



YARM SCHOOL  
EDUCATING FOR LIFE

# Inspection Report

2012

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	SATISFACTORY	UNSATIS
Pupils' Achievements, Learning, Skills and Attributes	✓			
Quality of Curricular and Extra-Curricular Provision	✓			
Quality of Teaching	✓			
Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development	✓			
Welfare, Health & Safety	✓			
Quality of governance	✓			
Quality of Leadership and Management	✓			
Quality of links between School and Parents	✓			

## Yarm Preparatory School Inspection Report: Head's Foreword

I am delighted to share with you the report from the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) who inspected Yarm Preparatory School on behalf of Ofsted in November and December 2011.

For background information, inspections of independent school EYFS settings (Nursery and Reception classes in the Preparatory School) use the same terminology as Ofsted reports. The highest rating is outstanding and an overall judgement on the setting is given. I am delighted to report that Yarm Preparatory School's EYFS setting was judged to be outstanding in all areas and outstanding overall.

From Year 1 upwards, Key Stages 1 and 2, the highest level of achievement in independent school inspections is excellent, rather than outstanding, and no overall judgement of the school is made. I am enormously proud that the inspection team judged our school to be excellent in all areas – an exceptional achievement. This is a testament to the Preparatory School's dedicated staff, enthusiastic pupils and a commitment to help young people reach their potential at school in preparation for leading confident, fulfilled and unselfish lives as adults.



Yarm Senior School, which was inspected at the same time, also received an exceptional inspection report and was found to be excellent in all areas. There can be very few school foundations in the country where both the Preparatory School and the Senior School were judged to have attained the highest grades in all sections.

With best wishes



Bill Toleman  
Headmaster, Yarm Preparatory School



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**YARM PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Yarm Preparatory School

Yarm at Raventhorpe and Yarm School were inspected at the same time and separate reports published.

Full Name of School	<b>Yarm Preparatory School</b>
DfE Number	<b>808/6003</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>507290</b>
Address	<b>Yarm Preparatory School Grammar School Lane Yarm North Yorkshire TS15 9ES</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01642 781447</b>
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Email Address	<b>prepschool@yarmschool.org</b>
Headmaster of Yarm Preparatory School	<b>Mr Bill Toleman</b>
Headmaster of Yarm School	<b>Mr David Dunn</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Ms Catherine Evans</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>324</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (159 boys; 165 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS): 74    5-11: 250</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Joanne Speight</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection dates	<b>08 Nov 2011 to 09 Nov 2011 05 Dec 2011 to 07 Dec 2011</b>

## PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Yarm Preparatory School was founded in 1991. It became co-educational in 2001 and opened a Nursery in 2003. It is one of the constituent schools of the Yarm foundation which also includes Yarm School and Yarm at Raventhorpe. The three schools, each with its own headmaster, operate under a single governing body. The preparatory school caters for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. The school serves the local community and a wider catchment of around 25 miles; pupils come from a range of professional, commercial and farming backgrounds. Since the previous inspection, a new headmaster, deputy head and Early Years co-ordinator have been appointed.
- 1.2 The three schools share common aims: to bring out the best in every boy and girl in their care and to give them the best possible all-round education, within a friendly, tolerant and supportive community in which all members are valued equally; to teach pupils to enjoy their education and to see it as a lifelong experience, and to support them in making important career decisions; to pursue high academic and social standards; and to show a sense of responsibility towards the local and wider community.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 324 pupils on roll: 159 boys and 165 girls. Of these 74 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children from the ages of three to five. Children from the Nursery have an automatic transfer into the Reception classes; pupils then progress through to Year 6. External candidates for Year 1 have an informal assessment. For Years 2 to 6 the assessment is more formal and includes mathematics, reading and verbal reasoning. Admission to the senior school at the end of Year 6 is by entrance examination.
- 1.4 Standardised tests show that the ability profile of the school is above the national average. The majority of pupils have an ability that is at least above average, with a significant proportion far above average. Few pupils have an ability that is below average. The school has identified 31 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 27 receive specialist support. Six pupils have been identified as having English as an additional language, and they all receive support with English. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

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

- 2.1 The pupils are extremely well educated in accordance with the schools' aims to bring out the best in every boy and girl in their care and to give them the best possible all-round education. Pupils receive a stimulating and enjoyable start to their education in the EYFS, which is successfully built upon as they move through the school. The pupils achieve at a high level, both academically and in their activities. Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress in their learning as a result of the excellent teaching they receive, and the well-planned curriculum is very well structured to meet the needs of all. Pupils participate in a wide range of activities and achieve good success in sport, music and drama. They have excellent relationships with one another and with their teachers, and their behaviour is exemplary.
- 2.2 The outstanding quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness reflects the strong sense of community in the school. The pupils' excellent personal development fully accords with the school's aims. They are given many opportunities for taking responsibility and accept them with enthusiasm and pride. Pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Teachers know their pupils well and are committed to the welfare of all in their care. The school has excellent arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety, and safeguarding, of all its pupils. All other requirements are fully met.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent and fully supports the aims of the school. The governors are highly committed to the school and take their responsibility for checking regulatory matters seriously. The school has responded to all the recommendations in the previous ISI inspection report. The quality of the leadership and management of the school is excellent. Effective policies and procedures support pupils considerably in their academic and personal development. There is currently no regular and systematic programme of peer review across all year groups. Recruitment procedures are efficient and safe, and all checks on staff and visitors are undertaken and recorded appropriately. The school's links with parents are excellent; they are extremely positive about all aspects of educational and pastoral provision.

### **2.(b) Action points**

#### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school met all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

#### **(ii) Recommendation for further improvement**

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Implement a regular system of peer observation and professional dialogue across all year groups.

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

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

- 3.1 Throughout the school the quality of pupils' achievements is excellent overall, with the highest standards both in academic work and in extra-curricular activities. This fulfils the school's aim of pursuing high personal, academic and social standards. In lessons and in their written work, pupils show excellent knowledge and understanding. Pupils of all ages speak competently. They listen well and show respect for others' contributions. Their reading skills are excellent. Pupils write well and some excellent work is on display in the classrooms. They learn to think for themselves and all benefit from the many opportunities to use their creativity. This is particularly true in from Reception to Year 2, where pupils follow a continuous timetable and all subjects are enhanced with a strong creative element. The older pupils work co-operatively in investigative work, particularly in mathematics, science and design technology. They judge risks during woodland pursuits and take part in the vast programme of activities.
- 3.2 The pupils are successful in a range of music and drama examinations, and in a good range of sports fixtures with local independent and maintained schools. The pupils were national finalists in the Quiz Club general knowledge competition for schools in 2011, and art competition winners for the last two years in a local art festival, and they have achieved a large number of bronze, silver and gold awards in a national junior mathematics challenge.
- 3.3 The standard of attainment overall is excellent. Excellent progress is seen across the EYFS, where both Nursery and Reception children benefit from a broad, balanced approach, and most achieve the expected standards well before they leave Reception. Since pupils have not taken national tests since 2008, their attainment cannot be measured in relation to national norms. However, on the evidence available, including the analysis of standardised data and results of the online tests the pupils take on a regular basis, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-expected expectations. This was confirmed by the excellent progress seen in work during the inspection. Those pupils with SEND and those who are gifted and talented achieve extremely well.
- 3.4 The pupils' excellent achievement and progress are supported by their positive attitudes to learning, their intellectual curiosity, and their creative and inquiring minds, evident in many lessons and activities. They always do their best. The presentation of work is outstanding throughout the school; pupils take a genuine pride in their work. Overall, the pupils have an outstanding work ethic.

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

- 3.5 Curricular provision is outstanding; the curriculum is broad and balanced, and is well planned, enabling pupils to achieve excellent standards. This is in line with the school's aim to teach pupils to enjoy their education and to see it as a lifelong experience, and to support them in making key career decisions.
- 3.6 An excellent balance of subjects ensures that pupils receive appropriate coverage of creative, academic, sporting and practical activities. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now provided in a networked suite in which all pupils receive a dedicated weekly lesson, and is also thoroughly embedded in the curriculum.
- 3.7 The school offers a wide and varied programme of activities, some of which are delivered by outside specialists. This broad range of activities enables pupils to develop skills and understanding beyond the confines of the curriculum and helps them to explore personal interests at a greater depth. A wide variety of both team and individual sports means that every pupil has opportunities for plenty of physical exercise as well as learning skills for life. The range of activities is carefully planned to include physical, aesthetic and creative subjects. The provision for extra-curricular activities is outstanding. A wide range of well-chosen activities, both during lunch breaks and out of school hours, ensures that all pupils enjoy the opportunity to develop intellectual, creative and physical skills outside the classroom. The list of clubs available is extensive and all the activities are popular and well organised.
- 3.8 Provision for those with SEND is excellent, whether pupils are withdrawn for one-to-one support, work in small groups or are supported within the classroom. Individual education plans identify pupils' particular needs as well as providing strategies for teachers to use in the classroom. These plans are reviewed termly and parents receive a copy. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is excellent. These pupils receive tuition in English from a specialist teacher twice each week, as well as in-class support from graduate assistants, enabling rapid progress to full integration into the curriculum.
- 3.9 Pupils gain a deeper understanding of the world in which they live through regular educational visits, both locally and to Scotland and France. The school also runs holiday clubs that give the pupils further opportunity to explore their locality, enjoy teamwork and participate in outward-bound activities.
- 3.10 The school provides an excellent programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE), in line with its aims and ethos. Each class has a regular PSHE lesson, covering a wide range of topics. During one PSHE lesson, sensitive and well-considered questioning by the teacher led the pupils to explore effectively such issues as racism and sexism. A particularly effective feature is the compilation of class books that are a proudly presented record of class achievements and experiences. These celebrate the successes of all pupils and are prominently displayed in each classroom.
- 3.11 Gifted and talented pupils are formally identified and they are offered suitable challenge through a weekly club that offers stimulating activities such as lateral thinking puzzles, problem-solving tasks and chess. Pupils with sporting talents are challenged through frequent participation in school matches, whilst those whose talents lie in the artistic fields are offered opportunities to sing in the school choirs

and to play in various music ensembles, and to take part in debate, and drama and dance activities. This is in addition to the many opportunities in everyday lessons provided for pupils of all abilities to work independently at their own level. The curriculum ensures that pupils are fully prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- 3.12 The overall quality of teaching is excellent. This fulfils the school's aim to encourage pupils to take full advantage of the opportunities on offer to them. Lessons are characterised by the knowledge each teacher has of the pupils and of their needs. The best lessons observed showed a high level of subject knowledge, were delivered at a brisk pace and used an imaginative range of teaching methods. In a history lesson, pupils enacted a dramatic scene that showed their deep understanding and knowledge of events during the reign of Queen Mary. In all lessons, work is suitably tailored to the differing abilities of the pupils. Teachers employ a range of teaching styles and ask pertinent questions, activities are varied and time is effectively managed. The pupils enjoy the lessons and as a result concentrate for sustained periods, leading to a high level of achievement.
- 3.13 The small class sizes and the excellent relationships between staff and pupils enable teachers to provide immediate and useful oral feedback to pupils on their work. Lessons are well planned, taking into account the pupils' prior attainment and enabling them to acquire new knowledge, to increase their understanding, to develop their skills and to make excellent progress. Independent learning is actively encouraged in all lessons and the pupils take an active role in their learning. Classroom management is excellent and the pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Staff make excellent use of a wide range of resources, including ICT in lessons and throughout the curriculum to enhance learning.
- 3.14 A clear and detailed framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly. Marking throughout the school is excellent: teachers give advice to pupils on how to improve, reward their achievement and write encouraging comments on their work. The new system for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress is highly successful in tracking the progress of individuals, as well as that of different year groups. It enables the school to measure progress in the core skills of mathematics, mental mathematics and reading comprehension. The school also uses an annual word recognition reading and spelling test to track progress in literacy. Other subjects are monitored and tracked through the use of end-of-unit tests.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, including in the EYFS, in accordance with the school's aim to foster personal qualities such as curiosity, concern, industry, reliability, honesty, creativity, enterprise, appreciation and respect. The pupils are confident, articulate and well adjusted, and display a sense of responsibility. They are clearly happy and secure within the school environment. Their behaviour is exemplary and attendance excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' outstanding spiritual awareness is evident in areas of the curriculum such as religious education, where they learn about Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and Hinduism. In their PSHE lessons they explore feelings, friendship and values. They feel valued within the school community and take pride in the rewards and accolades they receive. The high quality art displayed around the school is testimony to their aesthetic development as well as to their appreciation of the natural and man-made worlds.
- 4.3 All the pupils develop an excellent moral sense through the school's Christian ethos and values. They observe courtesy and fairness in their teachers, who act as excellent role models. Hence, they display great kindness and sensitivity in their relationships with each other, as well as good manners. Philosophy lessons afford them the opportunity to explore a range of morals and ethics, and to debate such issues as whether it is ever right to tell a lie.
- 4.4 Pupils develop well socially, an extremely strong feature of the school. They are courteous to their peers, as well as to their teachers and visitors. Pupils learn about responsibilities within the school community, as librarians, house captains and team captains. Some of these positions are voted for by their peers, enabling pupils to gain an understanding of how democracy works. Older pupils learn valuable life skills through such initiatives as the annual outward-bound trip to a Scottish island. Here, their initiative, tenacity and ability to solve problems are called upon when they set up camp on their own overnight in an outdoor environment.
- 4.5 Pupils develop excellent cultural awareness. They learn about the religious and cultural beliefs of others through the study of various faiths, and through celebrating their associated festivals, such as Chanuka, Diwali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year. They are aware of other traditions, and consider that cultural and religious diversity adds richness to life. A wide range of visitors to school for assemblies and class activities have enabled the pupils to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of art and music from their own and other cultures. These have included an aboriginal artist and an African dance group, while children in the EYFS experienced a ceilidh during their music week.

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

- 4.6 The arrangements for promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent and fully support the aims of the school. Staff are skilled, knowledgeable and committed to the welfare of all the pupils in their care. They are well supported by a very successful structure of policies and procedures implemented throughout the school. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and deal with them in a caring and relaxed manner, ensuring that they receive appropriate support and guidance, which contributes significantly to the family atmosphere throughout the school. In interviews, pupils spoke enthusiastically about their school and the opportunities it offers them to develop their all-round skills through interesting lessons and an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. They also appreciate the care shown for their welfare through the focus on healthy living and, in particular, the choices they are offered at lunchtime.
- 4.7 The quality of relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils themselves, is also excellent. In both their responses to the pupils' pre-inspection questionnaire and in discussion, pupils of all ages said they feel that they can turn to adults for assistance and support, and that teachers are genuinely concerned for their well-being. Pupils unanimously stated that there is no bullying, but that they know to whom they could turn if any took place, and that it would be effectively dealt with. All commented on how safe and secure they feel in school.
- 4.8 The school has effective policies and procedures to promote good behaviour, to guard against harassment and bullying, and to deal with any unacceptable behaviour. The aim to build and sustain a friendly, tolerant and supportive community in which all members are valued equally strengthens good relationships in all areas of school life, encouraging pupils to be aware of the needs of others.
- 4.9 The school's safeguarding policy meets requirements and is implemented successfully, and all staff receive appropriate checks and training. All necessary measures have been taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Fire drills are held at least once a term and all alarms are tested regularly. Excellent arrangements to ensure health and safety are highly effective, including comfortable provision for pupils who are ill. The school has a full-time matron. It has an appropriate plan to improve provision and educational access for pupils with disabilities.
- 4.10 The food served is nutritious. Pupils have the opportunity to take regular exercise, and playtimes are well supervised by teaching staff and playground assistants.

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

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

- 5.1 Governance provides excellent support for the school's aims. It shows a clear understanding of the school's ethos and needs, and of the diverse urban and rural backgrounds from which pupils come. The governing body includes a wide range of experience in finance and business management. It also benefits from an excellent range of expertise in education. Planning for introducing new areas of expertise is well considered, including, for example, the appointment of a governor with experience in provision for pupils with SEND. A comprehensive system of committees operates effectively, particularly so in the case of the compliance committee, which ensures that the full body receives regular advice on its legal responsibilities and how to fulfil them. Governors are well informed about the school; they hold regular meetings with senior management staff and receive presentations from subject leaders to which they respond with rigorous and highly focused questions. As a result, they provide both challenge and support. These arrangements are enhanced by the easy communication between senior staff and governors; Prep Management Team (Prep MT) meetings are open to visits by governors at any time and this opportunity is used well. Governors regularly attend school events and also engage in annual visits to lessons.
- 5.2 Governors provide strong support to the school through rigorous financial oversight and planning. Highly effective strategic planning has ensured that the building programme for Years 3 to 6 is designed to enhance both the pupils' education and their sense of worth. Planning includes aims for the development of governance through revision of its committee structures, alongside longer-term aims for the school in support of its ethos of providing an education for life. Governors lead and support the school's widespread culture of thorough self-review. They provide excellent oversight of those areas where they have legal responsibilities, reviewing safeguarding, staff recruitment, and health and safety arrangements.

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

- 5.3 The quality of leadership and management of the school is excellent. It enables the school to achieve its aims in full.
- 5.4 A regular pattern of meetings, clear and daily communication with staff, careful monitoring, self-evaluation and reflection contributes to the high educational standards and excellent pastoral care staff provide to pupils. The programme for self-review is well established and all subjects have been evaluated. There is a formal appraisal scheme for all teaching and non-teaching staff. A pastoral process monitors the provision of pastoral care, with clear guidelines communicated to all staff. An annual review of health and welfare provision is conducted and a rigorous programme of health and safety audits operates across all areas of the school. Recommendations from these reviews are implemented to ensure continual improvement in the quality of care provided.
- 5.5 The school development plan sets out areas for development and improvement, whilst at the same time showing clear understanding of the strengths of the school. The Prep MT and subject co-ordinators are all involved in monitoring standards and identifying best practice, using a wide variety of strategies. This has resulted in high standards and excellent marking, supporting pupils' learning effectively. The Prep

MT recognises a need to implement a regular system of peer review and professional dialogue across all year groups.

- 5.6 In all areas of the school, the management has been successful in recruiting staff of high quality, and through careful induction, a well-focused appraisal scheme and excellent communication it has effectively motivated staff. All staff take part in training provided for the school, in particular for safeguarding and health and safety, which fulfils the requirements in these areas. The school has thorough arrangements for checking and recording the suitability of staff and governors.

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

- 5.7 Links with parents are excellent, including in the EYFS, strongly supporting the academic and personal development aims of the school. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed a high level of support for the attitudes and values promoted by the school, for the range of subjects and experiences offered and for the high quality of pastoral care. They feel that information is easily available and that it is easy to communicate with the school, that responses are timely and that concerns are handled well. There were no issues raised by significant numbers of parents. The school keeps appropriate records of parental concerns which show that these are dealt with promptly and in accordance with its policy.
- 5.8 The school sends informative reports to parents three times a year and holds three parents' evenings a year. The website provides up-to-date information, including detailed material for parents. Parents receive all the information that is required. Daily information is sent to the parents of EYFS children, and planners are used for older pupils, both to record homework and for dialogue with parents if needed. The school also sends a weekly newsletter out to parents.
- 5.9 There are many ways in which parents can be involved in the life of the school, including through invitations to concerts and plays, and the events organised by the active parents association. Since the previous inspection, the school has held a number of curriculum evenings for parents, including those for mathematics, English, and reading for various year groups. A greater number of year group representatives have been appointed. Their main function is to organise social events, such as coffee mornings, in their year groups.

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



# Inspection Report

2012



## **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 This is an outstanding setting, meeting the needs of all children whilst fully appreciating their individual differences. An excellent system of review and self-evaluation ensures the realisation of the school's aims of enabling each child to become confident, creative learners, whose emotional development is nurtured to support individuality. Staff sustain existing high standards by regularly identifying areas for improvement, creating a stimulating environment where children feel valued and safe.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are outstanding, demonstrating a clear vision and an understanding of high standards. Excellent arrangements ensure that all children are effectively safeguarded. All adults have been suitably checked, and are well qualified and appropriately trained. Policies and procedures necessary for the efficient management of the setting are implemented rigorously. The capacity for sustained improvement is excellent, and is reflected in perceptive and detailed self-evaluation. Risk assessments have been established to ensure safety and are effectively implemented. Parents were overwhelmingly positive in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, expressing appreciation of their children's progress and the standard of their care. Parents are well informed of children's progress. Information evenings and parental workshops are provided regularly, and notebooks are sent home weekly, indicating what children have learned about a topic. This creates a valuable home-school link, and encourages parents to take an active role in their children's development and learning. The effective use and good management of resources, including those outdoors, lead to highly successful outcomes for all children.

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

6.3 The quality of provision is outstanding. All children learn and develop extremely well through stimulating play and valuable first-hand experiences. Regular analysis of data from assessments ensures continuity of teaching and informs next steps, ensuring that all children are supported effectively and make rapid progress. The setting has introduced the use of a commercial tool involving enlarged books that collate child-centred ideas and play an integral part in weekly planning. The Nursery and Reception environments are stimulating, challenging and productive. Great emphasis is placed on learning outdoors, and the school is pursuing the possibility of accessing further training for woodland education. Children's work and interests are valued and are reflected in high quality, colourful displays. A well-judged balance is maintained between adult-led and child-initiated activities, and children regularly benefit from both indoor and outdoor play. Staff promote welfare, health and safety extremely well and children are encouraged to eat healthy meals. The behaviour policy is implemented well, resulting in a happy and busy atmosphere, where children benefit fully from all the opportunities provided.

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

- 6.4 Outcomes for the children are outstanding. Children make rapid progress towards meeting all of the Early Learning Goals, with many likely to exceed them. Nursery children listen attentively to stories and play a range of percussion instruments. Reception children write names and addresses on parcels and play phonics games. All children co-operate well, enjoy their learning, and make choices and decisions. They are well prepared for a successful transition to the next stage of their learning. Children trust and respect their teachers and relate well to each other. They are provided with secure foundations for their future well-being in all aspects of their learning.

**Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.**

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Karin Kelly

Mrs Ann McDonnell

Mr Richard Lloyd

Mrs Lynda Boden

Reporting Inspector

Former Head of Department, IAPS school

Deputy Head, GSA school

Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector



# YARM SCHOOL

EDUCATING FOR LIFE

## **Yarm Preparatory School**

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