



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST ANDREW'S SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Andrew's School

Full Name of School	St Andrew's School		
DfE Number	869/6001		
Registered Charity Number	309090		
Address	St Andrew's School Buckhold Pangbourne Berkshire RG8 8QA		
Telephone Number	01189 744276		
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Email Address	admin@standrewspangbourne.co.uk		
Head	Dr David Livingstone		
Chairman of Governors	Mr Bill Jones		
Age Range	3 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	266		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (155 boys; 111 girls)		
Numbers by Age		5-11:	180
	3-5 (EYFS):	38	11-13: 48
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	264	Capacity for flexi-boarding: 38
Number of Boarders	Total:	2	
	Full:	0	Weekly: 2
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	01 Feb 2011 to 02 Feb 2011 02 Mar 2011 to 04 Mar 2011		

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 2005.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31st August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

Under the Care Standards Act 2000, an inspection of boarding was carried out at the same time by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The report of this inspection is available separately at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Children's social care/Boarding school.

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 Andrew's Preparatory School is a co-educational school for 266 pupils aged from three to thirteen. It is primarily a day school but offers flexible boarding from Monday to Thursday for pupils from Year 3 upwards. It was founded as a boys' boarding school in 1934. It became a non-profit making trust administered by a board of governors in 1961 and has been co-educational since 1971. The school has a Christian foundation and ethos. The present headmaster has been in post since September 2009.
- 1.2 The school is situated in 54 acres of woodland and parkland about three miles from the Berkshire village of Pangbourne. Buckhold, a Victorian gothic building, is the original school building and over the years this has been converted and significantly extended to include the pre-prep and Nursery, a music centre, sports hall, and facilities for art and design and science.
- 1.3 The school aims to give all pupils the chance to flourish academically and to create an environment where boys and girls leave filled with a zest for learning and equipped with the skills to be positive members of society. Pupils come mainly from rural and semi-rural backgrounds in the surrounding area of Berkshire and Oxfordshire. A small proportion represents ethnic minority groups.
- 1.4 Thirty-eight children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Twenty-one of these are in the Nursery and attend on a flexible part-time basis; one child has joined the Nursery since the EYFS inspection in February 2011. Seventeen children are in Reception. The Nursery and Reception classrooms, with their own separate outdoor play areas are located in adjacent buildings. The EYFS together with Years 1 and 2 form the pre-prep, and Years 3 to 8 constitute the prep school.
- 1.5 The school is academically non-selective at the point of entry. Standardised tests used by the school indicate that the ability profile is above the national average: however the spread of ability is quite broad. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs, but the school identifies 77 pupils as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), 28 of whom receive specialist learning support from the school. No pupils require support for English as an additional language. Almost all pupils continue their education as day pupils or boarders at independent senior schools.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 At all stages of the school, and in all aspects of their learning, pupils achieve high standards and make good progress. They are articulate and have well developed literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. They show strong creativity. Pupils achieve highly in their individual music examinations and in their many activities. They have excellent attitudes to their learning. The stimulating curriculum supports pupils' learning well. A good programme of activities and clubs and an excellent range of visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning. Pupils benefit from the school's strong links with the local and wider community. Teaching is good overall, and occasionally is outstanding; lessons are stimulating and well planned. A minority of lessons were less successful because pupils were not encouraged to play an active part in their learning. Systems of assessment are thorough. Most marking is detailed and informative, but some marking is rather superficial. Since the last inspection, ICT provision and its use in teaching have improved.
- 2.2 In the EYFS and throughout the school pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their spiritual development is excellent. They flourish in the strong Christian ethos of the school and demonstrate a sensitive awareness of the spiritual dimension of life. Pupils' moral development is excellent; they show thoughtfulness and maturity in discussion of complex moral issues. Their strong sense of social responsibility is apparent in the conscientious way in which they carry out their duties and responsibilities. Pupils show a strong appreciation of their own and other cultures. Pastoral care is excellent, and the school makes good provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils; a regulatory failing in the recording of afternoon attendance has been rectified. Boarding makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement and personal development. Some boarding accommodation requires refurbishment.
- 2.3 The governors provide good and thoughtful governance. Governors are aware of their legal responsibilities and fulfil them carefully; in the past they have paid less attention to ensuring the school's compliance with regulatory requirements. The quality of leadership and management is high, and in the EYFS is outstanding. The headmaster and his senior management team give dynamic leadership and show a clear awareness of the school's needs. This is enabling the school to make rapid progress during a period of transition. However the extent of the teaching commitment of the senior manager in the pre-prep restricts the time available for the monitoring of teaching and learning in this section of the school. Development planning is thorough. Since the last inspection, the quality of academic leadership and the systems for monitoring and evaluation have improved. Past omissions in the carrying out of recruitment checks have been fully rectified. The individual character of the school's buildings provides a stimulating learning environment. Some of the pupils' changing-room accommodation is of poor quality. The school enjoys an excellent relationship with parents. They are kept well informed and are highly supportive of 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 2010, and therefore it was required to:
- ensure that in all cases a criminal record check is made and the resulting CRB certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after the person's appointment [Part 4 paragraph 19(2)(c) under suitability of staff and proprietors] ;
 - and is recorded positively on the central register [Part 4 paragraph 22 (3)(d) and (4) under suitability of staff and proprietors] and for the same reason [Part 3 paragraph 7(b) under welfare health and safety]
 - ensure that appropriate checks to ensure medical fitness are carried out, and are completed before the member of staff starts work. [Part 4, paragraphs 19(2)(b)(ii) and 19(3), under the Suitability of Staff and Proprietors]
 - ensure that in all cases the required checks for references are made. [Part 3 paragraph 7(b) under Welfare Health and safety]
 - change procedures for afternoon registration to ensure that a full and accurate record of attendance is made at some point during the afternoon. [Part 3 paragraph 17, under Welfare, health and safety]
- 2.5 In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school was required to:
- provide parents with a summary of their child's progress against the Early Learning Goals and the assessment scales at the end of the Reception year.
- 2.6 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified all the above shortcomings with regard to the Independent School Standards Regulations as noted in the text of the report. However the following requirement remains unresolved and therefore the school must:
- provide parents with a summary of their child's progress against the Early Learning Goals and the assessment scales at the end of the Reception year.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that the senior manager in the pre-prep has sufficient time available for the regular monitoring of teaching and learning.
 2. Within the continuing programme for refurbishment make improvements to the boys' and girls' changing rooms in main school building as soon as possible.
 3. In the EYFS setting provide a covered area in order to improve the all weather outdoor environment for all areas of learning.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 Pupils are well educated. At all stages of the school, pupils of all abilities achieve high standards in their lessons and activities. The school meets fully its aim to foster a zest for learning and to enable all pupils to flourish academically. Since the last inspection pupils' attainment and progress in ICT have improved.
- 3.2 Pupils are articulate; they listen attentively and reflect thoughtfully. By Year 2 they can discuss their ideas clearly and older pupils discuss complex ideas, such as the theme of conflict in literature, confidently. Throughout the school literacy skills are strong. In their reading and writing pupils develop fluency, accuracy and good understanding. Whether recording data from a science experiment, or describing changing farming methods in history, they apply their skills effectively to their work across the curriculum. Numeracy skills are well-developed, Year 1 pupils making measurements in centimetres and Year 7 pupils solving algebraic equations demonstrated similar high levels of confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils use good transferrable ICT skills effectively across the curriculum; in Year 8 they use e-mail to submit some homework tasks. Pupils show great creativity; they understand the ways in which ideas and emotions can be expressed through music, art and drama.
- 3.3 The pupils are highly successful in their many individual music examinations. A large proportion are awarded passes at merit or distinction level; a significant number of pupils reach grade 5 and above. In recent years, several pupils have been selected for the National Children's Orchestra. Pupils frequently achieve group and team success in their various activities. In a wide range of sports, they gain very good results in relation to the size of the school. Recently, they have enjoyed success in public speaking and general knowledge competitions and in equestrian events. In orienteering they have won awards at regional and national levels. They are highly successful in their charitable fundraising.
- 3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but on the evidence available it is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. The pupils follow a rigorous and demanding curriculum which facilitates work to a high level in English, mathematics, science and other areas of the curriculum. On leaving the school they are well-equipped to continue their education at the selective, secondary schools to which they have gained entry through Common Entrance (CE) or scholarship examinations. Inspection evidence from lessons, work and discussion confirms this judgement of pupils' high attainment and includes evaluation of the levels they work at in relation to national targets. This level of attainment confirms that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar above average ability.
- 3.5 Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning. They are lively and energetic learners who take their work seriously and are usually fully engaged in tasks. They question, reason and enquire. They cooperate well with one another and, whenever opportunities arise they demonstrate independence of thought and a clear willingness to take responsibility for themselves and their work.

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

- 3.6 A stimulating and well-organised curriculum provides good support for pupils' learning and personal development and supports the school's aim to provide a well-rounded education of high quality. A thorough curriculum review is underway as the school seeks to improve it further. Since the last inspection ICT and library provision have been extended.
- 3.7 The curriculum encompasses the National Curriculum subjects and extends beyond to include French, German and religious studies (RS). The teaching of study skills in Years 5 to 7 and classical studies in Year 5 enhances the curriculum. In Years 7 and 8, the focus is upon CE requirements with an increased emphasis on specific areas of study for scholarship pupils. Strong curriculum provision for music and art offer good opportunities for creativity. While provision for drama as a discrete subject is limited, related skills are covered well in other curriculum areas, for example through script-writing in English and role play in several subjects. Similarly provision for design technology (DT) is mainly through work in art, activities and DT days for Years 3 and 4. Good curricular planning links at all stages and detailed schemes of work for each subject ensure continuity and progression in learning. The transition from classroom-based teaching in Years 1 and 2 to entirely specialist provision in Year 5 is well-managed.
- 3.8 Provision for those with LDD is strong. At all stages of the school, clear procedures identify pupils with difficulties and detailed individual learning plans are created for those pupils requiring one to one support. Good procedures to identify pupils for extension and scholarship groups in Years 7 and 8 ensure that the needs of these most able pupils are well met.
- 3.9 Lessons, activities, games provision and quiet study time are well-integrated into an extended school day. A good and varied range of clubs and activities is provided. As well as many sporting and musical activities, the programme ranges from chess to ballet and includes a Christian club known as the 'J Team' and film club. An excellent programme of educational visits and of visitors to the school, including artists and writers, enriches pupils' studies. The use of an entire day for a programme of stimulating and varied activities focussing on a particular topic, for example, the Egyptians in Years 3 and 4, enhances pupils understanding and make their studies memorable. Many pupils participate in the residential visits the school offers to destinations in this country and abroad. These opportunities foster pupils' growing independence. Year 4 pupils benefit from their three day visit to France and, by Years 7 and 8, pupils have opportunities for more extended visits; recent destinations include Turkey and the Czech Republic.
- 3.10 The school has forged many strong community links with the local and wider community. Pupils benefit greatly from their participation, both locally and further afield, in many sporting and musical events and educational visits. They benefit from interaction with other young people through Comenius, a school exchange programme which links pupils with schools in Europe. The school has twin schools in South Africa and Uganda and has close links with many local, national and international charities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.11 The quality of teaching is good overall and is occasionally outstanding. Teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' achievement and enables the school to meet its aim to equip pupils for the next stage of their education and to provide them with the skills to be positive members of society.
- 3.12 In most lessons, teachers' energy and strong subject knowledge ensure that pupils enjoy their lessons and make good progress. Whether explaining the concept of a graphic score in music, discussing characters in a story or considering facial expression in an art lesson, teachers transmit enthusiasm, arouse pupils' curiosity and stimulate their interest. Teachers plan their work carefully and use a variety of approaches. The pace of lessons is good. Skilful questioning enables pupils to develop their ideas and extend their understanding. Teachers know their pupils well and generally cater effectively for their differing needs. Lessons take place in a purposeful but relaxed atmosphere in which pupils have the confidence to try out ideas and are not afraid of falling short. Teachers show appreciation for the work and effort of individual pupils.
- 3.13 In a minority of less successful but satisfactory lessons, opportunities for pupils to play an active part were limited. Pupils were not fully engaged in their learning and sometimes became distracted because the lesson was too heavily directed by the teacher and the most able pupils were not challenged.
- 3.14 Resources for teaching, including resources for ICT are good and are used effectively. Teachers are confident and innovative in their use of interactive white boards. The library is used well to promote reading for pleasure.
- 3.15 Assessment procedures are thorough and are used effectively, both to guide planning and to monitor individual and group attainment and progress. Good procedures, used for the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties and of Year 7 and 8 pupils for the extension and scholarship groups ensure that individual needs are met well. Standardised tests in mathematics and English are used to measure pupils' performance against national norms and to monitor individual progress. The process of assessment does not yet operate seamlessly from Years 1 to 8.
- 3.16 Most of teachers' marking is regular and constructive. It is thorough and points the way forward. Pupils appreciate this valuable feedback. A minority of the marking is more superficial and does not always adhere to the school's marking policy. Pupils assess their own efforts through the use of a traffic light system to indicate the level of understanding they feel they have achieved. This, together with opportunities to respond to one another's work, ensures that pupils engage in their learning and progress well.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The personal development of pupils is outstanding and reflects the school's strong Christian ethos and its central values of respect, kindness, teamwork, honesty, enthusiasm and perseverance.
- 4.2 Pupils' spiritual awareness is outstanding. The school chapel is important in the life of the school. Pupils benefit greatly from their active participation through music, prayer and drama, in chapel services and assemblies. The high quality of their singing enhances their experience. The availability of the chapel for quiet prayer and the use of the prayer box for prayers to be read in support of others heighten pupils' spiritual awareness. Pupils show a strong appreciation of the non-material aspects of life and their responses in discussion are thoughtful and sensitive. In sport they demonstrate a sense of fair play; they win gracefully and cope well with the disappointment of losing. Their self-esteem is high because they feel that in all aspects of school life their contributions are valued and appreciated.
- 4.3 The moral development of pupils is excellent. They show a clear understanding of right and wrong and willingly abide by the moral code that governs the school community. Pupils demonstrate courtesy, respect and friendship. In a discussion about how they would intervene and respond to a playground quarrel, pupils showed empathy and the ability to work out the consequences of their own and others' actions. Pupils show mature understanding of the moral issues that affect the wider world. When debating the complex issue of growing of crops for bio fuels rather than for food, older pupils offered thoughtful and well-reasoned arguments.
- 4.4 Pupils show outstanding social development. They demonstrate a clear sense of responsibility in the fulfilment of duties allocated to them. Year 8 pupils understand that they should act as role models for younger pupils. Pupils benefit from their work in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. They understand the duties of citizenship and the importance of political institutions. They respond well to the responsibility placed upon them as student council members. Pupils develop an understanding and respect for those whose way of life is very different from their own through their active role in charitable fundraising. They work successfully alongside their teachers to raise funds and to focus on the needs of others locally and much further afield. Pupils' personal qualities of thoughtfulness and honesty are well developed because the school fosters a strong sense of a community with an ethos shared by all.
- 4.5 Pupils show an excellent understanding of their own and other cultures. Their cultural development is fostered well across the curriculum through visits to art galleries, museums and theatres. Through their participation in concerts and other cultural events within and beyond the school they develop a sensitive appreciation of various forms of music, art and literature. Pupils show strong knowledge, understanding and respect for different cultures, world faiths and religious festivals. They make African masks, work with multi-cultural textiles and learn about life in Zimbabwe and Hungary. They visit local churches and a synagogue, and learn how the Chinese New Year is celebrated. This rich variety of experiences strengthens greatly their cultural development. Residential trips abroad immerse pupils in other cultures and enable them to develop a wider perspective.

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

- 4.6 The school makes good and careful arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils and the quality of pastoral care is excellent. The school fulfils its aim to create a happy place in which everyone matters.
- 4.7 Teachers provide excellent help and guidance for pupils. The form teacher is at the heart of pastoral care. Pupils' academic progress is reviewed regularly; time is allocated at staff meetings for discussion of individual pupils giving any cause for concern. A staffroom noticeboard and excellent informal communication between staff ensure that all involved are alerted to pupil concerns that may arise suddenly. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils is high and is a significant factor in fostering positive attitudes to learning and promoting pupils' personal development. Pupils feel well cared for and know that they are valued. In the positive atmosphere of the school they learn to appreciate one another's contributions to school life.
- 4.8 The school has clear policies and procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils. The code of behaviour that governs school life is clear and positive. Pupils understand the system of rewards and the less frequently required sanctions. The anti-bullying policy is clear and pupils feel that incidents are rare and are dealt with quickly. They are confident that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated; they know whom to go to if a problem arises.
- 4.9 Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust and thorough. The child protection policy is clear and detailed; procedures are carefully implemented and supported by regular staff training. All procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are followed meticulously. All necessary measures are taken to minimise the risk from fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills are conducted and the required checks on equipment are made. Health and safety arrangements are thorough. Detailed risk assessments are carried out. First aid training meets all requirements. Pupils who are sick or injured are well cared for and records are carefully maintained; the medical accommodation is adequate but its location on the third floor of the main school building is inconvenient. The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with disabilities.
- 4.10 The school provides nutritious and appetising school meals which are served in a pleasant and relaxed environment. Through their work in PSHE and science lessons pupils are encouraged to eat healthily. They have ample opportunities on a daily basis for physical exercise. The admission register is properly maintained. A failure to complete an accurate record of attendance for all pupils for the afternoon session, identified at the initial visit, has been fully rectified. All registers are correctly stored for the previous three years.

4.(c) The quality of boarding education

- 4.11 A boarding inspection was conducted simultaneously by Ofsted and is the subject of a separate report. The ISI inspection has therefore considered boarding in the whole school context only.
- 4.12 Boarding makes a good contribution to the learning, achievement and personal development of pupils. It provides a friendly and supportive environment in line with the aims of the school. Only a very small number of pupils board regularly from Monday to Thursday. Most pupils who board do so occasionally, often for just one night at a time. Parents appreciate this flexible arrangement. The boarding fosters understanding between pupils and promotes their personal development very well. They gain confidence from the experience and, for some older pupils particularly, it provides an excellent preparation for boarding at their senior school. Pupils say that they feel well-cared for. They thoroughly enjoy the varied range of activities provided and sometimes elect to board on the basis of the activity being offered. The sleeping and bathroom accommodation requires some improvement; the school is aware of this and is committed to a rolling programme of refurbishment.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The board of governors provides good and thoughtful governance which ensures the high quality of educational provision and educational direction fully in line with the aims of the school. Governors bring to their work a wide range of relevant expertise from fields including finance, law and education. Recently appointed governors have strengthened the educational profile of the board. A governor has been appointed to have a particular oversight of pre-prep, including EYFS. The structures of governance are clear. Meetings of the full board and committees are regular and well-minuted.
- 5.2 Governors are fully involved in all aspects of development planning. Since the time of the last inspection precise terms of reference for committees of the governing body have been established. The academic committee is overseeing the thorough curriculum review currently being undertaken. This has enhanced the governors' understanding of the school's educational development. Procedures for the induction of new governors are thorough.
- 5.3 In the past the governing body paid insufficient attention to monitoring the school's policies and procedures to ensure that they were compliant with legislation, particularly in the areas of child protection and staff recruitment. However, they have since given their full attention to remedying these regulatory deficiencies. Currently, governors are well aware of their legal responsibilities and fulfil them carefully. A nominated governor has responsibility for and is active in overseeing child protection matters, and another governor oversees risk management, and health and safety policies and procedures. All key school policies are monitored carefully.
- 5.4 Governors provide strong support for the school. Contact is regular and the working relationship between the chair of governors and the headmaster and his senior management team is strong. A full and detailed report from the headmaster at each meeting of the full board and regular presentations to committees on relevant matters, by the bursar and other staff, ensure that governors are kept very well informed. Governors attend formal occasions and special events. Some also visit informally to observe the life of the school.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is high. The school is successful in creating an environment in which, in keeping with the school's motto *Altiora Petimus*, pupils are encouraged to strive to improve in all facets of school life. Since the last inspection the quality of whole school academic leadership and the formal systems for monitoring and evaluation have been strengthened and improved.
- 5.6 The headmaster and his senior management team provide stimulating and dynamic leadership and are strongly focused on developing specific aspects of the school provision, for example, the curriculum. This excellent educational direction is reflected in the high quality of pupils' learning and achievement and their outstanding personal development. The extent of the teaching commitment of the senior manager in the pre-prep restricts the time available for the monitoring of teaching

and learning in this section of the school. At all levels of management staff fulfil their responsibilities conscientiously. Academic middle management roles have been developed and extended to include the sharing of good practice within and between departments.

- 5.7 Development planning is thorough and detailed. Strong awareness of the school's needs and the clear identification of priorities are moving the school forward rapidly in a period of transition. An annual review of all departments, and the identification of clear targets, link subject development planning to whole school planning.
- 5.8 The school values its hard working and highly committed staff. Frequent and relevant opportunities for staff training, clearly linked to school needs, foster strong teaching and learning. A comprehensive system of staff appraisal linked to individual professional development is evolving well. Staff induction procedures are thorough and supportive and the staff handbook is comprehensive. All staff receive the necessary training in child protection and welfare, health and safety. Administrative and support staff make a very strong contribution and promote the school's warm and friendly ethos most effectively.
- 5.9 All measures for the safe recruitment of staff and for the safeguarding of children are firmly established and robust procedures are followed meticulously. Some past regulatory deficiencies in these areas were identified during the initial visit, by which time the school had already taken careful measures to rectify them.
- 5.10 The individual character of the school's buildings provides a stimulating learning environment and much of the accommodation is of high quality. However, within the original school building the pupils' changing rooms are of poor quality. The school's grounds provide an excellent educational resource which is used very effectively.

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

- 5.11 The quality of links with parents is excellent. This successful working relationship with parents confirms the school's success in creating a happy place where everyone matters.
- 5.12 Just under half of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Their responses showed parents to be strongly supportive of the school's provision. Parents appreciate particularly the teaching and the curriculum provided. They feel that the school is well-managed and that it develops worthwhile attitudes and views.
- 5.13 Parents have frequent and varied opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children; they attend many concerts as well as local sports fixtures. Parents with particular expertise give presentations and run workshops for pupils. A grandparents' day draws in the wider family. The headmaster regularly seeks the views of groups of parents via a parents' forum. The thriving parents' association supports the school well through social events and fund raising for the school and for local and international charities.
- 5.14 The quality of information for parents is outstanding. Parents of pupils and of prospective pupils are kept very well-informed about the life of the school through a prospectus, regular newsletters and a detailed handbook, written by a new parent in conjunction with the school. The school magazine provides a detailed and valuable retrospective of the previous school year. The recently re-developed school website is appreciated by parents; it provides clear information and is easily accessible.

Personal e-mails and an efficient mobile text service are used effectively to contact and inform parents.

- 5.15 Parents receive clear and useful information about their children's work and progress. Parents' evenings are regular and parents are able to meet staff at other times should the need arise. Parents receive thorough and detailed reports at least twice a year. Prep pupils also have regular grade sheets for effort and attainment. In the pre-prep parents are invited into the school to review their children's work on a Friday morning. Curricular presentations offer suggestions to parents about how they can support their children in reading and writing. At a later stage, workshops for parents and pupils provide strong support and preparation for the move to their chosen senior school.
- 5.16 The school handles the concerns of parents with care and according to its published procedures. Parents are made aware of how to proceed should the need arise to make a formal complaint. The quality of informal communication is high and the availability of senior and other staff ensures that problems are dealt with sympathetically and quickly.

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 setting is outstanding. Highly-skilled teaching challenges and stimulates children, and encourages independent thinking, self-confidence and an eagerness to learn. Since the last inspection, the provision has been improved to widen and enrich children's experience. Rigorous self-assessment by staff ensures that the high standards are maintained and further improvements planned. The setting is successful in all its aims.

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

6.2 The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The co-ordinator has a clear ambition to improve the provision further. Detailed and comprehensive policies and procedures ensure that children's well-being is promoted and they are properly safeguarded. Record keeping is full and rigorous. Effective links with external agencies and cluster group schools offer valuable support for staff. Parents appreciate the friendly, caring atmosphere of the setting and the quality of their children's achievement. The parents who responded to the questionnaire were strongly supportive of all aspects of provision. Parents are provided with a clear and detailed picture of their child's progress. However reports at the end of the Reception year do not summarise children's progress against the Early Learning Goals and the assessment scales. The Reception and Nursery classrooms are bright, cheerful and inviting. The outside area is sufficient for the number of children and is used regularly in most weathers although it lacks a covered area. The extensive range of good quality resources promotes stimulating opportunities for independent learning both indoors and outside.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. Adults have high expectations of the children and use successful strategies to encourage polite behaviour and the consideration of others. Observational assessment is used effectively to identify children's next steps in learning and to modify planning. Adults use skilful questions which stimulate and extend the children's thinking and reasoning well. The balance of the curriculum is excellent with many opportunities for child-initiated activities involving choosing, exploring and discovering in addition to those led by adults. There is specialist teaching in French, dynamic dance and music. Parents and other adults are welcomed into school to share their knowledge and experiences with the children. Staff assiduously promote the welfare and safety of children and the calm, orderly daily routines create an atmosphere in which children feel secure and thrive.

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

- 6.4 The outcomes for children in the EYFS are outstanding. Children enjoy learning and have consistently very good, and on some occasions excellent levels of achievement. By the end of the EYFS children attain the majority of the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning and some exceed them. Children are confident and their personal development is outstanding and a strength of the school. They understand about being safe, the importance of healthy eating, and the need for good hygiene. Their behaviour is exemplary; they listen keenly and answer questions thoughtfully. Their communication skills are above expected levels for this age. Their social skills are well developed; they share and take turns, form happy friendships and are courteous and considerate of others. They respond positively to adults and 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 governors including the chairman, 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.

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools were inspected by one Ofsted inspector over three days.

Inspectors

Mrs Jill Moore

Mr Matthew Lovett

Mrs Kerry Cooke

Mr Paul Leeming

Mrs Jenny Clayphan

Reporting Inspector

Headmaster, IAPS School

Deputy Head (academic), IAPS school

Senior Manager, GDST School

Early Years Coordinating Inspector