



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

The Ryleys School

February 2020



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School's Details

School	The Ryleys School			
DfE number	895/6002			
Early Years registration number	EY536299			
Registered charity number	525915			
Address	The Ryleys School Ryleys Lane Alderley Edge Cheshire SK9 7UY			
Telephone number	01625 583241			
Email address	reception@theryleys.com			
Headteacher	Mrs Julia Langford			
Chair of governors	Dr Mike Benson			
Age range	1 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	225			
	EYFS	100	Juniors	125
Inspection dates	4 to 6 February 2020			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 The Ryleys School is a co-educational preparatory school catering for pupils between one and eleven years of age. It is a charitable trust with a designated governing body. The school has three departments: early years unit, pre-prep and prep.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection there has been a change in the chair of governors and the introduction of new governors onto the board. In 2019, the nursery was expanded to take children from the age of one year old and there is a new head of the school and a new deputy head.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school aims to provide an outstanding education and opportunities which inspire pupils and nurture individual talents in an environment which celebrates diversity. Among their core values are; be curious, be tolerant, be respectful and be yourself.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional backgrounds, mostly from Alderley Edge and the surrounding towns. Data provided by the school indicate the ability of pupils is above average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. Two pupils in the school have an education, health and care plan (EHCP). The school has identified 11 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), eight of whom receive additional specialist help, mainly for dyslexia. English is an additional language (EAL) for 15 pupils, seven of whom receive additional support. Data used by the school have identified four pupils as being the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

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

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management. The remaining standards and requirements are deemed to continue to be met unless evidence to the contrary has been found.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.11 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.12 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

The quality and standards of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of the early years provision

- 2.19 The overall effectiveness of the early years provision is outstanding.
- 2.20 Leaders plan a highly effective curriculum that meets the age, stage and needs of the children in the setting. Practitioners are aware of the various needs of the children and plan activities to engage, support and extend their learning and ensure progress. Leaders undertake regular monitoring to ensure that learning intentions are met and to support staff and children in reaching targets and maintaining progress.
- 2.21 Children's progress is carefully monitored and tracked, and targets are set to ensure that next steps are reached to help children to be ready for their next stages in learning. There are highly effective systems in place to ensure that parents receive daily communication about their child, and staff ensure that parents know how to support their children in achieving the next stage of development through agreed targets set at parents' meetings.
- 2.22 Children's personal and emotional development is a strength of the setting and children are extremely confident to engage with practitioners and explore their surroundings, illustrating that they feel happy, safe and secure.
- 2.23 The requirements for children's safeguarding have been fully met and all staff have an excellent understanding and awareness of a shared responsibility for protecting the children in their care.

Quality of education

- 2.24 The quality of education is outstanding.
- 2.25 Leaders plan a highly effective and wide-ranging curriculum that meets the needs of the children and provides challenge and support. Practitioners make sure that the curriculum planning considers the developmental stage for each child to ensure that they are ready for their next stage in learning. There are many opportunities for children to develop their physical skills both in the outdoor area and inside, where children move confidently and independently around the room. However, opportunities for outside play are less frequent for the youngest pupils.
- 2.26 Practitioners engage with children well, supporting and extending their language skills and vocabulary and children readily initiate interactions with each other and staff. Children can respond to questions and make their requests clear. The setting has excellent systems in place to ensure that all children reach their appropriate stage of development and actions to support individual children are effective.
- 2.27 Practitioners note children's interests and seize opportunities to develop children's knowledge and understanding through carefully timed interactions. Staff adeptly enhance play opportunities to engage and develop children's skills. For example, children were encouraged to roll plastic balls down a slide and comment on what happens.
- 2.28 There is an excellent balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities and practitioners ensure that planning is flexible and caters for the children's needs, interests and developmental stage. Progress is carefully tracked, and the online system allows parents to access their child's observations and assessments. Assessments of children are undertaken on entry and ensure that staff build upon what children know and can do. Practitioners regularly update assessment data and these are monitored by leaders to ensure that every child is fully supported. Strategies to support individual children are put in place if needed and targets are set for each child. Sharing such information with all staff and parents means that children are fully supported, and well prepared for their next stage in learning.

Behaviour and attitudes

- 2.29 The quality of behaviour and attitudes is outstanding.
- 2.30 Children demonstrate extremely positive behaviour and conduct as a result of high expectations, effective praise and encouragement from practitioners. Children calmly and confidently explore their environment and are keen to have a go for themselves at something that is new or challenging. Children were observed enthusiastically climbing up the steps to the slide unsupported and trying to balance across some wooden blocks.
- 2.31 Practitioners actively encourage children to engage with activities, facilitating the opportunities but then allowing the child independent choice. Children showed high levels of focus and concentration when using cars to paint tracks, and practitioners asked others who showed interest to join in. There are numerous opportunities for children to use open-ended resources and practitioners skilfully allow children the time and space to initiate their own ideas, before supporting their learning.
- 2.32 Children demonstrate high levels of respect for each other, and staff are quick to praise and reinforce good manners and behaviour. This was evident at snack times when children sat around the table together and enjoyed their food, interacting calmly with staff. Children listen carefully to each other, and staff, and are encouraged to share with their friends and play together.
- 2.33 Staff are skilled at engaging children and encouraging their participation, ensuring that they all benefit from the opportunities available to them. Children are quick to respond to staff and turn their heads when spoken to, making gestures or using words in response to what has been asked.
- 2.34 Leaders promote prompt and regular attendance to allow children the chance to settle and develop good habits for future learning. They are highly effective in their support of parents to enable this and invite children to events that occur on non-attendance days so they do not miss out on opportunities.

Personal development

- 2.35 The personal development of children is outstanding.
- 2.36 Excellent care practices support and promote the children's emotional security, so that children feel safe and happy in the setting. The curriculum promotes the development of their character and provides opportunities for children to develop confidence, resilience and independence through an excellent balance and variety of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners support children in taking appropriate risks and discuss with them when they can be encouraged, and when they need to be supported. Well-chosen resources inside allow children the opportunities to explore possible risks within a familiar and safe environment.
- 2.37 There is a well-established key person system and children form extremely strong bonds with staff, which allow them to feel secure and safe in the setting and gives them the confidence to explore. Children are comfortable and willing to go to various members of staff in the room. Staff can quickly comfort children who are upset and know what they need at routine times of the day. For example, at sleep time, staff found a child's dummy to ensure that they could settle to sleep.
- 2.38 Children's well-being is a priority and staff ensure that parents are informed each day of children's routines and activities. Staff update parents at collection times and there are procedures in place to ensure that information about each child is passed to the parent. The setting promotes being physically active and leading a healthy lifestyle. Children have balanced meals, healthy snacks and can access their own water bottles when needed, encouraging their independence. The outdoor area is used daily and provides space for children to develop their gross motor skills and be active. However, access to the outdoor area for the youngest pupils is less frequent.
- 2.39 Effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure that children are kept safe and statutory requirements for safeguarding, welfare and learning and development are all met. Policies are overseen by leaders and regularly reviewed to ensure that they are up to date. Hygiene practices are

promoted and meet the personal needs of the children. Staff support children to wash their hands before they eat, and staff actively promote high levels of hygiene in their daily practice.

- 2.40 There is a no mobile phone policy in place in the setting and children do not have unsupervised access to any technology, ensuring that at a young age they are kept safe from potential risk.
- 2.41 The setting prepares children for life in modern Britain by teaching them how to show respect, help each other and take responsibility for their actions. Staff are excellent role models and consistently promote these values. All staff recognise the importance of helping young children to appreciate diversity. They utilise appropriate resources to support this aim and support and celebrate significant events relevant to children in the setting.

Leadership and management

- 2.42 Leadership and management is outstanding.
- 2.43 Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the setting and share strong values which are evident through their policies and daily practice. Staff are supported to enhance their own practice and therefore improve learning opportunities and outcomes for the children. Leaders ensure that staff are highly skilled to work with young children and encourage them to share best practice.
- 2.44 There are highly effective systems in place to ensure that the setting continues to provide the best care and outcomes for the children. Staff attend regular meetings and in-house training. Supervision meetings and performance management provide opportunities for staff to discuss issues, set targets and receive support for their own well-being.
- 2.45 Leaders are aware of staff workload and allow appropriate opportunities within the day for staff to complete tasks. They monitor staff pressures and provide support when needed. Staff and leaders communicate effectively with each other and this ensures that staff feel well supported and valued.
- 2.46 Leaders have high expectations for children in the setting and have a detailed development plan in place to help to realise these expectations. They are aware of how to support children and liaise with senior leaders and governors to ensure that resources are available and future plans are manageable.
- 2.47 Safeguarding is a priority and procedures are in place to ensure that staff respond quickly and appropriately to children's needs. Statutory requirements are met, and staff all have regular and appropriate training to ensure that they are up to date.
- 2.48 In pre-inspection questionnaires, and when speaking to parents, they were consistently positive and highlighted communication and organisation as particular strengths.

Compliance with statutory requirements

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

Recommendation for further improvement

The school is advised to make the following improvement to its provision for children in the early years:

- Increase opportunities in the outdoor area for the youngest children to explore and develop independence.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups in the school.

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- Pupils have highly developed communication skills and apply them well across the curriculum.
 - Pupils enjoy high levels of achievement and success beyond the curriculum in a range of academic, sporting and performance areas.
 - Pupils of all ages show highly positive attitudes to their learning. They are eager participants in their lessons and show attention to detail in their work.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils display high levels of self-knowledge and self-discipline which promotes their personal development and their academic development.
 - Pupils enjoying fulfilling additional responsibilities which make an excellent contribution to others, to the school and to the community.
 - Pupils demonstrate a highly developed moral understanding and readily take responsibility for their behaviour.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:
- Strengthening pupils' ICT skills and how they use these skills to support their learning across the curriculum.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 Evidence from the children's work, lesson observations and the school's own assessment data shows that the overall achievement of the pupils is excellent, representing a fulfilment of the school's aims to nurture individual talents. Pupils' attainment in standardised tests, including baseline tests in EYFS, is above that of the national average for those taking the same tests. Those sitting external examinations for secondary schools achieve a high rate of success in gaining entry to their school of choice, including schools with highly selective entry criteria. Several pupils have achieved scholarship awards in academia, music and sport in recent years. The excellent achievement of pupils is enhanced by regular monitoring of assessment data and an effective cycle of policy implementation and monitoring by leadership and management. These new monitoring arrangements successfully fulfil a recommendation made in the school's previous inspection report. Data provided by the school show that most pupils make good, and in some cases, excellent progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress and many children for whom English is an additional language (EAL) make rapid progress, due to the high levels of support and the directed teaching they receive.
- 3.6 Pupils' communications skills are excellent. They speak confidently, read with good understanding and write fluently. Many pupils demonstrate a mastery of cursive script at an early age. Younger pre-prep pupils expertly use their developing phonic knowledge to sound out and spell monosyllabic words and identify common exceptions to spelling rules. More able writers amongst the oldest pupils, successfully incorporate confident and accurate use of literary devices such as sophisticated embedded clauses into their writing. Prep pupils confidently identify alliteration, repetition and personification to great effect whilst studying a poem at a high level for their age. The successful

achievement of EAL pupils in their writing is facilitated by the focused teaching of English grammar and spelling. Pupils listen attentively and show well developed comprehension skills. In a pre-prep comprehension lesson, pupils with SEND demonstrated excellent progress as they received targeted support and were able to access the same work as their peers. Pupils are confident public speakers and many achieve very well in external speaking examinations. Their skills can be seen in practice in lessons and are utilised in a range of wider opportunities such as feeding back to class after school council meetings or reading match reports in assembly.

- 3.7 The quality of the pupils' academic and other successes is excellent. Pupils achieve highly, with some reaching regional finals in activities as diverse as hockey and science quiz knowledge. Sports teams enjoy considerable success in inter-school competitions and in recent years, several pupils have gone on to reach county and regional level in their chosen sports, benefiting from specialist sports coaching in school. Pupils with an interest in performance achieve well in local competitions, very successfully participating in areas such as verse speaking, prose and acting. The positive achievement of pupils is promoted by the school leadership's strategic approach to the provision of wider opportunities, for example, utilising specialist staff in music and physical education. The particular needs of higher attaining pupils are met as they productively take part in maths challenge days or attend regional gifted and talented workshops.
- 3.8 Pupils display excellent attitudes towards their learning. They show curiosity and are not afraid to take risks in their work. They show a willingness to revise and improve their work and demonstrate resilience and confidence in their lessons. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of pupils believes that school helps them to be confident. The youngest children can independently select resources and choose their activity, and work with outstanding levels of focus and concentration. In the pre-prep, pupils sit and listen to the teacher attentively and are eager to participate in the lesson. They work effectively individually showing care and attention to detail in their books. Such attitudes are often due to well-planned lessons linked to high teacher expectations.
- 3.9 Pupils' use of ICT across the curriculum is good. They use technology productively to research projects and to give illustrated class presentations. Pupils in pre-prep comfortably use tablets to take digital photographs and from an early age, they have access to ICT facilities where they begin to learn about coding. Pupils' learning in ICT has developed since the last inspection as the governors and school leaders have facilitated a growing use of ICT through the increased provision of digital technology resources. However, little use was seen by inspectors of pupils using ICT to enable learning that otherwise could not have taken place without it, or to analyse information to advance their learning.
- 3.10 The development of the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is excellent with pupils showing well-developed skills for learning across subjects. They take full advantage of a wide-ranging curriculum supported by the passion of their class and specialist teachers to enhance their knowledge from a very early age. For example, pupils in the youngest pre-prep classes are comfortable expressing themselves in French and other young pupils in the pre-prep enjoy coding lessons with an IT specialist. However, some teaching demonstrates an over reliance on worksheets which can restrict pupils' ability to provide longer answers and the potential for them to think in a more open-ended way. Pupils exhibit competent research skills in history and geography work and draw upon learning in one part of the curriculum to inform another. For example, in science, prep pupils were asked to hypothesise about what was happening when a cold glass of water developed water droplets on the outside, correctly identifying the process of condensation. They were able to draw accurate parallels to their own experiences with cold car windows on their commute to school and the formation of clouds. Pupils show well-developed artistic skills, enjoy the chance to play music and perform successfully in dramatic productions.
- 3.11 Pupils develop excellent numeracy skills. They learn to work on challenging problems in their maths lessons and then can apply these skills across the curriculum. For example, younger prep pupils applied their mathematical skills to a science lesson whilst investigating the length of shadows. They measured the length of an object's shadow and then successfully applied this knowledge in the construction of

a bar chart. Pupils make very good progress with their mathematical skills and understanding as they journey through the school. For example, young children in pre-school can recognise numbers to ten and find matching numbers for quantities to five, whilst older prep pupils successfully and confidently engaged in a highly challenging rapid recall and calculation game. Pupils benefit from well-planned lessons and teaching provides high levels of both support and challenge from staff to support effective learning. Pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires show that the vast majority are highly supportive of their teachers and appreciative of the time staff spend helping them.

- 3.12 The development of study skills is good. In their questionnaire responses the overwhelming majority of parents believe that school helps their children to develop confidence, independence and skills for the future. Pupils think for themselves when prompted, hypothesise in straightforward situations and analyse text and data accurately. For example, in their mathematics lesson, older pupils were asked to reason what number the missing keys on the calculator could be. There was animated discussion of which logic to apply and which way could the numbers go in order to produce the correct answer. Well-informed pupil predictions were evident in prep science lessons when plotting the results of an experiment into elasticity and load. The confidence to do this is developed amongst the younger pupils. For example, pre-prep pupils readily grasp opportunities to use their initiative and be independent when organising their own word books and targets, before sitting down to start their English work. The development of pupils' skills is further enhanced through the use of such target setting both in discussion with teachers and in the marking done by staff. This represents a successful fulfilment of one of the school's previous inspection recommendations.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.13 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.14 The development of pupils' self-understanding is excellent and is aided by the school's focus on personal development. Pupils show high levels of development of their resilience, problem solving capabilities, risk taking awareness and independence as a result of recent leadership initiatives such as the personal development programme and the provision of outdoor learning opportunities. Pupils display high levels of self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-discipline. For example, in a pre-prep mathematics lesson pupils worked as a class on a problem, showing great self-confidence in volunteering answers yet considerable self-restraint in taking turns. Younger prep pupils addressed their own shortcomings with a personal development plan. They discussed with their teacher the benefits of their personal targets and strategies for achieving them. Examples included, 'I need to get a better pencil case, so I don't lose things.' The youngest children in pre-prep were asked to express what they like about themselves and showed self-awareness with answers such as, 'I'm good at scissors and pictures.' To facilitate their strong growth in this area, pupils devise and use personal targets in their academic work. Older pre-prep pupils have individual targets on display on their desk which they have devised themselves, such as, 'remember to use exclamation marks and question marks in your writing.'
- 3.15 Pupils' contribution to others, the school and the community is excellent. They take pride in supporting numerous local charities and develop a strong awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils develop a sense of community pride as they, for example, distribute flowers to local shoppers in a random act of kindness or perform music in nearby nursing homes. In school, pupils relish the opportunity to develop their leadership capability, earning roles with responsibility including class captains, prefects and representative councillors. Pupils actively contribute ideas about how the school can be developed through participation in the school council or eco-council and class representatives comprehensively feedback to their classmates on a regular basis. Older pupils develop empathy and mentoring skills in their work as playground helpers and reading buddies to younger pupils. The older children in pre-prep develop their skills when they are paired with the younger children and ably assist them in the lunchroom, on the playground and with a dedicated time each week to work together. At these times, children feel valued and enjoy the company of others.

- 3.16 The development of moral understanding in the pupils and their willingness to take responsibility for their behaviour is excellent. Pupils readily understand the difference between right and wrong and accept that the school rules are there to help them. Pupils in pre-prep told inspectors that, 'The Rules are fair; they keep us safe. For example, we can't go over the yellow line in case we get hurt.' Such sentiments were echoed in the questionnaires where the overwhelming majority of pupils say they understand the school's behavioural expectations. The development of this area of school life is rapid amongst younger pupils as they watch older pupils modelling good behaviour and enjoy school assemblies examining how their actions affect others. The vast majority of parents and staff who responded to the questionnaire feel that the school promotes good behaviour and inspectors saw many examples of this. The pupils know the boundaries and acceptable norms for behaviour and are encouraged by friendly, yet high, expectations from the teaching staff.
- 3.17 The quality of pupils' decision making is good. They understand that the choices they make can determine their own success and well-being. Pupils quickly learn that a decision to compromise may be better for the common good as they help to decide on their own class rules each year. Pupils develop age-appropriate skills as they are exposed to a gradually increasing range of choices in their daily life. These include a choice of food at lunch, a selection of various art projects, inclusion or otherwise in some sports and activity clubs and the selection of news stories to summarise in tutor group. The youngest children confidently make appropriate choices about which activity to choose and can select suitable resources to use whilst the oldest pupils understand that a decision not to strive to meet their targets now, may impact upon the next stage of their education. Pupils understood the rationale for careful decision making when their council representatives voted to provide additional playground equipment which benefited everyone. All invariably make the right choices of behaviour.
- 3.18 The development of spiritual understanding amongst the pupils is excellent, demonstrating a mature appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Pupils' work demonstrates high levels of understanding about the different religions and beliefs in the world and written work showed how they had conscientiously reflected upon their meaning. They develop a love and awe of nature and the natural world, and confidently discuss their own beliefs and opinions, facilitated by the range of opportunities in their broad curriculum. For example, through an analysis of comparative artwork, pupils in pre-prep are encouraged to reflect on which pieces of art they liked best and why. Pupils' well-developed sense of aesthetic awareness was further illustrated as they eloquently spoke to inspectors about the joy of using the school garden to grow daffodils.
- 3.19 The social development and collaboration skills of the pupils are excellent. The overwhelming majority of parents and pupils feel that the school helps children to develop strong teamwork and social skills. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities which promote teamwork and collaboration across the curriculum, where problem solving forms a key part of many activities. For example, pupils showed excellent social and teamwork skills when working expertly in mixed year group teams to devise a collaborative presentation on endangered animal species. They successfully integrated software use, posters and model building to produce a final outcome of high quality that reflected the strength of their social cohesion. Across all age groups, pupils readily seize opportunities to work with others and they cooperate in a relaxed and harmonious way.
- 3.20 The pupils' ability to respect diversity and cultural understanding is excellent and represents a fulfilment of the school's aims to promote tolerance and respect in an environment which celebrates diversity. In the questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of pupils responded that the school actively promotes their respect and tolerance of others. Their broad curriculum gives many opportunities to foster this. For example in their art lessons, young prep pupils successfully analysed Aboriginal artwork and how symbols were used to tell a story. Prep pupils enhanced their understanding of the role played by a local mosque in the community, and how their Muslim friends and their families worship, whilst older pupils widened their understanding of Judaism and its belief structure in a lesson focusing on what is meant by kosher foods. Pupils work and play collaboratively and mix readily with those

from different backgrounds to their own, seeing no reason why this should not be the norm. These attitudes are actively promoted by the content in assemblies and aspects of the global perspectives curriculum which offer ample opportunities to investigate, appreciate and celebrate the cultures of other nations.

- 3.21 Pupils show a good understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy. A very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that the school encourages their child to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The youngest pupils understand the need to eat healthily and they maturely take advantage of a balanced and healthy range of food provided by school. Older pupils exhibit a well-developed knowledge of how to stay safe on the internet and know the importance of nurturing their own mental health. One group displayed an excellent understanding of how to be healthy following a session reading a published story on hygiene. They wrote analytically and knowledgeably to produce a manual to keep their body running healthily. Pupils' good understanding is fostered in a range of subjects including personal social, health and environmental education and ICT work and is supported by a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs.

4. Inspection Evidence

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Robert Lilley	Reporting inspector
Mrs Clare Bruce	Compliance team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Will Newman	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Miss Victoria Plenderleith	Co-ordinating inspector for early years (Former head of pre-prep, IAPS school)
Mrs Angela Beck	Team inspector for EYFS (Former early years coordinator, IAPS school)