



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**ST HILDA'S SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## St Hilda's School

Full Name of School	<b>St Hilda's School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>919/6080</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>311072</b>		
Address	<b>St Hilda's School High Street Bushey Hertfordshire WD23 3DA</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>020 8950 1751</b>		
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Email Address	<b>secretary@sthildasbushey.co.uk</b>		
Headmistress	<b>Mrs Loraine Cavanagh</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Brenda Batten</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>93</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls 3-11, Boys 3-5</b>		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>25</b>	5-11: <b>68</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>93</b>	
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Cheryl Rosenthal</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>15 Feb 2011 to 16 Feb 2011</b>		
	<b>16 Mar 2011 to 18 Mar 2011</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 March 2007.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 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 St Hilda's was founded in 1918. It is an educational trust, with a board of governors which provides an education for boys and girls from three to five years, and girls up to the age of eleven years. The school is non-denominational and pupils come from a diverse range of cultural and religious backgrounds. Situated on an attractive, compact site within the town of Bushey, the Edwardian house has been imaginatively extended and equipped to provide well for all areas of the curriculum. Since the last inspection the school has become a part of the Aldenham Foundation, whilst still retaining its individuality and independence. The school's stated aims are to provide a well-balanced, academic education within a supportive, respectful and caring community and to develop independent individuals, fully prepared to move on to the next stage of education with enthusiasm and confidence.
- 1.2 Currently the school has 93 pupils, is non-selective and welcomes pupils at any age throughout the academic year. Entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Little St Hilda's, is based on an informal assessment; children are gently and actively introduced to school life through a combination of structured play and interaction within small groups leading to a carefully managed introduction to a broad and challenging education within a happy, caring and secure family environment. Older pupils are assessed to ensure pupils can thrive and flourish in the school. Pupils are drawn mainly from business and professional families who provide strong support for their children's education.
- 1.3 The ability profile in the EYFS on entry is in line with expectations. The school does not administer national tests but, from data available, the overall ability of pupils is above the national average. Currently the school provides learning support for six of the twenty-four pupils identified with some form of learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD). No pupil has a statement of special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) are bi-lingual and are fully integrated into the school.
- 1.4 Out-of-school care is available from 8 am and after-school care until 5.30 pm for pupils each day. Pupils leave Year 6 for a wide range of independent day and boarding schools, via competitive entrance examinations. Many achieve academic and non-academic awards.

- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Kindergarten	Nursery
Reception	Reception

***Preparatory Department***

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 1
Form 2	Year 2
Form 3	Year 3
Form 4	Year 4
Form 5	Year 5
Form 6	Year 6

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 Throughout the school the pupils' achievement in academic work and in extra-curricular activities is excellent overall. The curriculum supports the work of the school and supports its aims. On evidence available pupils' attainment is above average and they make good progress. Well-developed skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) extend pupils understanding and contribute to the pupils' excellent progress over time. Pupils are successful in all aspects of their learning, which is reflected in their considerable success at the age of eleven in scholarships awarded to independent schools. The quality of teaching is good, being both challenging and interesting, and involves all pupils well. The school is starting to introduce new systems for assessing Year 1 and 2 pupils to track their progress more accurately against national norms. The school is aware that these have yet to be fully established and embedded. Notable successes achieved by pupils who have attended activities include, for example, drama, music and dance examinations. In sporting opportunities pupils have been successful in local and regional swimming competitions and county level athletics. In academic pursuits pupils were winners in a local prep schools general knowledge quiz and runners up in a schools 'Science Challenge'.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is outstanding, being well supported by excellent pastoral care, welfare, health and safety arrangements. Pupils show a strong sense of responsibility and actively involve themselves in all aspects of school life, contributing to its ethos of respect which ensures that they all support and care for each other within the community. Pupils rise to the challenge when given responsibilities, for example as school prefects, form captains, library monitors, or school counsellors, and these enhance their personal development. Charity events continue throughout the year, involving pupils, parents and staff.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent. Well-defined structures enable governors to provide effective oversight of the school. Governors offer a wide range of experience and a number have undertaken appropriate training. They have clearly defined roles and discharge their statutory responsibilities correctly. Leadership and management of the school are excellent. Structures and routines are clear, comprehensive and well communicated and are effective at all levels. Recruitment procedures are efficient and safe. The school has good links with parents, whose responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly favourable.

## **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.

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

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Embed new assessment procedures in routine practice, to improve monitoring and tracking of the progress of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils and those pupils, throughout the school, who require additional support with their learning.
  2. Provide more opportunities for EYFS children to initiate their own play and learning out of doors.

### **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' achievements is excellent overall, in line with the school's aim to provide a well-balanced, academic education for all pupils. Pupils are articulate and listen well. They are able to reason and develop solutions for themselves. They demonstrate good standards of logical thinking and numeracy. In interview, Year 6 pupils showed very good understanding of such scientific concepts as the three states of matter, life cycles and fair testing. They are able to give the properties for a range of mathematical shapes and show a good understanding of mathematical concepts. Pupils are well grounded in literacy with an emphasis on reading, comprehension and spelling. Mathematical and numerical skills are continually extended and pupils have the understanding to apply them effectively in other subjects, such as science and geography. Pupils have a high level of understanding and well-developed skills across the broad range of subjects which they study. They successfully apply their knowledge and think and act critically and creatively responding to their teachers' high expectations. For example, in an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson on electronic presentations in English, pupils took responsibility for their own learning and progressed by working co-operatively in pairs to produce informative presentations on a range of ideas.
- 3.2 Art work displayed around the school invites discussion amongst pupils and they expressed their enjoyment of creating an original piece of art. Notable successes have been achieved by pupils who have attended outside activities. In the creative arts, for example, they have been successful in drama, music and dance examinations. Through sporting opportunities, pupils were successful in local and regional swimming competitions and county level athletics and in academic pursuits they were winners in a local prep schools general knowledge quiz and runners up in a schools 'Science Challenge'.
- 3.3 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence available from the inspection, it is judged to be above average. They make good progress when compared with those of similar above average ability. Pupils with LDD are supported in class and make good progress as a result, as do gifted and talented pupils, who enjoy opportunities for investigative work throughout the curriculum. Over the last four years all pupils have achieved entry to their first choice schools, many gaining awards.
- 3.4 The pupils show good attitudes to learning, are articulate and listen well. They persevere well in tasks set and are eager to achieve high levels of success. A striking feature is the pupils' enjoyment of their lessons; in interviews they showed great interest and enthusiasm in talking about their subjects and activities. The presentation of work is of a high quality. Examples within lessons observed of pupils engaging in independent learning were frequent. Pupils are focused, able to sustain concentration and enthusiastic in their learning. The presentation of work is of a good quality.

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

- 3.5 The good, well-balanced and stimulating curriculum is a strength of the school and supports its aim to develop independent pupils who discover and develop individual talents and interest within a nurturing pastoral care framework that is secure yet challenging. Curriculum planning is thorough and, supported by detailed policy documents; it ensures continuity of education and progress across the years and is accessible and suited to all pupils. Schemes of work are comprehensive, both medium and long term and take account of assessment data which are collected at regular intervals during the pupils' time at the school.
- 3.6 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. Based on the National Curriculum and with the addition of personal, social and health education (PSHE), religious studies (RS), French, Latin and drama, the curriculum is suitable for the aptitude and needs of all pupils. Skills associated with speaking and listening are well developed in English and science where pupils are encouraged to think, discuss, make judgements, and draw conclusions on topical issues. Drama activities develop confidence in personal communication skills.
- 3.7 Across the school pupils' social, emotional and physical development is given a high priority. The PSHE programme and circle time are effective in developing in pupils an awareness of the world around them, whilst the physical education (PE) 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.
- 3.8 The needs of those pupils with LDD are well met and the school carefully monitors their progress. Guidance is given to teachers by the head of learning support to help ensure pupils' needs are met. All pupils enjoy opportunities for independent and investigative work, which extends across all subjects. Creative subjects are well represented through design and technology, art, drama and music. Music, drama and sport are well provided for and support the pupils' personal development. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 take part in a weekly enrichment afternoon where, in teams of mixed ages, they explore and investigate new challenges.
- 3.9 The school makes excellent use of its outdoor space for learning and play. The range of extra-curricular activities offered is varied; it includes creative, sporting and academic opportunities for pupils and is suitable for their ages. The pupils expressed enthusiastic appreciation for the opportunities offered them to develop their interests and hobbies.
- 3.10 Frequent trips and excursions extend the formal curriculum. They are organised for all age groups and include museums, theatre outings and places of historical and artistic interest, which further broaden their aesthetic development. Residential visits are organised for Year 2 upwards as part of developing their social skills and confidence and include a range of activities. Years 5 and 6 travel to France to learn more about the traditions, language and culture of that country. Visitors to the school provide curricular enrichment and include authors, story-tellers and representatives of the emergency services.

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

- 3.11 The quality of teaching is good overall and fully supports the aims of the school. Well planned lessons meet the needs of almost all pupils of differing abilities enabling them to acquire new knowledge, make progress, increase their understanding and develop their skills.
- 3.12 The most successful lessons are characterised by varied and effective teaching methods, together with pace and challenge. These, together with open-ended questioning, support and increase pupils' learning and allow them to develop their own strategies and ideas. In a Year 6 history lesson, pupils worked in pairs to develop ideas of propaganda to appeal to 'the heart' and not to alarm audiences, and in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils were applying knowledge and skills for interpreting data to calculate mode, median and averages. Teaching from the EYFS onwards enables all pupils to acquire a secure foundation in basic skills as well as increasing their understanding and challenging their thinking. Teachers generally have high expectations and teaching at all stages encourages pupils to strive to the best of their abilities and enables them to work well independently, reflect thoughtfully and contribute openly, and confidently, when developing and exchanging ideas. Less successful teaching gives insufficient attention to challenge and pupils are not given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning.
- 3.13 Praise and encouragement are used to good effect to build confidence and foster enjoyment. Lessons stimulate and encourage many aspects of pupils' intellectual, physical and creative development, and pupils have good opportunities to engage in research and inquiry. For example, in music, a class of younger pupils were exploring 'variations' in Mozart's tune used in a well known nursery rhyme where they could clap rhythms accurately. Pupils are always willing to add to class learning by offering their own views and ideas. Time is used well giving pupils of all abilities have opportunities for research, independent work and investigations.
- 3.14 Assessment arrangements provide good support for learning. Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly both formally and informally. More recently the school has begun to introduce a comprehensive and detailed monitoring procedure for all pupils who require help with their learning, to ensure that their progress is more rigorously tracked as they move up through the school. Concurrently, newly improved assessment and record-keeping procedures are being developed for Years 1 and 2. Though neither of these systems is yet fully embedded, the indications are that data collected is beginning to influence classroom planning. Marking is regular and clear. Meaningful comments written by some teachers as a dialogue between teacher and pupil, which may be continued orally in class, offer additional help and encouragement.
- 3.15 Teachers are well qualified and have a good knowledge of their subject which they share with their pupils. They use resources effectively to promote learning. The newly introduced electronic whiteboards 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 Throughout the school, including the EYFS, the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school's aims, to ensure pupils are fully prepared to move on to the next stage of their education with enthusiasm and confidence, is fully achieved.
- 4.2 Spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are confident and articulate and have a tremendous sense of pride in their own and others' achievements. Acknowledgement and celebration of success, and praise for something well done, are all part of the school's life, through which the pupils develop self-confidence and self-belief. The school's belief that audiences should enjoy the products of pupils' studies allows pupil-led assemblies by pupils of all ages to be a regular feature of the school. Examples included 'India Day' by Year 2, 'the Tudors' by Year 5 and the School Council assembly. Such assemblies provide the opportunity for pupils and staff to come together, offering time for celebration of school and individual success and collective worship. Time for quiet reflection helps pupils to value their contribution to the wellbeing of their school; they learn to value and respect themselves and others. High quality art work around the school highlights pupils' fascination with the process of creating an original piece of art and their obvious pride and enjoyment in the result.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral awareness is excellent and permeates the daily life of the school. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and know that fairness is important. In the EYFS, pupils learn to share and are taught about appropriate boundaries for social behaviour. Behaviour within and outside the classrooms is of a consistently high standard. Pupils have a good understanding of the benefit of charitable giving and regularly raise sums of money for charities, both local and further afield.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate excellent social awareness and feel that they are a valued part of a caring school. They enjoy friendly and respectful relationships with staff and know they are well cared for. Older pupils show consideration for younger pupils. Through the PSHE course, the personal development of pupils is enhanced as they learn about public institutions, social services, the wider community and how they should respond in difficult situations, including bullying. Pupils say they are happy at the school and are proud to be a part of it. They understand the school system of merits which they consider to be fair. Pupils rise to the challenge when given responsibilities, for example as school prefects, form captains, library monitors, or school counsellors, and these further enhance their personal development.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. They display a strong interest in, and respect for, their own and other cultures and faiths. For example, Year 2 pupils, with the support of some parents, explored aspects of Indian culture. The school shares in themed lunches from countries around the world and pupils learn about the significance of major festivals and traditions including those from continental Europe. They are tolerant, open-minded and keen to engage with, and understand, cultural differences. Pupils were eager to speak of opportunities to consider world issues, along with an understanding of the needs of people in other countries. The level of understanding, tolerance and harmony throughout the school is excellent. The Christian ethos is evident in the school's aims alongside studies of other world religions.

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

- 4.6 Across the school, the quality of the pastoral care and the attention given to welfare is excellent. Measures to promote the health and safety of the pupils are comprehensive and successful, and are kept constantly under review. Staff are supported in the day-to-day pastoral care of their pupils by a well-planned structure.
- 4.7 Parents are extremely happy with the care, help and guidance given to their children. The caring environment is a major strength of the whole school and one in which the pupils feel valued and where independence is fostered. Pupils are willing to express their own views and respect the views of others.
- 4.8 Co-operation and courtesy are evident in all aspects of school life. Pupils recognise and understand that they are accountable for their own actions; they work successfully together. Teachers are at the heart of the pastoral system. Regular staff briefings include discussions on pupils' welfare, and information about pupils is shared in order to support individual pupils if necessary.
- 4.9 The school has effective measures in place to promote good behaviour, which are understood by all pupils. Pupils of all ages move around the school purposefully and happily, and settle quickly into lessons. The anti-bullying procedures are highly effective, and include the development of awareness of cyber-bullying through PSHE and ICT lessons.
- 4.10 Pupils are well known to all staff. Form teachers provide sympathetic and strong support and guidance, both academically and pastorally. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves are excellent. Pupils are confident that they can ask an adult for support if they have a problem.
- 4.11 Through the catering staff and school council, and through the programme of PSHE on healthy eating and regular exercise, the school provides a choice of freshly prepared balanced and nutritious lunches, which pupils enjoy.
- 4.12 In their questionnaire responses and in interviews, pupils praised the help they were given by staff in and out of the classroom saying, "everything I do at school I always learn something new".
- 4.13 The safeguarding of pupils is thorough and effective. All staff are properly trained and all required checks and records are in place. Measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards; regular fire drills are held and staff receive fire training. Health and safety procedures are effective, and risk assessments covering all aspects of school life, including those for health and safety of pupils on school trips are comprehensive and detailed. Electrical testing is appropriately carried out and health and safety documentation is thorough. The school has suitable arrangements for pupils who are unwell, and an appropriate number of staff have first aid training. Accidents are correctly recorded, as is the administration of medicines. The school has an appropriate disability access plan. The admission and attendance registers have been accurately maintained and stored.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent. The structure of the governing body is well defined and enables governors to provide effective oversight of the school. One governor has special responsibility for the EYFS. Governors offer a wide range of experience and expertise and a number have a personal connection with the school. A number have undertaken appropriate training. Through carefully constituted committees, which include educational, safeguarding, health and safety and financial, governors discharge their statutory responsibilities. They take a full part in the overall strategic planning, educational development and management of the school, providing critical support for the headmistress as necessary. Governors work actively with the headmistress to ensure that a high quality of education is provided and that the aims and values of the school are upheld. Much time has been given to formulating a plan for the future development of the school.
- 5.2 Improved systems of communication enable governors to keep in touch with the progress of the school. The chairman meets regularly with the headmistress. Staff have regular opportunities for professional dialogue with governors and feel well supported by them. All policies, including those for health and safety and child protection, are reviewed annually by governors.
- 5.3 Governors frequently visit the school and meet with staff and 'drop in' on lessons. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, are invited periodically to governors' meetings. The governors show a strong allegiance to the school and, in particular, appreciate the friendly community spirit and the well-rounded, articulate young people it develops. They attend as many school events as is practicable.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management across the school is excellent and fulfils the school's aim to provide a thorough and appropriate academic education, enabling most pupils to achieve well. Curriculum leaders oversee the development of their subject and staff in their teaching roles. In turn, members of the senior management team (SMT) monitor the work of each curriculum area.
- 5.5 Through the headmistress and SMT, the school is led with vision and a commitment to achieving the best possible standards in academic pursuits, pastoral care and personal development of pupils. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The school's development plan is comprehensive; it is based on a thorough evaluation of current provision and is the result of extensive consultation. A clearer vision and educational direction for the school has emerged, which has inspired a growing fulfilment and confidence amongst the staff.
- 5.6 Senior staff work closely together, combining their expertise to set high standards and expectations for themselves. Through the curriculum co-ordinators, they monitor standards of teaching and learning. Members of the SMT work well together and involve staff in discussions which lead to overall ownership of decisions reached. Minutes are kept and decisions taken are effectively implemented across the school.

5.7 There are proper arrangements for the recruitment of suitable staff. Recruitment procedures are efficient and safe, and all checks on staff, regular assistants and visitors are applied fully and correctly. The central register of appointments is correctly maintained. Teaching, non-teaching and support staff are effectively deployed, and all staff share in the vision which ensures that the school's aims are fulfilled successfully; they work with commitment to achieve the best possible standards in pastoral care and personal development of pupils. Non-teaching staff all display the same commitment, dedication and loyalty to the school that is evident in the teaching staff. Communication within the school is highly effective. Management at all levels values the contribution of teaching and non-teaching staff. Arrangements for induction for staff new to the school are excellent. This includes support before joining to ensure a smooth start to their career in the school. A formal system for appraisal for all staff is in place, which serves to support individual teachers' professional development.

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

5.8 The school continues to enjoy the excellent partnership with parents seen at the time of the previous inspection. This, together with the established positive links with the local and wider community, makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning and personal development.

5.9 Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate that overall they are very supportive of the school. They are particularly pleased with their children's progress and achievement, the attitudes and values the school promotes and the ease with which they are able to communicate with the school. The inspectors find these views fully justified. A small minority of parents expressed some concern about the information they receive about their children's progress. The inspectors did not find any evidence to support this view.

5.10 Communication with parents is strong. Provision of information to parents meets requirements and includes a helpful and informative parents' handbook. Full written reports are provided in the spring and summer terms, the best of which provide guidance as to how pupils might improve their work. Formal parents' evenings are held twice a year for each year group with additional curriculum evenings for specific year groups at other times.

5.11 The school handles the concerns of parents carefully and sensitively. Close communication between home and school and an open door policy ensure that most difficulties are resolved informally and speedily. A formal complaints procedure is in place. No formal complaints have been received during the past academic year.

5.12 Parents have suitable opportunities to play an active part in the life of the school. They give generously of their time and support the children well. The parents association events, both social and fund-raising, further support all activities at the school. Recent projects have allowed for the contribution towards the resurfacing of the netball courts and the purchase of a sound system for the Whitby hall.

**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 This is an outstanding setting, which is highly effective in meeting the needs of the children and provides good support as required. Excellent teaching and a nurturing and stimulating environment ensures that all children achieve high standards in their learning and development. Children's welfare is effectively promoted and thorough safeguarding procedures are in place. Teachers' detailed knowledge of the children ensures that they have the best start to their education. The recent self-evaluation reveals a clear vision for future developments and the capacity for sustained improvement.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are good overall with some outstanding features. Teachers successfully implement policies which provide invaluable guidance, promote equality and eliminate discrimination. The school successfully provides a safe and secure environment and thorough risk assessments are in place. Close communication amongst staff ensures teachers identify clear priorities for improvement. The teacher with management responsibility for the setting effectively reviews and evaluates planning and ensures children's progress is closely monitored through extensive ongoing teacher observations and assessments, leading to completion of detailed and informative EYFS Profiles. An excellent relationship exists with parents and in the pre-inspection questionnaire parents indicated they valued the work of the school. Children have direct access to the outside learning environment but there are insufficient opportunities for them to use their own initiative through play and investigation out of doors. The school has identified this as an area for development. Good quality resources are easily accessed by children.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. Children are happy, feel valued and secure. They are involved in setting their own targets. Relationships between children and adults are excellent. Facilities are very good and the timetable provides an excellent balance and coverage of the early learning goals. Teachers manage children's behaviour sensitively, rewarding good work and behaviour with positive verbal comments, stickers and reward flowers which are presented at a weekly assembly. Teachers' planning is detailed and takes account of the differing needs of individual children.

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

6.3 Achievement and progress is outstanding in relation to children's starting points and capabilities. They are articulate and participate enthusiastically in speaking and listening activities. They listen attentively to each other and older children, as was observed in a whole-school assembly. A phonic reading programme is used daily and children use phonics to write simple regular words as well as making attempts at

more complex words. Most children can write their own name and in Reception they are beginning to develop independent writing skills. Social skills are well developed, and in their work about friendship their ideas included that to be a good friend you need to share your toys and play together. Younger children have a good understanding of the numbers zero, one and five, and in Reception children can use their mathematical skills to investigate numbers between ten and twenty. Children know how to stay safe when using scissors. They have good personal hygiene washing their hands regularly throughout the day. They are aware of the need to make healthy choices about what to eat and drink. Children are encouraged to be independent and in Reception they change in to PE kit, fold their clothes and put their coats on independently. Children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

**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

Mrs Vivien Sergeant

Miss Judith Bate

Miss Mary Regan

Reporting Inspector

Former Head, IAPS school

Head, IAPS school

Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector