



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

HIGHFIELDS SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Highfields School

Full Name of School	Highfields School		
DCSF Number	891/6000		
Registered Charity Number	528261		
Address	Highfields School London Road Newark Nottinghamshire NG24 3AL		
Telephone Number	01636 704103		
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Email Address	headmaster@highfieldsschool.co.uk		
Head	Mr D Roger Wood		
Chair of Governors	Mrs Beryl Rimmer		
Age Range	3 to 11		
Total Number of Pupils	151		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (79 boys; 72 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 109
	3-5 (EYFS):	42	11-18: 0
Number of Day Pupils	151		
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Amanda Jones		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection date/EYFS	08 Feb 2010 to 09 Feb 2010		
Final (team) visit	08 Mar 2010 to 10 Mar 2010		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in June 2006.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard is as follows.

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

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

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 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 does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Highfields School is situated in Balderton on the southern outskirts of Newark, approximately one mile from the city centre. It caters for boys and girls from the age of 3 to 11. The school was founded in 1945 in a single room above a chemist's shop in Appletongate. In 1947 the founder Gordon Benoy purchased the present fourteen-acre site on London Road. Parents provided funding to develop the school further in the early days. The school became and remains a school with a family atmosphere. A Nursery was started in 1987 with a new Nursery building opening in 1989. The Reception class is housed within the infant department. The school is a charitable trust and a board of governors, including a number of parents, administers the school. The current headmaster was appointed in 2004.
- 1.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision consists of a Nursery with eighteen children aged three to four attending part-time, and a Reception class of 24 full-time pupils. In Years 1 and 2 there are 39 pupils, of whom twenty are boys and nineteen are girls. Seventy pupils are in Years 3 to 6, of whom 36 are boys and 34 are girls.
- 1.3 The school is non-selective, and standardised tests show that the ability profile of the school is above the national average. The main entry points to the school are in Nursery or Reception, but pupils may join the school at all stages. Pupils are assessed informally on entry. They come from Newark and many of the outlying villages as far as Lincoln and Grantham. Most have a white British background, with a few of minority ethnic backgrounds. All pupils in the school have English as their first language. The majority of pupils are from families in professional or business occupations. Twenty pupils are identified as needing learning support and the local authority funds one pupil with a statement of special educational needs. On leaving the school at the age of eleven, approximately half of the pupils move to local grammar schools, others going to independent day or boarding schools.
- 1.4 The school aims to make the pupils' time at Highfields enjoyable and stimulating, so that they develop as individuals with an understanding of a sense of responsibility for the community, as well as acquiring the knowledge and skills needed for the next stage of education and for life. It aims to help them learn to live together in a community, to acquire resourcefulness, to feel valued and significant and to develop foundations for a happy and fulfilling life.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils achieve high standards and make good progress for their ability, including those children in the EYFS, where the overall effectiveness of their provision is good. All pupils enjoy learning, are well motivated, resourceful and show initiative and independence from an early age, in line with the school's aims. Teachers are hard working, have good relationships with pupils and generally understand their needs. Teaching is effective and enables good achievement. An excellent range of assessments is used to measure progress and attainment and identify needs. A good curriculum gives thorough coverage of English and mathematics at all ages but the time allocation for humanities, music, art and design and technology (DT) is low. An outstanding programme of activities, visits and speakers enhances the curriculum and enables pupils to achieve well.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is nurtured through the splendid relationships within the school community and the high quality of care they receive. Pupils behave well, are polite and courteous and their social and moral development is excellent. All staff within the school community effectively care for the pupils, with the form teacher at the heart of the pastoral system. Pupils say they are very happy at the school; they feel well cared for and safe. In the pre-inspection questionnaire they said that they are treated fairly, and that teachers are concerned for their welfare and help them learn. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are thorough in many respects. Some regulatory requirements concerning risk assessments, the admission register, fire training and recruitment checks were not met on the initial visit; the admission register, some risk assessments and the recruitment checks, as far as it was possible to do so, had been rectified by the final visit.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are successful in meeting the aims of the school. Governors have a clear vision for the school, are highly supportive and have constructive systems in place to enable them to have good oversight of the school. However, governors and senior managers have not monitored policies effectively to ensure that all procedures are carried out rigorously. The school has identified areas for development in its strategic plan and is starting to implement them. Since the previous inspection, the school has acted on all recommendations. The role of senior managers and subject co-ordinators has been developed but their rigorous monitoring of subjects is limited. The school has strong relationships with parents. Communication is frequent and helpful. The inspection team did not support comments made in response to the parent questionnaire that the school had not handled concerns well, that provision for those with learning difficulties was not worthwhile or that homework was not monitored. Parents are very positive about teaching, the curriculum and the levels of pastoral care 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 At the time of the initial visit, the school did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended, and therefore it was required to:

- carry out risk assessments on buildings and the environment [Regulation 3.(4), under Welfare, health and safety];
- appoint at least one competent person with sufficient training, expertise and knowledge to assist in fire prevention and arrange regular training for all staff [Regulation 3.(5), under Welfare, health and safety];
- correctly maintain the admission register by including the name and address of all previous schools attended by pupils [Regulation 3.(9), under Welfare, health and safety]; and
- carry out all the appropriate checks on new members of staff at the time of their appointment and record fully on the centralised register of appointments [Regulation 4.(2)(a), and 4.C (2) (a)(c) under Suitability of staff and proprietors and, for the same reason, 3.(2)(b) under Welfare, health and safety].

2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified some of the above shortcomings, as noted in the text of the report. However, the following requirements remain unresolved, and therefore the school must:

- complete the risk assessments on buildings and the environment [Regulation 3.(4), under Welfare, health and safety];
- appoint at least one competent person with sufficient training, expertise and knowledge to assist in fire prevention and arrange regular training for all staff [Regulation 3.(5), under Welfare, health and safety]; and
- carry out all the appropriate checks on new members of staff at the time of their appointment [Regulation 4.(2)(a), under the Suitability of staff and proprietors and, for the same reason, 3.(2)(b) under Welfare, health and safety].

2.6 The school's provision for childcare met the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and no action was required.

(ii) Recommended action

- 2.7 In addition to rectifying the weaknesses in meeting regulatory requirements, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure sufficient time is given to senior managers to effectively fulfil their role in rigorously monitoring the curriculum and standards of teaching and learning.
 2. Improve the provision for humanities, art, design and technology and music within the curriculum.
 3. Make planning, observation and assessment in the EYFS more consistent and provide further opportunities for child-initiated activities.
 4. Ensure the principles of the EYFS are better embedded in its curriculum, particularly in relation to the continuous provision at snack time and outdoor provision.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 Standards of achievement and pupils' learning, attitudes and skills are good, in line with the school's aims for pupils to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for the next stage of life. Results in national tests at the ages of 7 and 11 over the last three years for which nationally comparative data is available have been high when compared to the national average for maintained primary schools. Pupils make good progress over time in relation to their ability, which is above the national average. They are successful in gaining scholarships to senior independent schools and places at local grammar schools.
- 3.2 Pupils are articulate when speaking in lessons or interviews. They listen carefully to one another and to their teachers. Reading skills are high and their writing is detailed and imaginative, with careful use of correct grammar from an early age. For example, in a Year 3 English lesson, pupils correctly identified nouns and adverbs in sentences they wrote, and many could include similes and recognise alliteration. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to make use of the library to develop those skills, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- 3.3 Pupils of differing abilities reach high standards in mathematics through their thorough understanding. In some cases mathematically talented pupils work with the year above. Pupils are proficient at solving mathematical problems and their mental mathematics is strong. By Year 6, pupils apply their mathematical skills competently in other subjects such as science, when showing results as graphs.
- 3.4 Information and communication technology (ICT) is used constructively to record and analyse data, for research and to word process information. ICT, art and DT skills are sound and knowledge and breadth of humanities and music theory satisfactory. Opportunities for developing creativity are limited. Games and physical education (PE) skills are highly developed in a variety of sports. Pupils achieve well at local and national levels in swimming, athletics and rugby as well as in the UK Chess Challenge. Many pupils enjoy participating in the orchestra, brass ensemble or choir.
- 3.5 Independent learning is a strength and is highly developed from Reception. In Year 5, pupils have conducted their own research on the Tudors and also produced booklets about healthy lifestyles. Pupils show initiative in lessons, for example when checking their work using a dictionary or thesaurus. They work together effectively as, for example, in a games lesson for Years 3 and 4 when pupils helped each other to improve their netball skills.
- 3.6 Pupils present their work well and pay careful attention to handwriting. Generally they apply themselves constructively, persevere with the tasks set and show good concentration. Pupils enjoy their lessons, are interested and motivated and very happy in their learning.

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

- 3.7 A good curriculum for all ages and abilities successfully supports pupils' learning and effectively supports the school's aims of providing the necessary knowledge and skills for the next stage of their life. All areas of the national curriculum are covered and, in addition, religious education (RE), personal, social and health education (PSHE) and French are taught from Reception. Drama is included in English lessons and all pupils participate in a drama production during the year. Time allocation for English and mathematics is high throughout the school. Excellent use is made of the early-morning activity time at the beginning of each day. Since the previous inspection, time allocation for humanities has been increased but this is still low, as is time allocation for music, art and DT. The timetable is altered during the year to enable better subject coverage and sports fixtures are frequently arranged in games times. Individual music lessons are available for pupils from Year 3 and take place on a rota basis so that the same lessons are not missed regularly. Form teachers teach most subjects to their class with subject specialists teaching music, French and PE. In Years 5 and 6, specialists teach English and mathematics.
- 3.8 Curriculum planning is thorough within each year group and generally based on commercially produced plans. Subject co-ordinators have an overview of their subject and produce long-term plans with class teachers making more detailed plans. The format of plans is not always consistent between year groups. Daily lesson plans usually show how individual pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities are to be supported, and this is effective. Those with special educational needs are given an education which is in line with the requirements of their statement. Pupils' transition between year groups is eased by 'moving up days'. When moving between Years 2 and 3, extra time is given for pupils to adjust to their new routines. Class teachers pass on detailed records about pupils and informal discussions between teachers ensure that pupils settle quickly into their new forms.
- 3.9 Enrichment of the curriculum through visits, extra-curricular activities and visiting speakers is excellent. Over the year a wide range of extra-curricular activities are offered both in school and at the end of the school day. These include Spanish, judo and gardening club for Years 1 and 2 and in addition football, netball, cookery, orchestra and choir for Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits related to topics within the curriculum, such as a visit to Newark castle, the Tower of London, theatre visits and the Year 5 residential visit to Yorkshire. Visiting speakers, such as a poet, the local choirmaster and visiting artists including a potter, further enhance the curriculum. Constructive links with the local community are made, for example through visits to local churches and involvement with other schools in sports competitions and matches.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.10 Effective teaching successfully supports the aims of the school through giving pupils stimulating learning experiences, providing foundations for their future life and developing independent learning and resourcefulness. It makes a strong contribution to their levels of achievement.
- 3.11 Teachers know their pupils well and plan carefully according to individual and group requirements so that pupils of all abilities generally make good progress. An excellent assessment system is used to record and monitor levels of attainment and progress. This also ensures that any needs not already noted by teachers can be identified and addressed. Extra support may be given for a long or short time as necessary by learning support teachers, who effectively help those pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities or those with statements of special educational needs within the classroom and on an individual basis. Teachers use the early-morning task time constructively to ensure that pupils are up-to-date with their work, to hear individual reading, to enhance independent learning and to improve understanding.
- 3.12 Teachers' subject knowledge is good, generally challenging pupils and extending their understanding. Teaching assistants are used effectively, particularly in Years 1 and 2. A wide variety of teaching methods are used in some lessons to help maintain pupil interest as well as aid their progress. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils' mental mathematics skills were extended by quick questions; their understanding of time was reinforced through appropriate use of the interactive whiteboard and extra tasks were provided for different ability groups to enhance understanding. In a minority of lessons, teaching is insufficiently challenging and does not enable rapid progress. Teaching often makes constructive cross-curricular links. Year 1 pupils looking at toys through the twentieth century linked these to materials that they learned about in science. Most lessons take place at a brisk pace and time is used well, but in some cases lessons start late or the pace is slow and, on these occasions, pupils make less progress. Resources are sufficient for needs and used effectively. However, the library for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is used insufficiently. The range of fiction is small and many non-fiction books are outdated.
- 3.13 Marking is encouraging, but inconsistent across subjects and year groups. Excellent examples of marking were seen in English and mathematics that gave helpful pointers for improvement as well as reinforcing the pupils' knowledge. A system of target setting is beneficial in enabling pupils to understand the progress they are making in English and mathematics. Pupils say that they find this extremely useful, and that that they appreciate the marking and find it helpful.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of pupils' personal development is good. In accordance with the school's aims, pupils learn to live together in a community, grow as individuals with a sense of responsibility and develop foundations for a happy and fulfilling life. Pupils' spiritual development is good; they reflect on and write poetry, express wonder at making a plant for Mother's day in gardening club, and pupils playing in the orchestra become immersed in their music. They are proud to help in leading school assemblies and participate fully in the singing. Pupils feel valued and generally have high self-esteem, helped by the certificates and other awards that they win, both individually and collectively.
- 4.2 Teachers and other staff are good role models, showing respect for one another and for pupils. Around the school and when talking together, pupils show genuine respect and care for one another. They understand the difference between right and wrong from an early age and are quick to notice and correct unacceptable behaviour. The 'golden rules' are understood and accepted fully. Pupils are proud to raise money for local and national charities and support emergency appeals such as the Haiti disaster. In this atmosphere, pupils show excellent moral development. Assemblies, PSHE and RE lessons all successfully nurture spiritual, moral and social development.
- 4.3 Pupils show excellent social development. They take on responsibilities at different levels, such as class monitors, school prefects and games captains, and pupils from Year 2 upwards are members of the school council. They take their roles on the school council seriously and say they are confident that their views will be listened to. When responding to the pre-inspection pupil questionnaire, most pupils said that they could play a role in school life. They are well aware of their role within the school and the wider community. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about those who help them in the community, and in Years 3 to 6 they have a good understanding of some of the other services and institutions in England through the PSHE programme. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 regularly read newspapers and choose articles of interest to discuss with their peers in class, further promoting their social development and awareness of current affairs.
- 4.4 Pupils' cultural development has improved since the previous inspection due to the greater range of opportunities provided by the school. Celebrations such as Chinese New Year and Diwali are explored through assemblies and the curriculum; for example, pupils in Year 6 learnt to count in Chinese. In each year group pupils have looked at a country and noted the cultural differences. Parents and pupils of different faiths are encouraged to share these with the school community. Many pupils take part in the local Young Musician competition and most participate in an annual play which further promotes their cultural development.

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

- 4.5 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good and support pupils' personal development well. Excellent relationships exist between pupils and teachers, and a happy, caring community with a strong family atmosphere successfully enables pupils to learn and develop. The pastoral care system is based around class teachers who effectively ensure the well-being of those in their care. Concerns about individual pupils are discussed at staff meetings as well as informally between teachers. Pupils say they are happy in the school, which is like their home, and that there is always a teacher to whom they can speak if necessary. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, pupils said that teachers show concern for them and treat them fairly. Procedures for protecting against bullying and promoting good behaviour are effective. Pupils say that there is little bullying but are happy that their teachers will deal with it constructively should it occur. The 'golden rules' are displayed in each classroom and enable the promotion of good behaviour. Even the youngest pupils understand acceptable behaviour and are keen to keep the 'golden rules'. A system of rewards that go towards house points is further effective encouragement to pupils to behave well. Pupils say that they feel safe and they have a clear understanding of what this means.
- 4.6 Policies for health and safety are thorough but procedures are less effective. The head is in overall charge, but there is some lack of clarity as to responsibilities for different areas and there is no health and safety committee. An external agency produces a health and safety audit and governors oversee the health and safety policy. Risk assessments for trips are undertaken but those for buildings and the environment in the main school were not in place at the initial visit. However, most, but not all, had been produced for many areas by the time of the final visit. The child protection policy is clear and all staff have had recent training, including those as designated persons. Correct procedures have not been routinely followed in the past for checking new staff when appointed or recording that checks have been made.
- 4.7 Appropriate measures are taken to reduce risks from fire, including a fire safety policy and regular fire drills, and a fire risk assessment are undertaken. No regular training for staff in fire safety is carried out and there is no person with relevant training to oversee fire safety within the school. Provision for pupils who are ill is adequate, with a bed and private space, which has a washbasin, being provided. A suitable plan for improving access to premises and the curriculum for pupils with disabilities exists. Meals are nutritious, healthy eating habits are encouraged and pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy diet. Excellent opportunities for regular exercise are given through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
- 4.8 Attendance registers are correctly maintained, stored and backed up monthly. At the time of the initial visit, the admission register failed to indicate the previous schools that pupils had attended, but by the final visit this had been corrected.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governors give strong support to the school and its aims. They work together effectively and have a clear vision for the future of the school. Since the previous inspection, procedures have been strengthened and governors have had training in different aspects of governance. They now have greater responsibility for health and safety and child protection by regularly checking school policies, but they have not monitored the implementation of this with sufficient rigour, and this is an area of weakness. The overall effectiveness of their involvement in these areas is still developing. Governors have recently appointed a business manager, having identified this need, who is taking on a variety of roles in administration.
- 5.2 Different governors provide a breadth of expertise in the areas of finance, medicine, education, and business. Three committees, each meeting every term, give effective oversight of educational standards, personnel issues and financial planning. Careful minutes of these meetings are made, and committees report to the full governing body meeting each term.
- 5.3 Governors gain valuable insight into the running of the school through informal visits to the school for various functions and formal visits planned each half term for different governors. They have good relationships with staff and the parent body. The head provides a report each term for the full governing body meeting. This information enables governors to understand what is happening in the school, and to give their support for planned changes for growth and development.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 Leadership and management are effective in ensuring that the school's aims of educating its pupils within a caring environment are met, and this is reflected in the good quality of their education and their personal development. The senior leadership team (SLT), along with all teaching staff, has carried out a thorough self-evaluation of different aspects of the school leading to the production of a strategic plan for school development. This is detailed and comprehensive, but cost implications have not been considered. However, priorities have been set for future development, which is a recent improvement in management. Detailed policies are produced that cover all the necessary areas, but the monitoring of implementation of policies is insufficient, so that expected procedures are not always followed.
- 5.5 The SLT carries out helpful annual performance reviews of teaching staff that include whole school and personal target setting, which usefully ties in with the school development plan. Training days are provided each term and staff attend courses individually to extend their professional development, but this is uneven across subjects. Induction procedures for new staff are under-developed. Staff are trained regularly in child protection and first aid, but have had no recent training in fire safety and procedures. Whilst at the time of the final visit all checks and records for staff appointments were in place, at the time of the initial visit it was clear that not all checks and recording had been carried out in the past as new staff were appointed.
- 5.6 Since the previous inspection, most of the recommendations have been implemented. The role of subject co-ordinators has been developed and form teachers carry out subject planning with their guidance. At present co-ordinators are not fully effective in their role of monitoring the curriculum and teaching within subjects. However, members of the SLT and subject co-ordinators have limited time in which to fulfil all of their responsibilities.
- 5.7 Premises and accommodation are adequate for needs. The art room is a useful space, but is not suitable for larger classes doing science experiments or art. Grounds and premises are carefully maintained. Administrative, catering and maintenance staff work well to support teaching and pupils' personal development, and all contribute to the school's happy, family atmosphere.

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

- 5.8 Excellent relationships exist between the school and parents, carers and guardians, and these help to fulfil the school's overall aims. Over half of the parent body responded to a questionnaire sent out before the inspection. They were positive about the education the school provides, the care and guidance given to their children and the school's communication in different areas. A small minority expressed concern at the help given for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. However, inspection found that this was suitable. A few parents consider that amounts of homework are not always monitored carefully, but discussions with pupils showed that they understand that they need to do homework when advised by teachers.
- 5.9 Excellent opportunities exist for parents to be actively involved in the life of the school. All parents are members of the parent-teacher association and a committee organises social and fund-raising events, such as an annual ball and family quiz night, which are well attended and raise substantial amounts for the school. Parent helpers support children in the classroom and accompany them on day trips. They share their skills and expertise by speaking to different year groups, such as a pilot talking about aerodynamics to Year 5, and other parents through the 'people who help us' topic in the EYFS and Years 1 and 2.
- 5.10 Regular newsletters and notices in strategic places enable parents to have good daily understanding of the working of the school in relation to their children. The day's learning objectives are helpfully posted for parents on the Years 1 to 4 notice boards. All relevant information is available on the school's website which is regularly updated. The school has an open-door policy so that informal communication with teachers is easy and regular. Homework diaries further help parent-school communication.
- 5.11 Formal meetings between teachers and parents are held twice a year. The format has recently been reviewed in response to parental requests, and minor alterations made to facilitate the appointments system. In addition, a parents' information meeting is held in September enabling parents to meet their child's new form teacher. Results of standardised tests are sent to parents and reports are sent out once a year at the end of the summer term. Some reports, but not all, give helpful indicators for pupils to know how to improve their work. All subjects are covered in good detail, and in English, mathematics and science this includes grades given against national norms.
- 5.12 A few parents do not consider that their complaints are handled with care, but most are happy with the way the school deals with their concerns and inspectors found no evidence to the contrary.

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 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is good. Children enjoy school and make good progress in their learning and development. Some continuously make very good progress. Children have easy access to a broad range of resources, specialist teaching and before- and after-school care. Their relationships with their peers and carers are of high quality and their needs are well met. Overall there is good capacity for improvement. However some aspects, such as children initiating their own play or working one-to-one with their key person, are insufficiently emphasized.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are good. The new EYFS framework is beginning to be appropriately embedded. The setting has useful links with local authority advisers who provide training and advice. The curriculum is effectively evaluated, although planning, observation and assessment do not always lead to the next steps in learning. Policies and procedures to promote equality and eliminate discrimination are of high quality. Staff are vigilant regarding security checks of the premises and effectively ensure children are safeguarded. Most parents speak very highly of the care their children receive. Managers are clear about priorities and how to improve the quality of learning. Resources are used effectively and efficiently.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision in the EYFS is satisfactory. Effective steps are taken to evaluate provision for children's personal development and welfare. All staff have appropriate training in safeguarding children and first aid. Risk assessments are comprehensive, ensuring that children are safe and secure. Children's awareness of healthy eating is actively promoted at snack and mealtimes when they enjoy healthy snacks such as fresh fruit and vegetables although their independence is not fostered by encouraging them to prepare the snacks or pour their own drinks. Staff work hard to make effective use of the different areas within their shared premises although the necessary storage of resources leaves little space to create adequate play areas. Similarly, the outside area is predominantly used to promote children's physical development and is not yet sufficiently used in other areas of learning.

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

- 6.4 Most children in the setting are achieving well and making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Some make very good progress in literacy and numeracy. Children are motivated and interested, taking turns and sharing sensibly. Behaviour is excellent and their personal development is being strongly established. They feel safe and are very well supported by the caring staff. Children's awareness of healthy eating is actively promoted at snack and mealtimes when they enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables. They respond well to praise and encouragement, love coming to school and find learning 'a lot of fun'.

What the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Mrs Anthea Hickman	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Margaret Denton	Junior Team Inspector (Head, ISA)
Mrs Linda Dennis	Junior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS)
Ms Chrissie Pittman	Early Years Lead Inspector