

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## INSPECTION REPORT ON

### **The King's School in Macclesfield**

Full Name of the School	<b>The King's School in Macclesfield</b>
DCSF Number	<b>895/6007</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>525921</b>
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Chair of Governors	<b>Professor Michael Burdekin</b>
Age Range (of the whole school)	<b>3 to 18</b>
Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009</b>
Head of Early Years Setting	<b>Mrs Caroline Hulme-McKibbin</b>
Early Years Age Range	<b>3 to 5</b>
Early Years Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Early Years Foundation Stage Inspection Dates	<b>12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> October 2009</b>

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 162A(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002 as amended by the Education Act 2005, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31<sup>st</sup> August following their fifth birthday. The inspection was carried out by ISI, a body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting EYFS provision in schools belonging to the ISC Associations. Section 7 of this report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the EYFS 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.

# CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Characteristics of the School .....	1
2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION .....	3
The Educational Experience Provided .....	3
Pupils' Learning and Achievements .....	5
Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils .....	7
The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment) .....	8
3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS .....	11
The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils .....	11
The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community .....	13
4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT .....	15
The Quality of Governance .....	15
The Quality of Leadership and Management .....	15
5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS .....	17
Overall Conclusions .....	17
Next Steps .....	18
6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE .....	19
List of Inspectors .....	19
7. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) .....	20
What the Setting Should Do to Improve .....	21

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 The King's School in Macclesfield is a selective independent school for girls and boys aged three to eighteen years old, situated in the town of Macclesfield in North Cheshire. The school was founded in 1502 as the first of the Merchant Taylors' family of schools. It experienced mixed success in its early years and was re-founded as one of the King's School Foundations in the reign of Edward VI.
- 1.2 The school moved to the Cumberland Street site in 1855. In 1961 a junior section for five to eleven year old boys opened on the site. In 1986, after four and a half centuries as a boys' school, girls were admitted into the sixth form. In 1987 the age range of the school was extended to include boys aged three to five years old. In 1993 the school purchased the site of what had been the Macclesfield High School for Girls. The school then became fully co-educational, with this site (Fence Avenue) being used for the education of girls aged eleven to sixteen years old and boys and girls aged three to eleven years old. Early in this century the decision was made to build a purpose-built sixth form centre on the original site of the school, and it opened in 2007. Boys and girls are taught together between the ages of three and eleven, separately between the ages of eleven and sixteen and together in the sixth form. The various sections of the school - junior, boys, girls and sixth form - are known as divisions, each of which is headed by a principal, whose main responsibility is for pastoral care. The principals work closely with the head of foundation, who has overall responsibility for the whole school.
- 1.3 The aims of the school are to provide a caring, structured and disciplined learning environment, in which all pupils enjoy a wide selection of opportunities to discover and develop their talents and interests to their full potential. The school seeks to promote the highest standards of academic achievement for all individuals in the context of their own abilities. It aims to provide as wide a range of extra-curricular activities as possible, in order to encourage high standards of teamwork.
- 1.4 Pupils come from families living in Macclesfield, South Manchester and surrounding Cheshire and Derbyshire towns and villages, up to about 20 miles away. Most parents are in professional and business occupations. Families are predominantly of white British ethnic origin. The fees of about a twelfth of pupils are reduced through bursaries and a smaller number of pupils are awarded scholarships, which provide more limited financial support.
- 1.5 The overall ability of the pupils in the school is well above the average for maintained schools nationally, but includes a broad ability range that spreads from average to far above average ability. If pupils perform in line with abilities, therefore, their results will be well above the national average for maintained schools nationally up to GCSE level. The selective nature of sixth forms in maintained schools nationally means that at A Level, their results would be above the national average.
- 1.6 The size and composition of the school has changed little since the last inspection, with the main difference being an increase of over 40 pupils in the sixth form. There are 1475 pupils on roll, of whom 380 are in the junior division, 812 are eleven to sixteen year olds and 283 are in the sixth form. The school has identified 220 pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), of whom 30 receive specialist learning support, for which parents pay, and one has a statement of special educational need. Only seventeen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and none of these pupils require extra support. About a third of pupils in the senior divisions come from the junior division and about roughly three-quarters of pupils stay on into the sixth form, with those leaving going to local schools and

sixth form colleges. Pupils between the ages of three and seven years old are selected on the basis of their date of application. After this age, pupils are selected on the basis of English, mathematics and verbal reasoning tests, and of an individual interview until the sixth form. Entry into the sixth form is on the basis of GCSE grades and interview.

- 1.7 Since the last inspection, the school has benefited from a major programme of refurbishment, particularly on the Cumberland Street site, significant improvements in provision for information and communication technology (ICT), including the widespread equipping of classrooms with interactive whiteboards, and the building of a new sixth form centre. These improvements have significantly enhanced the quality of the teaching and learning environment.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.
- 1.9 See Section 7 for the report on the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **The Educational Experience Provided**

- 2.1 The school provides a good education for its pupils, which includes some excellent features. It is also consistent with the school's aims and philosophy. The shortcomings noted at the time the last inspection have been very largely addressed. The curriculum in the junior division has been revised to ensure that all subjects receive appropriate amounts of time. In the senior school, in Years 10 and 11 boys and girls receive a similar curriculum, but opportunities for pupils to develop higher-level ICT skills remain limited.

#### ***Junior Division***

- 2.2 In the junior division, the curriculum incorporates all the National Curriculum subjects, and also includes personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education (RE). Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their mathematical skills. Design and technology (DT) and ICT, which is integrated throughout the curriculum, support technological development well. Writing is strongly promoted and many opportunities are provided for pupils to express themselves orally with confidence. The inclusion of French from Year 1 extends linguistic experience and further develops pupils' skills in speaking and listening.
- 2.3 The curriculum provides for good development of pupils' aesthetic and creative skills, through art, music and English, for instance. Large numbers of pupils learn to play a musical instrument, and regular musical and dramatic productions involve many pupils. Physical exercise and development is encouraged strongly through physical education (PE) lessons and a wide range of extra-curricular activities, in which all pupils are encouraged to participate. Sporting activities include football, rugby, hockey, athletics, swimming, rounders, netball and cricket. History, geography, RE and PSHE contribute to pupils' human and social development, and this is further augmented by the many clubs and sporting activities in which pupils participate. A wide range of enrichment activities enhances pupils' educational experience significantly and also helps to foster links with the local and wider community, for example through visits to local places of interest such as the Macclesfield Silk Museum and Manchester Airport, and a residential trip to Normandy by pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- 2.4 The curriculum is generally well planned to ensure that pupils make consistent progress in learning. Provision for pupils with LDD is very effective. The procedures for identifying pupils' particular learning needs are well documented and understood by staff, while support by specialist teachers is well organised. Work is planned for gifted and talented pupils, and this challenges them fully on occasion, but planning is not as effective as it is for pupils with LDD. The junior division prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education, which nearly always involves moving to the senior school. Arrangements include parental meetings, visits to meet new teachers and close liaison between staff across the Foundation about pupils' personal development and academic progress.

#### ***Senior School***

- 2.5 In the senior school, the curriculum is broad and balanced and offers pupils a wealth of opportunities, suited to their interests, aptitudes and needs. In Years 7 to 9, the National Curriculum provides a good base upon which the school builds greater choice and challenge, with foreign languages featuring strongly. In Years 10 and 11, a combination of core subjects and option choices helps to ensure that pupils gain a balanced educational experience, whilst providing for their personal interests and needs. The curriculum in the

sixth form provides a great range of choice, with 26 subjects offered at AS and A-level. Pupils normally study four subjects at AS and three subjects at A-level. They also follow a PSHE programme, and take part in one or more sports activities and some form of community service.

- 2.6 The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 provides particularly well for pupils' linguistic development through English, humanities and the range of foreign languages that pupils can study. Mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative development is also well catered for. The combination of core subjects, including English, mathematics, science, a foreign language, PE, PSHE and ICT, and option choices in Years 10 and 11, ensure that the curriculum continues to support pupils' development across a broad range of areas. Pupils' choice of subjects in the sixth form narrows this range, but PSHE, PE and community service ensure that pupils' educational experience continues to develop in a well-rounded and appropriate manner.
- 2.7 Extra-curricular activities, in which the great majority of pupils take part, make a very important contribution to pupils' educational experience and personal development. They provide excellent opportunities for boys and girls to develop skills and confidence in a wide variety of sporting, musical, cultural and service activities. The school has an impressive sporting tradition and an excellent reputation for the quality and range of its musical activities, in which many pupils take part. Large numbers of pupils are involved in the burgeoning Duke of Edinburgh's award programme and an eclectic range of clubs and societies, ranging from those concerned with subjects and broad areas such as debating to *The First Lego League*, in which the school has won regional and national honours over recent years. A wide variety of subject-focused, musical and sporting visits to different parts of the country and overseas also help to broaden and develop pupils' experience.
- 2.8 Personal, social and health education is developed in a variety of ways by the school, particularly through the PSHE programme, assemblies and extra-curricular activities. Careers education and guidance is well-organised and provides pupils with appropriate opportunities to explore various career paths and the qualifications needed for them, as well as consultation with careers advisers. Pupils also receive extensive advice about option choices for Years 10 and 11 and subject choices for AS and A-level courses. Similarly, the advice and guidance about university courses and other options in the sixth form is of a good quality.
- 2.9 The curriculum is generally well planned to ensure that pupils make consistent progress in learning. Planning to support pupils with LDD has developed strongly since the last inspection. Helpful diagnosis of learning problems, and well-defined plans to address these, often help these pupils to make excellent progress. Planning to support gifted and talented pupils is more variable; the large majority of departments include plans for these pupils, but these frequently rest upon a limited range of strategies and do not provide sufficient opportunities for challenging tasks that encourage independent thinking. In contrast, the enrichment programme, introduced since the last inspection, does provide a wide range of opportunities to challenge and develop the most able pupils. One such opportunity during the inspection involved sixth form pupils leading discussions with able younger pupils about the use of child soldiers in Africa and the horrors and moral issues associated with this abhorrent phenomenon. Various events are also organised, such as visits to the Science and Engineering Challenge day, workshops with local feeder schools and residential courses.

### ***Whole School***

- 2.10 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

## **Pupils' Learning and Achievements**

- 2.11 Pupils' achievement and progress in learning are good across the school, with strengths in the progress and achievement of pupils with LDD and achievements in extra-curricular activities, particularly in the senior school. The school fulfils well its aim of promoting the high standards of academic achievement for all individuals in the context of their own abilities. There has been a marked improvement in boys' achievement in the senior school since the last inspection and in the quality of writing of higher attaining pupils by the end of Year 2 in the junior division.

### ***Junior Division***

- 2.12 Pupils of all ages and abilities are well grounded in the knowledge, skills and understanding of the subjects they study and the activities they take part in. They think critically and creatively and apply themselves diligently to the tasks set, showing enjoyment and contentment with the work they do. Pupils are articulate, listen carefully, read intelligently and write fluently. They develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of mathematical concepts and learn how to apply them effectively in problem-solving. Through their ICT lessons, pupils become competent users of ICT, but have only limited opportunities to develop these skills in the wider curriculum.
- 2.13 Pupils make good progress in learning, with no significant differences in relative attainment between different groups of pupils. The evidence, from lessons and work scrutinised during the inspection, is that pupils' achievement is good in relation to their abilities.
- 2.14 The achievements of pupils outside the classroom are also good. They take part in many competitive team and individual sports and are successful at both regional and national levels. Pupils have achieved success regionally and sometimes nationally in ice-skating, sailing, horse-riding, biathlon, athletics, trampolining and rugby. They have also gained gold, silver and bronze awards in national Mathematics Challenge competitions, played at a regional level in chess and achieved a very high placing in a national sudoku championship. The junior choir regularly makes appearances at local events and has won their class in the local musical festival.
- 2.15 Pupils show an increasing ability to reason and argue cogently and are increasingly confident in taking notes, studying on their own and organising their work, when opportunities are provided. Pupils work well collaboratively in small groups, for instance in a Year 4 art lesson discussing the work of Michelangelo, which led to an enhanced understanding of the quality of his achievement. In lessons like this the interest and excitement provided by lively debate stimulates learning and achievement of a high level. Pupils' attitudes to learning and achievement are excellent. They are well-behaved, polite, friendly, interested and generous in their praise of others. Their willingness to settle and apply themselves during lessons and extra-curricular pursuits is clearly apparent. They persevere with great diligence, even when tasks are dull, and generally show great enjoyment and enthusiasm in everything that they do, which gives powerful support to their learning and achievement.

### ***Senior School***

- 2.16 Pupils demonstrate subject knowledge and skills, which are always good and sometimes excellent. The most able show high levels of reasoning, evident in discussions in lessons and their written work, and they enjoy exploring ideas. All pupils think critically and perceptively about issues and problems that are presented to them; this includes the capacity to analyse complex questions with skill and maturity in the later stages of their education. Pupils are inquisitive and argue lucidly in all subjects, and at all stages, in response to

questions and issues raised. The ability to generate their own ideas or issues through independent thought is less well developed, mainly because they have relatively few opportunities to do this.

- 2.17 The quality of pupils' written work is nearly always good and sometimes outstanding. They use both their own and other languages with increasing sophistication and command. They are articulate and listen well, although occasionally a few pupils are inattentive. Specialist and technical language is used with increasing confidence; pupils apply mathematical concepts logically and explore scientific and philosophical ideas with confidence and enthusiasm. Basic ICT skills are used well, but pupils are seldom called upon to develop more advanced ICT skills through independent investigation and exploration.
- 2.18 There are no significant differences between the achievements of pupils in different groups or of differing abilities, unlike at the time of the last inspection, when girls' achievement in GCSE was considerably better than that of boys. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in the great majority of lessons, but very occasionally tasks set for pupils are mundane, and their progress slows, particularly that of able pupils. Results in public examinations have improved significantly since the last inspection, with a notable increase in boys' attainment. At GCSE and A-level, in the years 2006-8 for which comparative data is available, results were well above the average for maintained secondary schools nationally and close to far above this average at GCSE. In addition, they are better than the national average for maintained selective schools, despite having pupils with a broader range of ability than is normally found in these schools. Examination results at GCSE and A-level improved again in 2009. The results are good in relation to pupils' ability at GCSE and A-level.
- 2.19 The achievements of pupils beyond the classroom, through the extensive and wide-ranging extra-curricular and enrichment programmes, are excellent; large numbers of girls and boys achieve representative honours at local and regional level, as do significant numbers at national level. Pupils have been successful in various national competitions, such as the National Science Olympiads, Paper Clip Physics, Mathematics Challenge competitions where they have won gold, silver and bronze awards, and the Engineering Education Scheme. Many achieve high-level awards in drama, music and public speaking examinations, pupils are regularly awarded Arkwright Scholarships and many have achieved awards at various levels in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Choirs, orchestras and bands flourish and play regularly locally and regionally, and undertake regular overseas tours. In sport, many individuals have achieved local and regional representation and several have achieved representation at a national level in sports as diverse as cricket, hockey, netball, rugby, gymnastics, shooting, fishing and sailing. The school has had particular success in cheerleading, trampolining and the biathlon, where several national titles have been won. Cricket, hockey and rugby teams have also been successful at local, regional and sometimes national level.
- 2.20 Pupils' attitudes to their work and study are generally excellent. There is a strong culture of reading for pleasure amongst boys and girls in the younger age groups. Pupils respond enthusiastically to challenges and look forward to these lessons. Most settle quickly and concentrate well; they follow instructions willingly and few need to seek clarification or affirmation. Pupils' ability to take independent notes varies, but generally the organisation of work in books and files is good, with examples of excellence showing great care and pride.
- 2.21 Pupils are very proud of their school and supportive of each other. They work in pairs and larger groups flexibly and cooperatively, and were observed doing this well in a great range of activities during the week of the inspection. Pupils demonstrate perseverance, determination and, when opportunities allow, initiative in their work. They work well on their own in the classroom and when carrying out homework tasks.

## **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils**

- 2.22 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with many outstanding features. In the senior school, these include moral and social development. In the junior division spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This area of school provision, identified as a strength at the time of the last inspection, continues to be so. The school meets its aims very well.

### ***Junior Division***

- 2.23 Pupils develop a strong sense of personal identity and self-esteem from an early age, because of the encouraging and supportive attitudes of staff, who know their pupils very well and create an ethos of constructive support and celebration of individual achievement. Through assemblies, and subjects such as art, music and RE, pupils learn to value spiritual values of beauty, truth and religious belief, as exemplified in the way in which younger pupils spoke with feeling about the symbolic importance of the poppy for Remembrance Day.
- 2.24 From an early age, pupils develop a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and recognise the importance of rules and responsible behaviour. The respect and affection staff display towards pupils, combined with a gentle but firm insistence on high standards of behaviour, help to instil in pupils clear and highly appropriate moral values to guide their behaviour.
- 2.25 Similarly, pupils develop a strong sense of social responsibility and recognise the importance of harmonious relationships through sharing and collaboration. As they grow older, they take on responsibilities as prefects, house captains and as members of the school council. More informally, they also provide good support and guidance to their younger peers.
- 2.26 Pupils have a natural interest in other cultures and respect for others and their viewpoints, fostered in lessons and through extra-curricular activities by staff, which helps to promote tolerance. Assemblies and subjects such as geography and RE teach pupils about the differences and similarities of major world faiths, expanding pupils' understanding and empathy with different religious and cultural traditions.

### ***Senior School***

- 2.27 Pupils' spiritual development is good. In assemblies, pupils consider spiritual matters and use the opportunity for reflection. Religious education lessons cause pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and on their own uniqueness as a person, as well as learning about the beliefs and traditions of other religions. Pupils also use opportunities to develop their spirituality through art, music and drama and visits to a variety of different places of worship.
- 2.28 Pupils have a well-developed moral sense and can clearly distinguish right from wrong. They know the school's code of conduct, understand the need for it and display a caring, courteous and respectful attitude towards each other and staff. Within lessons, opportunities are provided for pupils to further develop their moral awareness, for example, in history pupils in Year 10 study the holocaust and in RE pupils regularly consider ethical dilemmas.
- 2.29 Pupils' social development is also strong. They understand their responsibilities as members of the school community and, as they move through the school, take advantage of increasing opportunities for them to show initiative, take on positions of responsibility and contribute to the life and work of the school. This is exemplified by their involvement in school teams, taking on roles as prefects or house captains, and responding well to the challenges offered by the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. The PSHE programme, topics in a wide range of subjects, talks by visiting speakers, participation in a number of national competitions and

charity fund-raising broaden and deepen pupils' knowledge of public institutions and services.

- 2.30 Pupils are keenly aware of the needs of others beyond the school community and raise substantial amounts of money each year for a wide range of charities, both local and further afield. Pupils are also involved in a wide variety of community action, ranging from working with the elderly to holding a Christmas party for pupils from a local school for the disabled.
- 2.31 Within school, pupils learn about other cultures through subjects such as art, English, geography, history, music, RE and PSHE, and in assemblies, where major festivals of other religions are celebrated. Pupils' cultural awareness is further developed through the many trips organised by the school, to local and regional places of interest and as far afield as Russia and New Zealand, through wide-spread participation in concerts and school plays and through charity fund-raising. Pupils said that the school places a high emphasis on respect for those from other cultures and belief systems, which they support.

### ***Whole School***

- 2.32 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

### **The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)**

- 2.33 The quality of teaching is good across the school, with significant examples of outstanding practice, particularly in the senior school. Teaching in the junior division has retained the good qualities identified at the time of the last inspection. In the senior school, teaching has improved considerably. Teaching across the school successfully helps to meet the school's aim of promoting the highest standards of academic achievement for all pupils.

### ***Junior Division***

- 2.34 Teachers have a secure command of their teaching material, which is reflected in thorough and effective planning of lessons, identifying clear learning objectives and appropriate learning tasks. A variety of teaching strategies is often used by teachers and they provide clear and explicit explanation and instructions for pupils. Lessons are well organised and in most lessons teachers use explanation and questioning effectively to introduce topics, test and consolidate understanding and answer queries. Tasks set for pupils engage their interest, for instance in a Year 2 art lesson, where pupils thoroughly enjoyed exploring the effects that using water-colours can achieve. In a minority of lessons, too much time is spent on talking by teachers, learning tasks lack interest and challenge, particularly for the more able, and the pace of learning becomes pedestrian.
- 2.35 Teaching generally shows a good knowledge of pupils' aptitudes, needs and prior attainment and expectations are high, which enables pupils to make consistently good progress in their learning. This is particularly so in relation to knowledge and understanding and the progress of pupils with LDD. Relationships between teachers and pupils are always good and often excellent, and behaviour is normally exemplary. These factors create a classroom ethos highly conducive to learning.
- 2.36 When teaching is at its best lessons are complex, involve a broad range of activities, maintain a brisk pace, and include interesting and lively presentations by teachers and tasks that catch the imagination of all pupils. These lessons challenge pupils intellectually, so engendering work of a high quality. This was illustrated well in a Year 4 science lesson exploring how liquids turn into gases, a Year 1 ICT lesson where pupils created Bonfire Night posters with animated fireworks, and a Year 6 PSHE lesson where pupils were developing models of their

'dream school'. These lessons encouraged pupils to explore ideas and concepts in open-ended investigations, often involving collaboration, discussion and independent thought. More generally, learning tasks are more restricted in scope, mainly consolidating ideas and concepts introduced by teachers.

- 2.37 Teaching is well resourced, and better so than at the time of the last inspection, both in terms of book and paper resources and in terms of ICT, with all classrooms now having interactive whiteboards and easier access to computers for pupils' use. Interactive whiteboards are used competently by teachers to structure lessons and, on occasion, to introduce lively stimulus material, but their full potential is only beginning to be explored. Similarly, pupils learn good technical skills in ICT lessons, but the teaching gives them limited opportunities to develop these skills across the curriculum. In PE and science, the division benefits from access to senior school facilities.
- 2.38 Since the last inspection, the division has developed clear and detailed assessment policies, which pupils understand. Examples of excellent oral feedback to pupils were observed and marking contains constructive and diagnostic comments, which help pupils to take their learning on. Some teachers also set pupils well-defined specific learning targets, which are helpful in improving progress in learning, but this is not yet fully embedded in all teachers' practice.
- 2.39 Standardised tests are used across the division to help track pupils' progress, and inform future planning.

### ***Senior School***

- 2.40 The teaching in the senior school has improved significantly since the last inspection, reflecting the success of the school's major initiative in its strategic planning, that of improving teaching and learning. Examples of outstanding teaching occurred across many subjects and age groups, but it was particularly noticeable in the teaching of older age groups, especially in the sixth form.
- 2.41 Teachers are well-qualified and very knowledgeable, which allows them to extemporise with easy authority and ask challenging questions of pupils whilst answering the challenging questions they sometimes ask. The quality of teachers' questioning is often excellent, allowing them to explore, test and consolidate pupils' understanding very effectively, whilst asking questions of differing difficulty to particular pupils, which reflect their current level of understanding. Teachers know their pupils well, including their learning needs and prior attainment. The individual education plans, now produced for pupils with LDD and for the pupil with a statement of educational needs, provide some excellent support and guidance.
- 2.42 Planning is thorough and teachers routinely draw on a range of teaching strategies that are well matched to the learning objectives of lessons, devise tasks that interest and engage pupils and establish a good-natured authority with them, which encourages attentiveness and good behaviour. Learning generally proceeds at a brisk pace, especially in the best lessons with transitions from one activity to another managed swiftly and effectively, and teachers often set tasks that challenge pupils of all abilities. A few lessons proceed at a slower pace, with tasks that are not challenging or particularly interesting. Where this happens, pupils can become a little restive and the most able pupils, in particular, are not challenged fully.
- 2.43 Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to structure lessons and, on occasion, introduce imaginative learning material, for example in a Year 11 mathematics lesson where a web site was used to provide interactive material on circle theorems, and in a Year 10 Latin lesson to access lexical help online. More generally, interactive whiteboards are under-utilised for more creative purposes. Similarly, tasks given to pupils seldom require them to

apply and extend the ICT skills that they have learnt in ICT lessons. Other resources are used well to support teaching.

- 2.44 The quality of assessment has improved markedly since the last inspection and now generally provides regular, constructive and diagnostic comments that encourage pupils and provide good advice about how they can improve their work. The best practice, of which there is a considerable amount, also includes sharply focused targets for pupils to address, resulting in noticeable improvements in work. Sometimes marking is not sufficiently demanding of the most able pupils, reflecting in part that learning tasks do not always challenge them fully. Occasionally marking can be perfunctory in merely acknowledging that work has been completed.
- 2.45 The school's examination results are analysed closely, both at group and individual level, and comparative data from a national sample of schools is used to assess performance. Recently the school has introduced a pupil tracking system to monitor the progress of pupils across the younger years and combined it with a more frequent assessment and reporting system, which is being used effectively to identify and monitor pupils' targets for improvement. The school already has evidence that this process is improving learning and achievement for some pupils.

***Whole School***

- 2.46 The school meets the regulatory requirements for teaching [Standard 1].

### **3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS**

#### **The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils**

- 3.1 The quality of care, support and guidance provided for pupils is good overall, with a number of outstanding features, one of which is the quality of relations between staff and pupils and another the care, support and guidance provided in the junior division. The school is very successful in fulfilling its aim of providing a caring, structured and disciplined learning environment. The care, support and guidance provided for pupils have improved since the last inspection. Policies and procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare, health and safety have been revised and improved since the last inspection, so that they are now comprehensive, well-organised and implemented fully.

##### *Junior Division*

- 3.2 Class teachers and assistants play a key role in their pupils' pastoral care. They have a strong commitment to them and have excellent relationships with them, based on mutual trust and respect. Pastoral leaders also know pupils well and help class teachers to monitor closely pupils' personal well-being and academic progress, as well as providing guidance and advice where necessary. Relationships with parents are close and communication is good, so that any issues or concerns quickly become known and are dealt with sensitively and effectively. Parents are very complimentary about the quality of care provided. Pupils readily identified several adults to whom they would turn if they had a problem and feel very safe and happy.
- 3.3 The pastoral care and behaviour policy have been reviewed recently. Pupils understand and agree with the system of sanctions and rewards that has been implemented. Younger pupils have a clear code of conduct that is well understood and older pupils have some flexibility in drawing up codes of conduct for their own classrooms, in discussion with their class teachers. Staff also provide excellent models of courteous and responsible behaviour for pupils to emulate. These factors combine to produce a strong ethos of care, respect and trust in a friendly community, which promotes strongly good behaviour and discipline through well understood moral and social values. The division also has clear and appropriate anti-bullying policies, linked to the general behaviour policy; pupils report that bullying is a highly unusual occurrence and that when it takes place it is dealt with speedily and effectively.

##### *Senior School*

- 3.4 Form tutors are key figures in pastoral care in the senior school, through their responsibility for the personal well-being of their tutees and for monitoring their academic progress. They carry out this important role more consistently than they did at the time of last inspection and know their pupils well. Nevertheless, tutor time is not always used productively for individual consultation with tutees or to engage in activities that would support personal and social development.
- 3.5 Heads of year work closely with form tutors in monitoring all aspects of pupils' progress, including the tracking of academic achievement. They do not have tutor groups themselves, which they did at the time of the last inspection, and this makes it easier for them to monitor and support their form tutors, as well as to get to know the pupils in their year groups. Heads of year meet together regularly with the principals and vice-principals of the divisions to discuss the effectiveness of particular policies and procedures, and to review concerns and issues related to a particular individual pupil or groups of pupils.

- 3.6 Pupils generally have excellent relationships with staff and other pupils. They readily identify adults they can go to with a problem and, as well as pastoral staff or their subject teachers, can speak on a confidential basis with the school nurses or a professional counsellor. Many pupils identified close friends as important confidants. Younger pupils sometimes mentioned older pupils, such as school prefects or those who are attached to particular forms in Years 7, 8 and 9 as helpers, reflecting the important role that older pupils play in the care of younger ones.
- 3.7 The various divisions that make up the senior school have clear and appropriate policies and procedures to establish a well understood framework that promotes good behaviour and discipline. The criteria for good and unacceptable behaviour, and the related rewards and sanctions, are clearly understood and regarded as fair and sensible by pupils. Staff set a good example in their firm, courteous treatment of pupils, often full of humour and demonstrating trust, high expectations and respect. Pupils respond well and clearly enjoy being in a friendly well-ordered community.
- 3.8 Clear and appropriate anti-bullying policies are known and understood by pupils, but they report that bullying is an infrequent occurrence that is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Through the PSHE programme, assemblies and subjects such as RE, history and geography, pupils discuss values in some depth and are guided towards those that embrace concepts of fairness, justice and respect for cultural and religious difference, thus providing a powerful bulwark against prejudice, harassment and bullying.

***Whole School: Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils***

- 3.9 The school has effective policies and procedures for the protection of pupils. All members of both the teaching and support staff receive appropriate training in child protection and there are designated child protection officers with inter-agency training on both school sites. All staff are recruited under the safer recruitment processes and current procedures are rigorous and effective. The school maintains an up-to-date and comprehensive admissions register. The arrangements for the daily electronic registration of pupils and the following up of absences are effective.
- 3.10 Concerns expressed in the last inspection report regarding the management of health and safety have been addressed thoroughly. A comprehensive health and safety policy is now in place, and a nominated governor has oversight of all the arrangements. Detailed risk assessments have been completed for all school activities, including educational visits. Thorough and detailed risk assessments for fire and other hazards have also been completed. Regular fire practices take place at both school sites and regular checks are made on equipment and procedures; the results of these checks are suitably recorded and action taken where necessary. In those subjects where pupils come into contact with hazardous materials or equipment, effective measures to prevent accidents are in place. The school has prepared a suitable three-year plan to promote access for those with disability or statements of special educational need.
- 3.11 The three school nurses between them provide full-time cover across both sites and are available to treat any pupil taken ill in an appropriate medical room; the nurses additionally provide valuable pastoral support and counselling, as does the school counsellor. Suitably qualified first-aiders are on hand throughout the school. The catering arrangements are good. The food sampled by the inspection team was of a high standard with a large choice of healthy and nourishing options available; school menus are constructed in consultation with a nutritionist. Pupils are made aware of the issues surrounding healthy eating and the need for regular exercise through PSHE, biology and PE lessons.

- 3.12 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils [Standard 3].

### **The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community**

- 3.13 The quality of links with parents and the community is an outstanding feature of the school's provision and reflects the considerable efforts made to improve these since the last inspection. The school commissioned a survey of parents' views after the last inspection, and has responded constructively to the issues raised, for instance, by increasing the amount of communication by e-mail and by providing information on the school's website.
- 3.14 Parental questionnaires administered before the inspection indicated high levels of satisfaction with the school, particularly in the junior division. No significant common themes emerge from parents' responses in the junior division, amongst the small number of parents making critical comments. In the senior school, provision for pupils with LDD and opportunities to be involved in the work of the school were common themes raised by several parents. Inspection evidence indicates that provision for pupils with LDD is a strong feature and that parents have good opportunities to be involved in school life. Offsetting these critical comments were the much larger number of positive comments made by parents, highly appreciative of how the school is educating their children.
- 3.15 Parents are provided with excellent information about the school, from the information received as prospective parents through to their children becoming pupils. The prospectus is colourful, well presented and informative and is supported by more detailed information about the various divisions of the school. Termly newsletters and a very detailed, high-quality annual report keep parents well informed about school events, activities and pupils' achievements. Letters, news bulletins and the school's web-site provide comprehensive information about what is happening at the school. Topics of current interest or concern are also addressed through specific meetings for parents, such as those recently held about cyber-bullying and pupils' preferred learning styles. The school has two thriving parents' associations, one for the senior school and one for the junior division, which provide opportunities for parents to meet socially and be involved in fund-raising activities. Parents also come in large numbers to the various musical concerts and dramatic productions at school.
- 3.16 The school keeps parents well informed about the academic progress of their children. It provides an annual written report, which is detailed, informative and includes helpful targets for pupils and parents to work on, in order to improve pupils' progress. Parents also discuss their children's progress and achievement once or twice a year at parents' meetings, which they find helpful and valuable. In addition, they receive further feedback about progress through half-termly reports, which give grades for effort and attainment and a brief comment from the form tutor. Homework diaries, signed weekly by parents and the form tutor, include sections for parental and form tutor or class teacher comments, which encourages further dialogue.
- 3.17 The school's complaints procedures define clearly the various stages through which complaints proceed and the relevant people to be involved. Any concerns that parents raise are dealt with quickly and efficiently.
- 3.18 The school has developed its links with the local and wider community further since the last inspection, so that these are now very strong in all parts of the school. From an early age, pupils visit local sites of cultural interest and learn about the origins and history of the local community. Early in the senior school, pupils visit various religious buildings, reflecting the range of faiths in the local area. Concerts and dramatic productions are open to members of

the local community. School choirs and bands go out into the community to play; for example, younger pupils in the junior division sang at the Christmas Advent Service at a local church and the school's Big Band performs regularly at a local charity events, raising money for charities as varied as the Stockport Prostate Cancer Fund and The Barnabas Trust, which supports homeless people. Sixth formers are now much more involved in community service than at the time of the last inspection and work as volunteers in a variety of settings, such as homes for the elderly and a school for pupils with severe physical disabilities. A group of pupils also do the Sports Leadership Award, which involves some voluntary work with local community sports groups. Many continue coaching groups after they have received the award.

- 3.19 All age groups in the school are heavily involved in fund-raising for a wide range of charities, local, national and international. Activities range from concerts, sponsored reading and 'swimathons', to packing bags for customers at local supermarkets and the sixth form fashion show. Pupils also participate in national fund-raising activities, including Harvest Festival, Comic Relief and Children in Need. Pupils engage in regular fund-raising for particular causes, for example, the girls' division raised sufficient funds to support the building of two classrooms in an African school through Oxfam, having set out to raise money for only one.
- 3.20 Visiting speakers contribute to pupils' developing understanding of the local community and the wider world; pupils gain much from the myriad of visits and trips that they make, whether subject, work experience, music or sports related, which take them to various parts of the local community, the United Kingdom, Europe and beyond.
- 3.21 The local community makes extensive use of the school's facilities. The Macclesfield Music Centre uses the school for music lessons for children in the area, and Macclesfield Town's Centre of Football Excellence and local cricket and hockey clubs use the school's sports facilities. The school's enrichment programme provides opportunities for pupils from local primary schools to use the science laboratories and art studios. The school runs a Science and Technology Challenge Day each year, in which local schools participate and hosts the Macclesfield Primary Schools' Cross-country Championships. The school has been used for county hockey and rugby championships and the North West Orienteering Championship. Facilities have also been used for activities as diverse as cub scout meetings, the martial arts and Examination Board meetings.
- 3.22 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the provision of information and the manner in which complaints are to be handled [Standards 6 and 7].

## **4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **The Quality of Governance**

- 4.1 The governance of the school is good overall, as at the time of the last inspection, and financial planning is now excellent. It plays an important role in ensuring that the school fulfils all of its aims. The structure of the governing body, with its various sub-committees, is well-defined and works effectively to provide it with clear, well-focused oversight of the school. The practice of allowing people to become members of sub-committees, but not full board members, extends the range of expertise available to governors.
- 4.2 The governors as a body encompass a formidable range of expertise and this, combined with a strong commitment to their roles and responsibilities, ensures that they are closely involved in the educational development of the school and financial planning to support educational development. Financial planning is a particular strength of the governing body now, which was not so at the time of the last inspection. Its expertise has allowed the school to fund the building of a new sixth form centre, whilst improving other accommodation significantly and enhancing resources to support learning, notably through the widespread provision of interactive whiteboards and increased numbers of computers for use by pupils.
- 4.3 Governors have clearly defined responsibilities, which help them in their work with the senior management team and the various groups with whom they liaise in the school, such as the health and safety committee. The governing body is closely involved in strategic planning and is kept well informed about various aspects of the school's provision and plans for improvement through regular detailed and informative reports, particularly from the head of foundation. The governing body works closely with the senior management team and the chair of governors, in particular, gives much time to his role.
- 4.4 Governors meet regularly with staff and parents in various contexts, and an interesting feature of this is the regular visits to classrooms to observe teaching and learning that take place on the day of meetings of the full governing board, which governors feel give them valuable insights into the key activities of the school. Governors carry out their responsibilities for the welfare, health and safety of pupils effectively.

### **The Quality of Leadership and Management**

- 4.5 The leadership and management of the school are good, with some outstanding features and it has improved in a number of ways since the last inspection. Planning for development has improved, whole school initiatives are implemented more effectively across the school, the monitoring and support for departments has improved and the senior management team is more cohesive. The leadership and management are now better placed to ensure that the school achieves all of its aims fully.
- 4.6 The senior managers provide very clear direction and leadership, which contributes significantly to the high quality of education and the careful attention paid to pupils' personal well-being and academic progress. They are also an important factor in ensuring that the school meets its aims fully and establishes and sustains its ethos well.
- 4.7 The school's needs are identified carefully and debated and agreed with governors. Clear priorities have been set and planning to meet these priorities has been thorough and effective. Senior managers have pursued a consultative management style with great success. Through this approach, staff have been consulted and involved in school initiatives and staff development has been targeted at supporting them. A notable example of this has been the

major initiative to improve teaching and learning in the senior school, which has led to significant improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and achievement, and is reflected in the improved examination results.

- 4.8 Clear and appropriate policies and procedures have been established and, where they have been implemented fully, have helped to improve various aspects of provision, such as the quality of teaching and learning. Where they have not been implemented fully inconsistencies in practice remain. For instance, some form tutors do not make effective use of the time allocated to them in order to contribute to the achievement and learning of their tutees and departmental handbooks vary considerably in their usefulness as planning documents, particularly in relation to teaching strategies to be deployed and their fitness for purpose. These inconsistencies in practice indicate that monitoring and review by managers is still not always ensuring that school policies are fully implemented.
- 4.9 Middle managers provide good professional leadership and manage their departments and year groups more effectively than at the time of the last inspection, but effective monitoring of teaching and learning is not always fully in place yet. They value the performance related review process, both for them and their staff, which they regard as leading to helpful professional dialogue that recognises what they do well and identifies clearly areas for further development, linked to their own and the school's development plans.
- 4.10 A major success of senior managers is their ability to recruit, retain, develop and motivate high quality staff, as is illustrated by recently appointed teachers, who are excellent classroom practitioners. The induction of new staff is thorough and well-organised, so they quickly settle in to the routines of the school and absorb its ethos. The school is meticulous in ensuring that all the necessary procedures are implemented fully in order to be certain that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children.
- 4.11 Financial resources are managed very efficiently to ensure that the school has good accommodation and resources to support teaching and learning, including ICT resources. The school has undertaken a major refurbishment and re-decoration programme since the last inspection, including the building of a new sixth form centre. This has improved teaching accommodation greatly, particularly in the boys' and sixth form divisions. The accommodation now provides a good quality environment for teaching and learning. This is enhanced by the high-quality display in classrooms, which celebrates subjects, acknowledges pupils' achievement and provides an environment highly conducive to learning. Maintenance and cleaning staff play an important part in making the school a physically welcoming and attractive place. The complex organisational arrangements of the school create difficulties that a highly efficient administration minimises, so that the school runs smoothly.
- 4.12 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].
- 4.13 The school participates in the national scheme for the induction of newly qualified teachers and meets its requirements.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

### Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 The King's School in Macclesfield is a successful school that fulfils all of its aims well and has a number of excellent features. Pupils receive a good education, in which extra-curricular activities make a valuable contribution. They achieve well in relation to their abilities and across all ages in the great majority of lessons, but very occasionally mundane tasks limit achievement, particularly that of the most able pupils. Information, communications and technology skills are developed well in ICT, but pupils have limited opportunities to apply and develop these skills in other subjects. The teaching staff are well qualified, generally have an excellent command of their material, maintain good discipline and usually have excellent relationships with the pupils that they teach. Planning is generally good, particularly for pupils with LDD, but planning for gifted and talented pupils is not always sufficiently challenging. The quality of teaching is good overall, with various examples of excellent practice, but sometimes teachers rely too much upon a narrow range of teaching strategies, particularly in the junior division. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and outstanding in the junior school. Pastoral care is also outstanding in the junior division. It is good in the senior school, but inconsistencies exist in the quality of tutoring by form tutors. Measures to safeguard and promote pupils' health and well-being are comprehensive and effective. Links with parents and the community are excellent and parents express high levels of satisfaction with the school. The governance of the school is good and financial planning is particularly strong. The leadership and management of the school are good, with some outstanding features, although the monitoring of the work of departments and form tutors is not yet fully effective. The senior management team provides very clear direction and professional leadership, which has led to significant improvements in various aspects of the school's provision. Middle managers generally provide good professional leadership and management. The administration of the school is very efficient and makes a key contribution to its smooth running, whilst maintenance and cleaning staff ensure that the sites are well-maintained. The premises and accommodation are of good quality, with lively and interesting displays that create a welcoming learning environment.
- 5.2 The school has made significant progress since the last inspection in many areas of its provision, and all the recommendations of the last report have been addressed well. The education provided for pupils is more balanced and of a better quality. The achievement of boys now matches the good achievement of girls. Progress in learning is consistently good for the great majority of pupils. Teaching has improved, with many examples of excellent teaching observed during the inspection. Staff development activities are much more coherent and linked to key school, divisional and departmental aims. Appraisal has a much sharper focus and is regarded by staff as helpful in reviewing performance and identifying areas for development. Resources are better managed to support teaching and learning and the accommodation now provides a well-maintained, attractive learning environment. Links with parents and the local community have become excellent. Governance is good and financial planning is excellent. Leadership and management are now clearly good and have been very effective in driving forward progress, with the support and agreement of staff. All the health and safety issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed fully and this is now a strong feature of the school's provision. The above represents a formidable achievement and indicates strongly that the school is very well placed to continue improving.
- 5.3 The school meets all the regulatory requirements.

## **Next Steps**

- 5.4 In order to improve still further, the school should:
1. ensure that the work set for gifted and talented pupils is suitably challenging;
  2. increase opportunities for pupils to use higher level ICT skills;
  3. ensure that all form tutors in the senior school make effective use of tutor time in order to support, guide and monitor pupils' progress;
  4. increase the range of teaching styles regularly used in the junior division.
- 5.5 No action is required in respect of regulatory requirements.
- 5.6 Any failures to meet EYFS requirements are detailed in Section 7.

## 6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.
- 6.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage was inspected on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> October 2009 by two inspectors. The inspectors observed sessions, talked to the children, examined samples of work, and held discussions with staff and governors. Comments from parents and carers were considered, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

### List of Inspectors

Mr Ted Cohn	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Felicity Lawson	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mrs Jean Marsland	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mr Michael Abraham	Head, GSA prep school
Mr Michael Buchanan	Head, HMC/SHMIS school
Mrs Colette Culligan	Former Head, GSA school
Dr John Godwin	Head of Department, HMC school
Mr David Littlefield	Head, HMC prep school
Mrs Jane Merriman	Head, IAPS school
Mrs Susan Mitchell	Head, GSA school
Ms Deborah Northin	Head, GSA prep school
Mr Jonathan Reddin	Deputy Head, HMC school
Miss Susan Richards	Assistant Head, HMC school
Dr Linda Skelton	Deputy Head, ISA school
Dr Tim Stubbs	Deputy Head, HMC school
Mr Mark Turner	Head, HMC school
Mrs Linda Donowho	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mr Jim Turner	Early Years Team Inspector

## **7. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)**

- 7.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) of The King's School in Macclesfield provides full-time education for children aged three to five years. There is one nursery class, and two parallel reception classes. The setting is situated within the infant department, sharing the grounds and facilities with the older infants. The children in the school are predominantly white British, but the school caters for the needs of a minority of pupils with different cultural backgrounds.
- 7.2 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS provision in meeting the needs of the children is good and successfully fulfils its aims. The children benefit from caring and enthusiastic staff, who promote an environment where both pastoral and academic development are nurtured and the welfare of the children is of the greatest importance. This is reflected in the responses of the parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire. Parents feel that staff are dedicated and caring, and they are confident that the environment allows all children to develop their potential in all areas of learning. Children are happy, show high levels of independence and make excellent progress. The EYFS is an important part of the whole school community and, as well as having their own outdoor environment, children enjoy having access to the school's many facilities such as the gym, sports hall and the adjoining meadow.
- 7.3 Staff provide strong support for the children and the leadership and management of the setting are good. All the records, policies and procedures necessary for efficient management are in place, well maintained and understood by staff. Staff are suitably qualified and are deployed effectively, and documentation is regularly reviewed. Outstanding links with parents and carers promote good quality care and education. Parents are well informed of their children's development and about the curriculum. Links with the external agencies are made and are being further developed.
- 7.4 The Early Years environment supports children's learning and development well, resulting in them making good progress and developing a lively and positive attitude to school. Staff make excellent use of the classroom space and good use of the well-organised outside area, providing a rich and stimulating environment, which offers children the freedom to explore, use their senses and be active. Problem-solving, decision-making and discussion are enthusiastically encouraged, with a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities, making learning highly effective. This was particularly evident in their outdoor play, where children developed their theme of pirate ships with chalk-drawn maps and incorporated their own ideas. Staff work diligently to ensure that the outside area offers exciting and challenging activities. However, the uneven surfaces, particularly in the nursery area, do not always support these activities and the stairs leading from the classrooms to the play areas need constant supervision. Detailed records and observational assessment inform staff's knowledge of each child. However, the system for using this knowledge to plan the progress of every child is in the early stages of being implemented. Relationships are excellent, and the policies and procedures for children's welfare ensure that they are well cared for and feel safe.
- 7.5 Children make good progress in their learning in relation to their starting points and capabilities. They are on course to meet or exceed the early learning goals in all six areas. Children work independently and collaboratively, understanding the need to take turns and to listen to one another. They are confident in making choices from a wide range of activities and can sustain interest in self-chosen activities. In the nursery, children engage in the experiences available to them with enthusiasm. They respond imaginatively to situations, for example when constructing a train from cardboard boxes. Children display good literacy and

numeracy skills and use the computer confidently. Their knowledge and understanding of the world develops well, based on first-hand experience, and children converse with adults with assurance. They develop well physically, as seen in both PE sessions and exuberant outside play.

- 7.6 Children respond well to praise, and gentle reminders about classroom rules ensure that they remain safe both indoors and outdoors. Children's outstanding personal development, positive attitudes and enthusiasm for learning are carefully guided by the staff. They respond well to the expectations of adults and enjoy their learning activities. They show that they feel safe by moving confidently from one area of the school to another. Behaviour is good throughout the EYFS and children show respect for their own safety and that of others. Children share and take turns, care for their possessions and understand the need for personal hygiene. Their knowledge of healthy eating is significantly guided by discussion of lunch and snacks, and they display well developed self-help skills.

### **What the Setting Should Do to Improve**

- 7.7 To improve further the good quality of its provision, the setting should:
1. improve the surface of the outside classroom areas and the access to this from the classrooms;
  2. continue to develop observation and assessment so that the "next steps" in each child's development and learning can be planned to match their individual needs and abilities;
  3. further develop staff knowledge of the EYFS through appropriate training.
- 7.8 The school's provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.