



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**LADY BARN HOUSE SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Lady Barn House School

Full Name of School/College	<b>Lady Barn House School</b>	
DfE Number	<b>356/6007</b>	
Registered Charity Number	<b>1042587</b>	
Address	<b>Lady Barn House School Langlands Schools Hill Cheadle Cheshire SK8 1JE</b>	
Telephone Number	<b>0161 4282912</b>	
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Email Address	<b>info@ladybarnhouse.stockport.sch.uk</b>	
Head	<b>Mrs Susan Yule</b>	
Chair of Board of Directors	<b>Mr Peter Ward</b>	
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>	
Total Number of Pupils	<b>449</b>	
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (245 boys; 204 girls;)</b>	
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS):101</b>	<b>5-11:348</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs S. Yule</b>	
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>	
Inspection dates	<b>10 May 2011 to 11 May 2011 08 Jun 2011 to 10 Jun 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 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 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 Founded in 1873, Lady Barn House School is an independent day school, located to the south of Manchester, which caters for boys and girls aged from 3 to 11. Extensive areas for sport and recreation about a number of buildings that house a range of general and specialist teaching facilities. At the time of the inspection there were 449 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11.
- 1.2 The school aims to develop children who are happy, confident, courteous, considerate and respectful of others, developing a pride in their achievements and their school and a love of learning. To achieve this it aims to create a secure and caring environment built on trust and respect that is well resourced and stimulating, optimising interactive learning. The school also aims to forge beneficial links with the community, fostering relationships between teachers, pupils, parents, directors and others interested in the school.
- 1.3 The school includes 101 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) who are accommodated in spacious and modern facilities with their own play areas. Since the last inspection the school has reduced its intake at 3+ from three to two classes and introduced an additional intake at 4+.
- 1.4 The school is a charitable trust with a board of directors, and it educates a broad mix of pupils with many, but not all, from professional backgrounds. There is a wide ethnic mix and many families have historic links to the school. Since the last inspection, an artificial playing surface and a dedicated and soundproofed music and drama centre have been built, together with additional music practice rooms. In addition to this a library for juniors has been installed in the main school building with a dedicated infants' library in their own teaching area.
- 1.5 The ability profile of pupils is above the national average, with many pupils having an ability that is at far above average, and few pupils having average ability.
- 1.6 Just over half of the pupils are boys. There are 54 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), with 52 of these benefiting from language enrichment activities. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Ten pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and receive support for their learning.
- 1.7 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 The pupils' excellent achievement includes highly effective day-to-day work and is reflected in the places they gain at highly selective senior schools. Pupils work together well and show considerable motivation and attentiveness. They ask pertinent questions, apply themselves with enthusiasm and enjoy strong, positive working relationships with their teachers. They achieve considerable success in an excellent range of sporting and creative activities. Literacy, numeracy, creative and physical skills are developed well alongside self-confidence in learning. Pupils with specific learning needs are well supported, as are the most able. Information and communications technology (ICT) teaching prepares pupils well for senior schools, but the greater use of ICT by pupils, particularly for independent research, across the curriculum is limited in scope. The pupils' excellent progress is supported by excellent teaching. Lessons are imaginative and the pupils' interest is stimulated. Marking and assessment are very effective and excellent pupil progress is well supported by the curriculum.
- 2.2 The pupils' outstanding personal development reflects excellent relationships between pupils and equally excellent relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils develop considerable self-confidence coupled with respect and care for others. They take their responsibilities seriously. Behaviour is exemplary. Lady Barn House School is a family community at ease with itself. Child protection measures are effective and staff are properly trained. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, pupils were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences at school.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are excellent. Directors bring much experience and expertise; they know and oversee the school well, and they discuss important educational issues as well as overseeing business and welfare. Proper care is taken over staff recruitment. The issues identified at the time of the previous inspection have been attended to successfully. Within the school, the sharp focus on the pupils' personal development improves pupils' learning significantly, whilst building a strong sense of community and commitment. Excellent leadership at all levels, coupled with the strong collegiate approach to school improvement, enables staff to share common goals and work towards them extremely well. The school has excellent links with parents, who were highly positive in the pre-inspection questionnaire. A minority expressed concern about support for pupils with LDD, but this concern was not borne out during the inspection. Parents are kept well informed and reports are good.

## **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. Foster the further development of independent learning and research skills through greater pupil use of ICT and the wider use of non-fiction resources within the library.
  2. Ensure the implementation of plans to extend and improve outdoor provision for EYFS pupils.

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

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

- 3.1 The pupils' overall achievement is excellent and fulfilling the school's aim for pupils to develop a love of learning. The pupils' literacy skills are exceptionally well-developed for their age, for example younger pupils are able to read confidently at a high level for their age and Year 5 pupils are able to write well with the accurate use of grammar, vocabulary and punctuation. Pupils show excellent speaking and listening skills, talking confidently about their work and their interests.
- 3.2 Mathematical skills are also of a very high standard. Older pupils can calculate areas of a variety of shapes and solve simultaneous equations. Pupils routinely apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum and have achieved considerable success in the national mathematics challenges. Pupils at all levels in the school show very well-developed reasoning abilities, for example in science older pupils were able to use their knowledge of the properties of solids, liquids and gases to deduce the fluid nature of glass.
- 3.3 The development of language skills is a particular strength of the school. Pupils are introduced to a wide variety of languages and they are keen to learn and show a high level of understanding and willingness to speak. For example, younger pupils in the Mandarin club understood the importance of tone and inflection in the language and enthusiastically played games applying the vocabulary they had learnt.
- 3.4 The pupils achieve high levels of success in gaining entry to highly selective local schools, often with scholarships being awarded for academic, art, music, dance and sporting excellence. Year 6 pupils maintain academic development through an imaginative post-examination programme which promotes learning through a variety of modules, including a young enterprise project. Work by infants in the school was included in a regional anthology of poetry and two junior pupils recently won prizes in a national essay writing competition.
- 3.5 High levels of success are also achieved in extra-curricular activities, both as individuals and as groups. Pupils are very successful in instrumental and speech and drama examinations. Many pupils participate in one or more of the many instrumental ensembles in the school. Many high-quality pieces of art work, showing skilful use of a variety of media and techniques, are displayed around the school and pupils have been successful in a regional schools' art competition. Pupils created imaginative art work with members of the local church to feature in a display marking the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the King James Bible.
- 3.6 Pupils enjoy many sporting successes in teams and individually. The Under 11 football team has won the Independent Schools Association North of England Cup for three successive years and several pupils have been selected to join the centres of excellence at local premier league football clubs. Similar levels of success have been achieved in gymnastics, cross-country and athletics.
- 3.7 The school does not participate in national testing programmes but the attainment of the pupils, as judged from observations in the classroom and in the results in entrance examinations to senior schools, is excellent in relation to the ability profile



of the pupils. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good and often excellent progress.

- 3.8 The pupils' excellent achievement results to a large extent from their outstanding attitude to learning. They are attentive in class and remain focused on the tasks set from an early age. Some useful self- and peer-review of work is apparent in lessons, although not yet uniformly so, and the school has identified this as an area for further development. The presentation of the pupils' work is uniformly excellent.

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

- 3.9 The school provides a comprehensive and stimulating range of curricular and extra-curricular activities for the pupils which make an excellent contribution to the pupils' development, helping the school to fulfil its aims.
- 3.10 The development of literacy and numeracy skills is very strong and pupils are encouraged to apply these skills across the curriculum. The school draws effectively on the wide range of languages spoken by the families of pupils, for example through the languages festival. All pupils learn French and have the opportunity to learn Mandarin from Year 1, and from Year 3 they can learn Latin, both languages being provided as clubs. Thorough planning for the teaching of religious education meets the recommendation of the previous report; the scheme of work enables the promotion of pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- 3.11 Pupils from Year 2 have science lessons in a designated room, which is well-equipped, although space in the room is limited which can restrict the ability to carry out investigative work. The subject development plan includes the refurbishment of the science room. Pupils learn ICT skills in their weekly lessons in the computer suite which contains sufficient computers for individual work, linked to the school's network. They are encouraged to use the internet for research, although this generally takes place at home rather than in school. The school has two well-stocked libraries. The Infant library is used in a number of ways but that in the junior school is used by the pupils largely as a source of reading books and its use for research is limited.
- 3.12 Support for those pupils with particular needs is strong. Pupils with identified needs are provided with individual education plans which are distributed to the class teachers so the pupils can be effectively supported in class. Some have individual lessons, in which they show pleasure in making good progress. Support to promote the speaking skills and vocabulary development of pupils with EAL is provided through a well-developed system of assessment and classroom support including focused language workshops.
- 3.13 Pupils who are especially high-achievers in one or more areas are identified in a Gifted and Talented register. Some of these pupils attend regional workshops which provide a range of activities to stimulate and develop their talents. The school has identified provision for the most able pupils as an area for development.
- 3.14 The provision for creative and performing arts is excellent and that for physical education is good. The artificial playing surface and adjacent sports fields allow the school to provide a range of different sporting experiences in lessons and as part of the extra-curricular programme.

- 3.15 Learning across the curriculum is enhanced by an outstandingly wide range of trips and visitors to the school, including trips to castles and a visit by a Viking. Year 6 carried out field work at a local nature reserve and all pupils from Year 2 upwards have the opportunity to participate in the many residential trips, which provide a wide range of learning opportunities.
- 3.16 The range of extra-curricular activities is exceptionally wide and makes an excellent contribution to the school's aim to provide opportunities for children to develop in as many ways as possible. Pupils can opt to join in with activities including various sports, climbing on the school's climbing wall, musical ensemble groups, science, languages and board games, such as chess and scrabble. In some cases the provision of a club is suggested by pupils, for example the fantasy war gaming club.
- 3.17 The school amply fulfils its aims to forge beneficial links with the community. These are promoted in a number of ways, for example participation of the pupils in creating art work for the church festival, the use of the church for school events, support for local and national charities through fund raising initiatives, participation in regional sporting events, and the school choir singing for residents in local homes for the elderly. International links with schools in Gambia and Finland widen the pupils' perspectives.

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

- 3.18 Teaching is excellent and promotes the pupils' learning and progress highly effectively, whilst taking account of their individual needs. It supports the school's aims. Teaching encompasses a variety of teaching styles and fosters considerable interest, excellent behaviour and a positive attitude to learning. The pace of lessons is generally well-judged and the behaviour of pupils very well managed. The excellent rapport between staff and pupils, coupled with thorough and imaginative planning, leads to high quality learning. Individual pupils are well supported, for example young pupils with specific learning needs made visible progress as a result of expert, carefully structured, multi-sensory teaching. Staff have strong subject knowledge and make effective use of the good range of resources available, including data projectors, excellent performance spaces and good sports facilities. For instance in science a demonstration by the teacher, followed by effective questioning, the use of a section of video and then group work for the pupils led to rapid pupil progress. Lessons are planned imaginatively and with care, and thus capture pupils' interest. In a religious education (RE) lesson on the Good Samaritan, older pupils were asked to use role play to bring the story into a modern context and this reinforced their understanding of the underlying message of "love your neighbour". Pupils' research skills are not strongly encouraged as there is little opportunity provided to learn through individual research at school, either by computer or in the library.
- 3.19 Teaching is informed and supported well by the learning support department and makes excellent use of classroom assistants in order to meet the pupils' individual needs. The needs of more able pupils are met well through the variety of rich experiences offered within the exceptional extra-curricular programme and through extension activities within lessons, although these examples of good practice are not yet universally applied.
- 3.20 Marking is highly effective, giving pupils a clear indication of their progress and targeting areas for further development. Although a few examples were seen of marking that did not suggest improvement, pupils say they find marking helpful, that

they have a clear idea of their progress and that they know the areas they need to work on. Strong pupil progress is enabled by the use of assessment to inform the planning of teaching through the regular use of a variety of nationally standardized tests and the dissemination of the results to staff.

## **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 the pupils is excellent, successfully meeting the aims of the school and is a significant strength.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They respond highly effectively to opportunities for personal reflection, as seen in an infant assembly on kindness in which the children were warm and sincere in their responses. It was apparent through discussions with pupils and staff that pupils of different abilities, faiths and cultures feel themselves to be valued members of this Christian school community. There is a very strong link to the local church, through involvement of the members of the church community in art activities with pupils and visits to the school by clergy. Pupils have a clear sense of their own identity and self-worth as shown by their confident involvement in an assembly for older pupils.
- 4.3 Pupils demonstrate strong moral awareness, and honesty, service and fairness are learned and developed through every aspect of school life. The pupils' behaviour and manners are exemplary, witnessed around the school as well as in lessons and reflect the superb relationships that exist within the school community. Pupils show compassion through their support for a wide ranging number of charities, including a recent sponsored silence by older pupils in aid of a charity to rescue monkeys, non-uniform days and collections at Christmas.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent and they grow into well-rounded, confident and socially aware individuals. Pupils, particularly in Year 6, relish the opportunity to take on responsibilities. Opportunities to do so start at an early age, such as being corridor monitors in the infants, and taking on classroom jobs effectively in Year 3. The school council, which has been set up for older pupils since the previous inspection, is a highly valued addition to school life, and pupils welcome the ability to contribute to the development of their school; suggestions such as the way house credits are collected, and the introduction of a platinum certificate for reading awards have been made by the council and put into practice by the school. The extension of this initiative to pupils in Years 1 and 2 is currently being considered. The level of support offered by older pupils to younger pupils is high and the Year 6 pupils really value their time acting as reading and playground buddies for pupils in the EYFS. In the pupil questionnaires and through conversations the pupils of all ages speak most warmly of their school, its ethos and their delight at being part of it.
- 4.5 The pupils' horizons are broadened by the school's cultural development programme, which is excellent and far reaching. They have opportunity, through the curriculum, to learn a wide of variety of languages and experience, through registrations, a great many more. Their study of languages is further enhanced by the Festival of Languages day as well as a residential trip to France for Year 6. Pupils appreciate and enjoy the opportunity to take part in a wide range of musical and sporting activities and displays around the school demonstrate a wide coverage of cultural diversity from aboriginal symbols to masks for Mardi Gras.

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

- 4.6 The contribution made by arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent. The interest of the pupils is foremost. Excellent pastoral care is highly effective in fostering the pupils' personal development and academic achievement throughout the school. The caring and supportive ethos, fully supported by the school directors, is palpable throughout the school community and ensures that pastoral aims are met to help pupils as they prepare to move on to the next stage of their educational life. Remarkable levels of commitment and care from all teaching and support staff results in outstanding support and guidance, and pupils benefit from the warm, caring atmosphere that is the Lady Barn family.
- 4.7 Relations between all staff and pupils, as well as amongst pupils themselves are excellent. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and this creates a happy, supportive environment in which they all thrive. Pupils, in response to questionnaires and in interviews, said that the school listens to their views and responds to them, and that teachers are fair, showing concern for them individually and treating everyone equally. Inspectors concur with their views. The school has in place a number of extremely effective pastoral care systems and procedures, including those for rewarding excellent behaviour and dealing with the very rare occurrences of poor behaviour. All pupils interviewed commented on how safe and secure they feel and this gives them confidence to turn to any adult if they have a concern. Bullying is not tolerated, incidents are rare and dealt with promptly, with extremely comprehensive records being kept and monitored.
- 4.8 Procedures to promote health and safety are very effective and an appropriate training programme for all staff in child protection is undertaken. All safeguarding procedures are exemplary, with a thorough dedication shown to record keeping. Staff fully understand their responsibilities in relation to welfare, health and safety.
- 4.9 Effective measures are undertaken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards; regular fire drills are held and staff receive fire training. Electrical testing is carried out and health and safety documentation is thorough. Risk assessments and arrangements for the wide range and number of off-site visits are detailed and efficient. Admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and stored, and absences followed up promptly.
- 4.10 Arrangements for pupils who feel unwell are very good with the additional facility of school nurses. The school has a comprehensive accessibility plan in place for those with disabilities. The school strongly promotes healthy eating and lifestyles through a comprehensive personal, social and health education scheme and through the healthy lunches it provides. Within the last year considerable work has been undertaken by the school, with parents and pupils on the quality and variety of school lunches. Pupil interviews and student council minutes clearly indicate a much improved attitude towards school lunches. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and, because of the extensive sports programme available, they appreciate the need for regular exercise.

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

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

- 5.1 Excellent governance supports the school in the successful achievement of its aim to provide a high quality education in a happy environment. Directors bring a wide range of experience and expertise to their work, enabling them to give effective support to all areas of school life. Many have had children within the school which adds to the high levels of commitment and care. They spend time getting to know staff, both through informal contact and through occasional coffee mornings and visits to the school. The governing body has shown considerable ingenuity in exercising its responsibilities, for example in enabling the significant capital projects of the past six years. They ensure that the school is both well maintained and well resourced in terms of buildings, materials and staff.
- 5.2 Directors have very good oversight of the school's finances, business affairs and quality of education, as well as to matters of regulation, welfare, staff recruitment and child protection procedures. Well-focussed reports from the head identify key issues clearly and provide an excellent picture of the quality of education that the pupils receive. The resulting high quality discussion enables directors to share with senior staff the responsibility for maintaining high standards and to provide a valuable stimulus for future development.

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

- 5.3 Excellent leadership at all levels provides a sharp focus for further improvement as well as on-going support for continued high standards in the pupils' achievement and personal development, as set out in the school's aim to develop every child to his or her maximum potential in as many areas as possible. The combination of excellent standards with a strong sense of community is a key strength of the school. The co-ordination of the four school departments under the overall leadership of the school management team is excellent, allowing appropriate autonomy for each head of department. Much of this excellent practice is underpinned by the strong, caring and collaborative leadership shown by the headmistress, whose gift is to enable and enthuse both staff and pupils.
- 5.4 Management is also excellent. Standards are monitored effectively through a widespread programme of staff induction, appraisal, peer review, work scrutiny and subject discussions, maintaining a strong focus on both personal and school development. In-service training is well supported by the school and meets the pupils' needs well. Sharing best teaching practice to further raise standards is encouraged by the recently created peer observation programme. The strong collegiate quality to staff relationships, coupled with effective delegation to post holders and imaginative use of staff meetings and occasional working parties, involves all staff in working together toward shared goals.
- 5.5 Educational issues are at the top of the agenda for meetings of staff and important priorities are drawn together well in the school development plan. Subject leaders play a key role in developing the teaching of their subjects, and communication between those working in each area is good; for example, staff sharing teaching in a year group share their preparation time. Leadership of pastoral issues is equally strong.

- 5.6 Proper attention is given to matters of the pupils' welfare, with suitable training given to staff in child protection and safeguarding, and health and safety matters. Careful recruitment of staff is supported by good arrangements for checking the suitability of staff and governors. Policies are implemented fully and reviewed regularly. Both buildings and grounds provide an exceptional environment and the school is well resourced. The issue of intrusive noise identified at the time of the previous inspection have been attended to. Finances are well managed. Pupils benefit greatly from the hard work and commitment of teaching and non-teaching staff, and from the ethos they create. Both pupils and parents said how well the school is run.

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

- 5.7 The school maintains excellent links with parents, carers and guardians, establishing and promoting constructive relationships in accordance with its aims. Open dialogue, the provision for which existing and prospective parents are made aware of and fully understand, is developed from an early stage and this continues throughout the pupils' school career.
- 5.8 Electronic communication with parents has been developed to be used more effectively and along with the comprehensive website, parents' handbook, The Lady Barn Chronicle, and the weekly newsletter, parents feel that they are fully informed about school life. Parents of pupils and prospective pupils receive all the required information. Parents appreciate the ease of access to staff of all levels, in particular teaching staff before school, and welcome the close links between home and school through the use of homework diaries. The school has an appropriate and thorough complaints procedure, it takes the views of parents very seriously and inspectors found that all issues are dealt with promptly and results communicated well.
- 5.9 The great majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive about the education and support offered to their children. They understand and subscribe to the ethos of the school, its aims and objectives. They are particularly positive about the progress that their children make, the curricular provision, the behaviour of the pupils and the way in which school promotes worthwhile attitudes and values. A small minority of parents indicated that complaints are not handled effectively. Inspectors investigated this and did not find evidence to support this view. The school deals highly effectively and efficiently with parental concerns and keeps meticulous records of such communications.
- 5.10 The parents' views are surveyed regularly and action taken on key points made. Regular written reports are sent home, which in the main are informative and give pointers on how pupils can improve their work. There is a full programme of parents' evenings and parents are very satisfied with the reporting schedule offered by the school. The school has an effective parent-teacher's association, which supports the life of the school and runs its own events, making a significant financial contribution to the additional benefits available for pupils. Parents have a varied number of ways to be involved in school life; from parent and child ski trips, to sharing experience of their professions, as seen in a Year 3 investigation of teeth.

## **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. It achieves its aims extremely well. The rich, vibrant and welcoming environment provides exciting opportunities for children to engage with skills and experiences which carefully match their different levels of understanding and stages of development. Consequently all children make excellent progress. Provision for their physical and emotional well-being is outstanding. Safeguarding procedures are highly effective. On-going, robust self-review ensures that the setting sustains improvement and meets its own exacting standards of care and provision. In strong partnership with parents and any necessary advisory agencies the setting ensures that the children's unique qualities are recognised and individual needs are met.

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

6.2 Outstanding leadership and management ensure highly trained and dedicated staff have clear and focused objectives, work extremely well together and share a strong sense of purpose. Planning is thorough and effective with the excellent and imaginative use of a wide range of appropriate resources. All records, policies and procedures for the safe and efficient management of the setting are in place. Appropriate safeguarding procedures are followed and risk assessments are comprehensive. Strong links between home and school are swiftly established and parents' views and observations are incorporated into the children's learning profiles. This inclusivity extends to community members and visitors whose contributions further enrich the provision. All children are fully supported and integrated as a result of careful and systematic monitoring systems. Consistent implementation of policies promotes equality very well.

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

6.3 The excellent provision ensures children learn and develop exceptionally well through stimulating play and valuable first-hand experiences. Bright, spacious, well organised classrooms promote effective learning. Detailed planning identifies and provides well for the children's individual needs. Adults skilfully use the children's own suggestions and interests to plan for learning. The excellent balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities successfully promotes critical thinking and independence. Regular, well planned use of the outside environment effectively extends classroom learning. The school is constantly developing the outdoor areas in order to increase their effectiveness as a rich learning resource. Plans are in place that will further improve the use of outdoor areas as part of the pupils' learning experience. The good provision for children with additional needs promotes consistent progress. Children are extremely well supported by their key person who promotes their welfare and safety at all times and guides them towards self-sufficiency.



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

- 6.4 Children learn and develop exceptionally well overall in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Nursery children use blending techniques proficiently to sound out words and Reception children read with expression and enthusiasm. All enjoy demonstrating their ability to use computer programs and their deft manipulation of the mouse. Nursery children identify a range of flat shapes and Reception children understand the properties of solid shapes. Children bring a sense of fun and energy to their activities and fully embrace new challenges. They talk eagerly and confidently about their learning, viewing communication with one another and with adults as a means of increasing their understanding. They are exceptional listeners. Their social and emotional development is excellent. The children have a good understanding of personal hygiene and practise careful hand washing routines. They understand what constitutes healthy eating, describing their favourite fruits and vegetables and the need to eat them daily. They take full advantage of the many opportunities to be physically active. They make a positive contribution to the community, being fully involved in rule-making for everyone's safety and well-being.

**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 directors, 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 Paul Brewster

Miss Louise Savage

Mrs Jane Le Poidevin

Mrs Susan Hunter

Reporting Inspector

Early Years Coordinating Inspector

Headmistress, ISA school

Head of Department, IAPS school