



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

RUSHMOOR SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Rushmoor School

Full Name of School	Rushmoor School		
DfE Number	822/6004		
EYFS Number	EY369834		
Registered Charity Number	307530		
Telephone Number	01234 352 031		
Fax Number	01234 348 395		
Email Address	office@rushmoorschool.co.uk		
Head Teacher	Mr Ian Daniel		
Chairman of Governors	Mr Graham M Bates, OBE		
Age Range	3 to 16		
Total Number of Pupils	261		
Gender of Pupils	Boys		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	12	5-11: 87
	11-18:	162	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	261	
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Lindsay Southwell		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	5 Oct 2010 to 6 Oct 2010		
	1 Nov 2010 to 3 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 November 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 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

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.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(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)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	7
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	8
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	9
(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
6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE	12
(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	12
(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	12
(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	12
(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	12
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	14

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Rushmoor School moved from London to Shakespeare Road, Bedford in 1918. It was privately owned and educated children in the age range from eight to thirteen. In 1965 the school became a charitable trust and is now administered by a board of governors welcoming pupils of all denominations, and offers co-education from three to ten for girls and from three to sixteen for boys.
- 1.2 Recent building developments include Owen House, comprising a second ICT suite, art rooms, a library and learning resources centre, a drama studio and an additional eight classrooms. Further developments include new changing room facilities and a refurbishment of the sports pavilion and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. A climbing frame and soft-mat play area has been developed for pupils in the Pre-Prep department.
- 1.3 The school aims to enable pupils to acquire the knowledge, wisdom and self-discipline appropriate for employment and adult life. It seeks to give pupils the opportunity to develop their intellectual, physical and creative skills, across a broad and balanced curriculum. The promotion of the personal development of pupils is paramount to encourage lively and enquiring minds. By encouraging self-confidence, integrity, social responsibility and awareness the school aims to develop in pupils a sense of respect and active concern for their surroundings.
- 1.4 The school welcomes pupils at any age and admits them throughout the academic year. At the age of sixteen, pupils leave to go to sixth forms in local independent or maintained schools, as well as some entering vocational studies at local colleges. At the time of the inspection, the number on roll was 261. The school is divided into three sections: Junior (7 boys and 5 girls in Nursery and Reception; 54 boys and 5 girls in Years 1 to 5), Middle (96 boys in Years 6 to 8) and Senior (94 boys in Years 9 to 11).
- 1.5 Entry to the school is not dependent upon academic selection. The pupils attend taster days before joining. The ability profile in the EYFS on entry is in line with expectations. Currently five pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN) are integrated into the school. Additionally, the school provides learning support for seventy-one pupils with some form of learning difficulty or disability (LDD). The ability profile of the pupils is wide overall though is mainly above the national average. Two pupils have English as an additional language and receive support.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 From the EYFS onwards, most pupils attain good or excellent standards in their learning and achievement. Pupils are very successful in their GCSE examinations. The school's curriculum is balanced, stimulating, accessible and suited to all pupils. The best teaching has high expectations and stimulates many aspects of pupils' intellectual, physical and creative development. Assessment procedures to improve monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress are not yet fully embedded. Pupils requiring help with their learning are extremely well supported. Talents both inside and outside lessons are encouraged and nurtured through the extensive activities programme. The behaviour of pupils is of a consistently high standard. A relaxed and respectful relationship between pupils and staff allows them to share the joy of learning and the benefits of high expectations.
- 2.2 Pupils of all ages are confident and articulate and value strongly their own and others' achievements. Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. They have a strong moral code, which is upheld by the staff and permeates the daily life of the school. Pupils enjoy friendly respectful relationships with staff and feel well cared for. They show sensitivity to beliefs other than their own and discuss their ideas in a considerate manner. The quality of the pastoral care, the welfare of pupils and the attention given to safeguarding is excellent. Measures and procedures to promote health and safety are of a high quality. Medical arrangements are excellent. Pupils are co-operative and courteous in all aspects of their school life. They are willing to express their own views and respect those of others, and work together, collaborating with and encouraging one another. Pupils from Year 5 stand for election to the school council. They have an awareness of people less fortunate than themselves, and through charity events raise funds for local causes as well as those overseas.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent overall, and has been developed and built upon since the last inspection. However, there are areas relating to the EYFS that do not yet reach this level. Governors are actively involved in the school and use their expertise to support the school community. The governing body has been rigorous in ensuring that recruitment and safeguarding procedures have been correctly followed. Leadership and management are excellent overall, though in the EYFS closer links have yet to be developed. Senior managers work well together and recent policy reviews are robust. Heads of department oversee their subject areas and support staff in their teaching roles. Members of the senior leadership team (SLT) oversee and monitor the work of each department. The school has developed an excellent partnership with parents. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire parents were unanimous in their praise for the school, citing in particular the family atmosphere; the help that pupils receive from their teachers and the high-quality education provided by the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- 2.4 The school's registered provision for childcare met the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Childcare Act 2006 and no action was required
- 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. Continue to develop and embed current assessment procedures to improve monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress as they move through the school.
 2. Ensure that best teaching practice is shared with all staff through training and planning.
 3. Ensure that activities in the EYFS are organised and resourced to stimulate interest, imagination and independent enquiry.
 4. In the EYFS take fuller account of children's age, ability and prior attainment in planning the next steps in learning for each child.
 5. Develop oversight of the EYFS by the school's governance and leadership in order to monitor effectiveness and plan for improvement.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievement is good overall, and in many areas excellent, especially when challenge is appropriate and when there is opportunity for independent working in line with the school's aim to give pupils the opportunity to develop their intellectual, physical and creative skills, across a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils are very successful in their GCSE examinations and many transfer to sixth forms in local senior schools or to sixth-form colleges.
- 3.2 Pupils requiring help with their learning are identified by staff, and appropriate measures are taken to formulate comprehensive individual education plans (IEPs) which are reviewed regularly. In addition to one-to-one teaching, good use is made of learning support assistants in lessons, and guidance is given to teachers by the head of learning support regarding strategies to help with the teaching of these pupils, in order to ensure that their school experience is successful and to ensure that they make rapid progress both in lessons and over periods of time. Gifted and talented pupils enjoy excellent opportunities for investigative work in many areas of the curriculum.
- 3.3 Pupils develop well in their knowledge, understanding and skills across a broad range of subjects supported by a strong grounding in basic numeracy and literacy and an emphasis on reading, comprehension and spelling leads to high-quality speaking skills. They apply mathematical concepts, are articulate and generally listen well. They are able to reason and work out solutions for themselves. Since the previous inspection, the two newly refurbished and well equipped information and communications technology (ICT) suites offer excellent provision and use across the school has increased. Interactive whiteboards and networked computers have been installed in some teaching areas. These are used well by teachers and have enhanced pupils' access to ICT across subject areas. The school encourages and nurtures pupils' talents outside lessons, and through individual and group activities in all the creative arts and in academic pursuits; they achieve high levels of success locally and nationally. Pupils are actively challenged and encouraged to recognise their many talents and their physical skills are well developed through the opportunity they have to experience a wide variety of sports.
- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic standards is at least good. As a result of mainly good and frequently excellent teaching, pupils make rapid progress and perform at least in line with their abilities, and in many cases beyond. Pupils requiring help with their learning receive excellent support in the classroom.
- 3.5 Across the school, pupils' social and emotional development is given a high priority. A wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop the skills associated with speaking and listening are developed in many subjects and activities where pupils have opportunities to think, discuss, make judgements, and draw conclusions on current issues; drama activities develop confidence in personal communication skills.
- 3.6 Pupils acquire a broad range of well-developed ICT skills, which they use confidently in many areas of the curriculum. Pupils create well-presented written work and illustrations, skilfully produced sound recordings and computerised presentations and animations.

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

- 3.7 In accordance with its aim to enable pupils to acquire the knowledge, wisdom and self-discipline appropriate for lifelong learning, the school has a balanced and stimulating curriculum, accessible and suited to all pupils, providing opportunities for them to develop both inside and outside the classroom. Setting and maintaining of good academic standards enables pupils to discover and develop individual talents and interest within a nurturing pastoral care framework that is secure yet challenging. The school carefully monitors pupils' progress and needs, and the planning for specialist learning support provision for those pupils requiring support for their learning ensures that their needs are extremely well met.
- 3.8 Given its size, the school offers a wide range of GCSE options and accommodates the option choices of all pupils where possible. Separate sciences and modern foreign languages are offered. Pupils in Years 9 to 11 are set according to ability in mathematics, science and English. Creative subjects are well represented through design and technology, art, drama and music.
- 3.9 Curriculum planning throughout the school is supported by detailed policy documents and ensures continuity of education and progression across the years. Schemes of work are comprehensive and are beginning to take account of assessment data.
- 3.10 The preparation of pupils for the next stage of their education is excellent and is built on the foundations laid by the daily realisation of the school's aims. In line with National Curriculum requirements and with the addition of personal, social and health education (PSHE), religious studies (RS) and French, excellent opportunities for pupils to think critically and work independently are offered.
- 3.11 The physical education and games curriculum enables pupils to participate in a range of physical activities and to enjoy them whether taking part as individuals, in groups or in teams.
- 3.12 The extensive programme of activities, both inside and outside school, offers opportunities for developing creative, sporting and academic interests. These are well attended and pupils speak enthusiastically of them. Notable successes have been achieved by pupils in sport, speech and drama, and music. Pupils are encouraged to suggest new activities for inclusion in the programme. Opportunities are offered for pupils of all ages to visit local places of interest including museums and theatre visits. Year 5 pupils travel to France. Pupils from Years 6 to 9 join residential trips offering challenging outdoor activities as part of developing their social skills and confidence. Years 10 and 11 visit the Peak district as part of work towards their silver Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. Pupils in Year 10 take part in a week of work experience in the summer term. Links with the community include a range of visitors to the school who talk to pupils about their occupations and professions.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is good overall, with the greater proportion being excellent. This supports the school's aim to help pupils to acquire skills for cooperative and personal learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is invariably strong. The great majority of lessons are well planned and meet the needs of almost all pupils of differing abilities, including those who require support for their learning, enabling them to acquire new knowledge, make progress, increase their understanding and develop their skills. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and classroom assistants are used effectively. The most successful lessons are characterised by varied and effective teaching methods together with pace and challenge. Open-ended questioning supports and develops learning and allows pupils to develop their own strategies and ideas. Support for those requiring help with their learning is outstanding. Occasionally, a few lessons lack opportunities to challenge and engage pupils.
- 3.14 Most pupils achieve good and, at times, excellent standards relative to their ability. In science pupils engage in scientific inquiry and discovery showing a good understanding for the need for fair testing when embarking on practical work. The best teaching encourages pupils to strive to the best of their abilities, enabling them to work independently, reflect thoughtfully and contribute openly when developing and exchanging ideas. Teaching further stimulates and encourages many aspects of pupils' intellectual, physical and creative development. When time is used well, pupils have good opportunities for research.
- 3.15 Marking seen in scrutiny of work and in lessons is regular. In the best examples, detailed comments to help pupils improve were seen with additional guidance offered orally in class. The positive ethos of the school is reflected in pupils' confidence, their ability to work together and their high standards of behaviour.
- 3.16 The improved assessment and record-keeping procedures introduced since the previous inspection have begun to make a positive contribution to effective teaching and the ability to track pupils' progress through the school more accurately. Data collected is beginning to influence planning and the evaluation of pupils' performance. Teachers have started to use assessment data more effectively. A system of half-termly grading of effort and achievement, as well as regular reports help to keep parents well informed of their children's progress.
- 3.17 Teachers use the wide range of resources effectively to promote interesting learning. Interactive whiteboards, which are increasingly available in the school, are an additional resource which enhances both teaching and learning.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is excellent. The school's aim, to value each child and adult, to promote the ideals of community, good citizenship and equal opportunity, is fully achieved. This builds further on the good practice in place at the last inspection. The ethos and values of the school are held in high regard by pupils and staff.
- 4.2 Pupils of all ages, including pupils in the EYFS, are confident and articulate and value strongly their own and others' achievements. Acknowledgement and celebration of success are part of the school's life, through which the pupils develop self-belief. They learn to value themselves and others.
- 4.3 The spiritual development of pupils is nurtured highly successfully in the creative arts, assemblies, English and RS, where they work on themes from different faiths and cultures. Assemblies, which include space for reflection, bring pupils and staff together to celebrate school and individual successes. Art work displayed around the school highlights their fascination with the process of creating an original piece of art and their obvious enjoyment in the result.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is outstanding; they have a strong moral code, which is upheld by the staff and permeates the daily life of the school. Pupils respond compassionately to the needs of others, both within the school and in the wider community. Relationships at all levels are strong; in particular, pupils readily discuss and resolve issues or conflicts between themselves without the need to refer to adults. They have a strong sense of what is acceptable and confidently turn to an adult or elder pupil if they have a problem. Pupils are encouraged to play a role in the life of the school.
- 4.5 Social development is outstanding; pupils show perseverance and self-discipline as well as respect for others. They enjoy friendly, respectful relationships with staff and feel well cared for. They show sensitivity to beliefs other than their own and discuss their ideas in a considerate manner. For example, pupils in discussion spoke about their studying of a text, 'Stone Cold', which led to extended investigations and empathy with the homeless community. Through well-established community links, pupils have a good appreciation of the needs of those who may be less fortunate than themselves.
- 4.6 Pupils' various roles and responsibilities in the school make a significant contribution to their personal growth and the smooth running of the school. The school council provides the opportunity for pupils to take an active part in discussion, suggestions and actions on matters important to the whole school community.
- 4.7 Pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of major world cultures is well planned. For example, in a history lesson pupils approached the influences on our society by studying the impact of immigration from around the world through the provenance of foods across the world. They are very aware and have a good understanding of different cultures and their related faiths through their studies in RE. The school enjoys excellent links with the local community and is always looking for opportunities to be involved. An example is the school's successful entry in the Jonathan Palmer Car Design and Build Scheme. Sponsorship at this event allowed the school to make a donation to a local charity.

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

- 4.8 Pastoral care throughout the school is excellent. The caring and supportive ethos of the school is evident and ensures that the school's pastoral aims are met to help pupils towards becoming well-adjusted young adults. Pupils' personal development is a significant strength of the school.
- 4.9 The school successfully builds confidence and self-esteem in pupils who often arrive from other schools where they did not flourish. Parents have chosen this small school with its family feel, and overwhelmingly endorse the attitudes and views it promotes. Tolerance and understanding are expectations in a school where a variety of faiths, cultures, and traditions are celebrated. The multicultural population of pupils in the school encourages them all to live in tolerance and harmony with each other.
- 4.10 Staff commitment results in outstanding support and guidance through the role of class, subject teachers and tutors. Small class sizes and the highly effective pastoral care system fosters pupils' personal development and academic achievement. Incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with promptly.
- 4.11 Pupils confirmed that the school listens to their views and responds to them, and that teachers show concern for them individually. Pupil responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were unanimous in praising the school for the high-quality care and support it offers them.
- 4.12 Arrangements for the welfare of pupils are excellent, and those for health and safety are good. Safeguarding systems are robust and staff are appropriately trained. Appropriate measures are in place to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards; regular fire drills are held. Health and safety documentation is thorough.
- 4.13 Good medical arrangements are in place. All staff are aware of pupils who have serious medical conditions, and understand how to respond to them. All necessary policies and risk assessments are in place and are well understood by staff and pupils.
- 4.14 Locally sourced food is freshly cooked each day in the school's well-equipped kitchen, and the food is well presented at both junior and senior lunchtimes, which are pleasant, social occasions. The catering staff work hard to encourage pupils to eat healthily. All pupils are encouraged to take regular exercise, be it through the fitness activity at lunchtimes or the wide range of PE games and activities held both during and after school. Pupils feel valued, and know that they will be listened to and fairly treated. Parents very much appreciate the level of care offered by the school.
- 4.15 The Health and Safety Committee meets regularly. Following the previous inspection report, all risk assessments are now complete and correctly recorded.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent overall. High-quality governance has been developed and built upon since the last inspection. However, there are areas relating to the EYFS that do not reach this level. Governors are actively involved in the school and use their expertise to support the school community. They take a full part in the overall strategic planning, development and financial management of the school and support its aims. Through carefully constituted committees, they have been rigorous in ensuring that the recruiting procedures and all regulatory requirements are fully met. Individual governors sit with curriculum planning groups which serve to advance their understanding of the school's educational needs. All governors have a good understanding of, and successfully take an active part in, the day-to-day running of the school. They have ensured that the school's accommodation and grounds are suitable and well-maintained, and that human and material resources are of the quality required to meet pupils' educational needs. Individual governors have attended training courses including safer recruitment and child protection. The chairman meets regularly with the head teacher.
- 5.2 The board of governors meet regularly with the head teacher, with his deputy in attendance. Minuted meetings ensure that the high-quality involvement of the governing body is appropriately documented. Health and safety and safeguarding children policies are reviewed annually.
- 5.3 The governors are proud of the school, in particular the friendly community spirit and the well-rounded, articulate young people it develops. They support as many school events as is practicable. The head teacher is well supported by the governing body.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is excellent overall, though in EYFS closer links have yet to be developed. Structures and routines introduced since the last inspection are clear, comprehensive and well communicated. Leadership and management are strong and effective across the whole range of school activity, fulfilling the school's aim to help each child to develop their potential in both academic and extra-curricular activities
- 5.5 Through the head teacher and senior leadership team (SLT), the school is effectively led with vision and a commitment to achieving the best possible academic standards, pastoral care and personal development of pupils. Staff are regularly consulted on proposed developments or changes which lead to overall ownership of decisions reached and policies set. Heads of department oversee the development of their subject areas and support staff in their teaching roles. In turn, members of the SLT oversee and monitor the work of each department, though as yet the best practice seen has not been shared with all staff through training and planning. Systems now in place have begun to strengthen the administration of the curriculum and assessment procedures. Data is increasingly used in planning to ensure that activities and tasks match the pupils' different abilities.
- 5.6 The accommodation, maintained to a high standard, is clean and well decorated. Space in all areas is used to maximum advantage and every effort has been made

to create a wide a range of high-quality facilities to support pupils in their learning. The library is well stocked and is an active and effective source for learning, fully integrated into the wider life of the school offering pupils opportunities for research and work as well as a refuge for relaxation and quiet reading. Pupils are encouraged by the librarian to request specific reading material, including newspapers and magazines which are now readily accessible to pupils.

- 5.7 Teaching, non-teaching and support staff all share in the vision which ensures that the school's aims are fulfilled successfully and work with commitment to achieve the best possible standards in pastoral care and personal development of pupils. The administrative, catering and maintenance staff and all other support staff display commitment, dedication and loyalty to the school. Together they provide high-quality assistance, upon which the smooth running of the school depends. Communication within the school is highly efficient. Management at all levels values the contribution of teaching and non-teaching staff. The school improvement plan is detailed and comprehensive, covering all areas of the school, and where possible includes timescales, costing and the criteria for success. Policies are up to date and fully implemented, and parents have appropriate information in line with regulatory requirements. Admission and attendance registers are well maintained
- 5.8 Recruitment procedures were reviewed following the previous inspection, and are now efficient and safe, with all checks on staff, governors and visitors applied fully and correctly. The central staff register and the clearly set out complaints policy comply with requirements. Induction arrangements for staff new to the school, though largely informal, work well and are effective. Staff are deployed effectively and used to the pupils' best advantage. All teachers are part of a regular appraisal system linked to their professional development.

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

- 5.9 Links with parents are outstanding. The parents' association successfully organises social and fundraising activities. Recent projects include the new EYFS provision and playground area, as well as a new school pavilion on the field. Parents feel welcome in the school and are frequently involved in supporting a variety of activities including sporting fixtures, concerts and drama productions, as well as sharing daily in the work and progress of their children. Staff are readily accessible to parents, and good examples of this were seen during the period of inspection. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire parents were unanimous in their praise for the school, citing in particular the family atmosphere; the help that pupils receive from their teachers and the high-quality education provided by the school.
- 5.10 Communication with parents is strong. Provision of information to parents is helpful and informative. Parents are provided with all necessary information and regular informative newsletters. Reports, issued twice termly, are detailed and keep parents informed of their children's progress and provide guidance as to how pupils might improve their work. Formal parents' evenings are held regularly for each year group.
- 5.11 The school operates an open door policy and parents are encouraged to come into school to discuss any concerns they may have at an early stage. Concerns or complaints are resolved sensitively and professionally within a set framework. A parents' council meets regularly, where topics of the moment are discussed and difficulties resolved. No formal complaint was received during the past academic year.

5.12 Prospective parents receive detailed information about the school together with a colourful and helpful prospectus. The school website, regular newsletters, an annual magazine, pupil homework diaries and a termly school calendar all serve to keep parents well informed and up to date about pupils' achievements, events and news.

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 provision is satisfactory and has some significant strengths. Children are well known by the staff and regular informal contact with parents reinforces the family atmosphere. Parents are highly satisfied with the setting. Staff are aware of children's unique characteristics, but do not always take enough account of different ages and abilities in planning learning activities. Good arrangements are made to ensure children's health, safety and welfare and the suitability of staff. The setting has sound capacity to continue to improve. Staff are intent on achieving the best for children but they do not routinely evaluate strengths and weaknesses in provision in order to enhance it.

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

6.2 The leadership and management of the setting are satisfactory, and the setting runs smoothly. Whilst the school's senior leadership team ensures that policies and procedures to safeguard children are drawn up and implemented effectively across the school, including in the EYFS, they have yet to involve themselves fully with the day-to-day organisation of the setting. Risks are identified and good systems are in place to ensure children's safety. Children are equally valued, whatever their background or individual needs. The setting works flexibly with parents as children make the transition from part-time to full-time attendance. Children are cared for well in the breakfast and after school clubs. Staff are strongly supported in seeking to continue their professional development. However, the school's leadership structure does not facilitate close monitoring of the quality of the setting, and the school's improvement plan pays little attention to this area.

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

6.3 The quality of provision is satisfactory. The outdoor play area is greatly enjoyed, though not yet fully used to link indoor and outdoor learning. The setting has good access to facilities such as the library and the school gym. The classroom has adequate resources and some attractive displays. However, activities are not always resourced and organised in ways that stimulate imagination, investigation and independent enquiry. The staff work together effectively, and with parents, to secure children's welfare. They observe and assess children's learning thoughtfully, but do not use these findings enough in planning the next steps in learning for each child. Staff are effective in teaching children to keep safe and to behave well.

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

6.4 Outcomes for children are satisfactory. Children make steady progress from their starting points so that they securely achieve the early learning goals set nationally for the end of the Reception year. They become confident in relating sounds to letters and words, and this lays strong foundations in reading and writing. Children are keen and eager to learn. They respond well if encouraged to go beyond the task set, though such opportunities are limited. Children learn to look after themselves,

for example when changing their clothes. Children benefit from the strong sense of routine. They listen and follow instructions, and readily help to tidy up. Children learn about being healthy and are careful to wash their hands when needed. They are given a sound start to their school career and transfer confidently into Year 1.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.6 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Frank Skipwith	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Marilyn Fenn	Head of Juniors, IAPS school
Mr Graeme Garrett	Head, ISA school
Mr Richard Willan	Head of Department, HMC school
Mrs Joy Richardson	Early Years Lead Inspector
Ms Barbara Whiteway	Early Years Team Inspector (Head of EYFS, IAPS school)