



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CLIFTON PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Clifton Pre-preparatory School

The junior school (St Olave's School) and senior school (St Peter's School) were inspected at the same time and separate reports published.

Full Name of School	Clifton Pre-preparatory School		
DfE Number	816/6002		
Registered Charity Number	6927030		
Address	Clifton Pre-preparatory School The Pre-prep of St Peter's York North Yorkshire YO30 6AB		
Telephone Number	01904 527 361		
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Email Address	enquiries@cliftonprep.york.sch.uk		
Headmistress	Mrs Paula M Arkley		
Chair of Governors	Mr P Nick Shepherd		
Age Range	3 to 8		
Total Number of Pupils	172		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (93 boys; 79 girls)		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	58	5-8: 114
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	172	
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	12 Oct 2010 to 13 Oct 2010 08 Nov 2010 to 10 Nov 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 October 2007.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 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 of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects; though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Clifton Pre-preparatory School is a co-educational day school for children aged from three to eight years, situated close to the centre of York. The school is part of the St Peter's group of schools. The group, a charitable foundation, has a central board of governors. The school is committed to enabling all children to realise their potential in a caring, challenging and supportive background and to developing their independence, self-confidence, ability to co-operate, think, question and to express their own opinions and ideas. The non-denominational Christian ethos of the school welcomes children of all faiths.
- 1.2 Established over 100 years ago, the school became part of the St Peter's Foundation in 1995 and moved to its present position in 2001. A teaching block, built in 1990, accommodates pupils from Reception to Year 3. The Nursery, for children aged three to four years, is situated in a ground floor self-contained unit within an adjacent Georgian building. It is linked to the teaching block by an outdoor activity area.
- 1.3 The school has continued its programme of refurbishment since the last inspection. In particular, library areas have been updated and restocked and outdoor provision has expanded with a new, large all-weather facility.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 172 pupils, (93 boys and 79 girls) aged three to eight years of age on the school roll. Of these, 58 children aged three to five years were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 23 of whom attended full-time and 35 part-time.
- 1.5 Prior to entry, pupils undertake assessments appropriate to their ages. The ability profile of the school is wide but is overall above the national average. The school has identified twelve pupils as requiring support with their learning. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs and no pupil has English as an additional language. Most pupils are from business or professional backgrounds and whilst the majority live within York and its surrounds, a few live further afield.
- 1.6 Occasionally a few pupils leave at the end of Year 2 or 3 for admission to a range of local maintained and independent schools. The majority of pupils move to St Olave's, the junior school of St Peter's, at the end of Year 3, where their place is guaranteed.
- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils in all parts of the school, including the EYFS, are extremely well educated. The school achieves its aim that all pupils work to their potential and express their views confidently, whilst valuing excellence, commitment and effort. The predominantly outstanding quality of teaching and the excellent, wide-ranging curriculum contribute significantly to the high quality of pupils' achievement and to progress that is good, and on occasion rapid, in relation to their abilities.
- 2.2 The confident, articulate pupils are eager to learn and succeed, and approach their lessons with enthusiasm. They are competent when managing their work individually and whilst in groups. Their good behaviour adds to their success. The impressive pastoral care and valuable academic guidance offered during lessons and throughout the day strongly support the pupils' excellent personal development. Their keen interest in being responsible citizens is evident in their concern for the rainforests and their desire to be an eco-friendly school. Across the school harmonious relationships reflect the friendliness of pupils, and their responses to visitors are exceptionally mature and courteous. The pupils are confident and happy and speak with pride of their school.
- 2.3 Governance of the school is strong and enables it to meet its aims. The governors' effective oversight, clear view of school life, wide-ranging skills and effective committee systems are of considerable benefit to, and provide significant support for, the school. Governors ensure that teaching and learning are sustained by plentiful and high-quality resources. The governors oversee the safeguarding, welfare, health and safety of pupils effectively. Leadership and management of the school are excellent. The dedicated senior managers have high expectations of all, a clear vision for progress and an accurate overview of school life. Whilst senior managers are extremely conversant with the quality of teaching, a lack of formal monitoring systems limits the recorded information available on strengths and areas for development in this area. Relationships with parents, who are highly supportive of the school, are excellent. Their extensive involvement in school life adds to the high quality of the home-school relationships. The majority of reports to parents are of an exceptionally high quality; however, a few lack sufficient detail about the individual pupil's knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 2.4 The school has successfully met the recommendations of the previous inspection to produce a central register of staff, improve pupil supervision at times of recreation, increase library facilities and introduce opportunities for pupils to take control of their learning.

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 met all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Establish systems to monitor teaching regularly and record the information gained for use by senior managers.
 2. Ensure that all subject reports contain detailed, high quality information about the pupils' skills, knowledge and progress.
 3. Ensure that the move to electronic recording of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed.

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 extremely well educated, and in line with its aims the school ensures that pupils work to their potential whilst valuing excellence, commitment and effort. Pupils achieve well in both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Their thorough grounding in knowledge, skills and understanding in the subjects studied promotes high standards and facilitates progress that is at least good, and sometimes rapid, across all subjects.
- 3.2 The confident and articulate pupils enjoy learning, settle quickly and apply themselves to their work. They express themselves clearly; their writing is interesting, imaginative and well-constructed, as exemplified in their accounts of life in the rainforest. Pupils are fluent, expressive readers who enjoy using the library, and by Year 3 reading ages are significantly above chronological ages. Their excellent listening skills and behaviour enable pupils to interpret and perform their tasks imaginatively. In their workbooks, during lessons and in conversation pupils display a secure acquisition and competent use of wide-ranging numeracy skills. They sustain their interest and produce accurate work of a high standard. Whilst exploring the properties of two-dimensional shapes Year 2 pupils used knowledge gained previously to assist them with their investigations. When investigating lines of symmetry Year 3 pupils used the interactive whiteboard effectively, reasoned competently, explained their findings clearly and made rapid progress. Access to the adjacent sports hall and good use of the all-weather facility make a significant contribution to pupils' excellent physical development.
- 3.3 The pupils' attainment in information and communications technology (ICT) has increased significantly since the previous inspection. They apply their skills suitably to support their learning. They access, store, record and display information accurately and enhance their work using a range of graphic tools. The pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment result in sustained interest during creative lessons, where high standards are exemplified by the large-scale textile wall hangings and environmental collages that enliven the school. The new, challenging, thinking skills programme has enabled the school to meet the recommendation of the previous inspection to develop pupils' ability to think and learn independently.
- 3.4 The school does not enter pupils for national tests; therefore attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average. The results of limited standardised testing in Year 3 indicate that the pupils' attainment is higher than that the average for pupils of the same age nationally. The pupils' contributions during lessons and in conversations about their work indicate that progress is most often good and occasionally rapid in relation to their above-average ability.
- 3.5 Pupils perform well and thoroughly enjoy participating in clubs and activities, developing individual skills and working well in groups. For example, country dancers remembered intricate steps and rhythms from a range of dances as they worked happily with their partners. Members of the singing group help each other to improve as they work together, producing high-standard performances. In a local music festival, pitted against older choirs, they achieved a merit. Individual

pupils demonstrate significant successes in music, speech and drama examinations and local swimming galas. Pupils talk animatedly and knowledgeably about their environmental work and, having achieved a bronze award, express their eagerness to obtain a silver award.

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

- 3.6 Curricular provision is excellent and the range of extra-curricular provision is good. The curriculum is, in accordance with school aims, stimulating and suitable for the ages, abilities and needs of pupils, and promotes a love of learning and an enquiring mind. The curriculum incorporates National Curriculum subjects as well as religious education (RE), drama and French from Reception. Literacy and numeracy skills are nurtured imaginatively across all subjects. Scientific and technical skills are suitably catered for, and ICT makes a significant contribution to the curriculum. The addition of drama to the curriculum promotes confidence and creativity, and is thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. The valuable contribution made by the extensive personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme to pupils' personal development was exemplified well by Year 1 pupils as they discussed their similarities and differences, learning to respect each other. Detailed curriculum planning and regularly updated policy documentation is supported by robust monitoring. This ensures quality and a smooth progression of knowledge and skills within and between subjects.
- 3.7 An excellent range of interesting activities enriches and enlivens classroom learning, and extends the pupils' knowledge and understanding of their work. During the inspection Year 3 pupils spent a day as Second World War evacuees, using artefacts from the era, and their subsequent discussion demonstrated the impact and extent of their learning. Pupils also speak animatedly of their Viking experiences in York. Visitors to lessons, such as an Indian mother who explained the culture of her native country to pupils, offer an additional dimension to academic learning and also support pupils' personal development. The recent expansion of outdoor provision and facilities to increase the range of activities, particularly for physical development, has enabled the school to meet the recommendations of the previous inspection.
- 3.8 Pupils have equal access to the curriculum throughout the school. Provision for pupils with specific learning needs during lessons and in special group sessions is good. The provision for pupils who have specific ability in one or more areas leads to adaptations in the curriculum that extends the pupils' learning suitably. The school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language; however, facilities are available for additional provision to adapt the curriculum accordingly should this occur.
- 3.9 The extra-curricular programme is of a good quality; it stimulates and encourages pupils to use their skills and expertise to maximum effect. Within sports clubs, high-quality tuition assists pupils to develop individual as well as team skills. Participation in musical activities and performances raises confidence and in art and design pupils enjoy exploring and experimenting with materials. The school is working to expand the range and number of clubs available for pupils. The good relationships that exist between the school and the local community promote the pupils' personal development and broaden their social skills. They meet and respond to a wide range of people, in particular students training for teaching and

those undertaking work experience. The pupils' involvement in supporting a number of selected charities develops their ability to make difficult decisions and to understand their wider community.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.10 Teaching, which is predominantly outstanding, promotes pupils' progress highly effectively and is a strength of the school. In line with school aims teachers are successful in assisting pupils to achieve, and in supporting their personal development.
- 3.11 In excellent lessons, the provision of wide-ranging activities and use of varied teaching methods challenges pupils of all abilities, achieving the school aim to select the appropriate teaching style for particular pupils and purposes. Teachers ensure that the pupils' literacy skills are utilised effectively across all subjects and that good use is made of the library to promote research. They encourage the use of ICT in many areas, which has a positive impact upon raising the pupils' knowledge and understanding of technology. The pupils' interest and achievement are sustained through the use of imaginative and well-prepared resources, the effective use of praise and challenge and the high expectations of their teachers. This was especially evident when older pupils applied their knowledge of oral hygiene to create imaginative posters about teeth. Across the school the teachers' comprehensive subject and specialist knowledge is used well to promote progress, as exemplified in a Year 2 lesson in which teaching enabled pupils to succeed in rapidly improving individual levels of skill and body control whilst working with small apparatus.
- 3.12 The teachers' skill in managing the organisation and timing of lessons ensures pupils achieve and complete their work in time. Lesson planning is detailed and includes programmes of progressively difficult material to continually engage the pupils' interest. Planning illustrates how closely teachers follow the curriculum, thus ensuring that learning is smooth and progressive across all ages. The relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. The thorough knowledge teachers have of their pupils and the adaptation of work to support, challenge and extend each resulted, during a Year 3 literacy lesson, in all pupils achieving well in both group discussion and written work, according to their individual abilities. The perceptive and challenging questioning of individual pupils in a Year 2 discussion about time captured their interest and assisted them to progress.
- 3.13 The needs of pupils with specific learning difficulties are met with sensitivity and understanding. Teachers utilise the excellent guidance provided by specialist staff well to adapt work to meet individual need. The assessment of progress during lessons is excellent. Teachers use the information they gain from observing and questioning pupils to tailor guidance to individual need. They challenge the more able suitably and expect more of them. All work is marked well, often alongside pupils when teachers explain how to make further improvements. The information from literacy and numeracy assessments and the limited details from standardised assessments in Year 3 are recorded systematically and used to monitor attainment over time.
- 3.14 Throughout the school teachers encourage pupils to manage their learning and to organise and be responsible for their work, thus meeting the recommendation of the previous inspection to improve opportunities for pupils to think for themselves.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' personal development remains, as at the previous inspection, excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are confident, happy and have high self-esteem. They are conscious of others' needs and respect their feelings, valuing each other's contributions when involved in group work. Their sensitivity toward those less fortunate than themselves was evident in their conversations whilst preparing for their harvest festival. Pupils were poised as they expressed a range of moods sensitively and with deep feeling in drama. Reflecting carefully on matters affecting them and their community during assembly, pupils confidently shared their views with their parents. Pupils have a good awareness of other religions and talk respectfully of Christian, Jewish and Hindu practices, which they discuss in their religious education lessons.
- 4.3 Across the school, pupils' moral development is excellent. At all ages the polite, well-behaved pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, expressing a clear understanding of what is acceptable in the classroom and playground. They applied their views maturely to a discussion on the moral dilemma faced by Guy Fawkes. Their growing understanding of community ideas and expectations is evident in their contribution to and understanding of their Golden Rules. They look forward to receiving special 'Golden Time', allocated for good work and behaviour. The considered, sensible views of Year 1 were evident during a discussion about their home life when they reflected on the importance of their own contributions to their families. Pupils understanding of being responsible citizens is good, assisted by visits from local public service personnel. Year 3 pupils relayed their responsible environmental attitudes convincingly and confidently in the St Peter's Schools eco-committee meeting, attended by representatives from all the schools in the group.
- 4.4 Pupils of all ages display excellent social skills and development. Throughout the day, pupils play well together and enjoy friendships across age groups. They interact well with and show respect, tolerance and consideration for each other. They maximise their opportunities for all-age friendships further during the many activities they attend after school. Year 3 pupils are proud to be playground 'buddies' as they organise and man the 'buddy bus stop', to which all pupils can go during break times if they are feeling unhappy or simply want someone to talk to. Representatives on the school council talk knowledgeably about their roles, being aware that they have a responsibility to those classmates whom they serve. The pupils' competent grasp of social courtesies is evident in the polite, warm way they greet and converse with visitors to the school.
- 4.5 The pupils' respect for other cultures is good and illustrated well in their preparation of a Gurdwara meal to share with friends. The pupils speak knowledgeably about artefacts held important in different cultures such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Pupils are very sensitive to the variety of cultures represented in the school body, and their conversations illustrate their sensitivity toward their similarities and differences. Pupils' knowledge of local culture and history is excellent, promoted by participation in the many interactive visits and experiences in and around York. The pupils express their views about the wide range of music they hear and talk with interest of the French way of life and of the various foods they taste in class.

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

- 4.6 The school places a high priority on arrangements for welfare, health and safety and provision is strong. Excellent pastoral systems foster the pupils' academic achievement and support and guide their personal development effectively, in line with school aims. In conversation, pupils express the view that they are supported well during lessons and staff look after them well during their time in the school. The productive links and informative discussions with St Olave's school ensure that pupils' pastoral and academic needs are catered for well during the transfer between the schools.
- 4.7 The excellent relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, promote a happy atmosphere and good behaviour. Pupils trust each other and their teachers. In conversation pupils state that they are confident to approach their teachers because they will help them at any time with any problem. They also express the view that there is very little unkindness from one pupil to another but should such occur they know who to inform and believe it will be dealt with swiftly. A helpful system for recording concerns and pastoral matters that can be accessed by staff on their web-link is updated daily, and the overall effectiveness of provision is monitored during every staff meeting and adapted as required.
- 4.8 The use made by staff of the school rewards system that is linked to 'Golden Time', when pupils have free choice of activity, is highly effective in both recognising and promoting good conduct. The system of collecting stickers toward the presentation of certificates is successful and very much enjoyed by pupils. The pupils are keen to explain the meaning of each sticker and describe how they reward good work, effort and kindness to others.
- 4.9 Pupils are safeguarded well. The school now has a comprehensive central register of staff, as recommended at the previous inspection. All staff are trained in protecting children at levels and times appropriate to their roles; school policies comply with requirements and are implemented carefully. Health and safety procedures are thorough. Comprehensive measures reduce the risk of fire and other hazards; regular fire drills are held and staff receive clear guidelines and training for fire safety. The detailed assessment of risk covers all areas, and findings are acted upon swiftly. The school has met the recommendation of the previous inspection to ensure that pupils are supervised safely at break-times.
- 4.10 Suitable medical facilities and a sufficient number of first-aid trained staff cater appropriately for pupils until collected by their parents and the school has access to St Peter's School nursing facilities. The school organises health checks for pupils, in particular eyesight and hearing examinations. The school accessibility plan details how those with learning or physical disabilities will be appropriately catered for in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA).
- 4.11 Pupils understand what constitutes good health. When discussing healthy lifestyles Year 2 pupils demonstrated a keen understanding of the need for daily exercise. They have discussed their likes and dislikes with catering staff, who take this into account when preparing healthy menus using locally sourced food. Fresh fruit is available daily and enjoyed by all pupils. Physical exercise is catered for well in the extensive grounds.
- 4.12 The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The St Peter's Foundation has a central governing body to oversee all three schools. The governance of Clifton is strong, with productive relationships between the governors and the school. The governors support the school aims through their effective oversight and commitment to the pupils' high standards and personal development, to excellent pastoral care, and to the school's continuing success. The governors' diverse range of professional expertise benefits the school. They make effective use of details from the school development plan to inform their strategic planning and ensure that the school receives a just recognition within the Foundation.
- 5.2 The significant involvement of governors in continually reviewing the financial impact of school planning ensures provision of high-quality buildings and resources, as well as well-qualified, experienced staff, and includes possibilities for future investment. Effective communication systems exist between governors and senior managers. The senior team, through their reports to the governors' meetings and constant contact with committee chairmen, ensure that governors are continually apprised and updated of provision. As a result, governors know where the school is strong and are aware of areas requiring further development.
- 5.3 The governors discharge their duties and responsibilities concerning child protection, safeguarding and the welfare, health and safety of pupils effectively. Their oversight of the systematic review, evaluation and updating of policies and procedures prepared by senior managers enables them to check that academic and legislative requirements are met. Governors attend suitable training, especially in the area of safeguarding. They have ensured that the school has met the recommendations of the previous inspection.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 Leadership and management of the school are excellent. Senior managers provide a clear vision and direction to the school community and, in line with the school aims, are committed to enabling pupils to fulfil their potential. Membership of the Foundation's senior management team enables the headmistress to promote and support effective communication and co-operation between the schools. It also allows each school to be conversant of the others' needs and to share a whole school vision. Senior managers are dedicated, motivated and have high expectations of all. Their success is exemplified in the standards pupils achieve, the high quality of care provided and the excellent personal development of pupils.
- 5.5 Senior managers make effective use of self-evaluation to order priorities within a useful development plan. This is shared with staff and governors so that all work toward the same goals. Regular progress reviews identify successes and areas that require further work. Curriculum management is effective and efficient. Subject co-ordinators record the ongoing monitoring of subject planning, standards achieved, staff training and any actions taken to rectify concerns, should they occur, in an informative file that is updated regularly.

- 5.6 The highly effective relationships between senior managers, the headmaster of St Peter's and the bursary, which oversees the group, ensure that resource needs are suitably met and senior managers are strongly supported in their roles. The senior managers secure high quality, extremely loyal and experienced staff who offer a wide range of skills. They ensure that all who work in the school are suitably checked for safe access to children. Staff appraisal, which is part of a two-year cycle of staff support, is currently being extended to include non-teaching staff. This includes the identification of needs, and contributes to professional development. The senior managers visit classrooms regularly and have a comprehensive overview of the quality of provision. However, teaching is not formally monitored, and good practice and areas requiring support are not identified or recorded regularly. Whole-school training ensures that staff are suitably updated in matters of child protection, safeguarding, health and safety. The school strongly promotes additional professional training opportunities. Non-teaching staff make significant contributions to the life and ethos of the school through their various roles.
- 5.7 The school has successfully met the recommendation of the previous inspection to produce an accurate central register of staff.

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

- 5.8 The school has continued to build upon the strong links with parents identified at the previous inspection and relationships are now excellent. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed strong support and approval for almost every aspect of school life. In particular, parents feel the curriculum, teaching and pastoral care are of high quality, views that are confirmed by inspection findings. Many parents referred to their appreciation of the availability of staff at all times and new parents commented on the rapid progress made by their children since joining.
- 5.9 Parents are heavily involved in school life. They assist in school with many activities, attend the pupils' assemblies and provide significant assistance at school events. The school researches the views of parents and reacts positively to their concerns. Following parental comments, a snack is now provided for pupils before after school clubs. A strong, active parents association raises funds for additional resources to enhance learning such as large-scale play apparatus and story sacks, and organises social events that bring the parent community together. Since the previous inspection electronic communication with parents has increased. An improved school website includes weekly updates, and summaries of school events appear regularly. A number of curriculum evenings and workshops throughout the year assist parents to understand what is taught and how it is taught.
- 5.10 The high-quality information that parents of current and prospective pupils receive offers them a comprehensive view of school life. The colourful prospectus is relevant to parental needs and inserts are updated regularly. The school newsletter informs parents of news and events, and class newsletters, sent each term, inform parents of what their children have been doing and achieving in class. School policies are easily accessible on the website. The parent handbook, a highly informative document, assists parents and pupils to understand the day-to-day functioning of the school. At the beginning of each year a special evening informs parents of school routines. At both formal and informal meetings, parents discuss their children's attainment and progress. The reports parents receive of their children's progress are excellent overall; although a few contain too much

information about the work covered and too little about the individual pupil's skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject, in general they are full and informative with targets that assist pupils to improve.

- 5.11 The school has clear procedures for dealing with parental complaints and it handles concerns with care, recording them in line with school 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 overall effectiveness of the EYFS is outstanding. The extensive knowledge of staff, high quality of provision and happy, supportive environment ensure that the setting achieves its aim to give children the best possible start in life. Irrespective of gender, ethnicity or ability children progress, develop and achieve well because the staff adapt provision to meet individual need. Safeguarding policies are implemented efficiently. The continuous evaluation of provision leads to detailed planning that sustains high standards. Provision for outdoor learning has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

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

6.2 Leadership and management of the EYFS are outstanding. The effective implementation of policies ensures children are safeguarded well, diversity is respected and equality promoted. Careful appointment checks ensure that only suitably qualified adults, who update their training regularly, work with children. Detailed risk assessments promote safety. The excellent relationships with highly supportive, well-informed parents and links with other local agencies contribute to the comprehensive understanding adults have of each child. Managers, ambitious for success, motivate and support a strong, united team. The results of good self-evaluation sustain high standards, identify priorities and implement actions. For example, identifying the need to use a different format to record assessment resulted in the introduction of the use of electronic methods to record EYFS profile assessments. The imaginative use of resources by staff provides exciting activities that motivate children.

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

6.3 The quality of provision is outstanding. Detailed, flexible planning successfully balances teacher-led activities with those chosen by children. Adults respond to the children's interests swiftly, as exemplified in the spider study initiated by Nursery children. Stimulating indoor and outdoor environments provide safe learning areas for wide-ranging activities, such as the Reception children's imaginative role-play about George and the dragon. Excellent ongoing assessments are used by staff to adapt provision according to individual need; therefore all children are suitably challenged. The excellent relationships between children and their key people ensure children are secure, extremely well cared for, and that behaviour is at least good and often excellent. Adults are vigilant in promoting safe practice. They actively encourage children to choose healthy snacks and meals and implement systems that successfully encourage good hygiene throughout the day.

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

- 6.4 Outcomes for children are outstanding. These eager learners enthuse about their achievements, progress well in relation to their starting points and work happily both individually and in groups. As they explored and investigated their surroundings the Nursery children's curiosity was evident when they planted potatoes and wondered what would happen. Children express their needs clearly, enjoy books and count objects carefully. Reception children use their phonic knowledge well as they read and write. They count accurately, measure confidently using the correct terms, and identify various shapes. They manipulate the mouse efficiently when working on the computer. Their imaginative role play in the vet's surgery and the knowledge shared during a visit from a guide dog and its owner demonstrated extensive knowledge of their surrounding world. The very well-behaved children listen to each other, use tools safely and are confident to request help. They eat healthily, keep clean and follow the systems established to promote good hygiene. The excellent availability of the outdoor classroom ensures that children are always physically active.

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff, with the chair of governors and members of the governing body, 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

Mrs Sandra Gordon

Mrs Ann Pelech

Mrs Barbara Mandley

Mrs Gillian De La Torre

Reporting Inspector

Head of Pre-prep, IAPS School

Head of Lower School, IAPS School

Co-ordinating Inspector, Early Years