



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

THE FALCONS SCHOOL FOR BOYS

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

The Falcons School for Boys

Full Name of School	The Falcons School for Boys			
DfE Number	313/6071			
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Headmaster	Mr Gordon Milne			
Chair of Governors	Sir John Ritblat			
Age Range	3 to 7			
Total Number of Pupils	173			
Gender of Pupils	Boys			
Numbers by Age	3-5 EYFS:	87	5-7:	86
Number of Pupils	Total:	173		
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Belinda Knight			
EYFS Gender	Boys			
Inspection dates	11 Oct 2011 to 12 Oct 2011			
	09 Nov 2011 to 11 Nov 2011			

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. The inspection consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2005.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although 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 Alpha Plus owns a number of schools and colleges. This includes the Falcons group of schools, one of which is The Falcons School for Boys. Alpha Plus oversees the governance arrangements of the schools. The school is situated in a four-storey Victorian building in Chiswick, in the London Borough of Hounslow. The headmaster took up his responsibilities in September 2010. The school now caters for boys from Nursery until the end of Year 2, and not Year 3, as at the time of the previous inspection.
- 1.2 The school's stated purpose is to bring out the best in boys, to find and recognise individual talents, to deliver a broad education and to provide a rich tapestry of relationships, activities and teaching that prepares the boys for their future lives. It also aims to encourage, nurture and motivate pupils so that learning is fun.
- 1.3 The total number of pupils on roll at the time of the inspection was 173; of these 87 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for pupils up to the age of five. There were 39 pupils aged three and four in two Nursery classes. In the four Reception classes, 48 pupils were aged four and five. There were 86 pupils in Years 1 and 2. There are no more than eighteen pupils in a class.
- 1.4 Pupils come from professional and business families. The majority are from White British backgrounds. Approximately fifteen per cent are from families who speak English as an additional language (EAL), two of whom receive support. The intake reflects a broad range of abilities, but overall the range of ability is above average. The school has identified nine pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In total eleven pupils receive specialist learning support from the school. No pupil has a statement of special education need. At the age of seven, most pupils transfer to The Falcons Boys' Preparatory School, subject to a seven-plus assessment. Some go on to attend highly selective preparatory schools in other parts of London.
- 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 The pupils' overall achievement is excellent, reflecting fully the school's aims to bring out the best in boys, to find and to recognise individual talents, to deliver a broad education and to provide a rich tapestry of relationships, activities and teaching that prepares the boys for their future lives. It encourages, nurtures and motivates pupils so that they find learning fun and rewarding. The school has made very significant improvements since the previous inspection. Overall, pupils make excellent progress because staff have high expectations of what pupils can do and apply their in-depth knowledge of the best way boys learn into their teaching methods. Following a smooth transition from Reception into Year 1, staff build very effectively on the strong start made in the EYFS. These factors together with the very positive atmosphere for learning enable pupils to communicate clearly, and to use their imaginative, investigative and expressive talents very effectively in their exceptional writing, mathematics, science and art work. High level literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are applied very well to subjects across the curriculum and also to their independent research projects. The pupils' enthusiasm for learning, an excellent broad, rich, practical curriculum, and a very wide range of extra-curricular activities contribute significantly to their rapid rate of progress. Pupils with EAL or SEND are supported very effectively. The quality of teaching is excellent overall, but varies between subjects and classes. While teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils' learning in most classes, this is not always the case. Regular assessments of pupils' learning and development provide staff with a clear understanding of what pupils can do. These are used very well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
- 2.2 Excellent personal development stems from the school's determined aim to prepare pupils well for their future lives. A residential visit for older pupils contributes much to their social development and confidence. Homework and projects to find out information for themselves establish pupils' personal study skills very successfully. The happy atmosphere and strong relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils are underpinned by excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. High quality pastoral care, welfare, health, and safety are central to the school's purpose. Consequently, pupils are confident and have a strong sense of their well-being and safety. Child protection arrangements are robust and induction training for new staff is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are highly positive about their learning and are confident that their views are valued and any worries dealt with quickly.
- 2.3 Excellent leadership by the headmaster, senior staff and the governing body have brought about many significant improvements to pupils' attainment and personal development, as well as provision. Strong teamwork means staff are very clear about the vision for the school and work together very successfully to achieve it. The aims of the school are implemented fully, and specialist expertise ensures that regulatory requirements are met. A new management structure is proving very successful in driving developments. Subject and Year group leaders know how well pupils are achieving in their subjects. Their skills in monitoring consistency in the quality of teaching are at an early stage of development. Welcoming administrative, catering and site management staff ensure that the school runs smoothly on a daily basis. The transfer of Year 3 pupils to the prep school has enabled the reorganisation of facilities to benefit pupils. Catering staff working in the new kitchen

provide highly nutritious meals and promote healthy eating strongly. The library and music room provide additional opportunities to develop musical, literacy and study skills. The strong focus on improving communications has resulted in excellent links with parents, carers and guardians. Responses to the questionnaires were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Inspection evidence endorses these very positive views.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school 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 improvement(s).
1. In the EYFS, enhance the provision for creative development across all classes.
 2. Throughout the school develop the monitoring skills of middle managers so they support senior leaders in ensuring the quality of teaching is consistently high across all classes and that classroom assistants are deployed effectively at all times.

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 quality of pupils' achievements, learning, skills and attitudes is excellent and has improved since the previous inspection. The school meets its aim to find and recognise individual talents. Through the school's high quality, practical and motivating curriculum, pupils acquire a very broad range of skills, including working as an effective member of a group, and the ability to think logically. The pupils' exemplary attitudes to learning enable them to apply themselves to the challenges they face, to persevere, and to take pride in their work.
- 3.2 The strong foundation of knowledge and skills in literacy established in the EYFS is built on effectively each year as pupils move through the school. Pupils speak confidently in class, in assembly and when performing on stage. They are at ease when talking to adults and convey their ideas clearly. Written work is original, imaginative, includes humour and captures the emotions and interest of the reader. They read extremely well. They derive great pleasure from becoming absorbed in a book whether fiction or non-fiction. High standards in reading contribute significantly to high levels of achievement in other subjects and a very good level of general knowledge. Pupils draw on their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example in literacy pupils devised a new board game and wrote the instructions, which included the number of steps to move forward or back. Pupils know how to ask effective questions to find out information at home or at school. This enhanced their knowledge about the Second World War. Essential ICT skills are well-established and a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- 3.3 In after school clubs for sports, languages, cookery, computers, gardening, chess, drama, art and preparation for seven plus examinations, pupils gain other important skills for their future lives. Early leadership skills are developed by taking on responsibilities, such as school councillor, head boy, deputy head boy or house captain. Through these, boys influenced the school's menus for lunch and play activities. Together with the very active Parents Association, pupils raise substantial funds each year for their chosen charity. They achieve very well in poetry, mathematics and chess competitions, and sing extremely well.
- 3.4 The school does not participate in national tests. Consequently it is not possible to judge attainment in relation to the average performance in schools nationally. Inspection evidence, including lesson observation, the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with them, shows that attainment is high in relation to national age-related expectations, especially in English, mathematics, science, and ICT. These high standards provide a secure foundation for their further education, and represent exceptional progress in relation to pupils of similar ability nationally. Pupils who are gifted and talented, or who have support for EAL or SEND, also progress extremely well because of the quality of the work that is planned for their particular needs. The school has a strong record of enabling pupils to pass the entrance examinations for highly selective and academic preparatory schools.
- 3.5 Exemplary attitudes to learning contribute to the rapid progress pupils make. Pupils respond enthusiastically to high expectations, cooperate very well in small groups and take care to present their work to a high standard. In many lessons they

complete a substantial volume of work. Pupils in Year 2 take their responsibilities as the oldest children in school seriously and offer good role models to the younger pupils. Their exceptional enthusiasm for learning, their behaviour, and their excellent relationships contribute much to the happy, relaxed atmosphere in which they thrive.

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

- 3.6 The school's aims, to provide a rich tapestry of activities and to bring out the best in boys are met fully through an excellent curriculum. The curriculum meets the needs of all ages and abilities of pupils, and covers all required areas. Since the previous inspection, the school's EYFS framework has been implemented successfully in the Nursery and Reception classes. Pupils transfer into the National Curriculum taught in Years 1 and 2 seamlessly. A review of the curriculum has ensured that time allocated to different subjects is appropriate so that it is now broad, and balanced. Lessons have been lengthened so that pupils can complete extended tasks more readily. They also have the chance to develop their ideas over time. This is particularly successful in giving pupils the opportunity to apply their literacy skills to write imaginatively and at length. Improved resources for ICT have resulted in its integration into lessons to bring about high levels of achievement.
- 3.7 The very well-planned curriculum takes into account boys' interests and offers many opportunities to develop their talents. Practical activities such as designing axles for cars, making electrical circuits and attending workshops on space and rocket propulsion, challenge their thinking and problem solving skills. A task to design a board game and write the instructions to play it, drew on pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. It gave them the opportunity to work creatively, independently or cooperatively. Visits to places of interest such as the RAF Museum in Hendon bring history to life. As a result pupils are keen to learn and find out more information at home.
- 3.8 The pupils' personal development is promoted strongly through the provision of a very wide range of extra-curricular activities. A residential visit for the oldest pupils enables them to be independent and appreciate social living away from home. Pupils are taught to understand how to make the right choice with regard to their behaviour, the impact of their actions on others and to be kind to one another. Assemblies, presentations to the class, drama productions, poetry reciting competitions and celebrations in church develop pupils' speaking and listening skills to a high standard. Opportunities to play football, rugby, cricket, basketball and hockey, as well as take part in gymnastics, swimming and athletics develop proficiency in individual and team sports. Specialist teaching in singing, musical instruments, the choir, French, Mandarin and Spanish adds considerable breadth to pupils' personal development. Subjects such as art, religious education and geography provide pupils with good levels of knowledge of different cultures.
- 3.9 Subject leaders take full responsibility for the quality of provision in their subjects. They check standards regularly through analysing pupils' work and outcomes of tests. Their main aim now is to ensure that all teaching is of equally high quality. Specialist support is successful in the teaching of small groups and overseeing the provision for pupils with SEND very successfully. Provision for more able pupils in many lessons is excellent as tasks enable them to make the most of their learning and abilities. Specialist, individual support for pupils with EAL enables them to play a full part in what the school has to offer.

- 3.10 An extensive range of extra-curricular activities that are well-attended adds to pupils learning in art, modern languages, design and technology, information and communication technology, geography, music, cookery, sport and preparation for tests for selective schools. Pupils benefit from a holiday club that offers an exciting range of activities, including a 'football academy'. Links with the community, especially the churches, Westfield Centre and other schools in the Alpha Plus group are strong and benefit pupils in developing their confidence when performing in public. An annual music festival, harvest festival, Christmas celebrations, and inter-school competitions extend pupils' social experiences and give them a clear sense of purpose. Visits to local amenities such as Kew Gardens, the Museum of Childhood, the Polka Theatre, Chiltern Open Air Museum, and local football stadia make learning relevant to pupils' lives.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.11 Overall, the quality of teaching is excellent, and has improved since the previous inspection. It provides a rich variety of activities that capture the pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm, so that learning is fun, in accordance with the school's aims. Consequently they make rapid progress and acquire essential skills relevant for their future lives by the time they leave the school. That said, the quality of teaching varies across subjects. Teaching in English, mathematics, science, music, sport and ICT is excellent. In other areas, teaching is mostly good and sometimes satisfactory. The best lessons challenge pupils of all abilities to draw on their previous learning and experiences and do as well as they can. Very effective questioning deepens thinking so that pupils explore and justify their ideas before recording them. However, in a small number of cases, teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively throughout the lesson to ensure that all pupils benefit fully from their support.
- 3.12 High expectations of what pupils can do, the careful choice of activities, effective use of resources, skilled use of information and communication technology, and respect for pupils' prior knowledge are further characteristics of the high quality teaching observed. They meet the school's aim to make learning fun and relevant to pupils' experiences, and motivate pupils to make the most of their talents. There are many opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or small groups to develop collaborative relationships, try out new ideas and solve problems. Staff use their excellent knowledge of how boys learn to include a wide range of strategies to maintain pupils' concentration and high levels of good behaviour. Consequently they cover a considerable amount of work in each lesson. Time is also set aside to enable them to write at length and develop story lines.
- 3.13 Pupils respond to challenges in lessons that make important contributions to their spiritual, moral and social development. In sports, pupils learn effectively that competition is important, but that it is equally important to know how to win and lose sensibly. Activities in science especially, promote strongly their investigative and inventive skills resulting in high attainment. Improved use of the library and ICT allows pupils to follow up their interests independently. Gifted and talented pupils are encouraged to use their talents in sport and music to the full in school and at home. Educational visits and a residential trip broaden pupils' experiences significantly. In the few less successful lessons, teachers' do not use resources well enough to underpin learning.
- 3.14 A wide range of methods is used to assess and to check pupils' learning in order to meet their differing needs. Marking is used productively to praise effort and confirm

that pupils have understood a lesson. While pertinent comments are given orally to pupils during lessons, they are not always written clearly enough for pupils to read and reflect on when work is marked. High quality feedback in lessons supports the pupils' rapid progress. Pupils help to set their own targets, including targets for personal development. This means they are clear about what they do well and what they need to improve. A new system to track pupils' progress very effectively has been introduced. Regular assessments of pupils' work gives staff a clear idea of how well pupils are doing when compared to others of this age.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' personal qualities are developed exceptionally well and in accordance with the aim of the school to provide a rich tapestry of relationships. Partnership between pupils and between staff and pupils is a major strength and underpins the high quality of their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
- 4.2 Spiritual development is excellent. Pupils have high levels of self-esteem, confidence and empathy for children who are less well off than themselves. They raise substantial sums of money through innovative charitable enterprises. Their poems about poppies for Remembrance Day were highly reflective and moving for the reader. Pupils learn about different world faiths, and listen sensitively to their peers when talking about their own religion and how it impacts upon their life. They show delight in their singing and speak about natural features in the landscape being God's creation. Their awe at the 'rocket launch' at the end of a workshop helped them to appreciate the wonder of science.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral awareness is excellent. Consideration for others and politeness are strengths of the school. Pupils respond very positively to the systems to promote high standards of behaviour and quality in their work. The emphasis on pupils evaluating their actions and the decisions they have made gives them a strong sense of right and wrong. All Year 2 boys take on responsibilities. The house captains, together with the head boy and deputy head boy, official helpers and librarians offer very good role models for the younger pupils. Elected school councillors provide an important voice for pupils in the school. Moral issues, such as being kind and unkind are explored in lessons, while anti-bullying week ensures pupils are fully aware of their responsibilities within the community. Eco Week reminds them of their moral obligation to care for the environment.
- 4.4 Excellent social development is promoted through many opportunities to work and play together. Mealtimes are particularly important social occasions. Pupils are articulate, confident and courteous and a strong sense of community and shared values pervades the school. Teamwork is encouraged in sports activities and pupils learn to listen to and respect one another's ideas when working in pairs or small groups in lessons. The residential visit for older pupils provides an excellent opportunity for pupils to develop their relationships.
- 4.5 Cultural awareness, enhanced by an appreciation of the different backgrounds of pupils within the school is excellent. Lessons in art, geography and religious education also add to pupil's awareness of other cultures. The quality of music making is high with many pupils learning to play a musical instrument. They sing and play in a whole school musical production each summer at a local theatre. Poetry speaking competitions foster literary appreciation. 'Picasso in the Making Club' and the 'Learn to Draw Club' complement curricular provision in art. Visits to the Chiltern Open Air Museum and the Museum of Childhood, and research projects in which grandparents are invited to share memories and artefacts of the past link pupils with their historical and cultural heritage.

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

- 4.6 Excellent pastoral care boosts the pupils' confidence and academic progress. Arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety reflect the school's determination to keep them safe. Meals and snacks provided on site are nourishing and pupils thrive in the happy atmosphere where their needs are met and their views valued. Staff know pupils well and are adept at providing activities that capture their imagination and develop their personalities. Pupils are confident that they feel safe in school, and that any member of staff will help them if they are upset. Pupils are polite towards each other and to staff, ensuring that relationships are excellent. Staff share pastoral information effectively so that pupils are supported sensitively according to their particular needs.
- 4.7 In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents are very pleased with the provision for pastoral care. Some say they chose the school because of its significant strengths in this respect. After school clubs are much appreciated as they broaden pupils' experiences and offer opportunities to gain skills to support their transfer to the next stage in their education. Inspectors agree with those views. A comprehensive and effective anti-bullying policy is implemented fully. Exemplary behaviour contributes significantly to the pupils' learning.
- 4.8 Arrangements for safeguarding are excellent. Staff training in child protection is up-to-date. Pupils receive high quality care when they are unwell. Secure risk assessments, together with reviews of the accommodation by the health and safety committee ensure that fire and other hazards are reduced.
- 4.9 The emphasis on sport, and nutritious lunches with menus devised following suggestions from pupils, promote healthy lifestyles strongly. Catering staff take into account the pupils' dietary requirements, and promote healthy eating very well. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in healthy exercise through physical education lessons, swimming, athletics, and attendance at a wide range of after school sports clubs.
- 4.10 Regulatory requirements for the maintenance and storage of admission and attendance registers are met. The school has many stairs and the upper floors are not accessible for physically disabled pupils. It has an appropriate plan and facilities to allow ease of entry to the ground floor. Adaptations have been made to accommodate those with hearing or visual difficulties.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The governing body provides excellent oversight and strategic leadership of the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The governing body is an integral part of Alpha Plus. Members of the governing body have strong co-operative working relationships with the headmaster and senior staff. This enables the school to implement its aims successfully, and pupils to achieve well. Members of the governing body have extensive expertise in leadership and management, education, safeguarding, welfare, finance, accommodation and health and safety. They draw on this very effectively to fulfil their regulatory responsibilities fully and bring about improvements to the quality of teaching and overall provision, as well as offer support to the headmaster. Governance monitors how well policies and procedures are implemented, for example in terms of the safeguarding of pupils.
- 5.2 Through their regular visits to the school, meetings and informative reports from senior staff, members of the governing body know the school well. They keep the long-term, medium-term and short-term plans for school development under regular review to make sure they bring benefits to pupils. Through challenge, regular monitoring, and support they have been successful in raising pupils' attainment, sustaining the school's good reputation, and overcoming the limitations to the building. The decision to open a prep school to which pupils can transfer at the age of seven in another location has resulted in much-improved accommodation. A new on-site kitchen and the provision of nutritious meals are valued highly by all. Pupils use the new library to extend the range of genres that they read and carry out independent research. The music room allows for extensive music provision. The purchase of notebook computers means many pupils use ICT frequently in lessons to enhance their learning. Alpha Plus provides strong continuing staff development for leaders and managers to enhance their skills and improve the school further.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.3 The quality of leadership and management is excellent and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, the management structure of the school has changed. Job descriptions and roles have been clarified. Year group and subject leaders are accountable for the pupils' progress and attainment. This has brought about a strong sense of teamwork as all are clear about their responsibilities and the contribution they make to the school's success. Some leaders have undergone significant training to develop their management skills while others are newer to their roles. A key priority of the school at present is to enhance the skills of middle managers in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. The leadership has a clear view of what needs to be done in the school, brought about by accurate self-evaluation.
- 5.4 There have been a number of staff changes recently. New staff are recruited with care to ensure their suitability to work with children; all required checks are carried out and recorded appropriately. Induction procedures have improved since the previous inspection and are rigorous and supportive. Leaders are diligent about ensuring new colleagues implement the aims and ethos of the school. Recent

changes to the management structure mean that duties have been shared among the staff depending on their particular skills. This has brought about effective communications and ensured the effective review and implementation of policies.

- 5.5 The community spirit of the school is strong. Each child's personality, interests and talents are respected. The exceptionally supportive atmosphere promotes pupils' personal development strongly. Parents appreciate fully the care all staff show their children and have every confidence in the school. Leaders and managers promote high quality communications, where the views of all, including those of the pupils are listened to and taken into account.
- 5.6 There is clear vision in the school. A sharply focused school development plan sets out a clear programme of improvements based on the findings of self-evaluation. It includes the aim to promote leadership and management skills, as well as regular reviews to sustain high quality provision and pupils' progress. Regular meetings and the provision of professional development for staff within the Alpha Plus group means staff can make the most of shared expertise to benefit pupils. A highly enthusiastic and welcoming team of administrators ensures that daily routines work well, that catering is of high quality and that the site is maintained to a high standard.

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

- 5.7 The strong emphasis on developing a highly constructive relationship with parents, carers and guardians is very successful in enabling the school to meet its aims fully. At the time of the previous inspection relationships were good and now they are excellent. In their comments and responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They particularly praised the school's high standards of behaviour, emphasis on sport, a curriculum designed to capture boys' enthusiasm for learning, worthwhile attitudes, pastoral care and ease of communication with the school. Inspection evidence confirms these highly positive views.
- 5.8 Staff welcome pupils and their parents at the gate at the beginning of the day and say goodbye at the end offering many opportunities for the exchange of important information. The school's website, together with an annual magazine sponsored by local businesses, provides parents with significant insight into the school's provision. In addition, an email system, highly informative newsletters, and regular parents' evenings keeps them as up-to-date as possible.
- 5.9 A very active parents' association plays an important role in sustaining the close partnership with parents through the organisation of successful charitable fund raising and social events for the boys, their families and staff. Parents make a valuable contribution to school life, assisting pupils in carrying out their enterprises to raise funds for their chosen charity, school trips and special events.
- 5.10 Regular reports and termly meetings between parents and teachers provide good, useful information about their children's progress and targets for improvement. Homework gives parents further information about how well their child is doing.
- 5.11 A complaints policy that meets statutory requirements is readily available for parents.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

6.1 The overall effectiveness of the setting is outstanding. Children are happy, settled and enthusiastic about learning. They make excellent progress because staff value their individuality and ensure their needs are met well. Since the previous inspection improvements include the successful implementation of the EYFS framework across the Nursery and Reception classes. Partnerships with parents are stronger and children's profiles give more information about their achievements. Outstanding leadership means self-evaluation is accurate and provides a clear picture of the strengths and areas for development. Plans to improve the provision further reflect a strong capacity to improve.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are outstanding. Children are safeguarded very well through rigorous staff checks, frequent risk assessments and implementation of all required policies and procedures. Their learning and development are supported effectively by an extensive range of high quality resources. Parents are highly supportive of the caring and strongly inclusive environment. They appreciate the excellent communications, established through home visits prior to children starting school, and the daily contact that enables staff to have a very good understanding of each child's needs. Training, regular meetings, self-evaluation and links with the local authority and other settings have brought about greater consistency in the quality of provision across all classes. Staff work effectively as a team, frequently reviewing practice.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. Classrooms and outdoor areas are attractive and welcoming. Well-qualified staff use their knowledge of the EYFS framework to provide a good range of activities for learning indoors and outdoors across the areas of learning. Literacy and numeracy are promoted strongly. There are good opportunities for children to use their imagination in role-play and to solve problems when completing challenging jigsaws or constructing models such as spaceships or jungles. Children benefit from specialist teaching in sport, French and music. Regular observations, including those from parents, and daily evaluations enable staff to plan the next steps in children's learning and check their progress. The children's welfare and safety is promoted strongly through meticulous routines and procedures.

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

- 6.4 Outcomes for children are outstanding. Children throughout the EYFS make outstanding progress in their early literacy skills using their knowledge of the sounds letters make to read and to write simple sentences and stories. They have thorough knowledge of numbers over ten. They develop good IT skills from Nursery onwards and enjoy a good range of opportunities to develop independence and try out new experiences. Visits out to the fire station and farm, and visits from health professionals and story tellers enhance children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Specialist teaching in physical education and the provision of tasty snacks and lunches help them to understand healthy lifestyles. There are many opportunities throughout the curriculum for children to develop their creative thinking, express their own ideas and use their initiative. Children behave very well, care for and respect each other, take turns and help one another to stay safe. These very positive attitudes, together with their enthusiasm for learning mean they are developing excellent skills for the future.

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 a representative from the governing body, 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 Kath Beck

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Audrey Marsden

Head of Pe-Prep IAPS

Mr Peter Nicholson

Headmaster IAPS

Mr Richard Balding

Early Years Lead Inspector