



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**CARLETON HOUSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Carleton House Preparatory School

Full Name of School	<b>Carleton House Preparatory School</b>			
DCSF Number	<b>341/6004</b>			
Registered Charity Number	<b>505310</b>			
Address	<b>Carleton House Preparatory School 145 Menlove Avenue Liverpool Merseyside L18 3EE</b>			
Telephone Number	<b>01517 220 756</b>			
Fax Number	<b>01517 371 408</b>			
Email Address	<b>info@carletonhouse.co.uk</b>			
Headmaster	<b>Mr Peter Andrew</b>			
Chair of Governors	<b>Dr Peter Edwards</b>			
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>			
Total Number of Pupils	<b>158</b>			
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed</b>			
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5-11:</b>	<b>118</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>158</b>			
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>			
Inspection date/EYFS	<b>8 Feb 2010 to 9 Feb 2010/11 Feb 2010 to 12 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 June 2006.

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 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	4
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>5</b>
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	5
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>7</b>
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	8
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>9</b>
(a) The quality of governance	9
(b) The quality of leadership and management	9
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	10
<b>6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	<b>11</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	11
(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	11
(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	11
(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	12
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>13</b>

## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Carleton House Preparatory School was founded in 1975. At that time it was led by the Sisters of Notre Dame in the Woolton area of Liverpool. Not long after, the school became a charitable trust run by a limited company. The trustees are directors of the limited company and members of the governing body. After 34 years in Mossley Hill the school moved to its present site in Menlove Avenue in September 2009. Since the previous inspection, in 2006, not only has the school moved its location but a nursery class catering for three-year-olds has also been added.
- 1.2 The school caters for 158 pupils between the ages of three and eleven. Twenty of these attend the co-educational Nursery. Of the twenty, fourteen attend part-time. Another twenty children are in the Reception class as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In addition, there are thirty-nine pupils in Years 1 and 2 (nineteen girls and twenty boys) and seventy-nine pupils in Years 3 to 6 (thirty-seven girls and forty-two boys).
- 1.3 No pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). Twenty-two pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD), and all receive additional support from the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. Results of the EYFS profiles as they leave Reception, and standardised tests as they leave the school, indicate that pupils' average ability is above the national average. If they perform in national tests according to their ability, their results will be above average for all maintained primary schools.
- 1.4 The school's mission statement states that 'We live, love and learn with Jesus'. The school is very proud of its Catholic heritage and, whilst it warmly welcomes pupils of all faiths, its primary aim is to strive to enable all children to achieve their full potential in a Christian environment.
- 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 Pupils at Carleton House Preparatory School achieve well and make good progress in many aspects of their learning. This results from good quality teaching, particularly amongst the older age groups, a curriculum that is geared to enabling them to gain entrance to the senior school of their choice and the everyday care and commitment shown by staff to the pupils' welfare and personal development. Progress has been made since the last inspection in leading the development of the school in terms of monitoring the quality of education the pupils receive in all classes. Pupils continue to have good attitudes to their work and this contributes significantly to their academic achievement, as does their particularly good behaviour and the high quality relationships they have with one another and with their teachers.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is strong and supported by high quality on-going pastoral care, sound welfare arrangements and good health and safety procedures. Pupils are tolerant of each other and collaborate very well with each other when working together. Pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves is evident in their pro-active approach to charitable giving. However, shortcomings in the implementation of their welfare arrangements reduced their otherwise strong quality.
- 2.3 The school is working towards fulfilling its aims. However, the lack of sufficiently effective oversight of the work of the school by the governors as well as, until very recently, insufficiently effective leadership and management does mean that the school is not completely fulfilling its aims as well as it should be. The governors have been insufficiently rigorous in questioning the policies and practices of the school. The lack of an effective school development plan and a lack of a systematic programme for the review and development of the school mean that progress of the school since the last inspection has been insufficient. Robust policies and procedures for most aspects of school life are now in place, although careful recruitment processes have not been sufficiently well followed. The school recognises that the monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet rigorously undertaken. The school promotes strong links with parents, whose replies to the pre-inspection questionnaires were most favourable.

## 2.(b) Action points

### (i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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:

- carry out criminal record checks on all governors before they are appointed, carry out required appointment checks on members of staff and supply staff before they are appointed and ensure that all recruitment checks are correctly entered on the centralised register [Regulation 4.(2)(a), 4B (4)(a) and (b) and 4B (5) and (6) and (7) under the suitability of staff and proprietors and for the same reason, Regulation 3.(2)(6)];
- maintain an admissions register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 [Regulation 3.(9)];
- ensure the responsible officer keeps records of fire safety training [Regulation 3.(5) (a)];
- ensure that there are sufficient washbasins for children to at least equal the number of WC's/urinals taking account of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 [Regulation (5) (k)];
- ensure that the medical room contains a washbasin in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 [Regulation (5) (6)].

2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school was still awaiting the outcome of criminal record checks on a small number of governors and was making good progress towards ensuring that all recruitment checks were correctly entered on the central register. In addition, the school has put in place an admissions register that fulfilled regulatory requirements and had begun the process of making monthly back up copies. Records of fire training were now complete and recent training had been undertaken. Also, the school had plans well in hand to increase the number of washbasins available for pupils within the school.

2.6 In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school was required to:

- ensure that the medical room contains a washbasin in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 [Regulation (5) (6)]

Since the Early Years Foundation Stage provision is inspected under a different system of regulation, within a two-day limit, the report cannot mention any regulatory deficiencies which are remedied by the end of the standard inspection.

**(ii) Recommended action**

- 2.7 In addition to rectifying the weaknesses in meeting regulatory requirements, the school is advised to make the following improvements:
1. implement a rigorous programme of training and development for governors and senior managers;
  2. compile a clear school development plan identifying clear objectives and timescales;
  3. continue to widen access to resources, particularly with regard to provision of fiction books for Years 5 and 6;
  4. improve access to outdoors and the provision for outdoor development across all six areas of learning in the EYFS;
  5. improve access to all areas of learning within the indoor classroom in the EYFS;
  6. establish systems for the formal monitoring and provision of the EYFS;
  7. develop training opportunities to ensure that staff fully develop their knowledge and understanding of the EYFS framework;
  8. develop assessment to include next steps in the EYFS.

### **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 successful in their learning from the EYFS onwards. As a result the school is making good progress towards achieving its aim of enabling all children to achieve their full potential in a Christian environment. In both their written work and their lessons, pupils demonstrate significant understanding and make good progress. They write fluently in both a factual and a creative context. Their speaking and listening skills are particularly well developed. They have a good knowledge of mathematics, are well able to carry out fair tests in science, and approach problems in a logical and appropriate manner.
- 3.2 Pupils' creative skills are well developed. In a recent topic week, the whole school studied aboriginal art which included a vast range of different media, and incorporated music and dance. They make good use of ICT to support their work and to research information. Opportunities to demonstrate their independent research skills are good. In addition, they apply themselves well and are interested in their work. In Year 6 national tests over the period from 2006 to 2009, they have attained particularly well. Their achievement is good in relation to their above average ability and they make good overall long-term progress.
- 3.3 The school has recorded many individual and team successes, including a regular number of scholarships and successful entrance examinations to senior school. Its pupils also do well in subject competitions. They have done well recently in speech and drama examinations. Over recent years pupils have taken part in many local, regional, and national sporting competitions. Indeed, sporting success has been attained in regional and national competitions in swimming, football, netball and athletics.
- 3.4 Pupils' academic success owes much to their positive attitudes, the good quality of teaching they receive and a curriculum, particularly at the upper end of the school, that is geared to academic examination.

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

- 3.5 The curriculum and resources supporting it are effective in enabling pupils to reach good standards across a range of subjects and activities and promote the aim of enabling all children to reach their full potential. However pupils in Years 5 and 6 expressed a wish, in their interviews, for more fiction suited to their age and standard in the library. All National Curriculum subjects are covered including personal, social, health and citizenship (PSHCE) and religious education (RE); French, from Year 1, and Spanish, in Years 5 and 6, are taught as modern foreign languages.
- 3.6 Pupils with LDD are supported by specialist help for two days of the week and there is additional support from classroom assistants. A register of gifted and talented pupils has been formulated but provision is still at an early stage of development throughout the school. PSHCE integrates well with the 'Here I Am' course in RE. In Year 2, RE pupils considered the concept of free will in providing choice between right and wrong. Civic awareness has been promoted through visits to the school by local councillors, the Lord Mayor and members of the emergency services. A cross-

curricular approach is used on topic weeks such as those on 'Rainforests' and 'Water' or as in a Year 5 geography traffic survey that incorporated elements of English, geography and ICT. The extensive use of interactive whiteboards increases the impact of ICT in Years 3 to 6.

- 3.7 The children are mainly taught by class teachers up to Year 4, when increasing use is made of specialist teachers in some areas. Good evidence of mid-term and weekly planning was observed and in some subjects monitoring by observation and work scrutiny is in place. Creativity is further fostered through links with a local Shakespearian company, through choral speaking, choir participation in local festivals and through an annual visit to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall.
- 3.8 The extra-curricular programme is extensive at in Years 3 to 6, and developing in Years 1 and 2. Links with the Liverpool Schools Sports Partnership has increased sporting opportunities which include infant agility, golf, and rugby. Other activities much enjoyed include drama, cookery, cheer leading and Spanish. The school has a dynamic choir and offers instrumental tuition in guitar, woodwind and piano. Increasing links with the local Catholic parish, Hindu temple and synagogues, and visits to the school by representatives of world faiths, deepen pupils' appreciation of religious diversity. Pupils' horizons are extended by a wide range of day and residential trips.

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

- 3.9 Good, and on occasions excellent, individual teaching is a major factor in contributing to pupils' good achievements and in assisting them to develop their academic potential as required by the school's aims. Much of the good quality teaching found at the time of the last inspection has, by and large, been maintained.
- 3.10 Pupils with LDD are well supported by teachers, both in individual lessons and in their general class lessons. Opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups are provided in several lessons such as in a Year 3 English lesson where pupils were learning about rhythm and rhyme and the structure of a limerick. In subjects such as art and English, creative work was well promoted. Basic skills in English and mathematics are strongly emphasised throughout the school. Pupils are greatly enthused by, and thoroughly enjoy, the short, sharp mental arithmetic and spelling sessions. Teachers have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Most make use of the time available as well as the stock of good quality resources, in order to support their pupils' learning. The use of ICT across subjects is good.
- 3.11 The teaching is supported by the use of high quality teacher assessments; these are effectively used to promote the knowledge teachers have of their pupils and enable them to meet their specific needs. In the best lessons, more difficult work is available for those pupils who finish a general task quickly. The marking of pupils' work includes good comments for older pupils and cheerful stickers for younger ones. In their replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents strongly agreed that the teaching helped their children to make progress, promoted worthwhile attitudes and values and achieved high standards of behaviour, so encouraging pupils to achieve well overall and fulfil their potential.

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

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

- 4.1 Pupils throughout the school are friendly and confident. They are proud of their school and their environment. They appreciate the opportunities they have in school as reflected in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and in the enthusiasm evident in pupils' interviews. Manners are excellent and behaviour throughout the school is exemplary. Achievement is celebrated in assemblies and on notice boards around the school.
- 4.2 Pupils have a well-developed sense of the spiritual. The RE course 'Here I Am' is the bedrock of this, complemented by religious corners in every classroom which are focal points for spirituality. In the choir, pupils sing with spirit and commitment. An awareness of beauty and nature is reflected in art and craft displays throughout the school, as in the stunning display on flower reproduction in the school entrance hall. Role play in Year 5 and Year 6 history and English encourages empathy; for example in the study of drama texts, with the victims of *Macbeth*.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral development is good. They show enthusiastic commitment to raising money for national and local charities. The pupils are very clear about the difference their support makes to those less fortunate than themselves. They respond to the system of merit marks given for both effort and behaviour. Great pride is expressed in the recently restored School Council that is seen partly as maintaining the moral fibre of the school. The RE programme reinforces moral awareness effectively.
- 4.4 Pupils are extremely well developed socially. Public speaking is promoted in assemblies throughout the school. Pupils are at ease with adults and each other and interact harmoniously. Bullying is not seen by pupils as a problem. A Year 5 pupil described the school as 'a bubble of politeness'. Pupils enjoy responsibility whether as members of the school council, house captains or prefects. Year 6 pupils mentor younger children, as seen in the regular morning 'wake and shake'. The pastoral focus of the school operates successfully through class teachers, but pupils spoke of being confident in taking concerns to prefects or members of the school council. Houses promote collegiality within the school and are not just centred on sport activities. The Head Boy, Head Girl and other senior officers of the school are elected by pupils in Years 5 and 6. Clubs such as board games club encourage social interaction between pupils. An observed registration clearly contributed to the ethos of courtesy and mutual respect.
- 4.5 Pupil's cultural awareness is well developed. Visits by representatives of world faiths and to centres of worship encourage appreciation of a diversity of belief. Topic Days concentrate on a range of cultural backgrounds. Pupils throughout the school visit local museums and galleries, whilst use is made of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's interactive programmes for schools. Drama is centred on annual productions such as the infant nativity and the junior play. Dancing incorporates ballet, modern dance and Indian dance. Civic awareness has been fostered through visits by the Lord Mayor and members of the local council.

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

- 4.6 The pastoral care provided for pupils is a strength of the school and fulfils its aims. Staff provide strong guidance and support in their roles as subject and class teachers. The management of learning support provides further additional help as necessary. Such pastoral arrangements are effective and foster pupils' academic achievement and personal development well. All staff promote the self-confidence of the pupils in many activities as a result of the support, encouragement and praise they give them. Pupils say they are confident in being able to go to a member of staff if they need to. In addition, they feel appreciated and well looked after.
- 4.7 Relationships within the school, both between teachers and pupils and between the pupils themselves are excellent. Consequently this results in the caring attitude that permeates the school. Pupils are well-mannered and adults provide good role-models for them. All staff know the pupils well, and this results in a caring and happy environment. Staff regularly discuss concerns about pupils in staff meetings and informally in the staff room. Pupils work and play together well and are most considerate of their peers. Behaviour both in lessons and around the school is exemplary, and class rules are evident in classrooms. Pupils are happy with the rules, believing them to be fair; they treat each other with courtesy and respect. They consider bullying to be rare and, on the few occasions when it might occur, to be quickly dealt with by staff.
- 4.8 The safeguarding of pupils has been improved since the last visit to the school. All staff are trained, and the staff appointments procedure and register now ensure that all statutory requirements to safeguard pupils have been met. Measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and similar hazards; regular fire drills are held, and staff now receive appropriate training. Effective health and safety procedures are in place, with appropriate risk assessments covering aspects of school life. A health and safety committee meets regularly to discuss any issues arising. Health and safety documentation is thorough and electrical testing is carried out appropriately. Similarly, accidents are suitably recorded; arrangements for pupils who are sick during the school day are being addressed but at present remain inadequate. In addition, the number of washbasins is insufficient. The school has an accessibility plan which aims to improve educational provision for any pupils with disabilities in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA). Pupils recognise the need and importance of choosing a healthy diet as well as taking part in physical exercise. They enjoy their school lunches, which are nutritious, and have plenty of choice. The admission and the attendance registers are now accurately maintained.

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

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

- 5.1 The governing body has not sufficiently overseen the work of the school in order to help it sufficiently reach its aim of enabling children to achieve their full potential in a Christian environment. Members of the governing body are becoming increasingly more rigorous in their monitoring of the school's progress which, until recently, has been insufficiently adequate.
- 5.2 Recently initiated committees, notably for safeguarding and curriculum, though in their very early stages, have been established to give governors a more satisfactory oversight of all aspects of the work of the school. Governors are considerably more effective in providing and maintaining good accommodation and by ensuring that material and human resources are available to meet the needs of the pupils.
- 5.3 One of the governors now takes a role in overseeing pastoral and welfare arrangements, in particular child protection. Their role in school development planning, as well as oversight of regulatory requirements, is more limited. Indeed their oversight and monitoring of the undertaking and recording of recruitment checks has not been sufficiently rigorous.

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

- 5.4 The leadership and management, up until very recently, has been unsatisfactory and ineffective in helping the school to achieve its aim of striving to enable all children to achieve their full potential. Staff in senior positions are approachable, although the general organisation of the leadership and management of the school has not enabled an efficient and effective leadership and management style to develop. However, the recently appointed acting head and acting deputy head have recognised this and have begun to address many of the issues. Whilst the EYFS is soundly led, it has also lacked support and guidance from the senior management of the school. At subject co-ordinator level some subject leaders have lacked sufficient guidance and training in carrying out their role. Consequently, they are less effective in their oversight of the development of their subject than they should be. Again this has been recognised and steps have been put in place to address this issue. The leadership and management is not as strong as it was at the time of the previous inspection.
- 5.5 The lack of a clearly defined school development plan results in a lack of clarity of vision for the further development of the school. The current plan is out of date and only limited priorities are evident for the near future. Whilst the ongoing day-to-day academic and personal development is good, it is as a result of caring and skilled teachers rather than definitive and effective overall leadership.
- 5.6 Policies and procedures for many aspects of school life that are now regulatory compliant have recently been produced and are now in place, although insufficient staff training has as yet taken place to ensure they are implemented satisfactorily. Individual teachers and support staff are deployed well and contribute significantly to pupils' learning and welfare, particularly for those pupils with LDD. Staffing levels are sound and support pupils well. Appraisal is limited and in-service training opportunities are sound.

- 5.7 Whilst procedures for the recruitment of staff are now sound this has only recently been the case. Inadequate procedures for carrying out checks with the Criminal Record Bureau, particularly on new governors, have only just been addressed.

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

- 5.8 The school has an effective and close relationship with parents. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate that parents are very supportive of the school. They are particularly positive about the information they are given about their children's progress, the high standards of behaviour and the promotion of worthwhile attitudes and values. They also believe they can communicate easily with the school.
- 5.9 Parents receive weekly newsletters and can maintain contact through electronic messaging and home school diaries. A buoyant Parent Teachers Association arranges a wealth of activities including an annual ball, Christmas and Easter fairs, a summer barbeque and a disco for pupils. Parents in specialist employment or professions share their expertise with pupils as part of their PSHCE programme.
- 5.10 Parents receive two written reports a year, which contain standardised test results, effort grades and targets from Year 2. They also attend twice-yearly parents' evenings to review progress. In addition, extraordinary meetings are arranged to discuss, for example, secondary transfer at 11+ in Years 5 and 6 and sacramental preparation in Year 3. Open mornings, not only for marketing, allow parents to view their children's work, displays and demonstrations in school. Parents have been invited to attend meetings that have explained how different aspects of the core curriculum are taught.
- 5.11 The school encourages parents to come in to school straight away to discuss concerns with the class teacher, or head, depending on the nature of the problem. The school operates an open door policy.

**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 school's aim to provide a warm and welcoming environment for parents and children is well met. Strong links exist with parents who are particularly pleased with the pastoral care their children receive. The school recognises the need to inform parents further about all aspects of the school. Effective teaching nurtures lively independent minds, personal confidence and concern for others. The staff promote an environment where both academic progress and pastoral care are well balanced and the welfare of the children is of utmost importance. Satisfactory arrangements are now in place to ensure children's welfare. The process of monitoring and evaluating the provision is in its early stages of development.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are overall satisfactory. The co-ordinator manages the day-to-day running of the setting extremely effectively, and has a clear understanding of what the setting needs to do to improve. However, she has not always been supported by the management of the school. Lack of regular formal meetings and dedicated management time limits the sharing of good expertise and practice. Staff work well together as a team and are committed to further improving the provision. They are suitably qualified and satisfactory steps are taken to safeguard the children. Together, they have a developing knowledge and awareness of the EYFS framework, but links with external agencies are in an early stage of development. Resources are used effectively and imaginatively, but they are not always easily accessed by the children. Excellent relationships exist with parents, who in the parental questionnaires and during discussions commented favourably on all aspects of the provision.

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

6.3 Children learn and develop well through stimulating play and valuable first-hand experiences. However, the balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities is uneven. Initial and ongoing observational assessment is thorough and identifies what children can do, but does not yet identify the next steps they need to take to make progress. Planning is detailed across all areas of learning. Staff plan for outdoor provision and use the limited and difficult-to-access areas well. However, children do not have independent access to these areas. Formal self-evaluation has recently begun, but formal systems to monitor and evaluate the provision and identify strengths and weaknesses are in their early stages. Staff guide and support children well, and provide safe and clear routines for them. The children enjoy the healthy snacks provided for them and the sociable nature of snack time and lunchtime.

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

- 6.4 Children make good progress in their learning in relation to their starting points and capabilities. They are on course to meet the early learning goals in all six areas. Their knowledge of the world develops from first hand experiences and, in both nursery and reception, children converse with adults with confidence and assurance. Staff are skilled at intervening in children's play to support or move on learning, and children's excellent personal development, positive attitudes and enthusiasm for learning are carefully guided by the staff. Children are well mannered and considerate, both to one another and to adults, and show independence in looking after their environment. Children share and take turns, care for their possessions and understand the need for personal hygiene.

**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 and deputy 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.

Mrs Karin Kelly

Reporting Inspector

Mr Graham Nunn

Reporting Inspector

Mr Paul Easterbrook

Team inspector (Head ISA/IAPS school)

Mr Peter Nicholson

Team inspector (Head IAPS school)

Mrs Linda Donowho

Early Years Lead Inspector