



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

OLD PALACE OF JOHN WHITGIFT SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Old Palace of John Whitgift School

Full Name of School	Old Palace of John Whitgift School		
DfE Number	306/6082		
EYFS Number	EY376554		
Registered Charity Number	312612		
Address	Old Palace of John Whitgift School Old Palace Road Croydon Surrey CR0 1AX		
Telephone Number	020 8688 2027		
Fax Number	020 8680 5877		
Email Address	info@oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk		
Head	Dr Judy Harris		
Chair of Governors	Mrs Rosemary Jones		
Age Range	3 months to 18 years		
Total Number of Pupils	889		
Gender of Pupils	Girls		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	49	5-11: 227
	3-5 (EYFS):	68	11-18: 545
Number of Day Pupils	889		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	05 Oct 2010 to 06 Oct 2010		
	01 Nov 2010 to 03 Nov 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 2006.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 Old Palace of John Whitgift School, established in 1889, is a selective day school in Croydon, Surrey, for girls aged 3 months to 18 years and boys aged 3 months to 4 years. The school's governing body is composed of members of the Court of the John Whitgift Foundation and school committee governors. New members of the school committee are appointed on the recommendation of current committee governors and approved by the foundation. There are three distinct sites but the school operates as a whole administratively, pastorally and educationally.
- 1.2 The school aims to equip pupils with the confidence, skills and knowledge needed to lead independent, successful and happy lives in an ever-changing world. It is committed to creating a secure atmosphere in which the values of mutual respect and understanding can flourish and where diversity and individuality are celebrated.
- 1.3 The senior school is accommodated in the Old Palace, once the residence of Archbishops of Canterbury, and new buildings have been designed to reflect the unique qualities of this historic environment. The Juniors and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are accommodated in refurbished buildings at the Juniors, some two miles away, acquired by the merger with Croham Hurst School in 2008. This has had a significant impact on the school and has allowed it to extend its provision considerably since the last inspection, including new subject opportunities for pupils and the establishment of a Nursery, open throughout the year. The Nursery is in a separate building at the Juniors with term time Pre-school and Reception classes accommodated with the Junior buildings, with appropriate outdoor areas available to each setting. Year 6 girls are taught on the senior site.
- 1.4 There are currently 889 pupils enrolled, of whom 129 are in the sixth form. There are 117 children in the EYFS; 67 of these receive the government nursery grant. The ability range of the school is fairly broad and has widened since the last inspection. Junior pupils are of average ability and at senior level most are of above average ability. There are twenty-seven pupils with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLD) and ten who receive extra support for English as an additional language (EAL). There is one pupil with a statement of special educational needs. The rich cultural and ethnic mix of the school reflects the nature of the local area.
- 1.5 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 Pupils of Old Palace of John Whitgift School are well educated, in line with the school's ethos. They flourish in an atmosphere in which they feel safe, respected and valued. The quality of their learning and achievements is good. Pupils make good progress overall relative to their ability and develop good levels of skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. Their attitude to learning is excellent and they are cheerful, enthusiastic and co-operative workers. The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities for all abilities, with an imaginative Year 6 course of study helping to smooth the transition from primary to secondary education. The vast majority of Year 13 leavers go on to university. A wide range of extra-curricular activities enhances the school's provision. Pupils participate enthusiastically and achieve high levels of success, especially in music, drama and sport.
- 2.2 The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent. The school is very successful in creating an atmosphere in which pupils grow in cheerful self-confidence and an awareness of their responsibilities to themselves and to others. They are articulate, courteous and open in conversation. They have a well-developed sense of the needs of others, demonstrated by their everyday behaviour as well as by their commitment to charitable causes. The girls treat each other with respect and enjoy each other's company. The school successfully encourages pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the rich range of cultures and beliefs represented in the school community. Pupils are well prepared to play a full part in adult life and are ambitious for their own futures.
- 2.3 Governance is good. The Court of the John Whitgift Foundation and school committee of governors together exercise a careful oversight of the school. They are committed to the school and to meeting their legal obligations. Governors have recently undertaken governor appraisal and attend regular training. They are very supportive of the school and have an astute understanding of the challenges inherent in bringing together two communities. The high expectations of the headship team and the staff encourage the girls to achieve their best. Excellent leadership at the highest level is resulting in the emergence of a happy, united school community. Inspectors found no evidence to support the few parental complaints about bullying and communication. The overwhelming majority of parents express high levels of satisfaction with the school, its values and their children's education.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it was required to:
- ensure that fire evacuation notices are prominently displayed in all rooms [Part 3, paragraph 13, under Welfare, health and safety].
- 2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified the above shortcoming, 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. Ensure direct representation of the Juniors on the headship team.
 2. Develop further the roles and responsibilities of middle managers in the Seniors and of subject co-ordinators in the Juniors.
 3. Ensure that all staff are trained in different teaching styles to improve the matching of tasks to ability and challenge of work for pupils and to encourage independent thought.
 4. Develop further the outdoor provision for the EYFS to allow greater free-flow access and opportunities for child-initiated activities.
 5. Strengthen links between the Nursery and Reception within the main junior building to ensure the sharing of best practice.

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 good in relation to their abilities, supporting the school's aim to equip them with the confidence, skills and knowledge to lead independent, successful and happy lives in an ever-changing world. Pupils are articulate, and good standards of literacy, numeracy and core skills are evident in lessons and in written work at all ages. They reason effectively and think creatively when given the opportunity. In a Year 2 art lesson, pupils produced particularly inventive pictures of fireworks using pastels. Pupils in Year 6 read aloud expressively and enthusiastically predicted what would happen next in a narrative poem, and older girls confidently used subject-specific terminology in science classes. However, the teaching styles in some lessons do not provide the opportunity for pupils to engage fully in independent learning or allow them to utilise their information and communication technology (ICT) skills.
- 3.2 Pupils' attainment in Years 1 to 5 is in line with their abilities. In the Seniors, public examination results, lesson observations and written work show that attainment is good when compared with the average for all maintained schools. The school has responded to a recommendation in the last report by creating a thorough and effective means of monitoring pupils' attainment and progress over time. Pupils, including those with LDD or EAL, make good progress over time in relation to their ability, which for those in the Seniors is above the national average and, for Juniors, in line with the national average. Scrutiny of written work shows that junior pupils make good progress. In Years 7 to 11 data from national standardised measures of progress shows that pupils exceed expectations in relation to their abilities. Similar data for the sixth form shows that pupils' progress is in line with their ability.
- 3.3 Throughout the school pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils work well individually and usually co-operatively in groups. They contribute willingly in lessons, and older pupils keep extremely well-organised notes. Pupils enjoy their lessons; in Year 7 mathematics, several pupils complained when the lesson ended because they were enjoying solving the problems.
- 3.4 Pupils are successful in a number of activities, including music, a mathematics challenge, and speech and drama. Numerous individual successes have been achieved in a range of activities, for example acting, chess, geography, tennis and music. Various teams participate successfully in a range of competitions, including in gymnastics and swimming.

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

- 3.5 Curricular and extra-curricular provision is good, with excellent resources across the school. The broad and balanced curriculum contributes positively to the pupils' achievements and has a substantial impact on their personal development. The curriculum is suited to all ages, abilities and needs. In the Juniors it covers all the required subjects, including a valuable 'Learning for Life' personal, social and health education programme that continues into the Seniors. A determined thrust to encourage good literacy levels further has met a positive response from pupils; Juniors are quickly meeting the reward targets set and Year 11 pupils were seen enjoying the 'Drop Everything and Read' registration time. Modern foreign languages are introduced from Year 1. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities to participate in expressive and creative subjects. They benefit from a wide range of option subjects at GCSE and flexibility of choice in the sixth form. Subjects offered to GCSE level include separate sciences, and extra-curricular GCSEs are offered, such as astronomy. The enrichment programme further ensures that sixth-form pupils are extended beyond their examination subjects.
- 3.6 The curriculum includes good arrangements for transition between different stages of the pupils' education. Junior pupils make a smooth transition to the Seniors by moving to that site for Year 6, and from Year 7 onwards the careers department provides good guidance and support to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education, including application to university. Currently the role of subject co-ordinators in the Juniors is not fully developed so as to ensure continuity of learning across the years. The appointment of a lead advisory teacher in September 2009 has considerably extended provision for pupils with LDD or EAL, but the strategies suggested have yet to be fully implemented by all staff. The 'Palace Group' for identified high ability girls imaginatively encourages opportunities beyond the usual curriculum.
- 3.7 Music and drama play a significant part in the extra-curricular activities on offer. All pupils in Year 3 benefit from the opportunity to learn a musical instrument for a year. High standards of musicianship were observed, for example in a Caribbean steel band and a string group rehearsal. Senior girls participate enthusiastically in sporting activities and inter-school fixtures; as yet the Juniors have limited opportunities to represent the school in matches. From Indian dance to knitting and gardening, pupils in the Juniors enjoy a wide range of clubs, but extra-curricular activities are more limited at senior level for those who are less musical or interested in sport. The school is aware of this and there are plans to extend the activity programme.
- 3.8 The good links which exist with the local community benefit the pupils in a variety of ways. Interview practice for older pupils has been provided by local businesses, and visits by the police and fire brigade have enhanced safety awareness. There is an interesting programme of visiting speakers provided for the junior and senior pupils. Older girls enjoy the challenge of developing their leadership and teamwork skills through The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, in which sizeable numbers participate. Pupils have a useful range of opportunities to extend their awareness of the wider world through trips and outings, such as modern foreign language visits and field trips.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.9 The standard of teaching is good and effectively meets the school's aims. Nearly all the lessons seen were good, with some examples of excellence. When the teaching is at its best, girls are stretched and challenged to explore subjects in depth through an approach that encourages them to reason rather than simply absorb facts. This was particularly evident in senior and sixth-form teaching. Girls respond positively to teachers' expectations. When given the opportunity, they show very good skills in exploring factual material, as seen for example in a lesson on American history. At times the lessons observed were teacher dominated and somewhat lacking in pace. This limited the girls' opportunity to demonstrate creativity and independent thinking. Where teaching was less demanding, girls became inattentive and indulged in low level disruption that was not always checked.
- 3.10 The recent appointment of a lead advisory teacher has been influential in facilitating an increased understanding of pupils with additional needs. Positive strategies for support have been implemented and are still evolving, to the benefit of the pupils. The matching of tasks to ability was used to good effect in some lessons seen, such as a Year 10 physics lesson on renewable resources and in Year 8 Latin. Although all teachers are aware of pupils with identified needs, such skilful variation of work according to ability was not universal. There is an insufficient range and variety of teaching strategies to ensure the very best rate of girls' progress. Some teaching used ICT effectively to enhance learning, although often the capabilities of interactive white boards were not exploited.
- 3.11 The standard of marking is generally good across the school, especially for the Juniors. At its best assessment is evaluative and formative, shaping planning of both teaching and learning. Most teachers provide written encouragement and good advice for pupils on how to improve their work. In conversation, girls expressed their appreciation of this clear guidance. There are some inconsistencies of practice across and between departments. The older girls find some departments' policy of comments without grades confusing at times, not always providing them with guidance on how to improve. The school is aware of this and the marking policy is under review.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent. The school retains its Christian ethos but is sensitive to the multi-faith nature of its community so that all girls listen thoughtfully to the excellent material presented in assemblies. They benefit from the religious studies syllabus and the 'Learning for Life' programmes which provide understanding of, and emphasise respect for other faiths. They are conscious of the history and beauty of their physical environment, taking pride in pointing out the room where Queen Elizabeth I slept and the chapel where she attended services, still in use for assemblies. The pupils are emotionally mature, with a strong awareness of their own personalities, and their own value and that of others. In conversation, two pupils of different faiths stated: 'we are all individual, equal inside and outside school.'
- 4.2 The girls have a well-developed moral sense, encouraged by the excellent role models of staff. They understand and respect the school's rules. They respond positively to the many displays in the school which encourage them to be involved, to help each other and to recognise the positives in others. Consequently behaviour is usually very good, occasional boisterousness being easily checked, and pupils show good manners in their dealings with each other and adults. Girls are generally ambitious and focused. Year 13 girls interviewed were very clear on future university courses and why this was the path chosen. Year 5 girls also had clear ideas of their future careers, based on their perceived strengths. Year 7 girls spoke appreciatively of the guidance given, saying: 'the teachers train you to be good and bring you out of yourself.'
- 4.3 Girls are responding well to encouragement to participate actively in the school's life. They appreciate being asked for opinions in end-of-unit questionnaires about subjects. They are enthusiastic about the re-establishment of a house system and have been keen to seek responsibility as house officers and members of the school pupil leadership team. There is a strong sense of belonging to a school that is changing; a senior house assembly taken by a sixth-form house officer was all about belonging to 'our school'. For junior girls being a senior girl is something to aspire to. The girls develop a strong awareness of the needs of others, evident in the school's 'Caritas' venture through which money is raised for charitable causes, including a link school in Uganda and responses to disaster emergency appeals. Pupils' education is enriched through local community activities, including carol singing at the local shopping centre and at a home for the elderly.
- 4.4 The many cultures represented in the school body exist harmoniously side by side, with mutual respect and tolerance being evident. Girls enjoy the annual celebration of achievements held at Fairfield Halls. They relish the variety of experiences provided in the school's daily life to reflect its cultural diversity. Juniors enjoyed their introduction to Haydn's music by a resident string quartet and girls routinely participate in a number of choirs singing a varied repertoire. Art displays reflect the girls' awareness of other cultures and their own opinions on female equality.

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

- 4.5 The school makes good provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils, in line with its commitment to creating a secure atmosphere where mutual respect can flourish. The pastoral care provided for pupils is excellent and promotes good behaviour, responsibility and consideration for others. The awareness of each girl as a unique individual is quite clear. Teachers give positive, caring advice. These pastoral arrangements are highly effective, fostering pupils' personal development and academic achievement extremely well. Staff promote pupils' self-confidence effectively through support, praise and encouragement. The quality of relationships between pupils and staff, and amongst pupils themselves, is generally good and exists in a cheerful, relaxed but focused atmosphere, although some staff are more adept than others in creating this.
- 4.6 On the infrequent occasions when pupils are a little over exuberant, most staff are able to refocus them swiftly. Pupils say they are well cared for. They feel appreciated and this gives them the confidence to turn to an adult should they have a concern. Girls acknowledge that the school rules are sensible and necessary. They report very few incidences of bullying and feel that any that occur are dealt with quickly and well, using the school's 'no blame' policy in the first instance. Behaviour which continues to be unacceptable is dealt with by strong and effective action. In the parental pre-inspection questionnaire a few parents expressed concern about bullying; however, pupils are adamant that there is now no tension amongst them and inspectors found no evidence to support parents' anxieties.
- 4.7 The policy and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils are excellent; all staff are trained appropriately and regularly in child protection issues. A suitable number of staff are trained as child protection officers, the head having overall responsibility. Members of the headship team have had safe recruitment training and a thorough and rigorous recruitment process is in place.
- 4.8 Good measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards; regular fire drills are held and fire notices are in place throughout so that the school now fully complies with regulations. Admission and attendance registers are accurately maintained. Health and safety procedures are effective, with good risk assessments covering all aspects of school life. A health and safety committee meets regularly to discuss any issues arising. Electrical testing is carried out appropriately, and health and safety documentation is thorough. Numerous staff are qualified as first aiders and a full-time qualified nurse is on duty in the Juniors, ensuring good care for pupils who are unwell or injured. The school is currently recruiting a nurse to be based at the Seniors. There are adequate sick rooms both for Seniors and Juniors; the school is looking to improve these. Accidents are suitably recorded. An accessibility plan has been written in compliance with the SENDA while taking into account the historic nature of the site and consequent constraints. Pupils understand very well the importance of participating in physical exercise and of healthy diet. They enjoy the school meals, which are healthy and appetising, and provide good choice, including vegetarian options.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The governance of the school is good. The members of the school committee and the designated members of the Court of the John Whitgift Foundation provide a wide range of useful skills of which they give generously for the benefit of the school in line with its aims. Governors exercise their duties regarding oversight of standards conscientiously. A number of core policies are established by the foundation. Financial oversight is thorough, with careful monitoring of budgetary requests both at school and at foundation level. This ensures that a good level of financial support is available for pupils from less privileged backgrounds. Governors have invested a great deal of energy and thought into the refurbishment of the junior site following the merger, ensuring that very good facilities and resources are available for all pupils and teachers.
- 5.2 The creation of a number of governors' sub-committees, each chaired by a member of the school's headship team, ensures that governors have a good grasp of the everyday workings of the school and can exercise their legal responsibilities effectively, including those for safeguarding children and for health and safety. This effective monitoring is much improved since the last inspection. Governors are kept well informed by the head and the headship team, with whom they have good relationships. Governors have had training in issues of governance and are exploring ways in which to enhance further their ability to support the headship team and staff in continuing to build the new school community.

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

- 5.3 Leadership and management of the school are good and at the highest levels excellent. A clear, shared vision of the school's aims and determination to succeed characterise the approach of the hard working headship team which is united in its wholehearted commitment to building a sense of one school, split geographically but otherwise united. Senior leaders move daily between senior and junior sites, vigorously reinforcing the school's ethos and building confidence. Their passionately committed approach has ensured that a sense of a happy, united community is now apparent. The headship team is a self-reflective group which analyses effectively the success of initiatives and establishes priorities in a good school development plan. Faculty and section leaders and the headship team constitute the school steering group which is seen as a highly effective means of involving staff in the future direction of the school.
- 5.4 School leadership has been successful in retaining and recruiting staff who are well qualified. Leadership provides opportunities for continuous professional development and ensures that all staff and volunteers are well trained in safeguarding. In the establishment of the merged school, a thorough and compliant system of recording has been created to show that all current members of staff have been rigorously checked in accordance with legal requirements.
- 5.5 Leadership has the confidence to try new ideas, reviewing rigorously and adapting as necessary. The roles and responsibilities of individuals in the headship team are continuing to evolve. At times this evolutionary process has resulted in some uncertainty about lines of management. The school intends to bring a senior member of the Juniors staff onto the headship team, to ensure its effectiveness in

bringing the school together, both in terms of management and of the pupils' learning. In some subjects, there is currently excellent co-operation between teachers of Juniors and Seniors to ensure smooth progression of pupils' learning; in other subjects there is very little collaboration or none. In the Seniors, some middle managers are reluctant to accept fully their responsibility for liaising with teachers in the Juniors or monitoring within their own department. The latter was mentioned in the last report and the headship team continues to work on ways to encourage this. Mechanisms for monitoring subject teaching and learning in the Juniors are not currently as fully developed as in the Seniors, and the school has good plans to rectify this. The high level of the girls' achievements and their excellent personal development owe a great deal to the consistency with which leadership at all levels encourages them to believe in themselves and in their value as individuals.

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

- 5.6 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is good. Inspectors found no evidence to support the few concerns expressed in the parental questionnaires about bullying, communication or handling of concerns. The overwhelming majority of parents appreciate and positively endorse the school's ethos, and value the quality of their children's education and the support they receive.
- 5.7 The headship team is working hard and effectively to re-engage parents in the life of the school following the merger, sensitively recognising the concerns then generated. The emergence of parent class representatives and groups of parents offering to organise social events provide evidence that this hard work is bearing fruit. Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They are invited to concerts and drama productions, attend junior class assemblies regularly and participate in outings. A recent concert was over subscribed, evidence of parental involvement with their children's school life. All Juniors staff are available at the end of each day to meet parents, thus providing useful informal opportunities to talk about pupils' progress or parental concerns. In the Seniors this informal contact with parents is less frequent but equally valued.
- 5.8 Parents are provided with good information; a great deal of routine information as well as insight into school life is available on the website. All legally required policies and others are on this website and also available as hard copies. A record is kept of any serious concerns and the school's response. Communication between school and home is regular and frequent, including a termly newsletter and community bulletin. Clear and useful reports, with precise comments and targets for improvement, give parents a good indication of their children's attainment and progress, and enable them to support the school. Regular parents' evenings give formal opportunities for the discussion of pupils' progress and their participation in school life.

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 effectiveness of the EYFS is good, with some outstanding elements. Detailed and consistently implemented policies promote an environment where children's welfare is of the utmost importance. Adults recognise the children's unique qualities and meet their individual needs through highly effective observation and assessment. This ensures that children make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Since the last inspection some changes have been made to planning for outdoor activities, but this does not reflect the standard of the school's drive for continuous improvement seen in other areas.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are good, with some outstanding features. Staff are appropriately qualified and trained. Required checks are carried out on all current staff. Safeguarding is robust. Comprehensive risk assessments ensure that buildings, furniture and all equipment are regularly checked. A strong commitment to equality and inclusion enables all children, irrespective of background, ability or need, to make very good progress. Systems for self-evaluation are good and identify priorities for improvement. Resources are good and in some areas outstanding. Partnership with parents is excellent, with many commenting on the caring nature of staff. Relationships with external agencies are managed effectively and contribute to understanding children's development and maintaining high standards. Governors are very supportive of the setting and are committed to its continued development.

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

6.3 The quality of provision, especially for indoor learning, is good overall, with outstanding elements. Children's welfare, learning and development are very well supported through good adult to child ratios and an effective balance of structured learning, direct experiences and free play. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge of the EYFS framework and use systematic observation and assessment to plan enjoyable, challenging activities across all areas of learning. Most classrooms have direct access to dedicated outdoor areas that are seen as integral to learning, although such provision is not fully developed. Careful exemplification and gentle reinforcement from adults result in children being well behaved and caring. An excellent key worker system, particularly for babies and younger children, ensures that children feel safe and secure. Provision for before- and after-school care is good, with a range of appropriate activities.

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

- 6.4 Outcomes for children are good, with some outstanding features. Children become active, independent learners through a wide range of appropriate and sometimes challenging activities. When given the opportunity to choose their own activities, they play purposefully either with friends or alone. They show great enjoyment in all they do and make good progress in all areas of learning and development, with attainment in numeracy and personal development being particularly strong. Children show enthusiastic interest in, and understanding of the wider world through role play activities. Hygiene, healthy eating, fitness and exercise are promoted strongly. Children develop a good awareness of personal safety and display well-developed self-help skills, washing their hands before eating and drinking water regularly. Opportunities for developing independence outside the classroom are not always provided for older children. Access to ICT is excellent and as a result children become highly confident in the use of computers and other ICT equipment.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.5 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Complaints since the last inspection

- 6.6 There have been no complaints to Ofsted regarding provision for those under the age of three since the last inspection.

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Colette Culligan	Reporting Inspector
Mr Geoff Lee-Gallon	Assistant Reporting Inspector (Retired head, IAPS school)
Dr Paul Birchley	Head, maintained grammar school
Mr Basil Brown	Head, IAPS school
Mr Douglas Buchanan	Former Deputy Head, IAPS school
Mrs Susan Clifford	Head, IAPS school
Mrs Karen Hollingdale	Deputy Head, GSA school
Mrs Rosemary Martin	Head, GSA school
Mr Chris Manville	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mrs Gill Pinchbeck	Head of Nursery, IAPS school