



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**WINTERFOLD HOUSE SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Winterfold House School

Full Name of School	<b>Winterfold House School</b>
DCSF Number	<b>885/6008</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY287516</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1063133</b>
Address	<b>Winterfold House School Winterfold Chaddesley Corbett Kidderminster Worcestershire DY10 4PW</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01562 777 234</b>
Fax Number	<b>01562 777 078</b>
Email Address	<b>head@winterfoldhouse.co.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr William Ibbetson-Price</b>
Chairman of Governors	<b>Mrs Morag Chapman</b>
Age Range	<b>0 to 13</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>405</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (226 boys; 179 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>0-2 (EYFS): 78    5-11: 186 3-5 (EYFS): 80    11-18: 61</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>405</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Pat Thackery</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection dates	<b>8 Feb 2010 to 9 Feb 2010</b>
EYFS inspection	<b>11 Feb 2010 to 12 Feb 2010</b>
Final (team) visit	<b>08 Mar 2010 to 10 Mar 2010</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It 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 April 2004.

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 31<sup>st</sup> August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection 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.

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Winterfold House is a co-educational preparatory and pre-preparatory day school, with its own specialist day nursery within its grounds. It caters for children between the ages of 6 weeks and 13 years within its three departments. It is a Catholic school where all faiths are made welcome; one fifth of its families are Catholic at present. Founded in 1928 in Edgbaston, it moved to Winterfold in 1946. Initially a boys' boarding preparatory school, it became co-educational in 1995 and totally a day school in 1996. The school was family owned until 1997 when a charitable educational trust, with a board of governors, was established. The pre-preparatory department was opened in 1992 and the day nursery in 1998. The school is set in and around a Georgian mansion; its 40 acres of grounds give ample space for games and country activities, and for a Forest School. Since the previous inspection, changes have been made to the management structure and new buildings have been added, with a major teaching block almost completed.
- 1.2 The school's mission is to provide a happy, secure and supportive environment within which children can develop into confident young people, able to respond to high expectations and fulfil their potential in all areas of life. The school aims to develop the whole child and value every pupil, regardless of academic ability. It seeks to provide a broad and balanced curriculum with a wide range of opportunities and extra-curricular activities, which will allow each pupil to find some area in which to shine. It aims to promote, by teaching and by example, a respect for learning, self-esteem, consideration for others, and the importance of the community above self.
- 1.3 The 405 pupils on roll include 158 in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), of whom 78 are part time children in the day nursery, 49 are part time in Kindergarten and 31 are full time in Reception. There are 55 pupils in Years 1 and 2, together with 131 pupils in Years 3 to 6, and 61 in Years 7 and 8.
- 1.4 The ability profile at entry is broadly average, although there are variations from year to year. No pupil has English as an additional language (EAL) or a statement of special educational needs (SEN). The vast majority of pupils are white British, with very few from minority ethnic groups. The school has identified 71 pupils as having relatively mild learning difficulties, of whom 34 receive specialist learning support from the school. The school is not selective and the ability range of pupils is very wide. While most pupils remain until the end of Year 8, a significant minority leave in Year 6 and their places are filled by new entrants in Year 7. The majority of leavers proceed to local independent day schools, although some move to boarding schools.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

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

School	NC name
Woodhouse Nursery	Day Nursery
Kindergarten 1	Nursery
Kindergarten 2	Nursery
Reception	Reception

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS**

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

- 2.1 From the EYFS onwards, pupils of all abilities and needs make good progress and are successful in their learning and their personal development. The school fully meets its aims to develop the whole child and enable each to fulfil their academic potential and to discover and nurture their special talents. In national assessments at the ages of 7 and 11, results are high when compared with the national average for maintained primary schools. The overall attainment of pupils in lessons is good in relation to the slightly above average ability profile of the school. The curriculum is broad and well planned to provide progressively more demanding work and enable pupils to reach above average standards. It is supplemented by an excellent range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities, in many of which pupils are outstandingly successful. Support for those with learning difficulties is of good quality; development of provision for the academically gifted is in progress. Good teaching by well-qualified staff contributes to the good academic progress and success of the pupils who respond with interest and application. They have very positive attitudes to learning; they respect their teachers, enjoy being challenged and are eager to contribute.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is outstanding. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. In an atmosphere of quiet faith, pupils develop a deep appreciation of the need to think about others and to take responsibility for themselves and others around them both in school and in the outside world. The quality of pastoral care is excellent and, in line with the aims of the school, pupils feel safe and happy in a secure and supportive environment.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent, as are leadership and management. The governors are highly effective and committed to the success of the school, as their major investment in the splendid new classroom building illustrates; their responsibilities for welfare, health and safety are carried out very carefully. The leadership and management are extremely effective in their establishment of a clear educational direction, and fulfilment of the aims of the school. They have a clear vision for the future while working to provide the best possible education for the present pupils. The recommendations of the previous inspection have been successfully attended to. The overwhelmingly positive and complimentary response of parents in their replies to their questionnaires illustrates their approval and support for the school. Their comments indicated their appreciation of the understanding teaching, and their children's progress from the EYFS onwards. They are pleased with the pastoral care, the happy and encouraging environment and the positive attitudes and high standards of behaviour of their children. They are very happy to be part of the Winterfold family.

## **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 registered provision for childcare met the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Childcare Act 2006 and no action was required.

### **(ii) Recommended action**

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Continue the development of provision for academically gifted and talented pupils across the curriculum.
  2. Share best practice in teaching and learning by extending the programme of monitoring lessons within departments, and include peer observation across the curriculum and age groups.
  3. Record, throughout the EYFS setting, individual children's 'next steps' in the short-term planning.

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

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

- 3.1 Standards are high when compared with the average for maintained primary schools. This is confirmed by results in national assessments at the ages of 7 and 11. From the EYFS onwards, pupils are successfully educated. Their progress over time is good in relation to their ability. Although the school is non-selective and there is a full ability range, some excellent results have been achieved by pupils in Year 8 over the past three years, with over 50 pupils securing scholarships to senior schools, and all Common Entrance pupils gaining places at their first choice school. In other external examinations and challenges, such as in music, drama and poetry, in scholarship awards and in sports, very good results are achieved. These results, and the closely monitored results from the range of standardised tests used by the school, confirm the good levels of achievement observed in the scrutiny of work where a substantial volume of work was in evidence for each ability level.
- 3.2 In accordance with the school's aims, pupils receive a broad and balanced education which enables each individual to fulfil their academic potential, through high expectations, good teaching and encouragement. They are encouraged to find and develop their own academic strengths, and work to the highest possible standard in relation to their own ability. A very high proportion of pupils agree that they are making good progress.
- 3.3 Pupils have good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in the subjects covered in the curriculum. Their basic skills of literacy and numeracy are an effective support to their learning. Pupils are attentive listeners and they are supportive of the contribution of others. They are also confident in speaking and co-operate well in their collaborative class work. In a Year 8 English lesson they showed original and articulate ways of developing a story. In many classes observed, pupils were working well in pairs and very willing to reason and discuss with each other in order to think of ways to achieve their goal. Their literacy skills are well developed and there are excellent examples of creative writing, some of which have been published in a book. Although independent learning and research is not consistent across the curriculum, evidence of very good independent research was noted in history, geography and religious education (RE) topics. Pupils achieve highly in sport and creative activities such as music, drama and art.
- 3.4 Evidence of the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the pupils' work is quite sparse in some subjects, because of the demands on the single computer room. The school is aware of the current constraints and acknowledges the need for the second computer suite, which will follow on from the completion of the new building. This will offer greater availability and flexibility to the departments and will enhance the quality and range of the pupils' work, and add an extra dimension to their learning. Already, in mathematics, history and art there is confident use of ICT to enhance learning. Throughout the school, there is a very positive attitude to learning, with well-behaved, courteous and industrious pupils who show good application and perseverance in the classroom, listening attentively to the teacher and one another, often enjoying the challenges set and keen to contribute their ideas. Good behaviour and respect for teachers and for one another make an important contribution to successful understanding and learning.

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

- 3.5 The strong curricular provision makes a significant contribution to the successful education of pupils of all ages, abilities and needs. In line with the aims of the school, the curriculum is broad and balanced and effectively covers all the required areas of learning with additional opportunities such as Latin, classical civilization and Spanish, which is offered as a club activity. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is enhanced by a listening programme.
- 3.6 The curriculum is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and strong links with the community. All members of staff contribute towards the extra-curricular provision which includes an air rifle club, cookery, fishing, golf and fencing. A good number of music-related activities include a very popular jazz choir and band, a highly accomplished orchestra and a choir who gave impressive performances in assemblies. Keen potters were seen glazing their various creations and young carpenters finishing their Mother's Day gifts. Drama is exceptionally strong and popular, with a good range of productions. Even the pre-preparatory pupils are included in the activities programme, and learn how to address a golf ball.
- 3.7 Virtually all parents agreed that their child is offered an appropriate range of subjects and that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. All pupils who returned a questionnaire agreed that they can join in a good range of extra-curricular activities, and this was confirmed in conversations and interviews with pupils.
- 3.8 A number of successful sports and cultural trips are organised each year. Every two years there is a trip to South Africa where a primary school has been 'adopted' by Winterfold. Last year £17,500 was raised to build a new classroom block there, and it is anticipated that these bonds will be strengthened and broadened. There have been links with the British International School in Prague following a recent music tour. Locally there are links with the village school and an old people's home, which is part of the pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. The choirs, orchestra and jazz band have an excellent reputation for helping with fund-raising projects in the local community.
- 3.9 The relevant school aim 'To discover and nurture the special talents of each pupil by providing a comprehensive range of opportunities in drama, music, and sport, which allows every boy and girl to find some area in which to shine, thereby raising confidence and self-esteem and in turn leading to success in other areas, not least academic,' is certainly achieved very successfully.
- 3.10 Pupils benefit from a learning support department which assesses and regularly monitors the pupils' needs. Those who require learning support lessons have individual education plans (IEP) of which all staff are made aware. The school and departmental policies recognise the importance of giving equal opportunity to all pupils whatever their ability, difficulty or disability in order to maximise individual potential. In most lesson planning, work was prepared for different abilities, and in the best lessons this was put into practice with different worksheets and individual support for those with additional needs. Higher ability and gifted and talented pupils are also identified, and in some departments they are provided with more challenging tasks on a regular basis. However, this good practice is not sufficiently developed and shared across the curriculum.

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

- 3.11 The quality of teaching is good overall; a considerable proportion is excellent. The pupils' progress is effectively enhanced by the teaching, which supports the school's aims of instilling respect for learning and enabling each individual to fulfil their academic potential through high expectations and encouragement. It contributes significantly to the academic success of the school, especially with the high level of scholarship results over the past three years. The pupils are suitably challenged; this became clear in discussions with them and in a number of their books in the work scrutiny. They genuinely enjoy learning with their teachers.
- 3.12 In general, teachers are knowledgeable and impart their enthusiasm to the pupils. They also understand the different needs of individuals in the class, and provide appropriate challenges and encouragement to enable the pupils not only to share their ideas but also to think and work independently. Teaching is mostly well planned, with lesson objectives to aid learning clearly displayed, or explained to the class. The pupils benefit from good planning and varied and challenging activities. Good use of different resources, including ICT, and links within the lesson to the pupils' personal experiences or on-going investigations maintain interest levels. In lessons where insufficient attention was given to capturing the interest of the class through imaginative planning and a brisk pace, the pupils' learning was less successful.
- 3.13 The results of the questionnaires completed by the parents and their children indicated that they concurred with the inspectors. Parents considered that the teachers help their children to learn and a very high proportion considered that the school provided worthwhile learning support. Virtually all pupils in the survey agreed that they are encouraged to do things for themselves and to work independently, and that their teachers help them to learn, as does the work they are given to do out of the class. An unusually high proportion of pupils agreed that they find the work they do interesting, and that their teachers give them individual help when they need it.
- 3.14 Resources for teaching are generous, and are used effectively in lessons. A Year 6 geography lesson, with clear targets set, showed a good variety of resources in use, including the data projector with maps and photographs. These were supported by clear, colourful and user-friendly hand-outs, adapted for different abilities, which fostered interest and debate both in collaborative paired work and in class discussion. Pupils responded with enthusiasm to encouraging comments and probing questions. However, some accommodation, particularly for practical subjects such as technology, does not provide an ideal learning environment. This will soon to be remedied with the opening of a new classroom block.
- 3.15 Since the previous report, significant progress has been made by senior management and heads of department to put in place a robust monitoring system to record results of assessments. These results are shared with staff and are used to inform planning and enhance learning. In ICT and in physical education (PE) there is very good self-evaluation and peer-evaluation of skills.

## **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 the pupils is excellent, and the school is successful in its aim to develop the whole child. Personal qualities such as self-esteem, respect and consideration for others are very much in evidence, as demonstrated in the excellent relationships throughout the school community.
- 4.2 Pupils develop a strong sense of the spiritual. The Catholic faith underpins the philosophy of the school with its genuine concern for the happiness and success of each child and its quiet but firm belief in the value and sanctity of the individual made in the likeness of God. This ethos and the beauty of the school's setting, with breathtaking views over the Worcestershire countryside, make a deep impression on the pupils. In RE lessons, they study the gospel values and, in assemblies, they are encouraged to reflect on applying these in their everyday journey through life. Pupils in Year 6 have deepened their spiritual understanding as they have considered how Bible stories can shape living as a Christian through treating others in the way they wish to be treated. Morning assemblies, to which the pupils make a significant contribution, are very sincere and meaningful, and give an excellent start to the day. Whilst it was not possible to observe any school or year group Masses, pupils speak positively about these and feel they provide opportunities for celebration and reflection. The pupils respond thoughtfully to prayers at the end of the day and before lunch; these focus on giving thanks to God for what has been made possible by others.
- 4.3 Pupils have a highly developed moral awareness. The school successfully meets its aim of producing young people who have a strong sense of right and wrong and the courage to follow their convictions. They respect the school rules and can explain why they are necessary. Misdemeanours are relatively few and pupils are encouraged to forgive and seek reconciliation. Pupils have a strong sense of the need to help those less fortunate and they raise significant amounts of funds through a wide range of activities that involve giving of their own time and energy. The vast majority of parents feel that the school promotes worthwhile values and attitudes.
- 4.4 The school very successfully develops its pupils socially and meets its aim of imbuing them with the importance of community above self. Pupils are very polite and well mannered. They live up to a quotation, seen on a Year 8 board, from the writings of the thirteenth Dalai Lama – 'Be kind whenever possible – it is always possible'. Pupils also thrive on the opportunities to take on responsibilities. Year 8 pupils contribute by becoming prefects and monitors, whilst younger pupils are lunchtime waiters. The pack or house system encourages a sense of loyalty and pride as well as a keen sense of belonging to the community.
- 4.5 The major emphasis in school on music, drama and art successfully enhances pupils' cultural awareness which is further strengthened by all that the school offers with visiting speakers and visits in this country, sports trips to South Africa, performances with the visiting Pearl of Africa choir, music trips to Europe and exciting World Challenge opportunities. All these promote self-confidence and independence too.

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

- 4.6 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good, and reflect the school's aims in this area. Pastoral care is outstanding. It is evident from their responses to their questionnaires that pupils and parents appreciate the evident high degree of support, care, nurturing and encouragement which is given. The pupils are very well known by staff and valued as individuals; they feel safe and secure within a supportive environment where excellent relationships and a pupil-centred approach are paramount. The holistic approach to each child is underpinned by formal arrangements which effectively provide support and guidance. Form tutors are the first port of call, but pupils identified many individuals to whom they could turn if they have a problem. A higher than usual number of pupils agreed that the school listens to their views and responds to them. Pupils are very supportive of one another and enjoy celebrating one another's success. This is as evident in activities, such as the Winterfold Challenge, as it is in the classroom when Year 5 pupils use their checkmates in mathematics to help one another.
- 4.7 Policies and procedures for preventing bullying are known and understood by all members of the community. These are on display in classrooms of the older pupils. Work in PSHE ensures that all pupils are aware that bullying is unacceptable and know exactly how to report an incident. The emphasis on a clear reward system motivates and affirms the pupils. Unacceptable behaviour is handled promptly and constructively. Parents firmly agree that the school achieves high standards of behaviour.
- 4.8 The safeguarding policy contains all the necessary requirements and is successfully implemented, with excellent up-to-date child protection training for all staff. All necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards have been implemented. Appropriate fire precautions are reviewed by relevant staff and all are up to date; regular practices are also held. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with disabilities.
- 4.9 The school provides home-cooked food that is enjoyed by the majority of pupils with only a few considering the choice to be limited. Pupils understand from their science and PSHE lessons what is meant by a balanced diet and healthy eating. An excellent wide-ranging programme of sporting activities provides many opportunities for pupils to exercise.
- 4.10 Health and safety procedures are efficient, and problems are regularly and carefully reviewed by the senior members of staff and governors. Since the previous inspection, a new medical room has been added, and careful provision is made for pupils who become unwell in school. Attendance is registered electronically and the admission register contains all the necessary information; both registers are maintained, saved and stored correctly. The school office efficiently implements the procedures for following up absence and lateness.
- 4.11 Great care is taken to ensure that pupils are kept safe in the area of the current building site. The new classrooms are almost ready for occupation, after which attention will be given to the refurbishment of the vacated accommodation, including passages and staircases, and re-surfacing pathways and playgrounds.

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

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

- 5.1 The school benefits from excellent governance. The governors are in full agreement with the mission and ethos of the school and place great importance on the education of each child as an individual in a happy, secure and trusting environment. Members of the governing body are carefully appointed from relevant professions; very effective arrangements are made for their selection, induction and training.
- 5.2 Through an efficient structure of committees, the governing body successfully provides highly effective oversight of the school and discharges its duties most capably. Governors take their responsibility for educational standards extremely seriously. Financial oversight and arrangements are careful and thorough. Considerable investment is made in staff and resources, and the completion of the splendid new classroom block and subsequent redesign and refurbishment of vacated classrooms represents the culmination of many years of meticulous preparation and planning.
- 5.3 Through frequent reports and visits, and close liaison between the headmaster and the chairman, the governing body has a clear insight into the working of the school and provides extremely effective support combined with high expectations for continued improvement.
- 5.4 The governing body is aware of, and is very effective in discharging, its responsibilities for safe recruitment, child protection, welfare, health and safety throughout the school. It achieves this through the appointment of members with highly relevant experience and the use of expert advice as necessary. Governors have ensured that the recommendations of the previous report have been successfully attended to. The governors have become increasingly effective as the educational trust arrangements and strategic and development planning have become embedded. Parents indicated their high level of satisfaction with the governance of the school.

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

- 5.5 The leadership and management of the school are of the highest quality, and completely in accordance with the aims of the school, which place the happiness and success of each individual child at the centre of all the education the school provides. The school has developed extremely successfully since the previous inspection, and is very capably led by the commitment to the highest possible standards shown by the headmaster and those in management positions at different levels within the responsibility structure. A significant strength is the evident pride and loyalty of the whole school community.
- 5.6 Leadership and management certainly provide extremely clear and determined educational direction and a shared vision for continued success. Ever-increasing emphasis is being placed on the quality of the pupils' academic education, in order that best advantage is taken of the evident enjoyment in learning and positive attitudes of the pupils, and that their academic performance should match the high standard of their personal development. There is much good practice at middle management level; heads of departments and subject leaders monitor the pupils' work and the teaching of their subject across the age groups as part of their own appraisal progress. This good practice in observation of lessons does not extend at present across subjects, or to peer observation to any significant extent. Best advantage is not taken of opportunities to propagate strengths and spread good practice.
- 5.7 Appraisal and professional development procedures give the leadership and management of different levels and sections of the school the opportunity for reflection and self-evaluation, and subsequently enable senior management to plan effectively and set priorities perceptively. The new classrooms, which will greatly enhance the educational environment, are a testimony to the high expectations of members of the leadership and management team and their drive and determination to achieve their goals.
- 5.8 Senior managers are successful in appointing staff of high quality; they are very effective in their approach to appraisal, and are pro-active in providing support and development opportunities. Staff are very well trained for their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety arrangements, all of which contribute to the happy, secure and supportive environment in which their pupils flourish. Managers have successfully implemented the major and minor recommendations in the previous report. Particular attention was paid to improving arrangements for child protection which are now exemplary. Training in safeguarding is particularly strong. The school also has extremely thorough arrangements for checking the suitability of staff (including volunteers), supply staff and governors.

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

- 5.9 Excellent links have been established with parents. The school recognises, and amply fulfils, its commitment to parents who have selected this school with its emphasis on and concern for the happiness and success of every child.
- 5.10 Parents indicated in their answers to the questionnaire that they are extremely happy with the education and pastoral help, support and guidance provided for their children, and they are virtually in total agreement also about the high quality of communication with the school. Regular colourful newsletters keep them up to date, in addition to a weekly update from the headmaster; the website is attractive and informative and is regularly updated.
- 5.11 Parents have good opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children and are a very welcome part of the community. The innovative school music shop is run by parents, who offer generous help with concerts, productions, visits and fund-raising events, and loyally offer support at competitions and matches. The Friends of Winterfold arrange a social calendar of enjoyable events.
- 5.12 The open, pro-active attitude and the approachability of staff are much appreciated by parents. Parents of pupils (and of prospective pupils) are provided with the required information about the school and with the introduction of a new management system, parents receive clear and useful reports about their children's work and progress.
- 5.13 Comments in the parents' questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive and appreciative. A few criticised lack of consistency in the amount of homework expected and the school will give further consideration to this area. The inspectors considered that the school has established good practice. It has a clear policy about homework and provides supervision after lessons, when pupils are encouraged to remain in school to complete the work set.
- 5.14 A very high proportion of parents agreed with the inspectors that the school handles the concerns of parents with care and understanding which is another indication of the school's success in perpetuating its genuine, friendly, supportive family atmosphere.

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

## **6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

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

6.1 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is outstanding. The setting provides high quality education and care in a safe, stimulating and happy environment where children are at the heart of all that happens. Staff have a robust approach to keeping children safe. Self evaluation underpins the setting's ability to improve. All children learn and develop well through interesting, age-appropriate play, talk and valuable first-hand experiences. They enjoy and participate in activities with great enthusiasm. This prepares them well for the next steps in their education.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are outstanding. The leaders of the EYFS ensure that all adults working throughout the setting have excellent knowledge of the framework, and a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All relevant policies and practices are in place to safeguard each child, and thorough and ongoing risk assessment ensures that children are safe. Staff reflect on the quality of their practice, are highly motivated and committed to improvement. Policies and procedures to prevent discrimination and promote equality are clear and effective. Staff use records effectively to track children's progress. They identify any concerns early, and share them sensitively with parents and outside agencies to ensure each child receives the best possible help where it is needed. Records on babies include details of their growth and development including sleep times and times of feeding. Children's records are shared with parents and children, and parents contribute to creating these. Parents speak highly of the setting, and of the nurture, care and support their children receive. Resources are appropriate to the age of the children, are of high quality and used effectively. The recommendations set at the previous inspection have been addressed and excellent progress has been made.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. Staff are warm and enthusiastic and work well as a team to promote children's all-round development. They have strong knowledge of the EYFS framework and are highly effective in helping children learn appropriately both in and out of doors. All children are assigned a key person, and the youngest children are secure and develop well because they have close and caring contact with staff who spend time with them and whom they get to know well. The key person leads the assessment and planning in close liaison with parents to ensure that each child's welfare, learning and development needs are met effectively. Children who need extra help are closely monitored and support is given where needed. The curriculum is well balanced with many opportunities for adult and child led activities. Staff focus on problem solving and excellent questioning is used to challenge thinking skills. Staff recognise the importance of the outdoor environment, and children are provided with frequent opportunities to work and play outside.

- 6.4 The all-round development of the youngest children is successfully promoted by activities specially planned and adapted to their needs. Babies can choose what they want to play with, developing longer periods of concentration as they use all their senses. Staff actively promote the welfare and safety of children and consistent positive interactions enable children to feel secure and help them to thrive in their learning. The behaviour policy is well implemented, leading to a calm and happy atmosphere. Thorough initial and ongoing assessment identifies what children can do and helps adults to match activities to children's needs. The recording of individual children's 'next steps' in learning on short term planning documentation could be improved. This has been acknowledged by the school as an area for development. Communication with parents about their children's development is a key strength. Staff take time to gather information from parents about their children, and parents are informed about the curriculum and encouraged to contribute to their children's 'Learning Journeys'.

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

- 6.5 Outcomes for children in the EYFS are outstanding. Babies and toddlers are provided with an excellent start in the Nursery and this, together with the high quality Kindergarten and Reception provision, ensures that all children make rapid progress from the time they enter the setting. According to the school's benchmarks the children enter with average attainment overall. By the time children leave Reception they demonstrate progress which is well above national standards, as evident in the EYFS Profile, moderated by the local authority. Children of all ages are highly active, inquisitive, happy learners who respond wholeheartedly to their colourful and stimulating environment with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Older children converse confidently, and talk about their learning activities with enthusiasm and clarity of expression. They respond well to the high expectations of the staff, who guide them to behave with consideration and courtesy. They get on well with each other and interact confidently with adults. Children understand about eating healthily and enjoy their food. They are aware of the need to maintain good hygiene and understand about being safe. They are happy in the setting, deriving great pleasure from their learning.

#### **Complaints since the last inspection**

- 6.6 Since the previous inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required any action to meet national requirements.

**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 chairman 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 Danice Iles	Reporting Inspector
Mr Richard Johnson	Team Inspector (Deputy Headmaster, IAPS)
Mrs Kathleen Hayes	Team Inspector (Headmistress, IAPS)
Mr Michael Westcombe	Team Inspector (Senior Master, Head of Department, IAPS)
Mrs Felicity Lawson	Early Years Lead Inspector