



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

## **DURLSTON COURT SCHOOL STANDARD INSPECTION**

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## Durlston Court School

Full Name of School	<b>Durlston Court School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>850/6056</b>		
EYFS Number	<b>EY380235</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>307325</b>		
Address	<b>Durlston Court School Becton Lane Barton-on-Sea New Milton Hampshire BH25 7AQ</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01425 610010</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01425 622731</b>		
Email Address	<b>headmaster@durlstoncourt.co.uk</b>		
Headmaster	<b>Mr David Wansey</b>		
Chairman of Governors	<b>Mr Chandra Ashfield</b>		
Age Range	<b>2 to 13</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>290</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (164 boys; 126 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>31</b>	5-7: <b>57</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>14</b>	7-13: <b>188</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>290</b>	
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Claire Holly</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>21 Sep 2010 to 22 Sep 2010</b>		
	<b>18 Oct 2010 to 20 Oct 2010</b>		

## 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 2004.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 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 31<sup>st</sup> August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of 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 Durlston Court School was founded in 1903 at Durlston Head, near Swanage in Dorset. The school moved to its present site at Barton-on-Sea after the Second World War. Originally founded as a boys' boarding school, Durlston Court School is now a co-educational day school, catering for 290 pupils aged two to thirteen. Since the last inspection the school's facilities have been enlarged including: a new, purpose-built kindergarten; a new pre-prep play area; two new information and communication technology (ICT) suites, a new library and a learning support department. The school is a charitable trust, administered by a board of governors. The present headmaster was appointed in September 2000.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, there were 30 pupils attending part-time and one attending full time in the kindergarten, which opened in September 2007. Another 14 pupils are in the Reception class, as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Fifty-seven pupils are in the pre-prep, aged five to seven and 188 in the middle and upper schools, aged seven to thirteen. Four pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), although none now requires specialist support. Thirty-one pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD). No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Five pupils come from an ethnic minority background. The school draws pupils from a range of different backgrounds in the local area, which includes the large conurbation of Bournemouth and Christchurch. Results of standardised tests indicate that, although a wide range of ability is represented, pupils' average ability is above the national average. Pupils transfer to a wide range of senior schools, both day and boarding, mostly within the independent sector.
- 1.3 The school aims to educate the 'whole child' by providing an academic education of the highest quality, underpinned by the pursuit of excellence and high expectations for all. It aims to deliver a broad, well-balanced curriculum and a wealth of extra-curricular, artistic and sporting opportunities enabling each pupil to fulfil his/her potential, within a culture of praise and encouragement. It wishes to foster a happy, secure, disciplined environment, in which each individual's contribution to the community is valued and develop happy, well-rounded, self-disciplined, well-mannered, caring, confident young people.
- 1.4 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 All pupils, including those with LDD and EAL, are successful in their learning and their personal development is outstanding. The school meets its aims well. Standards are good and pupils' progress is good in relation to their above average ability. Pupils enjoy exceptionally high levels of success in activities. Teaching is good, and often excellent, and demonstrates thorough subject knowledge, knowledge of individual pupils and their needs, and the frequent use of praise. Occasionally activities limit opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. The quality of assessment and marking is excellent. The pupils' overall success is as a result of a broad curriculum, much enhanced by the outstanding extra-curricular programme, and the pupils' own highly positive attitudes to learning.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal qualities are outstanding and are fostered by the excellent quality of pastoral care and thorough welfare, health and safety procedures. The many opportunities to celebrate success from the use of stickers, credits and debits and celebratory assemblies enable self-esteem and confidence. Pupils understand the importance of helping those less fortunate than themselves. They are highly considerate towards each other, enjoying excellent relationships between themselves and with staff.
- 2.3 The ethos and aims of the school are overseen exceptionally well by the governors and senior management team (SMT), who provide strong support to ensure the school fulfils its aims. Procedures for the monitoring of teaching and learning are strong in the upper and middle schools but are not consistent in the pre-prep. The school has fulfilled the recommendations of the previous inspection. Links with parents and carers are outstanding. Parents are very happy with the educational and welfare provision for their children, as indicated by the parent questionnaires, where the vast majority of responses were positive about most aspects of school life.

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

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

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

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school met all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Extend the effective existing procedures for the monitoring of teaching and learning, including development planning, into the pre-prep.
  2. Extend existing good practice in offering opportunities for pupils to develop skills in independent learning, reasoning and critical thinking to all teaching.
  3. Strengthen observational assessment in the EYFS so that “next steps” in each child’s development match their individual needs, interests and abilities.
  4. Increase opportunities for outdoor learning in the EYFS to include all areas of the curriculum and include this in planning.
  5. Increase the accessibility of resources for children in the EYFS to encourage them to be independent, develop their creative skills and to make choices.

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

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

- 3.1 The pupils' all-round achievement is good, fulfilling the school's aims to provide an academic education of the highest quality, underpinned by the pursuit of excellence and high expectations for all. They achieve high standards in a wide variety of activities including mathematical challenges, dance and drama productions and speech and drama examinations. Their group and individual achievements in activities such as music and games are exceptional. For the last three years, all pupils have gained a place at the school of their choice for secondary education, a great number with scholarships and awards.
- 3.2 The following analysis uses the national tests from 2007-2009. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at the age of eleven have been excellent in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools. Pupils' overall attainment interpreted in the light of inspection evidence and the high proportion of good teaching indicate that they make good progress in relation to their ability, which is above the national average. Pupils have strong numeracy skills used across the curriculum, for example younger pupils in geography considered the uses of water and then represented this information on a bar chart. ICT skills in specific lessons are well developed although these skills are not used across the curriculum limiting opportunities for independent research. The pupils' creativity is well developed as is evident from the displays that celebrate their work, and from the excellent creative writing examples across the school.
- 3.3 The presentation of the pupils' work is of high quality, demonstrating the focus and effort they put into it. They work well both in groups and individually. They are articulate; they listen carefully to the views of others and generally express themselves with confidence. However, their ability to reason well and think critically for themselves at their own level of ability is sometimes limited when teaching styles restrict opportunities for engaging in activities which develop these skills. The pupils' success in academic work and activities has a strong impact on the excellence of their personal development. It is underpinned by their excellent attitudes to learning and by their exemplary behaviour. The outstanding relationships they enjoy between themselves and with staff is a major factor in the enjoyment and satisfaction they gain from all that they do.

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

- 3.4 The school offers a good curriculum and an outstanding extra-curricular programme which fulfils its aims to deliver a broad, well-balanced curriculum and a wealth of extra-curricular, artistic and sporting opportunities. The curriculum has a highly positive impact on the pupils' achievements and their personal development.
- 3.5 Pupils of all ages and abilities are given experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education. Pupils broadly follow the National Curriculum and in Years 7 and 8 concentrate on the 13+ Common Entrance syllabus, including Latin. This is adapted to the needs of pupils moving on to a variety of senior schools. In addition to the National Curriculum subjects, French is taught from Reception and personal, social

and health education (PSHE) and religious studies (RS) from Year 3. Setting arrangements from Year 4 in mathematics and English enable teachers to successfully adapt their lessons to the needs of pupils across the ability range. These experiences contribute highly effectively to the pupils' levels of achievement and their personal development.

- 3.6 Planning in almost all subjects is designed to ensure the continuity of education throughout the school. However, planning for the development of RS and PSHE in the pre-prep does not always enable the subjects to be covered progressively or to be appropriately monitored. In many subjects planning is excellent, rooted in long term plans, with the daily lesson plan specifically referring to the differentiation required for the wide range of abilities evident, and providing clear aims and objectives. Learning support for those with LDD and EAL is excellent; it is well organised and very effective across the whole school. Pupils requiring an individual learning plan draw up their own targets in consultation with the teaching staff, these are regularly reviewed and hugely beneficial. More able pupils are identified and are catered for via a range of methods, including the creative and sporting experiences they can access from the curricular and extra-curricular programme. There are good systems in place for transition to different parts of the school.
- 3.7 The school provides an outstanding range of well planned and structured activities for pupils and these make a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development, their love of learning and their enjoyment of school. Pupils in the pre-prep thoroughly enjoy the varied extra activities including yoga and cooking although, as the school is aware, sporting activities for this age group are more limited. Older pupils enjoy such activities as electric cars and dance and a plethora of sporting and musical activities.
- 3.8 Performance drama, which is a vibrant part of school life, and cross-curricular days further broaden the pupils' aesthetic development. A wide range of visits is organised for each year group, both local day trips and visits overseas, including a residential trip to France for Years 7 and 8. The school has developed strong links with the local community including a local church and hospice, developing in pupils an awareness and respect for the needs of others.

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

- 3.9 Teaching is good, with many examples of excellent practice. Well planned and knowledgeable teaching enables the pupils of all abilities to develop their learning skills and achieve the school's aim to educate the 'whole child.' The teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pupils are invariably strong and they use praise regularly, which adds to the pupils' enjoyment of the topics studied. In a games lesson all pupils, including those naturally less skilled at football, were praised and encouraged, enabling all participants to enjoy the session and have a clear sense of achievement. The best lessons are conducted with pace, include enthusiastic teaching, and effective planning and questioning which encourages pupils to think for themselves enabling them to achieve exceptionally well. For example, in a general studies lesson pupils were encouraged to think with empathy about the conditions found in the second world war death camps. Support for pupils with LDD, together with the deployment of teaching assistants, ensures that pupils are given the appropriate help. In an art lesson on Picasso all pupils were on task and engrossed in their learning due to the excellent support provided. In lessons where activities are over directed, providing fewer opportunities for pupils

to be challenged, to think for themselves and learn independently, pupils' progress is less rapid.

3.10 Excellent assessment data is compiled enabling teachers to check on pupils' progress. A range of standardised tests is carried out regularly and analysed carefully to help staff to effectively monitor and plan for pupils' needs. Marking across the school is excellent; it is developmental and encouraging, leading to greater efforts and understanding by the pupils who report that they are fully aware of what they need to do to improve.

3.11 Resources across the school are excellent. Interactive whiteboards are in the majority of classrooms and, in those lessons where they are used effectively, these help to produce stimulating lessons and aid pupils' enjoyment and interest.

## **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 is outstanding for their age. Throughout the school pupils have exceptionally well-developed personal qualities: they are articulate; they have a confidence in themselves and they have a sense of pride in their own achievements and in those of other pupils and the school. The aims of the school to foster a happy, secure, disciplined environment, in which each individual's contribution to the community is valued and develop happy, well-rounded, self-disciplined, well-mannered, caring, confident young people are exceptionally well met.
- 4.2 Pupils have a strong spiritual awareness. Through the varied, high quality assemblies that take place each day pupils develop their understanding of the needs of others and of the non-material aspects of life. They are caring and considerate, alert to their own strengths and weaknesses and in interviews were able to identify how perceived failings, for example in their academic work, may be overcome. They clearly enjoy being reminded of special days for others; for example, when the chapel bell rings out to remind them to celebrate a birthday. Pupils respond reflectively both in lessons and assemblies; for example in a chapel service where pupils considered the importance of working together rather than going selfishly alone. They are self-confident and have high levels of self-esteem, encouraged through the many occasions provided to celebrate their successes and by the badges, from prefects to sports, that they wear with pride. Pupils also have a highly developed sense of self-awareness.
- 4.3 The moral development of pupils is excellent: they have a keen understanding of right and wrong. These skills are fostered through the code of conduct which is known and understood by older pupils, and by the set of golden rules which guide younger pupils, including, for example, thinking of the importance of being grateful. Their manners are excellent and behaviour throughout the school is exemplary. They are highly supportive of each other and prefects willingly support younger pupils on the playground. Pupils have a clear understanding that there are many in Britain and in the wider world that are less fortunate than themselves. In interviews, pupils listed many charities that the school, or small groups of pupils, have worked to support by fundraising. In the recent past these have included organising a disco in aid of an earthquake appeal, and filling shoeboxes for less fortunate children at Christmas.
- 4.4 Pupils' social development is outstanding. They are highly courteous both towards adults and each other. They show immense pride on being asked to undertake responsibilities, be it form captain for the week in the pre-prep, or the boy or girl head chorister, or sports captain for more senior pupils. Pupils are also very aware of the responsibility they have for the success of their house in sporting and other competitions. Elected school councillors clearly understand their responsibilities to represent their peers. Pupils proudly name the improvements in the school that have emanated from ideas raised in this forum, from a complete adventure playground to replacement mirrors in the changing rooms. Through lessons in citizenship delivered as part of the PSHE programme pupils learn effectively about the institutions and governance of their country.
- 4.5 Pupils' development of an understanding of other cultures is good. Understanding of other faiths and cultures is promoted very well in the pre-prep where pupils celebrate

festivals such as Diwali, Passover and the Chinese New Year. Pupils in Year 6 develop their understanding of different cultures from their study of major world faiths. In accordance with the stated ethos of the school, chapel services for middle and upper school pupils focus on the Christian calendar. However, across the curriculum, teaching enables pupils to develop awareness of other countries and cultures. In geography pupils compare world weather patterns with the incidence of less economically developed economies, and in history and general studies topics include subjects as diverse as the Aztecs and the rise and fall of Nazi Germany. Pupils develop a good understanding of their own and other cultures through regular visits to concerts and art galleries: at the time of the inspection pupils in Years 7 and 8 were enthusing about a forthcoming trip to a performance of *War Horse* in London.

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

- 4.6 The pastoral care provided and the level of attention to pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent. In their responses to questionnaires, and in discussions, pupils make it clear that they greatly appreciate the support and guidance given by their teachers. This promotion of a happy, secure environment, so evident in all age groups, is one of the school's aims and is fully achieved.
- 4.7 Excellent, extremely positive relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves help to provide an environment in which pupils thrive. Regular staff meetings are held at which the agenda is devoted solely to the welfare and development of the pupils. Teachers are exceptionally good role models and are encouraged to reflect on how they relate to the pupils. An excellent booklet produced by senior staff invites staff and others to think what it is like to be a pupil in different school situations. Teachers and support staff provide outstanding help and guidance. Pupils state that they feel safe and very well cared for. Through assemblies, lessons and activities staff promote pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem.
- 4.8 Effective procedures are in place to promote excellent behaviour among the pupils and to prevent bullying. In ICT lessons pupils consider the safe use of the internet and produce presentations on cyber-bullying. In the pupil questionnaire and in discussions, pupils reported that bullying is not an issue; they were equally confident that, if it did occur the matter would be dealt with appropriately. As well as displaying exceptional politeness and courtesy to adults, pupils treat each other with similarly outstanding courtesy. Very many parents answering the parental questionnaire praised the high expectations and exemplary standards of behaviour achieved by pupils. Although a very small number of pupils expressed concern in the questionnaire about whether teachers are fair in the way that they give rewards and punishments, pupils were clear when interviewed about how credits and debits were awarded, and were highly supportive of the system.
- 4.9 Thorough procedures and policies support the welfare, health and safety of pupils in the EYFS and throughout the school. The safeguarding of pupils is strong. The training for inter-agency working for designated training officers is up-to-date and all others working in the school have been appropriately trained. The policy is in line with requirements and appropriate. Suitable measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Health and safety procedures are robust and risk assessments cover all areas of school life. An accessibility plan has been written which is designed to improve the educational provision for those pupils with disabilities. Facilities for those who become ill during the school day are good. The admission and attendance registers have been accurately maintained.

- 4.10 School meals are highly nutritious, offer an excellent choice and are very highly praised by parents and pupils in their questionnaires and in interviews. Pupils understand very well the importance of choosing a healthy diet and participating in physical exercise. Very many pupils speak enthusiastically about the outstanding variety of high-quality sporting activities available to them. They enjoy the significant period of time devoted to physical education and games in their timetable.

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

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

5.1 The governing body shows outstanding commitment to the needs of the school and helps to secure the school's aims. The three committees of marketing, risk management and finance and general purposes oversee the work of the school highly effectively and strongly support the pupils' personal and academic development. Governors provide, maintain and improve the accommodation and ensure that material and human resources are used to best advantage to meet the needs of the pupils. Development planning is thorough and has ensured the recent investment in buildings that enhance the quality of education for the pupils. Regular board and committee meetings, a formal reporting system, and informal contact between the chairman, staff and governors give an excellent insight into the achievements and challenges of the whole school. Additionally the chair meets weekly with the headmaster and the bursar. One governor has the responsibility for linking particularly with the pre-prep and the EYFS. Governors are closely involved in the appointments of senior managers and have undertaken appropriate training in this area. Governors are well known throughout the school by parents and staff and attend many of the events that make up the life of the school, enabling further support for improvement. Their oversight of pastoral and welfare health and safety matters, including child protection, is thorough.

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

5.2 The good quality of leadership and management throughout the school, including in the EYFS, is reflected in the excellent personal development of pupils and their good academic achievements. Leadership and management fulfil the school's aims to enable each pupil to fulfil his/her potential, within a culture of praise and encouragement. The headmaster has overall responsibility for the school and works highly effectively with the SMT, to ensure the effective day-to-day management of the pre-prep, middle and upper schools.

5.3 The vision of the SMT and governors is clearly put forward in a strategic five-year school development plan which is evaluated and reviewed regularly. This plan is supported by school curriculum plans to which staff can easily contribute. The joint curriculum plan for the middle and upper school is costed and has clear evaluation procedures. However, the pre-prep curriculum plan is not costed, lacks evaluation procedures and is not clearly linked with plans for other age groups. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the middle and upper schools is highly effective. It is carried out by heads of department using valuable procedures such as examining pupils' books, observing lessons and pupil interviews or questionnaires. Additionally, the SMT act as mentors, working with heads of department, and an annual review results in a clear development plan. Procedures in the pre-prep lack consistency, limiting the further development of the monitoring of teaching and learning across the whole school. Since the last inspection, more non-contact time has been provided for staff with management and curriculum responsibilities to develop teaching and learning, and links between the pre-prep and the middle and upper schools have been strengthened through regular meetings at all levels.

5.4 Policies are reviewed regularly according to the needs of the pupils. The aim to foster a happy, secure, disciplined environment is at the heart of the school and is

supported by the regular staff meetings where the academic and pastoral needs of each individual are carefully discussed. All staff in the school, teaching and non-teaching, support the excellent personal development and welfare of pupils, so that all thrive within this encouraging environment. Appraisal takes place annually. Leadership has made a strong commitment to the professional development of staff in Years 3 to 8 but this has been more limited in Years 1 and 2. Teaching staff are deployed effectively as reflected in the high quality of the pupils' education. Staff are effectively trained in areas of welfare, health and safety and safeguarding. The recruitment of staff is appropriately carried out and the centralised register is maintained accurately. The school's premises are used highly effectively, and pupils particularly value the opportunities provided to build 'camps' in the extensive grounds during their recreation time.

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

- 5.5 Links with parents are outstanding throughout the school, including the EYFS, meeting the schools aims. Responses to pre-inspection questionnaires showed that, almost without exception, parents feel satisfied or very satisfied with all aspects of their children's education and the support provided by the school. They feel strongly that teaching helps their children to make progress, believe that the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and values, and are very pleased with the range of extra-curricular activities offered, the high standards of behaviour achieved by pupils, and the management of the school.
- 5.6 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. Some help by listening to younger pupils reading; some assist with school trips; many support the thriving parents association, attending quiz evenings and the annual ball; others become class parent representative for the year. Very many parents visit the school to watch matches or to attend plays and concerts. The school has a wealth of information available to parents and prospective parents on an excellent website and many parents made reference to this in their questionnaire responses.
- 5.7 Parents are very satisfied with the information provided about their child's progress. Short reports at half term together with full, detailed reports at the end of term enable parents to monitor their child's progress; the best reports offer targets to improve and give personalised information to both pupil and parents about the individual's academic progress. Especially useful are the notes between the form teacher and the parents written each week in the pupil's planner and homework record. Parents' evenings are held regularly. However parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns as they might arise and staff are accessible at the start and the end of the school day.
- 5.8 The school has a clear complaints policy. Complaints are treated seriously and with due care. Many parents reported how swiftly and effectively minor concerns are handled by form teachers or the SMT, with many commenting on the excellent approachability of the teaching staff and of the SMT.

**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 good and fulfils its aims well enabling all children to make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Warm and caring relationships exist with parents and carers who particularly appreciate the balance between pastoral and academic support. The strong staff team is united in their commitment to the children's welfare and a thorough set of policies and procedures underpin this effectively, although planning for individual needs and interests lacks depth and detail. The newly appointed head of pre-prep is keen to develop the culture of reflection, review and self evaluation further to ensure the best outcomes for every child.

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

6.2 The leadership and management of the Early Years are good with many outstanding features. A strong range of regularly reviewed policies and procedures and risk assessments are in place to ensure the safe and efficient management of the EYFS. Every child's needs are well catered for through excellent staff ratios, an effective appraisal system and close liaison with local agencies. Excellent relationships exist with parents who have a high regard for the setting and have many opportunities to discuss their child's progress and receive regular informative reports. The department is extremely well resourced, but resources are not always easily accessible to children, limiting their opportunities to develop independence, creativity and make choices. Children's safety has been enhanced by an effective hand-over process which incorporates parents signing their children in and out.

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

6.3 The quality of provision in the EYFS is good. The environment supports children's learning and development well. As a result all children including those under three make good progress and develop a happy and positive attitude. The well resourced indoor and outdoor areas provide opportunities for purposeful play and exploration. However, observations are not yet sufficiently focused to inform planning for individual needs, abilities and interests and this limits progress overall. The outdoor areas provide excellent resources for children's physical development; but their use for learning across other curriculum areas is less well developed. Children needing extra help or greater challenge are quickly identified and appropriate support provided. Children are encouraged to understand all aspects of health and safety and the exemplary behaviour of the children is a strength of the setting.

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

- 6.4 Outcomes for children in the EYFS are good. Children, including those under three happily engage in the learning experiences available to them and make good progress in reading, writing, number and use of ICT. In the most effective sessions observed children were confident in making choices from the activities on offer and could sustain interest; for example children enjoyed using the telephone and taking messages in the office role play area. In other sessions where children had limited opportunities to work independently or solve problems progress was more restricted. The children communicate well with each other playing collaboratively and sharing resources. Children's excellent personal development is demonstrated as they move confidently from one area of the school to another showing respect for their own safety and that of others. Their knowledge of healthy eating is good and they respond well to the expectations of adults.

**Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three**

- 6.5 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 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**

Mrs Sara Wiggins	Reporting Inspector
Mr Nicholas Park	Deputy Head, IAPS school
Mrs Catherine Watts	Deputy Head, IAPS school
Mrs Diane Gardiner	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mrs Jane Morgan	Early Years Team Inspector (Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)