



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Lichfield Cathedral School

Full Name of School/College **Lichfield Cathedral School**

DCSF Number **860/6012**

Registered Charity Number **1078650**

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Headmaster **Mr Peter Allwood**

Chair of Governors **The Very Rev Adrian Dorber**

Age Range **3 to 18**

Total Number of Pupils **422**

Gender of Pupils **Mixed**

Numbers by Age 3-5(EYFS): **67** 5-11: **210**
11-18: **145**

Number of Day Pupils **401** Capacity for flexi-boarding: **6**

Number of Boarders Total: **21**
Full: **21** Weekly: **0**

Head of EYFS Setting **Mrs Alison Stevens**

EYFS Gender **Mixed**

Inspection date/EYFS **23 Feb 2010 to 24 Feb 2010**

Final (team) visit **22 Mar 2010 to 24 Mar 2010**

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 March 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 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.

Under the Care Standards Act 2000, an inspection of boarding was carried out at the same time by the Children's Directorate of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). The report of this inspection is available separately at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

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 Lichfield Cathedral School has provided for the appointment of boy choristers since the 15th century. The existing school was established within the Cathedral Close in 1942, with the name St Chad's Cathedral School. The school admitted girls for the first time in 1974, and opened a pre-preparatory department in 1982. In 1981 the school became a financially independent charitable trust known as Lichfield Cathedral School. It offers education for pupils from 3 to 18. The school aims to provide a Christian environment in which good relationships and understanding of one another are fostered, and is committed to a learning ethos which is flexible to individual needs.
- 1.2 The school's Longdon Green building is for pupils from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Year 3. This site, a former preparatory school, was acquired by the school in 2006. Pupils in Years 4 to 11 are taught in buildings within the Cathedral Close. Since the previous inspection the school has changed significantly. It has expanded to provide secondary education, and there have been considerable increases in the number of pupils and the numbers of staff in academic and support roles to reflect the fundamental re-structuring that has taken place over the last five years.
- 1.3 At the time of inspection there were 422 pupils on roll. Of these, 67 were in the EYFS, 210 from Years 1 to 6 and 145 from Years 7 to 11. At present, there are no pupils in the sixth form.
- 1.4 Entry to the school is non-selective. The average ability profile of the pupils is just above the national average. Pupils take national tests at age 7 and 11, and Common Entrance has been taken by some pupils at age 11 or 13. This year sees the first cohorts of pupils in the history of the school to take GCSE. The sixth form opens in September 2010. The majority of pupils come from families of white British origin, while others come from a range of different minority ethnic groups, which reflects the local community.
- 1.5 One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school has identified 65 pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD).
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils at Lichfield Cathedral School, including those in the EYFS, achieve well and make good progress in their learning because of a wide-ranging curriculum and programme of activities, both inside and outside the school, and the good and effective teaching. This successfully reflects the school's aims and philosophy in supporting the full development of pupils in a Christian environment in which excellent relationships and understanding of one another are fostered. Learning throughout the school is at least good, and often excellent. The pupils' excellent attitudes to their studies also contribute to their academic achievement, as does their impeccable behaviour and their exemplary relationships with one another and their teachers. Excellent support is given to those with LDD, ensuring that their needs are met. In addition a number of gifted and talented pupils have been identified and their needs are extremely well catered for. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has increased since the previous inspection, with interactive whiteboards in almost every classroom and more computers in classrooms and around the school. The newly refurbished, well-resourced laboratories enhance the delivery of the science curriculum.
- 2.2 The personal development of the pupils from the earliest age is outstanding and supported by the excellent pastoral care, welfare arrangements and health and safety procedures. Pupils are always tolerant and respectful of one another's differences and collaborate well when working together. Their care for one another is embedded in all aspects of school life. There is a phenomenal amount of charitable giving, which is all part of the school ethos and develops and cements a culture of generosity within the community. The currently expanding age group has engendered a vibrant atmosphere in the school with the whole school community working together to make it a success.
- 2.3 The aims of the school to commit to a learning ethos which is flexible to individual need and to respond to the educational needs of the local and wider community by providing an independent education from 3 to 18 are fulfilled by a governing body which is committed to the success of the school and the academic and personal progress of each pupil. They have clear oversight of the school. Leadership and management are very strong and teachers are diligent in their planning. The school's status as a cathedral school, the extremely successful music department, the appointment of experienced specialists to key leadership and management roles and the strong shared vision by the leadership group for the future of the school are key to the school's success. Robust policies and procedures for all aspects of school life are in place. The appraisal system includes lesson observation and target setting. The school promotes strong links with its parents. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, both parents and pupils were extremely positive about all aspects of school life, particularly teaching, pastoral care and the open communication with the school.

2.(b) Action points**(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school met all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended.
- 2.5 The school's provision for childcare met the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and no action was required.

(ii) Recommended action

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Continue the work on developing a coherent and structured programme of assessment recording and reporting which is clear and purposeful for all age groups.
 2. Ensure that the manager of the EYFS has sufficient administrative time to undertake her duties.

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 above average overall, and the pupils make good progress in relation to their ability. Pupils are extremely well educated, and their success in academic work fulfils the school's aims of creating and maintaining an educational environment which nurtures, nourishes and stimulates young minds and talents. Pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and skills effectively, supported by a broad and balanced curriculum. As a result, the results in tests at the end of Year 6 have been high in relation to the national average for primary schools over the past three years. The school enters its first candidates for GCSE this year.
- 3.2 The development of language skills from EYFS is excellent; pupils are encouraged to strive for fluency, precision and creativity in their use of language. The skills for literacy and numeracy are steadily developed as the pupils move through the school. Different subject and curriculum areas reveal that there is no significant difference in relative attainment between groups of pupils. By the end of the EYFS all pupils are progressing towards or exceeding the Early Learning Goals. The pupils co-operate extremely well; they work enthusiastically in pairs and in groups both in and out of the classroom. Creative skills are exceptionally well developed. For example, in Year 2, pupils created collages of giants, showing great individuality. Pupils in a Year 4 drama lesson worked as directors to give critical feedback following scenes that their peers had worked through. The school's individual and team successes are vast and varied.
- 3.3 The pupils' progress is supported by their excellent attitudes to learning, their exemplary behaviour, and the extremely good relationships they enjoy between themselves and with staff. They are well-motivated, concentrate and persevere with their work and show great enthusiasm for their studies.

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

- 3.4 The curriculum is outstanding overall. Substantial access to core subjects and to a range of creative subjects ensures that the curriculum contributes effectively to the pupils' academic development, in line with the aims of the school. The use of setting by ability in subjects, and throughout the curriculum further supports this.
- 3.5 The curriculum is planned throughout the school to ensure continuity of education, and progress within and across the years. It is broad and balanced, covers the required subject areas, and nurtures the physical and emotional well-being of pupils as well as providing them with exciting creative opportunities. It is suitable for the ages, abilities and needs of the pupils. Secure foundations for later study are provided in the EYFS and specialist teaching in physical education, music, drama and French for the youngest children onwards is of great benefit to them, and helps to provide a link between the junior, middle and senior school. From Year 5 onwards, teaching is carried out by specialist subject teachers. A choice of three modern foreign languages is available to older pupils, and Latin is taught in Years 5 and 6. This provides children with a basic grounding in vocabulary and grammar and some insight into how Latin underpins many other languages. It also assists the choristers, who sing frequently in Latin in Cathedral services.
- 3.6 The opportunity to study through to GCSE, and shortly to A level, has enabled the curriculum to be widened and extended to include new subjects such as business studies, ethics and music technology. New staff in all departments have given a breadth of skill from which all children are benefiting.
- 3.7 The variety, and extent, of extra-curricular activities provided is another considerable strength of the school, offering opportunities for all pupils, on both sites, to improve their interpersonal, leadership, and team-working skills, and to develop their talents to the full. The flagship activity for the school has always traditionally been the work of the choristers in the cathedral choir. They sing for six services each week and also take part in concerts, broadcasts, recordings and tours in this country and abroad; a tour in the USA took place at Easter 2010. The girls' choir is forging a reputation in the local area for lively and skilful singing and are they are strong ambassadors for the school. In addition the school runs eight choirs of its own; over 360 individual music lessons take place on a weekly basis from 24 specialist music staff. Every year group has their own concert from Year 1 to Year 11.
- 3.8 The broad range of year-based performances includes productions devised by the pupils under the guidance of the music and drama departments. These have included a Year 7 murder mystery, Year 8 comedy nativity and Year 9 cabaret. Pupils work in a variety of genres including puppetry and dance. The creative arts work happily alongside a full programme of sporting activities, owing to the comfortable working relationship between these departments. There is a very large number of day and residential trips locally, countrywide and internationally.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.9 Teaching is good overall; some is excellent. It enables pupils to make good progress and give of their best in line with the aims of the school. Teachers are well aware of those pupils with LDD and, in close consultation with the learning support department, tailor work to their needs, as is evident in lessons and in the department handbooks. The teachers have good subject knowledge, and they make good use of resources. Lessons are well planned and, in the best lessons, lively and enthusiastic teaching which makes use of effective questioning techniques enables pupils to achieve well. In a Year 10 English lesson pupils discussed enthusiastically the choric function of *Alfiara* in *View from a Bridge*. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect, and this adds to pupils' enjoyment of the topics studied.
- 3.10 Resources are used effectively to help produce lessons, which maintains interest and enthusiasm. The classrooms are well equipped and most have interactive whiteboards. Staff and children can quickly access information through the internet and can use the whiteboards to share information with the whole class. Since the previous inspection, the libraries have been revamped, stocked, and are now run by qualified staff. Pupils now have access to a wide range of good quality books and information on current affairs. They are actively encouraged to use these facilities and supported by all staff, including the school librarian, this encourages a greater level of independent learning. Staff use a range of teaching methods to ensure that lessons are interesting.
- 3.11 A detailed marking policy is in place; this is adhered to by all staff and fully understood by all pupils. Assessment is regular and thorough, and informs staff of the next steps in learning for pupils. Analysis of standardised testing is well used to plan and deliver lessons, so that pupils of all abilities make good progress. Work is now in progress for a system of a clear and comprehensive assessment recording, which will support reporting and intervention work. Teachers regularly check in lessons that pupils understand what they are doing, and are ready to progress further.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of personal development is excellent, from the EYFS onwards, promoted by strong relationships within the school community and the outstanding pastoral care provided by all staff. Pupils throughout the school have excellent well-developed personal qualities, in accordance with the aims of the school. They are confident and articulate and take an obvious pride in their own achievements and in those of others. Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to develop and improve its excellent practice in this area.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual awareness permeates the community. As part of an ancient cathedral foundation and through its cathedral choir, the school takes pride in promoting a sense of values which reflect life's meaning and purpose. Their highly developed spiritual awareness is shown in the worship in the cathedral, the appreciation of their tremendous artistic and creative displays, and their participation in the great variety of music and drama events in which they are encouraged. The many opportunities for staff and pupils to come together are used to reinforce the pupils' spiritual and social awareness through collective worship, the shared celebration of various individual and group music achievement and sports results. Pupils have high levels of self-esteem, and are caring and considerate towards others.
- 4.3 The pupils have a strong moral code upheld by staff which permeates daily life. They develop independent thinking and consider world issues, along with an understanding of the needs of other countries. Charity events continue throughout the year and closely involve pupils, parents and staff. Pupils discuss matters of the moment in class and religious education (RE) lessons, and this encourages them to think about the effects of their actions on others. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, and of justice and fairness. They understand and support the standards of behaviour expected of them. A respectful relationship between pupils and staff allows them to share the common goal of discovering the riches of successful participation and achievement, and to develop a spirit of generosity and service to the wider community.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate excellent social awareness. The pupils develop excellent co-operative team working skills by example from their staff, at all levels, and in their choirs, orchestras, and music ensembles and sports teams. They gather together to support their peers, as was seen in the many music activities and the school production of *Blood Brothers*. Those in positions of responsibility have a mature and caring attitude and this contributes to pupils' social development. The school council, formed from elected pupils from Years 3 to 11, changes termly and gives pupils a voice within the school community. Year 11 prefects are excellent ambassadors for the school, relishing a wide variety of responsibilities. They are effusive in their appreciation of the contribution made by all staff, teaching and non-teaching, to their development. One pupil said of the staff: 'They are amazing, and the reason to be here'.

4.5 Pupils have a strong appreciation of cultural diversity which comes from their RE studies work on alternative faiths and cultures and traditions. They also develop their understanding of other cultures in subjects such as geography, history, art and music. They understand about the festivals and places of worship in religions other than their own. In addition they develop a strong awareness of their own culture through visits to museums and theatres.

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

4.6 The pastoral care provided for pupils and the attention given to their welfare, health and safety are outstanding throughout the school, including in the EYFS, and fulfil the aims of the school in encouraging self-discipline, responsibility and consideration for others. The caring environment is a strength of the school. The staff provide good support and guidance; pastoral arrangements are effective, fostering the pupils' personal development extremely well. All staff promote self-confidence in pupils over a wide range of activities through support, praise and encouragement. In return, pupils say they are well cared for, they feel appreciated, and this gives them the confidence to turn to an adult should they have a problem.

4.7 The quality of relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves is strong. The pupils are exceptionally well-mannered and adults serve as good role models. Staff know pupils well and this helps to provide a happy and caring environment in which pupils thrive. Any issues or concerns are discussed at staff meetings. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Pupils believe rules are fair. They believe bullying is rare, and comment that staff deal with any difficulties quickly and constructively.

4.8 The safeguarding of pupils is excellent; all staff are appropriately trained for their responsibilities. Measures are taken to reduce the risks of fire and other hazards; regular fire drills are held, and staff receive suitable fire training. Health and safety procedures are effective, with risk assessments covering all aspects of school life. A health and safety committee operates and meets regularly to discuss any matters arising. Electrical testing is appropriately carried out and health and safety documentation is thorough. Accidents are suitably recorded and facilities for those who become ill during the day are good. An accessibility plan has been written, which is designed to improve the educational provision of those with disabilities, and is in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SEND). Pupils understand well the importance of choosing a healthy diet and participating in physical exercise. They enjoy the school meals, which are nutritious and give good choice. The admission and attendance registers have been accurately maintained.

4.(c) The quality of boarding education

- 4.9 The good quality boarding experience fully supports the school's aim to develop the pastoral need of all pupils, creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Boarders present themselves as confident, courteous and articulate, and both the boarders and their parents are fully supportive of the boarding provision.
- 4.10 Handbooks for boarders, parents and staff provide excellent information about the provision. The experienced matron and the head of middle school, who manage the provision, are very well supported by a dedicated team including a fully qualified nurse. Between them they provide a safe family environment where the children feel secure and develop their independence. The relationships amongst boarders, and between the boarders and the staff who care for them, are outstanding, and pupils enjoy living at school amongst their friends. Pastoral support for boarders is very strong, and high-quality guidance is provided by staff to help pupils manage their relationships and time. The choristers have a very full programme due to their commitments to their Cathedral duties, and thus the limited evening free time is not overburdened by a wealth of non-musical extra activities so that they have time to relax and do what they wish to do, with guidance and support from the house staff. They much enjoy the use of the outside facilities in the summer and the option to use the Great Hall for badminton, football or other games on other occasions. Due to the close proximity of a considerable number of families, parents come along to evensong to support their children and then meet with them briefly afterwards or take them home or out on a Wednesday evening, Saturday or Sunday when not singing in services or rehearsing.
- 4.11 All matters of health are overseen by the team of matrons and nurse, and boarders enjoy healthy and nutritious meals, the highlight being when a boy has a birthday and he can select the meal of his choice enthusiastically provided by the kitchen team. The pupils were very complimentary about all aspects of their boarding experience.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governance is good, with an effective range of expertise and skills available. Governors give clear and effective leadership to the school. The structure of the governing body is well-defined and it is planned to be even more so in the next term. The commitment and experience of the governors have enabled them to make key changes in personnel. The robust controls in place enabled the school to develop and expand, to continue to meet its aims and build significantly on its achievements at the time of the previous inspection.
- 5.2 Effective communication between the headmaster and the governors ensures that that they have good insight into the working of the school. The governors are effective in discharging their responsibilities for the areas of child protection and health and safety of the pupils. Individual governors have delegated responsibility for areas of child protection and health and safety; policies and procedures are reviewed annually.
- 5.3 Governors have demonstrated through this period of significant change that they have good strategic insight into the working of the school and the ability to prioritise what needs to be done.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 The school benefits from exemplary leadership and management which have a clear vision for the school's future development. It has established clear priorities, enabling the school's aims to be even more successfully fulfilled. It is particularly successful in promoting the pupils' pastoral care, confidence and self-esteem and in developing the creative and cultural interests and talents of the pupils, who often have great demands placed upon them. Structures are clear and comprehensive. The leadership group is strong and well defined with expertise in finance, human resources, marketing and educational expertise. Management roles have developed effectively since the previous inspection.
- 5.5 A clear school development plan is in place, which sets out specific areas of educational improvement. This clarity of vision benefits the whole community and is reflected in the good quality of education and the excellent personal development of the pupils.
- 5.6 Excellent policies and procedures have been produced for all aspects of school life and they are implemented successfully by staff. They give parents a clear understanding of the school's processes. Teaching and support staff are deployed well and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning and welfare, particularly for those with LDD. High quality staff are appointed. In-service training and appraisal are regular features of staff development and the safeguarding, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are given high priority, with all staff trained in these areas. Non-teaching staff contribute significantly to pupils' personal and academic development through their support roles within the school community. Recruitment of staff is carried out with due rigour.

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

- 5.7 Links between the school and parents are excellent and support the academic and personal development of the pupils. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate that parents are most supportive of the school. They are particularly positive about the information that they are given about their children's progress, and the promotion of worthwhile attitudes and values. They believe they can communicate easily with the school and that policies and procedures are readily available. The exceptionally well-produced weekly newsletters for junior, middle and senior school pupils are extremely informative. The informative, easy to use website is another bonus for outreach and effective communication to pupils at home and to their parents. The school has a clear and appropriate complaints policy and handles concerns with due care. Parents indicated that minor matters are dealt with by class teachers. In the parental questionnaire parents commented on how approachable the staff and headmaster are and said that their concerns, when they arise, are dealt with sympathetically and resolution is achieved speedily.
- 5.8 Lichfield Cathedral School lies at the heart of the community, being in the hub of the city, adjacent to the cathedral; pupils move between the constituent parts and are excellent ambassadors for the school. There are many opportunities to engage with the community in all sections of the school; the police and fire service regularly visit to familiarise pupils with community service personnel. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are involved in selecting a shortlist for the literary competition at Lichfield library and pupils from local schools are invited to participate in lectures and seminars, such as the St Chad's Youth Lecture Series and the Music Master Class series. In addition, the school enables their facilities to be used by the community for sport, music and drama. The pupils also participate in the multi-media art installation city-wide art project.
- 5.9 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. The Friends of Lichfield Cathedral School is a thriving body which organises both charitable and social events for parents, staff, pupils and friends of the school on a regular basis. There is a parent/staff choir, which initiated a large scale community project to perform an African choral work *Zimbe* in the Cathedral with many local primary and Birmingham state school choirs and instrumentalists. This raised funds for a school rebuilding project in Africa, and relationships there are ongoing. The junior site has strong links with its local church and the community outside the city. There is already a mutually valuable relationship with a nearby special needs school, which is continually developing.

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 provision is good because the needs of all children are met effectively. Children are kept safe and supported well in their learning and development. Good links with the parents help children to settle in quickly. Regular contact with the older children and frequent contact with the local community help children to grow in confidence and develop independence. Managers have addressed all of the issues from the previous inspection and have plans for further improvement, indicating a good capacity for continual improvement.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are good. Procedures for safeguarding children are implemented effectively. The setting actively promotes equality and inclusion; recommendations made from the previous inspection have been implemented and plans for further improvement are in place. Staff are well trained and suitably deployed. The manager, who teaches full-time, provides good support and guidance for her staff. However, procedures for monitoring performance and self-evaluation are at an early stage of development, and the manager has insufficient time to undertake her role effectively. The views of parents are sought regularly, and they frequently receive suitable information about their children's learning and development. The reception and nursery classes both have access to good outdoor play facilities. However, because of their separate locations; opportunities for integration and communication are reduced. Resources are well used overall. Those for ICT are good in Reception, but limited in the nursery. Effective use is made of the local rural environment to enhance the curriculum, and children benefit from the specialist teaching they receive in music and dance and from the before- and after-school clubs.

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

6.3 Provision for the children's learning, development and welfare is good. Staff provide interesting and varied learning opportunities for them. The regular exchange of information with parents helps them plan for children's individual needs and interests. Ongoing assessment and observation inform planning and next steps in learning are identified for individual children. The routines of the day offer children a good balance of planned activities in a safe and stimulating environment. Daily sessions in phonics and number work help children to develop their early reading, writing and spelling skills and their ability to solve number problems. By the time they reach school age a good foundation is laid for future learning. Good links with the local community help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Moral development is promoted well in a Christian environment where children are taught to value and respect each other. Transfer arrangements at all levels are good.

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

- 6.4 The outcomes for the children in the EYFS are good. Children are happy; they feel safe and are confident individuals who make good progress. They communicate their views confidently and show good levels of concentration by listening to adults. The reception children demonstrate good early writing, number and ICT skills. Younger children write their names independently using phonic knowledge and their counting skills are reinforced through singing nursery rhymes and action songs. Children regularly use the outdoor climbing facilities and develop their physical, language and social skills. Trips off site help to develop their confidence and independence. Children develop creative skills by exploring different materials such as water, play-dough, paint and various types of paper and materials. They make a positive contribution through recycling activities and by raising funds for local charities. They understand the need to wash their hands at important times, make healthy choices and take regular exercise. The children's spiritual awareness is developing well by looking at seasonal changes in their environment and observing how they and other children in their family grow and change. Their moral development is demonstrated in their good behaviour and in the respect they show to adults. Children are developing a good foundation for learning in preparation for transfer to formal schooling.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and a representative of the governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and 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.

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools were inspected by a team of one Ofsted inspectors over 3 days.

Inspectors

Mrs Karin Kelly	Reporting inspector
Mrs Annabelle Hancock	Assistant Reporting Inspector (Former Head, IAPS)
Mr Paul Cozens	Junior Team Inspector (Academic Deputy, IAPS)
Mrs Julie Bolger	Junior Team Inspector (Head of School (Pre-prep), HMC)
Mr Peter Cook	Junior Team Inspector (Head, IAPS)
Mrs Laura Miller-Biddle	Senior Team Inspector (Head of Dept, ISA)
Mr Laurence Fleck	Senior Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, GSA)
Ms Sheila Boyle	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mrs Sue Bennett	Early Years Team Inspector (Head, IAPS)