



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**FOSSE BANK SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Fosse Bank School

Full Name of School/College	<b>Fosse Bank School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>886/6066</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>1045435</b>		
Address	<b>Fosse Bank School Mountains Noble Tree Road Hildenborough Tonbridge Kent TN11 8ND</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01732 834212</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01732 834884</b>		
Email Address	<b>office@fossebankschool.co.uk</b>		
Head	<b>Mrs Gillian Lovatt-Young</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Miles Cavey</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>104</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (57 boys; 47 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS):</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5-11: 84</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Wendy Izzard</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>18 Oct 2011 to 19 Oct 2011 16 Nov 2011 to 18 Nov 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 school has not previously had an ISI inspection.

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.

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(a) Main findings</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(b) Action points</b>	<b>3</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>7</b>
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	8
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>9</b>
(a) The quality of governance	9
(b) The quality of leadership and management	9
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	10
<b>6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	<b>12</b>
(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	12
(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	12
(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	12
(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	13
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>14</b>

## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Fosse Bank School is a co-educational day school for pupils from three to eleven years of age. It was founded in 1892 and moved to its present 26-acre site in Hildenborough in 1994. It occupies a much adapted and extended large Victorian House. The school is a charitable, non-profit making trust administered by a board of governors. The school aims to provide a caring, happy and stimulating learning environment where all pupils are treated as individuals and inspired with confidence to reach their full potential. They are encouraged to be true to themselves and show honesty, respect and trust within a family community. The head was appointed in 2005 and at the time of the inspection had recently returned to school following sixteen months maternity leave.
- 1.2 The school has a total of 104 pupils with roughly equal numbers of boys and girls. Of these, 20 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children in the EYFS occupy three spacious adjacent rooms on the ground floor with access to a purpose-built play area. The pupils are drawn from a ten-mile radius of the school and come from a wide range of economic, social, ethnic and religious backgrounds.
- 1.3 Admission is based on the school's own selection procedures. The ability range is wide, but overall the ability of pupils is above the national average. Eleven pupils receive specialist support for special educational needs and/or difficulties (SEND). At the end of Year 6, a high proportion of pupils transfer to Kent grammar schools and almost all other pupils are successful in obtaining a place at their first choice of day or boarding independent school.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used by the school in Years 1 to 6 and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

### ***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Pre-school	Nursery
Reception	Reception

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

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

- 2.1 From the EYFS, the quality of pupils' achievements is good. Pupils are well educated and suitably prepared for the next stage of their education. They are highly successful in entrance examinations for Kent grammar schools. More able pupils and those with SEND achieve well. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and in some lessons it is excellent, enabling pupils to make good progress in relation to their ability, which is above the national average. However, some teaching does not always set sufficiently high standards. In activities outside the classroom, individual and team achievements are good. The pupils' achievements are supported by good attitudes to learning in a climate of encouragement. For a small school, the curriculum offers a good range of subjects, and together with the excellent extra-curricular programme, strongly assists the school in meeting its aim.
- 2.2 In a friendly, caring community, pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils are friendly and courteous and they said that they like being at school. The quality of pastoral care is excellent and effective arrangements identify and respond to individual needs. Health and safety measures operate effectively and ensure that all members of the school community are safe. All staff have received the required training in safeguarding.
- 2.3 Whilst the quality of governance, leadership and managements is good, at the time of the initial visit, the school had not ensured that recruitment procedures and the implementation of the safeguarding policy were consistent with the guidance. The school took immediate action to rectify the regulatory failings. The senior management team (SMT) provide clear educational direction and they are well supported by subject leaders and non-teaching staff. Consultation is a strong feature of their work and there is a commitment to doing the best for the pupils. Good links with parents, carers and guardians are promoted. The views of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed that they are appreciative of the education and care provided for their children. Inspection judgements support these views. A small number of parents said that they are not given enough information on their children's progress and that provision is not good for pupils with SEND and the more able. The inspection team could find no evidence to support these views.

## **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:

- check and record reference information and the employment history of staff before making an appointment [Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety];
- carry out the required checks on staff before they are appointed and ensure that all checks are correctly recorded on the central register of appointments [Part 4, paragraph 19(2)(b)(ii) and (3), under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors].

2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified all of the above shortcomings, as noted in the text of the report.

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

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Share good practice to raise standards in the classroom to those of the best lessons.
2. Strengthen the work of governors by arranging up-to-date training on their responsibilities.
3. In the EYFS, make clear the next steps for learning in written reports for parents.
4. In the EYFS, provide more opportunities for pupils to develop creative thinking skills and an inquisitive mind.

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

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

- 3.1 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the pupils' overall achievement is good. They are well educated in accordance with the school's aims and suitably prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 3.2 By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have good levels of knowledge, skill and understanding across the curriculum and in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. They build secure foundations in literacy and numeracy. The pupils are articulate, usually listen well and most read fluently with understanding. Their handwriting does not always reach similar good standards and the presentation of work in some exercise books is frequently carelessly organised. The pupils have good information and communication technology (ICT) skills and successfully use a variety of applications, for example to design posters and to generate graphs in number of subjects. Those pupils with SEND achieve well in relation to their ability as a result of the support they receive. More able pupils and those with particular talents achieve well, for example those in the Years 5 and 6 top mathematics set successfully investigated the relationship between two-, three- and four-digit numbers returning multiples of nine when subtracted. The displays around the school demonstrate a good standard of creativity, particularly through art. The pupils' physical development is good. From an early age pupils work independently and evaluate their work.
- 3.3 In activities outside the classroom, individual and team achievements are good. Notable successes include the national primary mathematics challenge at bronze and silver levels and regional chess competitions. The pupils are successful in local, regional and national competitions in sport. These include football and judo, as well as Kent cross-country running and tag rugby. Many pupils reach high standards in gymnastics and swimming, as well as instrumental music grade examinations.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2008 to 2010. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in National Curriculum tests at the age of eleven have been above the national average for maintained primary schools. Overall, results are good in relation to pupils' abilities, indicating that their progress is above the average for pupils of similar ability. Inspection judgements based on lesson observation, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of their work confirm this evaluation of pupils' progress. The school discontinued entering pupils for these tests in 2011. The pupils are highly successful in the entry examination for Kent grammar schools.
- 3.5 The pupils' achievements are supported by good attitudes to learning and they say that they enjoy their lessons. They respond well to good teaching in a climate of encouragement and want to be successful. They work well individually and collaboratively. In lessons, they are eager to answer questions and their reasoning skills are well developed.

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

- 3.6 The school provides a good curriculum that covers all areas of learning. It is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. Together with the excellent extra-curricular programme it assists the school in meeting its aims. Both make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' achievements and their personal development.
- 3.7 The curriculum includes National Curriculum subjects together with French and religious studies (RS). It provides opportunities for pupils to develop their creative, physical and ICT skills, but the greatest amount of time is spent on literacy and numeracy, reducing the time for the humanities subjects. French, music and physical education are taught by subject specialists, which enhances pupils' application of skills and increases their confidence. Good provision is made to integrate art with design and technology across the curriculum, for example Year 5 pupils successfully used recycled materials to construct a Greek temple.
- 3.8 The timetable is arranged to enable Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 to be set by ability in numeracy, in order to give pupils appropriate levels of challenge. The personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme covers a range of topics relevant to pupils' ages, and plays a valuable part in promoting their personal development. Curriculum planning is exceptionally good and provides continuity and progression in pupils' learning across all year groups. Schemes of work are supported by high-quality subject documentation. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, and pupils with SEND and more able pupils, who are identified early, have appropriate support arranged. All pupils have provision maps (a summary of needs and targets for improvement) prepared by class teachers in conjunction with the special educational needs co-ordinator where appropriate. These provision maps are reviewed regularly and the targets for improvement discussed with pupils. They are designed for teachers to use the information to match tasks to the differing needs of pupils when planning lessons. Curriculum days and themed weeks, for example World Book Day, offer opportunities for the whole school to be involved with cross-curricular learning. The curriculum is enriched with regular off-site visits to local places of interest, for example Chiddingstone Castle and Carroty Woods Outdoor Centre.
- 3.9 The excellent range of extra-curricular activities is planned systematically around sports, arts and crafts, music and dance, social, computing, academic and natural world activities, providing opportunities for pupils to develop an interest or tackle a new activity. The pupils' participation is high. Extra-curricular achievements are acknowledged in newsletters and assemblies building pupils' confidence and self-belief. The pupils benefit from the school's involvement with community partnerships such as the Eco Schools Award Programme and the Healthy Schools Campaign. These enable pupils to develop responsible attitudes about global issues.

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

- 3.10 The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes excellent. It is effective in promoting pupils' progress and the school's aims by encouraging pupils to grow in confidence and reach their full potential.
- 3.11 Teaching places emphasis on acquiring the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and their application in all subjects. In the best lessons, teachers provide a wide variety of activities to match individual pupils' needs, have high expectations of pupils and encourage them to take responsibility for their learning. Pupils confidently ask for help when they do not understand. Teaching assistants work closely with class teachers and provide good support, especially for pupils with SEND and the most able. In some lessons, the pupils' provision maps are not used to match tasks to different abilities and as a result progress is slower for some pupils. Setting in mathematics enables teachers to plan work to the individual needs of pupils.
- 3.12 Teachers are well qualified and possess strong subject knowledge. Lesson planning is good, usually taking account of prior learning, with clear learning objectives and identification of those with SEND and the most able. Teaching generally makes use of a variety of methods, and pupils are encouraged to be independent and think for themselves from an early age. They work collaboratively in pairs and in groups. However, work in exercise books in some year groups suggests that pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to take a pride in their work. Most teaching fosters interest but the one-hour lessons present a challenge for some pupils, especially when planning lacks a variety of tasks and a brisk pace to maintain the interest of all the pupils. The use of ICT is not fully developed in all subjects and as a result the pupils have fewer opportunities to use their skills to support cross-curricular learning. Some teaching uses interactive white boards effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and develop intellectual curiosity. Praise and encouragement are used effectively and this adds to pupils' enjoyment.
- 3.13 Teaching is supported by a suitable range of resources and good accommodation. Provision for physical education and ICT is exceptionally good and the attractive school grounds are used well to support the curriculum. The refurbished and well-stocked library is welcoming and the pupils visit for personal reading and for reference, and they enjoy operating the new personal finger print identification system to check out a book.
- 3.14 Marking is mostly regular although the whole-school policy is not consistently used in all subjects. The best marking is not only encouraging but shows pupils how to improve their work.
- 3.15 The arrangements for assessment are exceptionally good. The information provided by standardised tests and from formal and informal assessment is used to identify pupils' needs, and to record and monitor their progress. Management information systems are used well to collate the data. Those pupils whose achievement or approach to work falters are readily identified so that remedial action can be taken promptly. The school is already aware of the need to make more use of the information provided by assessment data. The school's self-assessment arrangements encourage pupils from Year 1 onwards to evaluate their work and to record responses in their books.

## **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 excellent and makes a significant contribution to their achievement. The school successfully achieves its aim to provide a caring, happy and stimulating learning environment where pupils, including those in the EYFS, are treated as individuals, and inspired with confidence to reach their full potential.
- 4.2 The pupils have strong spiritual awareness. They have a well-developed sense of identity and grow in self-knowledge and self-confidence in the school's caring community and in response to a culture of praise. The pupils develop a good appreciation of Christianity and other faiths in RS lessons and assemblies taken from time to time by the local vicar, representatives of other faiths and a local Christian group. The pupils' develop high levels of self-esteem through the school's emphasis on the value of the individual and acknowledge one another's successes in the Friday assemblies.
- 4.3 The pupils have excellent moral awareness. They comprehend what constitutes right and wrong and have a strong sense of fair play. Their moral awareness is reflected in their commitment to helping others, notably through their response to charity fundraising. They participate enthusiastically in house weekly cake sales to raise money for projects and local charities, for example the RSPCA and Comic Relief. The school's eco council raises awareness of the importance of conservation in its widest sense and pupils recently conducted a survey of power, gas and water usage by taking meter readings in the school's boiler room. The PSHCE programme and circle time reinforce the school's ethos and pupils discuss topics of concern to them such as friendships, differences and anti-bullying.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. They thrive on the additional responsibility they are given as sport captains, house captains, school council and eco council representatives and through the buddy system, where those in Year 6 help EYFS pupils. The pupils' voice is strongly heard, most notably through the suggestion boxes, and they have successfully negotiated more participation in charity fundraising. Most recently pupils raised money for local charities through a walkathon and book sale. Regular inter-house sports competitions develop a strong sense of family in houses, and through participation they learn team building and leadership skills. The pupils visit annually the castles after which their houses have been named, giving them a sense of local history.
- 4.5 For their ages, pupils have a good insight into the work of public services and institutions. For example, the local police visited the school to officiate at the Top Gear themed week.
- 4.6 The pupils have a good sense of their own and other cultures. Teaching draws on the traditions of other faiths, through which pupils learn about establishing harmonious relationships with those from backgrounds different from their own. They learn about other customs in art, English, geography and music. Theatre and museum visits strengthen their knowledge and understanding of world cultures. As part of the International Schools award, pupils communicate by email with children in schools in France where they share experiences about daily life in other countries.

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

- 4.7 The overall quality of welfare, health and safety is good. A key feature in the nurturing of pupils' personal development is the excellent quality of pastoral care, which resonates with the school's aims. Efficient systems, supported by appropriate documentation, ensure the health and safety of the school community. The school has acted promptly to deal with lapses in staff recruitment checks identified at the time of the initial visit and these are now carried out correctly.
- 4.8 The class teachers provide strong support and guidance for pupils. In a friendly, close-knit community pupils are listened to and personally known. The pupils commented that they are happy and feel secure. Any academic or pastoral concerns are given a high priority and are followed up promptly by teachers. Staff go out of their way to provide support in an approachable manner. The great majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that they are happy with the pastoral care arrangements.
- 4.9 The relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. The pupils work and play together well, are mutually supportive and look after one another. In conversation, pupils said they can turn to a number of people if they needed help.
- 4.10 The pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. The school has effective arrangements for promoting good behaviour, guarding against harassment and dealing constructively with any unacceptable behaviour. The pupils said that bullying is extremely rare, but if they ever felt bullied they would tell a teacher immediately and they are confident it will be dealt with immediately. Appropriate sanctions exist to deal with unacceptable behaviour and pupils said that they are fair. The rewards system is good and based on encouragement.
- 4.11 The safeguarding policy meets requirements and is implemented effectively. All staff are trained in safeguarding to appropriate levels depending on their responsibility. The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored.
- 4.12 Health and safety measures are implemented efficiently and risk assessments covering all aspects of school life, including off-site visits, are thorough. All necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are in place and regularly reviewed. The pupils who are unwell at school are cared for appropriately but, whilst the medical room meets requirements, it is uninviting. The accessibility plan demonstrates how the school plans to improve provision and access for pupils with disabilities.
- 4.13 The pupils understand the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles and eating sensibly. School lunches are of good quality and there is variety and choice. The pupils make full use of the extensive attractive grounds, swimming pool and sports hall to engage in physical exercise.

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

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

- 5.1 Overall, the quality of governance is good. Governors are fully committed to the aims of the school and its future development. They responded swiftly to the realisation that safeguarding practice was not in accordance with guidance.
- 5.2 The board has a well-considered sub-committee structure, designed to oversee the work of the school. Sub-committees meet termly and report to the board. The governing body of nine is small and is stretched to undertake the tasks required. Governors have a wide range of professional skills and experience, and most have long-standing links with the school as parents or past parents. Through the finance committee, governors exert prudent financial control and close oversight of the school's finances. They maintain a suitable level of staffing and resources, and work with the head to ensure that the school makes the best use of the accommodation. The health, safety and premises committee keep systems and supporting documentation under regular review to ensure the safety of the school community.
- 5.3 Whilst governors have had in-house training on safeguarding, they have not had recent training in the wider responsibilities of governance today. They do, however, have an excellent handbook to support the induction of new governors. The regulatory failings found at the time of the initial visit indicate that governors have not been sufficiently diligent in monitoring the school's safeguarding policy and its arrangements for checking and recording staff recruitment. They are currently identifying measures to become better informed about their responsibilities, including those for monitoring safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.4 The chairman meets regularly with the head and has a good grasp of the school's strengths, pupil numbers, matters of concern and areas for development. Governors are kept informed about educational standards and the work of the school through their regular visits and the head's reports at sub-committee and board meetings, enabling them to be appropriately involved with educational development. This information, however, is not always used to give support and stimulus for growth and improvement.

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

- 5.5 The leadership and management of the school are good, with some excellent features. At the time of the initial visit some staff recruitment checks had not been carried out. The school's response to these shortcomings was immediate: a member of staff has been appointed and all required recruitment checks have been carried out and properly recorded on the central register of appointments before confirming the appointment. Additionally, all other outstanding recruitment checks have been made. The school is successful in achieving its aims, contributing significantly to pupils' achievements and their personal development.
- 5.6 The SMT have complementary skills and provide a clear sense of direction. They are accessible and approachable. Consultation is a strong feature of their work. They monitor teaching and learning systematically and regularly, including scrutinising pupils' exercise books, and use the information to ensure a consistent approach to planning. Subject leaders manage their subjects particularly well.

Weekly curriculum staff meetings are used to discuss the outcomes of monitoring in different subjects and to share good practice.

- 5.7 The well-considered development plan, setting out objectives to 2014, demonstrates the school's secure understanding of its strengths and areas for development. It combines the governors' strategic vision for the development of the facilities and resources with priorities to improve teaching and learning and raise standards. Evaluation of the school's needs draws on views of pupils, staff, parents and governors, providing a comprehensive overview of the school. The development plan is supported by high-quality action plans outlining long-, medium- and short-term targets prepared by subject leaders. Whole-school policies, reviewed annually, illustrate the school's commitment to high standards. They provide practical and achievable guidance and are mostly implemented successfully.
- 5.8 The school secures and successfully deploys well-qualified staff who contribute much to the development of the caring community. All staff have received up-to-date training in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Teaching and non-teaching staff are supported by an annual performance management programme and the provision of a suitable range of opportunities for professional development. Comprehensive induction arrangements ensure that new staff understand the school's ethos and ways of work.
- 5.9 Teaching assistants contribute significantly to pupils' achievement and personal development, particularly those pupils with SEND. The sense of community is strengthened by the efficient work of the administrative and other non-teaching staff who contribute much to the school's smooth running. The attractive premises are maintained to a high standard.

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

- 5.10 The school has good links and a constructive relationship with parents, carers and guardians, effectively supporting the aim of the school.
- 5.11 The responses of parents who replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the education and care provided. They singled out for particular praise the range of subjects offered, the high standards of behaviour and the ease of communication with the school. The inspectors support these positive views. A small number of parents said that they are not given enough information on their children's progress and that the provision is poor for pupils with SEND and the more able. Inspection evidence found that parents have good opportunities to hear about their children's progress, and that the school is already strengthening its work for pupils with SEND and the more able.
- 5.12 Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the work and the progress of their children. The open door policy ensures that teachers are accessible, for example at the beginning and end of the school day, and any issue causing concern is resolved before it becomes a problem. Parents are welcomed at school for numerous events, including concerts, class assemblies, prize giving and sports fixtures. The active Fosse Association, to which all parents belong, organises social and fundraising events that provide excellent practical support for the school. A fancy dress Halloween party was organised for children and parents and other regular functions include the annual summer ball, a camp-over and Christmas fair. Most recently, they funded the refurbishment of the attractive school library. At key points in the pupils' education, the school offers support by providing Saturday lessons and a

summer holiday school to Year 5 pupils when transfer to senior school is under consideration.

5.13 Communications between home and school are frequent and regular. The recently introduced *parentmail* is popular and keeps parents informed about school life through the weekly newsletter as well as other communications from staff. The comprehensive parents' handbook, reading records and homework diaries all serve to keep parents informed and involved. The school maintains open channels of communications with parents and their views are welcomed and listened to. The regularly updated website is accessible and provides a wealth of information including the required information for parents of pupils and of prospective pupils. Through two half-termly and one full end-of-year report, together with three consultation evenings, parents are kept fully informed about the work and progress of their children. Reports provide a summary of pupils' work and their attitudes to learning, but not all give guidance on what has to be done to improve.

5.14 The complaints policy conforms to current regulatory requirements.

**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 is good. The setting successfully achieves its aims, ensuring that the differing needs of children are well met in a welcoming, friendly and nurturing environment. Children make good progress in their learning, especially in literacy and numeracy. The setting has the capacity to make continuous improvement and makes full use of the feedback from parents and the outcomes of children's learning to plan future work. Self-evaluation is at an early stage of development.

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

6.2 Leadership and management of the EYFS are good. Arrangements to safeguard children are secure. The setting has good relationships with parents and carers, who appreciate the opportunities they have to be involved with their children's learning through the 'my unique story' books and the home-school reading diaries. The setting has good links with local agencies, who advise on best practice. A comprehensive range of risk assessments and regular checks on furniture, indoor and outdoor play equipment ensure children's safety. Policies and procedures are implemented consistently to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. Staff work well together to ensure the smooth running of the setting. They meet regularly to monitor the provision and outcomes to identify targets for development.

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

6.3 The quality of provision is good. Children learn and develop well through a range of carefully planned indoor and outdoor activities covering the Early Learning Goals and through specialist teaching in French, music and swimming. An appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities involves choosing, exploring and discovering, to foster active learning. The staff know children well and have excellent relationships with them. Good provision is made for children with additional learning needs. The information from observation and assessment is used effectively to plan the 'next steps' for learning. Reporting to parents is regular, but gives no indication of what has to be done to improve. Classrooms are clean, tidy and have attractive, stimulating displays. Suitable resource storage allows children independent access. The outside play area is an attractive extension to the classroom. Children's welfare has a high priority and adults establish routines that help children to understand the importance of good attitudes to health.

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

- 6.4 Children make good, and sometimes excellent, progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. They enjoy school. By the end of the Reception year all pupils have achieved the Early Learning Goals. Their literacy, numeracy and communication skills develop well. Most can write key words to build sentences and make simple calculations. They apply their numeracy skills confidently when using the interactive white board and their phonic skills develop well. Their physical development is good. They share with others and enjoy outdoor play with Year 6. They contribute readily to class discussions and listen to others' views. They reason well when increasing their knowledge and understanding of the world, but have insufficient opportunities to work independently, to develop an inquisitive mind and develop creative thinking skills. Children's behaviour and personal development are good. They are learning to manage their personal hygiene, the importance of staying safe and they are beginning to appreciate the need for healthy eating and exercise. The children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning in Year 1.

**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, the chair of governors and another governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Margaret Banks

Mr Andrew Carter

Mr Clive Holder

Mrs Marjorie Harris

Reporting Inspector

Head IAPS junior school

Deputy Head IAPS school

Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector