and the school's continuing success. Oversight of daily life is efficient and a major factor in enabling the school to achieve its aims. The governing body is primarily composed of current parents. No governor has educational experience. Plans are in place to rectify this situation. In response to discussions regarding the composition of the governing body, plans are also in place to increase the ratio of non-parent governors. The governors offer a wide range of skills, with the exception of education, which benefits the school.
- 5.2 The extensive daily involvement of governors in school life, together with their regular meetings and full reports from the head teacher, enable them to recognise areas of strength and those requiring further development. Governors monitor school policies, attend school functions and receive presentations from senior managers to update them regarding provision. The governors' strategic plan indicates their priorities and shows that they know how they wish the school to progress. Continuing development and good maintenance of the premises, expansion of resources and significant investment in staff are evidence of careful fiscal management over time. The defect in the girls' washroom, identified at the first visit, was corrected by the time of the final visit. The governors are highly supportive of new initiatives and strongly encourage staff to develop personally and professionally for the benefit of pupils. The chair of governors is a valuable source of support and advice to the head.
- 5.3 Governors discharge their responsibilities regarding new legislation suitably. They have had specific training in these areas and, on occasion, seek the advice of consultants. The regularity and rigour of governors' oversight of the implementation of appointment procedures by senior staff has developed recently. The governors know that errors in appointment procedures, identified at the first visit, were rectified by the time of the main inspection.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 Leadership and management of the whole school, including the EYFS, are excellent and meet the school's aim to promote and facilitate the sharing of best practice for the benefit of pupils.
- 5.5 The high aspirations and consistent quality of senior leadership provide clear direction on the way forward, ensuring that all share the same vision. The outstanding quality of the education, the highly successful pastoral care and pupils' excellent personal development reflect the success of their leadership and management. Middle managers' efficient organisation and management of their areas of responsibility move the school forward. Effective curriculum management ensures that pupils receive a progressive, stimulating and wide programme of learning, tailored to their needs.

- 5.6 Senior managers regularly review and revise school policies and procedures. The information from such evaluations is used well to identify areas of strength and aspects for development, to set priorities, to raise standards and to contribute to the school development plan. The detailed ongoing monitoring of progress of each target by senior managers ensures that they know how exactly how plans are advancing and highlights areas of continuing concern. Curriculum managers monitor their subject areas efficiently, order their priorities and plan ahead carefully.
- 5.7 Senior managers secure high quality, experienced staff who offer a wide variety of skills and expertise. Extensive training opportunities are strongly promoted and closely linked to whole school development and to individual staff need, as identified during regular appraisal. Staff are constantly updated and trained in matters of safeguarding, health and safety. Non-teaching staff contribute well to pupils' personal development through their support roles.
- 5.8 At the time of the first inspection visit administrative errors were identified in the appointment of non-teaching agency staff. Senior managers rectified this situation by the time of the main visit when procedures were implemented correctly.

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

- 5.9 Relationships with parents are excellent. As at the previous inspection, the school achieves its aim to establish a close relationship between parents and teachers in order to meet the needs of each child.
- 5.10 Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire demonstrate parental satisfaction with almost every area of school life. A large number of parents made specific comments concerning their appreciation of the helpfulness of teachers and the availability of staff to see them whenever they requested it. Parents are happy with communication channels between home and school.
- 5.11 Parents are fully involved in school life. A strong parents association raises a significant amount of money for additional resources to enhance pupils' learning. The organisation has excellent relationships with the school and supports all events, providing assistance of many types that is much appreciated by staff. The school's website has an active parents section, which enables them to be updated about the everyday life of the school. News is entered regularly; pupil events are listed and reported on fully. Curriculum evenings inform parents of what their children are learning. A number of parents visit the school to talk to pupils about their professions and lifestyles. Parents who may have a concern or query regarding their child's work or progress may contact the school at any time.
- 5.12 A wide range of useful and regular information to parents ensures that they are constantly updated of school events, studies and news. The informative newsletter acknowledges pupils' successes and highlights areas of learning by specific year groups. The professional annual magazine again highlights success, and pupils are proud that their own contributions will be read by their parents. The year's considerable successes are summarised in the magazine. The 'Gazette', the magazine compiled and produced by Year 6, is an effective vehicle which informs parents of their children's views and activities. The colourful prospectus contains helpful information, updated regularly, that is relevant to the needs of prospective parents. The website informs parents of the school's aims and ethos and provides access to school policies, all of which are also available to parents at the school. Parents learn of how their children are progressing through a wide range of

information including formal meetings, records of reading progress, effort grades, targets and full academic reports. Parents have the opportunity to discuss the content of reports with staff. Almost all reports inform parents about what their child knows, the specific progress made and exactly what is required to improve.

- 5.13 The school has a clear procedure for parental complaints and handles concerns suitably. Concerns are recorded suitably. No formal complaints have been made 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 excellent knowledge of all aspects of each child's development by every member of staff, careful planning and exciting use of the accommodation ensure that the aim to provide a happy, supportive learning environment which promotes excellence is well fulfilled. Children achieve extremely well irrespective of ethnicity, gender or disability. Strong links with parents and outside agencies help to provide a good start to the children's education. Careful self-evaluation produces innovative plans to sustain high standards. Since the previous inspection, the nursery outdoor area has been imaginatively developed.

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

6.2 Leadership and management of the setting are outstanding. Effective implementation of comprehensive policies, procedures and risk assessments ensure that all children are safeguarded well, equality is promoted and diversity respected. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. Appointment checks ensure that adults are suitable to work with children. The dedicated, hard working team benefit from regular training. Outside therapists support children when required. Appraisal, departmental monitoring, self-evaluation and staff meetings contribute to the successful identification of ambitious improvements, which are organised according to priority. These include the inspiring initiatives in some outdoor areas, with plans for further development. Excellent resources are used effectively to support learning. Parents are well informed and are very supportive of the setting. Pre-inspection questionnaires highlight their satisfaction with the wide range of experiences offered and the very good pastoral guidance given in a truly caring environment.

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 all abilities and careful observations, staff plan challenging work for each child across all learning areas. They meet daily, quickly identifying where individual support is needed. Planning provides an excellent balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities which is sufficiently flexible to accommodate children's new ideas. The outstanding accommodation, including the sports hall and library, provides a stimulating, safe learning environment. The excellent outdoor areas are used throughout the day by nursery but such opportunities, although carefully planned, are more limited for reception. Visits and visitors, including parents who frequently share experiences, enrich the curriculum. Outstanding relationships and good use of key people result in children being exceedingly well cared for, including during out-of-school care. Staff and older pupils provide excellent role models for healthy and considerate behaviour.

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

- 6.4 The outcomes for the EYFS are outstanding. The children are enthusiastic about their considerable achievements in all curriculum areas. All make excellent progress. They enjoy completing tasks independently and are confident, active, creative learners. The children answer questions and participate in activities with enthusiasm. They respond eagerly to adults' high expectations, but always demonstrate good behaviour. They co-operate and are helpful, often sharing equipment. These very articulate children listen carefully to each other. They climb and balance skilfully and use ICT competently. Problems are solved with interest as they develop into inquisitive learners, particularly when planting seeds to grow vegetables. The children demonstrate understanding of how to stay safe and turn confidently to an adult when upset. They know the importance of clean hands for lunch and enjoy discussing which foods are healthy. The effect of exercise on heart-rate is understood.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

What the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

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| Mrs Sandra Gordon | Reporting Inspector |
| Mrs Pamela Craig | Former Head Teacher, ISA school |
| Mr Gary Wright | Head Teacher, ISA school |
| Mrs Ann Stranack | Early Years Lead Inspector |
| Mrs Beverley Vaughan | Early Years Team Inspector (IAPS school) |