



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

RUNNYMEDE ST EDWARD'S SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Runnymede St Edward's School

Full Name of School	Runnymede St Edward's School
DfE Number	341/6034
Registered Charity Number	254312
Address	Runnymede St Edward's School North Drive Sandfield Park Liverpool Merseyside L12 1LE
Telephone Number	01512 812 300
Fax Number	01512 814 900
Email Address	scarter@runnymede-school.org.uk
Head teacher	Miss S Carter
Chair of Governors	Dr J Myerscough
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	226
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (116 boys; 110 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5(EYFS): 58 5-11: 168
Number of Day Pupils	226
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Barbara Pinnington
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection date/EYFS	11 May 2010 to 12 May 2010
Final (team) visit	14 Jun 2010 to 16 Jun 2010

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 October 2003.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommended action	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(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
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	7
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	8
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	9
(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
6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE	12
(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
INSPECTION EVIDENCE	14

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Runnymede St Edward's School is a Roman Catholic co-educational school for pupils aged 3-11 years. It is situated in Sandfield Park and is one of the choir schools for Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. Administered by the Christian Brothers at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it became St Edward's College in 1920. In 1938, it transferred from Central Liverpool to its present site. Following that it evolved into a preparatory and senior school. In 1997 St Edward's College and Runnymede separated. The school continues to share some facilities and some areas of the 30-acre site with St Edward's College. Runnymede St Edward's School is overseen by the Congregation of Christian Brothers, who act as trustees. A board of local governors are appointed, who then act as a governing body in the administration of the school.
- 1.2 The school caters for 226 pupils between the ages of three and eleven. Eleven of these, of whom four are boys, attend part-time. Another 47 children attend full-time in the Nursery and Reception classes, as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Each class of children in the EYFS is taught by a qualified teacher supported by qualified assistants. In addition, specialist teachers teach French, music, information and communication technology (ICT) and swimming. Fifty-three pupils are in the pre-preparatory department (22 girls and 31 boys, Years 1 and 2, ages 6-7) and 115 pupils are in the preparatory department (54 girls and 61 boys, Years 3-6, ages 7-11).
- 1.3 The majority of pupils are from Catholic homes in the immediate locality, some of which have above average socio-economic circumstances. A significant minority of pupils are from less advantaged backgrounds. The school population is predominantly white British; however, a number of pupils come from different ethnic backgrounds and a small number follow faiths other than Christianity.
- 1.4 Thirty-four pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) although only a very few receive support for the acquisition of English. A further 16 pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). All receive additional support from the school. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Results of the EYFS profiles as they leave the Reception classes, and standardised tests as they leave the school and enter senior schools, indicate that the pupils' average ability is above the national average. If they perform in national tests according to their ability, their results will be above the average for all maintained primary schools.
- 1.5 The school aims to encourage and foster the spiritual growth of all pupils and to make prayer an integral and enjoyable experience in daily life. In addition, it aims to provide experiences that broaden, enrich and extend the skills, talents and attitudes of each member of the school community and to provide a safe, caring and welcoming environment within which all are treated with respect, courtesy and kindness. Furthermore, the school aims to foster a spirit of co-operation and friendship between home, school and the wider community.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 All pupils, including those in the EYFS and those with LDD and EAL, are highly successful in their learning and personal development. The school meets its aims of enabling pupils to broaden, enrich and extend their skills, talents and attitudes to the full within a Catholic Christian framework. Standards are high overall and pupils make good progress in relation to their ability which is above the national average. The breadth of the curriculum and good range of extra-curricular activities significantly assist the educational experiences of the pupils. Teaching is good and on occasions is excellent. It demonstrates thorough subject knowledge, very good planning and is lively and enthusiastic, enabling pupils to make the progress that they do. Very occasionally lessons which lack pace, or work insufficiently well matched to the pupils' abilities, limit their learning. ICT is used appropriately to support pupils' learning in most areas of the curriculum. Some opportunities for independent learning are in place but these are not yet fully developed. The pupils' excellent attitudes to their studies also contribute to their academic achievement, as do their exemplary behaviour and the excellent relationships they have with each other and with their teachers.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal qualities are excellent and are fostered by the outstanding quality of the school's pastoral care, welfare, health and safety procedures and practices. The numerous opportunities to celebrate pupils' successes enable the development of their self-esteem and confidence, alongside the school's strong spiritual ethos. Opportunities for taking responsibility are widespread. Pupils are highly considerate of one another and understand well the need to help those less fortunate than themselves.
- 2.3 The governors are highly committed to the success of the school, give good support and effectively oversee its work in order to help it achieve its aims. The school is exceptionally well led and managed with senior managers working most efficiently as a team. The school improvement plan is good but the school recognises that further refinements are necessary. The school has fulfilled the recommendations of the previous report very well, particularly in respect of the monitoring of teaching and learning. Links with parents and carers are excellent. Parents, as indicated by the pre-inspection questionnaire, are overwhelmingly delighted with all aspects of school life. All of the above factors combine particularly well to ensure that pupils receive a high quality education with many excellent features.

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 2003, as subsequently amended.
- 2.5 The school's provision for childcare met the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and no action was required.

(ii) Recommended action

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Adopt an even more systematic approach to monitoring and developing all aspects of school life over a two or three year period which builds upon the current school improvement plan.
 2. Ensure that opportunities to become inquisitive and independent learners are extended to all pupils.
 3. Continue to seek even more opportunities for child-initiated learning in the EYFS.

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' achievements are good. At the age of 11, pupils' results over the last three years for which comparative data are available have been high in comparison with the national average for maintained primary schools. They make very good progress in their learning over time in relation to their ability profile, which is above the national average. The school is successful in fulfilling its aim of enabling pupils to achieve their full potential. Pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding most effectively. In lessons and written work they make considerable progress and demonstrate clear understanding. In both factual and imaginative contexts they write clearly and fluently. They are most articulate. They have a particularly good grasp of mathematics, where their progress is enhanced as a result of the setting arrangements according to ability. In science they are able to devise fair tests and solve problems logically and with clear explanations. They work together well and also individually. The presentation of their work is of high quality, demonstrating the effort and concentration that they put in.
- 3.2 The pupils' creativity is strong as evidenced in the excellent art work displayed within the school. They are well able to use their ICT skills to support their studies in various subjects. Opportunities for independent research are available, but not always as well developed as other opportunities for learning that are provided for the pupils. Hence, pupils' skills in this area are not as well developed as in other areas.
- 3.3 The school has many individual and team successes, which include scholarships to senior schools and team successes in athletics, rounders and cross-country. Pupils have also performed particularly well in speech, drama and music examinations. Many pupils have obtained places in the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Choir. In addition, there have been many individual sporting successes in athletics, rugby, football, cricket and swimming at both national and regional levels.
- 3.4 The pupils' success in academic work, sport and music is due largely to their very positive attitudes to learning, the opportunities provided by the curriculum and the good quality of teaching they receive. Their behaviour is excellent and they enjoy high quality relationships among themselves and with their teachers and other staff.

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

- 3.5 The school offers a good, well-balanced curriculum which is in accordance with the school's aims to enrich and extend pupils' skills by placing an emphasis on English and mathematics, encouraging interaction with other children, offering a wide range of activities and supporting pupils in developing self-esteem and potential. All National Curriculum subjects are offered as well as French, religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education (PSHE). These experiences contribute effectively to the pupils' academic performance and their personal development.
- 3.6 Pupils of all abilities are provided with experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- 3.7 Planning is thorough across the whole school and enables the experienced staff to provide unique opportunities for each class. Steps have been taken to provide opportunities throughout the school for topic-based teaching. Examples of this include links between study in history and dance in Year 4 (based on the Tudors) and between art and science topics in Year 1 (self-portraits and a topic on 'Ourselves'). One ICT lesson is set aside each week so that pupils may use their skills and resources to enhance their learning in other subjects, for example in the pupils' planning in Year 3 science and in displays throughout the school.
- 3.8 Pupils with LDD are identified through good screening and teacher observations, and individual education plans are provided so that each pupil may work effectively towards their targets with the help of their teachers. In addition, good extension activities are planned for more able pupils and challenge boxes are provided in each classroom to enable all pupils to access more demanding tasks. This is a significant improvement on the last inspection, when provision for the more able pupils was a cause of concern.
- 3.9 Regular trips and contributions from visitors to the school significantly enhance learning; these include local visits, such as the one made to a local supermarket, outings to Chester as part of a topic on the Romans, and a visit to Chester Zoo. Residential trips to outdoor centres take place in Years 5 and 6 and these additionally contribute to the pupils' personal development.
- 3.10 A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided, and most of the pupils across the school take part in these. Many activities support pupils' development in sport and music. Pupils' speaking and listening skills also benefit from activities such as the English speaking board activity, school council, and the Edmund Rice club which promotes fundraising. The latter also contributes significantly to the social awareness of the pupils throughout the school.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.11 Good and, on occasions, excellent teaching enables most pupils to achieve well. Teaching is a major contributing factor in enabling pupils to develop their academic potential in line with the school's aims. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved largely as a result of the introduction of monitoring systems. In English and many other subjects, good opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their work. This has a significant impact on improving their oral communication and self-confidence. Basic skills are strongly emphasised in both English and mathematics teaching, enabling pupils to attain high standards by the time they leave the school. In particular art, music and English help to promote the pupils' creative skills.
- 3.12 Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and they make good use of resources to assist pupils with their learning. In the best lessons, lively and enthusiastic teaching, which includes effective questioning techniques, enables all pupils to achieve well. On most occasions the tasks set are varied and well matched to pupils' abilities. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect, adding to pupils' enjoyment of their learning. On the few occasions when teaching does not quite reach such high standards it is usually characterised by a slower pace, overlong introductions during which pupils become disinterested, or work that is not sufficiently precisely matched to the pupils' abilities. In such lessons the pupils' learning is less well developed. In several lessons, opportunities to enable pupils to develop their independent and research skills are in place; however, the school is well aware that further developments in this area are needed.
- 3.13 The learning support programme, through its good provision, enables teachers to plan individual help in their lessons for those pupils who need it. The few pupils with English as an additional language are given good help with subject specific vocabulary. Classrooms contain good resources, with some having interactive whiteboards. These along with other ICT resources help to produce stimulating lessons, maintain the pupils' interest and enthuse them.
- 3.14 Much of the marking of pupils' work is good, containing both encouraging words and practical suggestions for improvement, although there are some minor variations between subjects and teachers. Pupils say they are often given verbal feedback also, so that they know what they have to do to continue to improve. Assessment data is compiled exceptionally well to check on pupils' progress, and good analyses are used to plan effectively the future work for the pupils.

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 the pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils are friendly, polite and courteous. Their personal development is clearly a priority of the school. This is underpinned by the school ethos, which, in turn, it strongly supports. A broadly based PSHE and citizenship programme contributes effectively to the provision, meeting all of the school's aims.
- 4.2 Pupils respond extremely well to a wide range of opportunities for spiritual development which permeate school life. They clearly appreciate the significance of the first communion service which the Year 3 pupils take part in, and respond sensitively and naturally to daily prayer times. Regular collective worship includes opportunities for pupils to experience prayers from a range of faiths, and the importance placed on spiritual development is reinforced by the dance and musical activities which support it.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral development is excellent. The school has a simple and effective code of conduct, which is adapted appropriately for pupils of different ages. The 'quality of the week' is taken from the code and the many rewards on offer reinforce the school's priorities in this regard. The pupils are very much aware of the code of conduct and assume that it will be followed.
- 4.4 The pupils' social awareness is excellent. Many roles and responsibilities are undertaken by pupils, including prefects, librarians and monitors. The community atmosphere of the school is reinforced by the close ties between pupils of different ages. For example, the pupils in Year 6 act as prayer sponsors for those in Year 3 who are preparing for their first communion, and as reading partners for pupils in the younger classes. Pupils show considerable initiative in their approach to fundraising and a high level of awareness of the needs of others. Pupil-initiated fundraising events are numerous. The pupils' approach to fundraising is underpinned by a desire to share with others, as is their practical link with a school in Sierra Leone. The school council is active, and several initiatives, including a talent competition, have been instigated by its members. A wide knowledge of public institutions and services is gained through the PSHE and citizenship programme, and Year 5 pupils talk well about the recent general election, with a confident grasp of the process and issues involved.
- 4.5 Pupils have a strong cultural awareness. They respond extremely well to being introduced to a number of different cultures through their RE and geography lessons, and they benefit significantly from their link with a school in Sierra Leone. Music lessons also contribute, and a display in the music room about African music supports this. All such provision enables pupils to have a strong cultural awareness.

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

- 4.6 The school's arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils, including those in the EYFS, are excellent. It fulfils its aim of providing a high standard of pastoral care for its pupils within a Catholic family background.
- 4.7 Throughout the school, class teachers are responsible for the welfare of the pupils in their classes. Particularly good academic and pastoral records are kept so that teachers can have a good view of individual pupils' overall progress and development. Registration and other opportunities are used well to address any welfare issues that might arise. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, and in their questionnaire responses pupils were most clear that there were adults to whom they could turn if they had a problem. Pupils relate extremely well to one another and are more than happy when one of their classmates achieves a particular success.
- 4.8 The school's anti-bullying policy is well put together and is supported by notices around the school related to what to do should a problem occur. Many successful strategies are in place to reward good work and helpful conduct. Sanctions rarely need to be used but when necessary are given according to clearly defined steps. In discussions and through responses to questionnaires, pupils indicated quite clearly that they regard these as fair. No serious sanctions have had to be invoked recently.
- 4.9 The school's child protection policy contains all the necessary elements and is well supported by the designated officer and her deputy. Their training for inter-agency working is up to date, as also is the training for all other members of the school staff. The policy is available to all parents and is properly publicised. The safe recruitment of staff is meticulous and procedures for checking all concerned are robust and accurately recorded in the central appointments' register.
- 4.10 Fire precautions receive appropriate attention and fire practices are held regularly. Health and safety matters are well supervised. The access plan for those with learning or physical problems has a wide scope and appropriate developments are scheduled. School food is healthy and varied at lunchtimes and is most acceptable. Opportunities for pupils to have physical exercise are appropriate. Medical facilities for ill pupils are of high quality. The attendance and admission registers are well maintained and suitably stored for three year periods.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The school is well governed by the trustees and locally appointed governors. Designated governors visit the school regularly and all offer strong support to the school. They are well placed to fulfil the school's aims related to the pupils' Christian and academic development.
- 5.2 In addition to visits from designated governors, the work of various committees covering areas such as finance, staffing, fabric and the curriculum means that governors are well informed about the school. These supplement the considerable amount of information provided by the head teacher.
- 5.3 Training in safeguarding has taken place and governors are well involved in most staff appointments. The governors take a close interest in school improvement planning and help to devise challenging targets for developments in premises, accommodation and the curriculum. Governors also work closely with the school with regard to financial matters. Applications to the school are monitored and a keen interest is taken in the destination of pupils when they leave.
- 5.4 The governing body is well aware of its responsibilities and committed to the welfare of the pupils throughout the school. Procedural matters as well as regulatory issues are carefully monitored. Individual governors have links to the operation of child protection and health and safety in the school.
- 5.5 The governors are most keen to provide favourable working conditions for staff and in this they are most successful. The governors also keep in close contact with the parents in order to ascertain their views and thoughts.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.6 The school, including the EYFS, is exceptionally well led and those in senior positions are highly efficient and approachable. They are most effective in furthering the school's aims of providing experiences for pupils that broaden, enrich and extend their skills, talents and values. Since the last inspection, a considerable amount of progress has been made in developing the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders. Consequently, management is now particularly effective at all levels.
- 5.7 The success of the leadership and management of the school is clearly apparent in the excellent levels of pupils' personal development and in their high levels of achievement. School improvement planning is good with an appropriate number of measurable objectives clearly identified. These result from appropriate consultation with staff, governors, parents and pupils. The current plan, which expires in July 2010, lacks a sufficiently detailed systemic approach to the ongoing review and development of all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, over a two or three year period. Other practices for monitoring the school's progress are well in place and these include the senior management's role in a good formal process of the self-evaluation of the work of the school.

- 5.8 Significant emphasis is focused on selecting high quality staff. A good system of induction for all new staff is in place. It highlights the need to support new staff in their understanding of the operation of the school and enables them to benefit from contact with experienced members of the existing staff. Professional development is well organised both within the school and through the use of a sufficient budget to bring in external expertise for whole staff training or for the introduction of new initiatives. Externally mounted training is used appropriately, and staff are effectively trained in their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.9 High quality policies and procedures have been produced for all aspects of school life and these are implemented by all staff. Teachers, classroom support staff and other non-teaching staff are well deployed and contribute significantly to pupils' learning and welfare, particularly those with LDD or EAL. Staffing levels are good, so that strong support is given to pupils.
- 5.10 Lesson observation is well carried out both formally by senior staff and subject leaders as well as by more informal methods. All those working with pupils are suitably checked through recruitment procedures which are scrupulously followed. The central register of appointments is completed accurately and fully.

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

- 5.11 The school has an excellent and constructive relationship with parents which more than fulfils its aims in this regard. Parental questionnaires issued prior to the inspection indicate that all parents, including those with children in the EYFS, are pleased with all aspects of school life. The school is characterised by a community feel, and everyone – pupils, parents and staff – is encouraged to feel that it is 'our school'.
- 5.12 Parents receive excellent information about the school, and the complaints policy is readily available to parents of pupils and of prospective pupils. Parents' evenings are held twice a year and three written reports are also issued each year. These give a strong indication to parents of their child's progress with most containing meaningful targets for improvement. Regular newsletters are sent home and a wealth of information about the school's events and routines is available on its website. The school makes very good use of emails to inform parents about events and is constantly seeking new ways to improve its provision of information to parents.
- 5.13 The school places a clear priority on its 'open door' policy. The head teacher has taken advantage of the size of the school to ensure that parents are known personally and seeks to provide a 'bespoke' service wherever possible. Informal means of communication, such as homework diaries, are well used. When concerns are identified about a pupil the school takes a sensitive approach when contacting parents, seeking to avoid any possible form of embarrassment. Issues raised by parents are dealt with most appropriately.
- 5.14 The Parents and Staff Association is active, well supported by parents and staff, and is accommodated in a room within the school. It has made valuable contributions to the life of the school through the provision of treats for the pupils and the provision of resources. Parents also take an active role in school life through helping with trips and with reading in school. The views and ideas of parents are regularly sought and acted upon by the school's management team.

- 5.15 Social meetings at the start of the year enable parents to meet their children's teachers in an informal setting, whilst new parents' meetings held in advance of children joining the school are used to put new parents in touch with current parents who can help them to settle in. This is particularly helpful for parents for whom English is not their first language, who are paired whenever possible with those who also speak their specific language.
- 5.16 The pupils benefit greatly from the excellent links between their parents and the school, understanding that they have shared aspirations for them and that they will work together to achieve them.

What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.1 This is an outstanding setting with the capacity to sustain improvement. Constant self-review ensures the achievement of the school's aims of providing a safe, caring and welcoming environment within which all are treated with respect, courtesy and kindness. It also ensures that the setting continues to provide experiences that broaden, enrich and extend the skills, talents and values of each member of the school community. Staff recognise the unique qualities of each child and show an excellent understanding of how to meet their individual needs. The high expectations of the staff and well-informed understanding of young children enables the significant progress made by children with differing abilities and needs.

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

6.2 The leadership and management of the setting are outstanding. Excellent and comprehensive arrangements are in place for safeguarding children and all staff are suitably trained. Using contributions from staff, governors and parents, clear direction for developments within the EYFS is set, with a strong focus on achievement, learning and the well-being of all. The head of the setting has an excellent understanding of the provision's strengths and weaknesses and a clear vision about how the development of the EYFS is integral to the overall development of the school. All records, policies and procedures necessary for the efficient management of the setting are in place and implemented rigorously. Risk assessments are detailed, carefully organised, well managed and reviewed regularly. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the parents expressed a strong appreciation of their children's progress and the standard of their care. Every opportunity is taken to inform parents of their children's progress and to give clear information about the learning environment.

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

6.3 The quality of provision is outstanding. All children learn and develop extremely well through stimulating play and valuable first-hand experiences that are specifically aimed at pupils' individual needs. There is always a clear focus on what the children are going to learn rather than what they are going to do. A well-judged balance is maintained between adult-led and self-initiated activities which involve choosing, exploring and discovering. The school recognises the need to refine this balance even further. The children's welfare is strongly promoted, so that their individual needs are very well met and all benefit from a full range of learning experiences. Planning is extremely detailed across all areas of learning. Children have access to a wide range of resources which they use most effectively.

- 6.4 The highly stimulating outdoor environment gives them first-hand experiences of weather, seasons and the natural world. In addition, it encourages them to be creative and to develop their independence. Key persons guide and support children very well and provide safe and clear routines for them. The children enjoy the healthy snacks provided for them and the sociable nature of snack time and lunchtime.

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

- 6.5 The children achieve very well and are on course to meet all the early learning goals by the end of their reception year, with many being likely to exceed them. Children learn to communicate fluently, enjoy books and express their thoughts and feelings with developing confidence. They fully embrace new experiences and skills positively. They are very confident in working with computer programs and numbers. Children show good physical co-ordination and excellent spatial awareness when playing on outdoor equipment, and in Reception class they show a high degree of perseverance in their efforts to master swimming skills. Their personal, social and emotional development is outstanding. They are inquisitive, enthusiastic and self-motivated, relating extremely well to one another and to adults. Children absorb the school's culture of respect and co-operation. Behaviour, which is exemplary, is effectively managed through gentle reminders of the school rules. Children develop a particularly good awareness of personal safety and they comply with the simple rules that relate to this.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and a governors' representative, 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 Graham Nunn

Mr Alexander Mitchell

Mrs Karen Williams

Miss Louise Savage

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS School)

Team Inspector (Head, ISA School)

Co-ordinating Inspector (Early Years)