



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**GRESHAM'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

**FINAL VISIT**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Gresham's Preparatory School

The senior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	<b>Gresham's Preparatory School</b>			
DCSF Number	<b>926/6003</b>			
Registered Charity Number	<b>1105500</b>			
Address	<b>Gresham's Preparatory School Holt Norfolk NR25 6EY</b>			
Telephone Number	<b>01263 714600</b>			
Fax Number	<b>01263 714060</b>			
Email Address	<b>prep@greshams.com</b>			
Headmaster	<b>Mr James Quick</b>			
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Anthony Duckworth Chad</b>			
Age Range	<b>3 to 13</b>			
Total Number of Pupils	<b>383</b>			
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (211 boys; 172 girls)</b>			
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS)	<b>41</b>	8-13	<b>256</b>
	5-8	<b>86</b>		
Number of Day Pupils	<b>323</b>		Capacity for flexi-boarding:	<b>27</b>
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>60</b>		
	Full:	<b>60</b>	Weekly:	<b>0</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>			
Inspection date/EYFS	<b>9 Feb 2010 to 10 Feb 2010</b>			
Final (team) visit	<b>8 Mar 2010 to 10 Mar 2010</b>			

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It 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 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 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 full Ofsted report refers to an inspection in June 2009 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

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.

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(a) Main findings</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(b) Action points</b>	<b>3</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommended action	3
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	4
(c) The contribution of teaching	5
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>6</b>
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	6
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	6
(c) The quality of boarding education	7
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
(a) The quality of governance	8
(b) The quality of leadership and management	8
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	9
<b>6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	<b>10</b>
(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	10
(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	10
(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	10
(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	11
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>12</b>

## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Gresham's Prep School is part of the Gresham's family of schools which has developed over the past 450 years in the town of Holt. The Prep School comprises the prep and the pre-prep and has a total of 210 boys and 173 girls, aged from three to thirteen. The pre-prep runs separately on a day-to-day basis in its own building. It has 127 pupils, aged three to eight, and includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) where eighteen children attend part-time, and twenty-three attend full-time. The prep has 256 pupils aged from eight to thirteen, of whom 60 are full boarders. The school also has the capacity for flexi-boarding for up to 27 pupils. The girls' and the boys' boarding houses provide social facilities for all pupils during the day. The school makes some use of senior school facilities including pitches, the sports hall and swimming pool, the chapel and the Auden Theatre.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a happy, caring, inclusive and vibrant environment where pupils are enthused and confident about learning. It seeks to develop the skills that pupils need to achieve their potential at school and in later life, and to foster pupils' self-respect, and sense of duty to their peers, their community and the wider world.
- 1.3 Pupils can join in any year. The size of the year group increases as pupils move from the Pre-Prep to the Prep and there is a significant intake in Year 7. The school is non-selective, though older pupils sit tests to ensure that the school can provide appropriately for them. The ability profile of pupils is just above the national average, though the range is wide. The school provides for pupils with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A total of 69 pupils receive specialist learning support, including one who has a statement of special educational need. A few pupils speak English as an additional language, of whom five receive additional support for their English.
- 1.4 The large majority of pupils transfer from the pre-prep to the prep, and a high proportion proceed at the age of thirteen to the senior school. The Gresham's schools share the same governing body. The school was last inspected by ISI in November 2004.
- 1.5 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 The school is successful in living out its aims. It provides a vibrant environment, where individuals develop the skills needed to achieve their potential. Pupils reach good standards. Teaching is thorough and frequently inspirational. Often, though not always, teaching makes learning fun while challenging pupils' thinking to the full. The school provides an extremely well-rounded education, fostering intellectual, physical and creative endeavour, and giving pupils many opportunities to excel. It has made improvements in many areas since the last inspection, so that the quality of teaching is higher and the progress of pupils is assessed more closely.
- 2.2 The personal development of each pupil lies at the heart of the school's ethos. Pastoral care, and provision for boarding that encompasses both boarders and day pupils, are extremely strong. Pupils feel secure and valued, and are firmly and gently guided by the school's values. They understand that they have a duty to others and talk about 'pulling their weight' in work and play. They are keen to contribute to the community, and readily take responsibility when it is offered.
- 2.3 Many parents commented positively, on pre-inspection questionnaires, about the school's 'vibrant buzz' and the excellence of pastoral care. A few had concerns about fairness, and 'stretch' for the most able, but most were extremely satisfied. Some pupils felt that teachers were not always just, but more commented on how well the staff cared for them. Many said that school was 'brilliant', and they were full of praise for the friendliness, the food and the many opportunities offered in sport and the arts.
- 2.4 The school is well led and managed. The prep and pre-prep each have their own individual identity, while working together to share effective practice and provide continuity in learning. Curricular links with the senior school are also developing. Governors support the school, but processes for relating planning for the development of educational provision to a whole school strategy are not well established. The school fulfils the regulatory requirements except, at the time of the initial visit, in regard to aspects of checks made when staff are recruited, and the central recording of these checks. These deficiencies were remedied by the time of the main visit, and the school as a whole is tightening its central administrative procedures to support effective management arrangements in the prep and pre-prep.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

- 2.5 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:
- carry out all the recruitment checks on staff before they are appointed and enter the date of their completion and initials of the checker on the centralised register [Regulation 4.(2) (a), 4C (2) (a) and (c), 4C (3) under The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors] and for the same reason [Regulation 3.(2) (b) under The welfare, health and safety of pupils].
- 2.6 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified the above shortcomings, as noted in the text of the report.
- 2.7 The school's provision for childcare met the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and no action was required.

### **(ii) Recommended action**

- 2.8 The school is advised to make the following improvements:
1. develop procedures for reviewing and planning improvement in educational provision, relating plans more closely to the whole school's strategic overview;
  2. ensure that pupils, including the most able, are consistently challenged in lessons, in the prep and pre-prep, to enquire, and to think for themselves;
  3. update resources in the Nursery, and strengthen the use of assessment at this stage to plan the next steps in learning for each child.

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

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

- 3.1 Pupils are well educated so that they achieve well in relation to their individual starting points. They develop good work habits and have positive attitudes to learning. In line with the school's aims, they gain the skills needed to help them achieve their potential at school and in later life.
- 3.2 Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are strong. They listen attentively and participate confidently, expressing their ideas clearly. They read fluently and enjoy a wide range of books, both fiction and non-fiction. Pupils are well versed in mathematical skills and apply concepts competently. In the process of scientific investigations, they learn to think logically, to work independently and to draw conclusions from the evidence. Pupils acquire wide factual knowledge, and older pupils learn to take notes and to carry out independent research, as in history and geography. Pupils develop high levels of skills in using information and communication technology (ICT). In the performing arts, including art, dance, drama and music, pupils achieve extremely well. Skills are highly developed in a wide range of sports, and teams and individuals compete successfully, often at national level. The school fosters all-round achievement, as seen in recent house music and art competitions, where pupils respond with great enthusiasm.
- 3.3 Pupils make good progress over time in relation to their ability. The school does not use National Curriculum tests to benchmark performance, but pupils do well in other standardised tests used by the school, and in Common Entrance and Scholarship examinations. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported well, with a focus on specific areas of individual need, such as spelling, so that they are helped to fulfil their potential.
- 3.4 Pupils have a zest for learning and apply themselves to their work. They sustain concentration in the course of practical and creative projects which require a degree of self-direction. They organise their work well and standards of presentation are high throughout the school. Pupils co-operate well with their teachers and with each other, and their behaviour in lessons is usually exemplary.

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

- 3.5 The school offers an excellent curriculum that reflects the school's aim for pupils to be enthused about learning in a vibrant environment. The broad and balanced curriculum incorporates a wide range of subjects and is significantly and imaginatively extended beyond the classroom, contributing to a rich educational experience for pupils.
- 3.6 The curriculum is well structured and carefully planned across the pre-prep and the prep. Pupils learn French from Year 2 onwards, and from Year 7 they also learn Latin, Spanish or cultural and classical studies. The school takes account of individual needs in guiding choices about languages. Separate sciences, in dedicated labs, are provided from Year 7. Art and design and technology feature strongly, and high quality work by pupils is displayed throughout the school, contributing to the attractive environment. A well-designed personal, social and health education programme supports pupils' personal development. The school

tailors provision of extra help for pupils with particular needs, as seen in their individual education plans, and there is good liaison between learning support staff and other teachers. All pupils are tested to identify specific learning difficulties before they start in the prep so that appropriate support can be given. The school identifies pupils who are gifted or talented in particular areas, and is developing strategies for meeting their needs.

- 3.7 The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils, both day and boarding, are able to choose from a variety of after school activities that build on their skills and open up new interests in a relaxed and sociable context. A high proportion of pupils, from Reception onwards, learn a musical instrument and many take singing lessons. The school is alive with music and multiple choirs, bands and groups rehearse regularly and perform frequently. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in drama productions, including an annual performance by each year group in which every child takes part. A group from the school performs regularly at the Edinburgh Fringe. Educational visits bring learning to life and expand horizons within, and far beyond, the local vicinity. Authors visit, and special events, such as a Buddhism workshop for Years 4 and 5, extend awareness of different ways of perception and living.

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

- 3.8 Teaching is good and often excellent across the pre-prep and the prep. The quality of teaching is central to the school's success in meeting its aim of helping pupils to develop skills as confident learners, and achieve their potential. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Good practice is now discussed and shared more widely, and assessment and marking are used to greater effect.
- 3.9 Teaching, by class teachers in the pre-prep and by subject teachers in the prep, is well planned so that pupils make good progress. Teaching is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. In many lessons, pupils are caught up in the interest and excitement of learning, whether acting out characters from Greek legends in Year 3, or grasping how declensions fit into the 'jigsaw puzzle' of Latin grammar in Year 7. The best teaching helps pupils take ownership of their own learning through making complex ideas accessible, and supporting and challenging pupils in equal measure. In some lessons, though teaching is thorough and covers the required ground, questions check knowledge rather than extending thinking and pupils are not fully challenged. This sometimes results, in the older years, from an emphasis on revision and practice for Common Entrance and Scholarship examinations.
- 3.10 Teaching is generally adapted well to the ability of pupils in different sets. Teachers have high expectations and set these out clearly, as seen in reminders in the front of pupils' books and sometimes in the setting of targets. Work is marked well, with close attention to areas for improvement as well as recognition of successful learning. Teachers are developing ways to help pupils evaluate their own learning, as when pupils noted in science whether they had achieved particular targets, or marked a sample answer in history to check their own understanding of exam requirements. Learning support teaching effectively underpins learning through a combination of sessions for individuals and groups, and support for pupils within lessons.

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

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

- 4.1 Pupils' all-round personal development is excellent. The school is highly successful in achieving its aim of fostering pupils' self respect and their sense of duty towards their peers, their community and the wider world. Since the last inspection, the school has taken effective steps to encourage pupils to look outwards, and to be more widely aware of different cultural traditions.
- 4.2 Pupils respond well to the school's Christian ethos, and enjoy participating in regular Chapel services. They are also increasingly aware of other faiths, beliefs and customs. For example, pupils in Year 2 have wide knowledge about the festivals of different religions and pupils in Year 8 have studied the Five Pillars of Islam. Pupils have a strong appreciation of the natural world, and a sense of wonder about the discoveries they make in their learning. Pupils take part extensively in fundraising for those in need, with up to ten charity days in a year. For example, pupils from Year 2 to Year 8 recently participated, with five choirs from the pre-prep and the prep, and a staff choir, in recording a CD 'Hymn for Haiti'. Visiting speakers and preparatory work in lessons help pupils understand the background to the causes they support.
- 4.3 Pupils are friendly and show good manners because they are alert to the needs of others. They have well-developed social skills and are at ease with themselves and with adults. Pupils work together extremely well, learning that together they can achieve great things, as in a house art challenge where each pupil had a small square to be fitted into a big picture for the entrance hall. They understand the school's rules and recognise that these are based on values of kindness and consideration. Pupils readily take responsibility, for example on the school council and the eco council, and know that their contribution matters. They are keen to express their ideas and are mature in considering different points of view. Older pupils in the pre-prep have a strong sense of responsibility about looking after younger pupils. In the prep, older pupils are appointed to positions such as prefect and take their role seriously.

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

- 4.4 The school has good arrangements to secure pupils' welfare, health and safety within a happy, caring and inclusive environment, as described in its aims. The quality of pastoral care, rooted in excellent relationships, is extremely good, ensuring that each pupil is known and valued as an individual. The care provided by the boarding houseparents, for day pupils as well as boarders, is central to this, and the social areas of the boarding houses provide a haven for pupils throughout the day. Pupils meet regularly with a tutor who oversees their academic and personal progress. Any concerns are logged centrally and shared with other staff so that necessary support can be put in place quickly. There is a strong sense of community throughout the school and the pupils' welfare is further supported by the friendly and efficient administrative staff, grounds staff, caretaking and catering staff.

- 4.5 Pupils express confidence that any bullying or unkindness would be dealt with straight away, and that they can always turn to adults for help. Some pupils question the fairness of the sanctions system and have been consulted about this in tutor groups in order to help review the school's procedures. Pupils comment that the school is good at keeping them safe. The school provides frequent opportunity for pupils to be sensibly adventurous, encouraging them to assess risk for themselves, for example in negotiating the adventure playground equipment in the prep and the pre-prep. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily, and they have extensive opportunity for physical exercise. Lunchtimes are sociable occasions where adults and pupils enjoy eating and talking together. The dining room has several clocks showing the time in different parts of the world where pupils have family connections, and this reinforces the sense of community.
- 4.6 Policies and procedure for securing pupils' welfare, health and safety are set out clearly in the staff manual and implemented consistently. The school has good procedures for first aid and for dealing with pupils who are ill. Suitable measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards and these are overseen by the Director of Operations who attends regular senior management team meetings. The school carries out the required criminal record checks on all who work at the school. At the time of the initial inspection visit, its recruitment procedures had omissions. These had been rectified by the time of the final inspection visit.

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

- 4.7 The school provides an excellent boarding experience that contributes much to pupils' all-round education and to the vibrant environment pursued in the school's aims. The school makes no distinction between boarders and day pupils in access to the staff and facilities of the boarding houses during the day. This is a major strength, allowing all pupils to benefit from the boarding ethos and making the transition to boarding easier for new full time or flexi-boarders. Relationships are excellent and communication is good between staff, parents and pupils. Boarders take part in after-school activities and say that their free time is easily filled. Pupils greatly appreciate the opportunities that boarding offers, including exciting weekend activities.
- 4.8 The team of staff looking after the boarding houses is keen to create a family atmosphere. Recreational facilities in both houses are excellent and pupils enjoy the opportunity to relax together in bright and attractive surroundings. In both the boys' and girls' houses, well-decorated dormitories provide personal space with a homely feel. Senior pupils have responsibilities as dormitory captains and take it in turns to look after the younger children. The staff are well trained in the care of children. The boarding houses are well organised and arrangements for flexi boarding run smoothly. The school has acted swiftly on recommendations made in the Ofsted boarding inspection report in June 2009.

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

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

- 5.1 Governance is satisfactory in providing oversight of the school so that it is able to achieve its aims. The headmaster, and the headmistress of the pre-prep, report to the governing body so that it is kept informed about matters of concern to each school. Designated governors visit each school informally and their interest and support are valued by the staff.
- 5.2 Governors are not closely involved in evaluating what the prep school does well and where it could improve. The governing body exercises strategic oversight in its financial planning and provision of resources. It has a more limited overview of planning for improvement in the school's educational provision. It is working to rectify this through the establishment of an education committee with representation from each school.
- 5.3 The governing body reviews the school's policies, though the applicability of these policies to the school as a whole, or to each separate school, is not clearly defined. Governors contribute to securing the school's arrangements for child protection and health and safety. However, systems for ensuring compliance with statutory requirements across the school as a whole have not been sufficiently robust. This has led to deficiencies in the making and recording of recruitment checks on staff.

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

- 5.4 The school is led and managed well, and is successful in helping individuals achieve their potential within a vibrant and caring environment. Since the last inspection, there has been significant improvement in the monitoring of teaching quality, in the management of arrangements for pastoral care and academic guidance, and in links between the prep and the pre-prep. The school's leadership has a clear educational vision with the well-being of each individual at the centre. This is reflected in the cultivation of positive relationships between pupils and with adults and in the commitment and teamwork of staff.
- 5.5 The school's leadership thoughtfully evaluates the school's strengths and has an accurate awareness of areas requiring further development. Detailed tracking of pupils' progress is being developed in the pre-prep, with a view to carrying this through into the prep, in order to evaluate the pace of pupils' progress more consistently. Under the guidance of senior management, heads of department, subject teachers, academic co-ordinators, tutors and learning support staff are increasingly working together to monitor pupils' academic performance and to identify where this could be better. Teachers are observed, and observe one another's lessons, in order to share good practice. Teachers from the prep and pre-prep work together in curriculum groups in order to foster continuity in pupils' learning and innovation in the organisation of the curriculum. The school has effective systems for inducting and mentoring new staff.

- 5.6 The pastoral care of pupils is led and managed extremely well, and underpinned by effective communication at all levels. The school is well organised so that pupils' busy days run smoothly, and special events and extra activities are incorporated with ease. The school is well resourced and the site and buildings are well maintained and attractively presented.
- 5.7 Staff are actively involved in formulating development plans for each school and for subject departments. These are helping to drive improvement, but are not clearly linked to the whole school's strategic development planning. The prep and pre-prep schools have effective systems for checking the suitability of staff, and for inducting and mentoring new staff. Flaws in the central administration of recruitment checks have been remedied since the initial visit.

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

- 5.8 The school has good links with parents and involves them in the life of the school. A wide range of information is provided through the parents' manual, the well-produced school magazine, regular newsletters from the prep and the pre-prep and pupils' termly diaries. The school is increasing its use of electronic communication with an informative website, wide use of emails and information screens within the school carrying the latest news and reminders. Pupils receive half-termly grades for effort and attainment in all subjects, and parents receive full written reports twice a year. There are regular parent teacher meetings and curriculum evenings. Parents are welcome at sporting and cultural events as well as open meetings and special displays of pupils' work.
- 5.9 The Parents' Association is active in social and fundraising activities, and organises many events that are enjoyed by the whole school community. It helps to promote links between staff and parents for the educational benefit of pupils. The school takes the views of parents into account when reviewing its procedures, for example, before changing the timings of the school day. It responds to the needs of parents, for example, allowing pupils to stay in the boarding house if older brothers or sisters are being picked up later from the senior school.
- 5.10 Analysis of parents' responses to questions in the pre-inspection questionnaire shows a high level of satisfaction with the school. Parents particularly appreciate the wealth of extra-curricular opportunity, the quality of boarding, the ease of communication with staff, the range of subjects taught and the quality of teaching. A few parents were not satisfied with the information provided about progress and provision for homework. Inspection found that the school provides a good level of information. It clearly explains its policy on homework, which is completed at school, while also keeping the effectiveness of its arrangements under review.

**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 setting is excellent. Children thrive in the happy, family environment of the school. Staff routinely monitor provision, identifying areas to improve. Excellent partnerships between adults and parents ensure that children are provided and cared for as individuals and make good progress in their learning and development. Robust safeguarding procedures and a focus on good hygiene practices and staying safe strongly promote the welfare of children.

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

6.2 Outstanding leadership and management result in a safe and secure environment where the needs of children are nurtured by suitable, well-qualified staff. There is an ambitious vision of development and progress for the setting. Excellent teamwork and regular and productive meetings result in continuous improvement and clear self-evaluation, and there is a strong commitment to equality. Emphasis is placed on professional development. A dedicated, happy and caring staff regularly interact and improve links with parents. This increases parents' understanding of their children's development and influence outcomes.

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

6.3 Provision has outstanding elements and is good overall. Staff provide children with a stimulating and challenging experience throughout all the areas of learning. All staff are actively involved in planning and assessment, and contribute to development planning. The setting offers a wealth of opportunities for creative development, and art and music are of a particularly high standard. Nursery planning, although thorough, does not identify what children need to learn next. The recent implementation of 'classroom monitor' in Reception tracks children's progress, both individually and as a group, and informs planning for next steps. A stimulating environment and a balanced curriculum, combined with good teaching, encourage children to develop their independence and the ability to think for themselves. Staff promote the welfare of pupils extremely well and teach them sensitively in the ways of keeping safe. All children benefit from the caring ethos within the community and participate and contribute actively in school life. The behaviour policy is well implemented and children learn in a calm and happy environment. Children move between the indoor and outdoor facilities and plans to cover the outdoor Reception provision are in the pre-prep development plan. Some resources in the Nursery have become rather tired.

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

- 6.4 Outcomes for children are outstanding. Children's achievement is high in relation to their age and ability and they begin to develop good skills for the future. They are happy and independent learners who respond wholeheartedly to their environment with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They learn to work co-operatively and take turns. They get on well together and have excellent relationships with staff. They show an awareness of the wider world and learn how other people live and celebrate festivals. They begin to feel part of their community and work happily with older children during their special art week. They are extremely well behaved and respond to the high expectations of staff who guide them to behave with consideration and courtesy. They understand about eating healthily and enjoy their food. They are aware of the need to maintain good hygiene and understand about being safe.

**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 governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mrs Joy Richardson	Reporting inspector
Mrs Hilary Betty	Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, IAPS)
Mrs Alan Laurent	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS)
Mrs Jane Holberton	Team Inspector (Head, GSA)
Mrs Heather Friell	Team Inspector (Head, HMC)
Mrs Bridget Forrest	Early Years Lead Inspector