

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## INSPECTION REPORT ON

### Hawkesdown House School

Full Name of the School	<b>Hawkesdown House School</b>
DCSF Number	<b>207/6400</b>
Early Years Number	<b>N/A</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>N/A</b>
Address	<b>27 Edge Street, London W8 7PN.</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 7727 9090</b>
Fax Number	<b>020 7727 9988</b>
Email Address	<b>admin@hawkesdown.co.uk</b>
Headmistress	<b>Mrs Christine Leslie</b>
Proprietor	<b>Mr Michael Loveridge</b>
Age Range (of the whole school)	<b>3 to 8</b>
Gender	<b>Boys</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009</b>
Early Years Age Range	<b>3 to 5</b>
Early Years Gender	<b>Boys</b>
Early Years Foundation Stage Inspection Dates	<b>11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> May 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.....	4
	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils .....	5
	The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment).....	6
3.	THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS .....	9
	The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils.....	9
	The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community .....	10
4.	THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ....	11
	The Quality of Governance .....	11
	The Quality of Leadership and Management .....	11
5.	CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS.....	13
	Overall Conclusions .....	13
	Next Steps.....	13
6.	SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE .....	14
	List of Inspectors .....	14
7.	THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) .....	15
	What the Setting Should Do to Improve .....	17

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the School**

- 1.1 Hawkesdown House was founded in September 2001 as a pre-preparatory school for boys aged three to eight. The building was originally additional accommodation for the maintained primary school still in existence nearby, and was bought by the proprietor in 2000. He maintains an oversight of school life. The school is in a traditional building beyond the end of a terrace of houses in a quiet cul-de-sac. Whilst there is no outdoor playing space, boys have a programme of breaks and games at local recreation grounds and parks.
- 1.2 The school has 55 boys in the EYFS section and 83 in the main school. There are nine classes - one Nursery and two each for Reception, Years 1, 2 and 3. Boys usually join either the Nursery or Reception classes from local Nursery settings. Most leave at the end of Year 3 to attend day and/or boarding preparatory schools, principally in the London area. About one fifth of the boys arrive and leave at other times, as a result of their parents' career moves. Many live in the local area and walk to school with parents or carers.
- 1.3 The pupils reflect the international composition of the local neighbourhood and are mainly of British, Russian, Chinese or Japanese heritage or come from a range of European countries. About one quarter are bilingual or speak English as an additional language. The school ethos is based on Christian principles though children from a range of faith backgrounds are welcomed. Since the last inspection in 2003, the number on roll has increased from 83 to 138 and substantial improvements have been made to the buildings to cater for this. About one sixth are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and a very small number have a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 Prospective pupils attend for an afternoon's familiarisation session to meet the headmistress, and to ensure that the school can meet their needs. No formal entry test is conducted. Entry capabilities are wide, which the school recognises in its classification of some as young learners, and others as mature and settled. The ability profile on entry into Year 1 is above the national average for boys of that age.
- 1.5 The aims, which reflect the vision for Hawkesdown House School promoted by the proprietor and headmistress, state that the school is to provide a caring environment in which young boys are nurtured as individuals. The emphasis is on teaching and learning in a manner that helps each boy to develop personally and intellectually. Staff, pupils and parents are expected to work together to create a sense of community in which teamwork plays a key role and all are valued. Discipline is intended to be firm, fair and friendly, building an ethos that is based on mutual respect and consideration.

- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

***Early Years Foundation Stage***

School	Age of children
Nursery	3 to 4
Reception	4 to 5

***Pre-preparatory Department***

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 1
Form 2	Year 2
Form 3	Year 3

- 1.7 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 its pupils with a good educational experience through its curricular and extra-curricular activities. These are in line with the school's aims and philosophy of enabling pupils to develop personally and intellectually. Since the last inspection, the school has taken appropriate measures to increase the time available and to provide greater opportunities for practical mathematics. It has also introduced a comprehensive and well-considered strategy to assist pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- 2.2 The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers all six areas of learning and is of a high quality. In Years 1 to 3 the curriculum is broadly based and equally accessible to all pupils, contributing effectively to their development. In addition to a wide range of subjects, including French and personal, social, health and moral education (PSHME), judo, chess and fencing also form part of the curriculum. Pupils' literacy and speaking and listening skills are promoted in virtually all lessons and numeracy in many. The music curriculum makes good provision for them to develop their singing and listening skills. Number work in mathematics is an area of strength and the new science programme is enabling pupils to develop their skills, use relevant language and develop an understanding of scientific concepts. The school makes good provision for physical education, both in lessons and at other times. 'Get Moving' assemblies, morning walks in the locality and use of nearby parks for games sessions are both energetic and enjoyable. Creative and investigative aspects of the curriculum have a lower priority than other areas, often taking second place to the expectation that pupils should record information they have been taught. Responses to the parents' questionnaire showed strong agreement that the school offers an appropriate and enjoyable curriculum.
- 2.3 In line with the school's aims, the school's PSHME programme contributes well to enabling pupils to develop in a secure environment. Pupils are made fully aware of the school's golden rules. Regular circle-time discussions encourage pupils to be aware of each other's needs. The pupils' personal development is enriched by extra-curricular clubs and strong links with the community. Nearly all pupils attend the extensive activities programme which offers them the opportunity to develop their talents in areas such as Mandarin, art, information and communication technology (ICT), music and drama. Pupils in Year 2 spoke very enthusiastically about their football squad sessions after school. Visits are an integral part of the curriculum for all year groups. Pupils take part in two visits each term to places as diverse as Hever Castle and Knightsbridge Fire Station. Year 3 pupils enjoy visiting an activity centre in Dorking. Regular visitors to the school, such as local police support officers, road safety officers and parents, provide opportunities for pupils to engage in discussion with representatives of the local community.
- 2.4 Based on a good transition policy, preparation for pupils to move to the next stage of their education is effective. The school works closely with parents to ensure that pupils make a successful transfer to their next schools. The over-riding concern is to find the appropriate school for each child, with the happiness and well-being of the pupil being of the utmost priority. Throughout Hawkesdown House, great care is taken to ensure that pupil movement on to their next class at the end of the academic year is as seamless as possible. Information relating to the pupils is carefully discussed prior to each move.
- 2.5 Curriculum planning is good. It is informed by the use of assessment data, with modifications targeted on those areas identified as in need of development. Subject policies and schemes of work identify clearly the curriculum for each year group and long and

medium term planning is thorough. Equality of access for all pupils is carefully considered, with work matched to mature and young learner classes in English and mathematics. The very high levels of participation in the activities offered after school each day indicates the success with which the school promotes them.

- 2.6 The school takes a great deal of care to ensure that those pupils requiring learning support receive personal attention; detailed lesson plans indicate the care taken to ensure the needs of identified children are met. Where there is a statement of special educational needs the school makes outstanding provision, working closely with parents and the local authority to achieve this. Individual education plans are in place for those who require adaptation of the curriculum. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive intensive, effective support followed by ongoing help in class.
- 2.7 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

### **Pupils' Learning and Achievements**

- 2.8 The quality of pupils' learning is good. Pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities, meeting the school's aim that they develop intellectually. Standards of learning and achievement have improved since the previous inspection.
- 2.9 Pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge, skill and understanding. They make very effective progress in the development of reading and accurate writing skills and express themselves very confidently and fluently when talking about their lessons and activities. Pupils' mathematical competence is secure and they show enjoyment in number-based lessons. Overall, pupils' ICT skills are good but they are stronger in some subject areas than others. In a Year 1 history lesson, ICT was used very effectively, involving both graphics and text, as pupils studied concentric castles. They were also encouraged to use library books to undertake their independent research. Pupils' investigative and experimental approaches are developing as new schemes are implemented, but work is occasionally too prescriptive, reducing the opportunities for creative application.
- 2.10 Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects and activities. They reach above average levels of attainment, notwithstanding the relatively high number who arrive and leave other than at the usual times of admission and transfer. The school takes care to monitor individual pupils' progress and provides very effective support, including curriculum changes, where progress is less effective than expected. By the end of the EYFS, most pupils are achieving or exceeding the Early Learning Goals. Pupils build on the secure foundations established in the EYFS as they move through the school. Achievement in all areas of learning is good. In discussion with pupils and in lesson observations, the very high attainment levels achieved by the most able pupils are apparent. Pupils' talents are recognised in art and music and they develop them further through extra-curricular activities such as art and recorder clubs, and through individual instrumental tuition. Pupils with English as an additional language, those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those with statements of special educational need, make very good progress and speak with confidence to their peers and adults.
- 2.11 Overall, pupils' progress, as judged by nationally standardized assessments, is above national norms in reading, writing and mathematics. Regular testing is used to monitor progress in mathematics and literacy against National Curriculum attainment levels and in twice-yearly reading and spelling assessments.

- 2.12 Group and individual achievements are very good as the school provides many different opportunities where they can excel. Boys have enjoyed considerable success in national handwriting competitions, with individuals either winning or finishing as runner-up in recent years. Year 3 pupils achieved excellent results in national assessments of English speaking and pupils' artwork has been displayed in local exhibitions. A third of children are learning to play musical instruments at the school and the choir has performed at local Nursery schools. All pupils confidently take part in class assemblies, performing to parents, and the annual nativity play which takes place in a local church. The football team has successfully competed in fixtures against other schools.
- 2.13 Pupils study hard and organise their work independently most effectively for their ages. In a Year 2 lesson on insulators and conductors, and with some guidance, pupils planned their own work, setting up circuits and developing their understanding of the properties of materials. Book presentation is exemplary; pupils are encouraged to take care with presentation and pride in their written work. They concentrate very well, aware of the importance of individual effort if they are to succeed.
- 2.14 Overall, pupils' level of cooperation is good. They listen well to one another's points of view in circle time and take turns in discussions. They are given few opportunities to develop their skills in paired or group learning tasks, however, which means that pupils perform less well in cooperative tasks, preferring to work competitively and individually when possible.
- 2.15 Pupils follow instructions very effectively, settling down quickly to work and activities. They show perseverance and their eagerness to achieve successful outcomes is abundantly clear. They speak of their enjoyment of lessons and their enthusiasm for extra-curricular activities. Enthusiasm and enjoyment are particularly notable in lessons where the challenge of work is high. Year 2 young learners, playing tables and number games, were excited to be working to the limit of their ability in mathematics.

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

- 2.16 The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and continues to be the strength it was at the time of the last inspection. The school fully meets its aim to help each child to develop personally by providing a caring environment in which young boys are nurtured as individuals. Throughout the school, enthusiasm and enjoyment pervade everything the boys do.
- 2.17 The pupils' strong sense of identity and self-worth is excellent. Assemblies and religious education lessons promote firm Christian beliefs. All assemblies include the Lord's Prayer, which children from Nursery upwards are able to recite. During this time, the pupils who do not wish to join in sit quietly and have their own thoughts. This helps to unite all pupils as a community. Once a week an assembly is led by a local vicar, which further enhances the importance of assemblies and the spirituality they promote. Pupils show respect for the beliefs of a wide range of different faiths, learnt through their study of several of the major world religions. Pupils also demonstrate their excellent understanding of meaning and purpose. For example in a religious education lesson, pupils listened enthralled to the story of John Wesley and the life-changing moment when he decided to carry out God's work. When asked why the fire that destroyed his parents' home, but left the family unharmed, was of such significance to John Wesley, one of the pupils explained that 'your friends and family are so much more important than just buildings'.

- 2.18 For their ages, pupils have an excellent understanding of moral issues and are able to distinguish right from wrong. This is apparent in what they say and in their daily actions around the school. Confident and secure in their dealings with each other and adults, they are nevertheless obedient and usually considerate. They are expected to abide by the golden rules, displayed in every room, and are quite clear about the sanctions that are taken if they are broken. Consideration for others is at the heart of the boys' approach, reflecting the school aim that staff, pupils and parents should work together to create a sense of community. Pupils appreciate the weekly PSHME lessons, where flexible planning enables them to discuss current and personal issues, concerning the welfare of individual children.
- 2.19 Social development is excellent overall. As pupils walk to local parks to take exercise they are often in the public eye, and are often praised for their conduct. During a Year 2 pupils' 'huff and puff' walk, three members of the public remarked to an inspector accompanying them, that the pupils were a credit to the school. Boys are reminded when arriving at the local playground of the need to be aware of other younger children who are also using the facilities, and they do this exceptionally well. They have learnt to be responsible for their own behaviour. Occasionally in the classroom, pupils are less keen to co-operate. Especially if there is a need to share equipment, their competitive approach comes to the fore, although they respond quickly and contritely if admonished for failing to follow the golden rules. Pupils are proud of the responsibilities they carry. Year 3 pupils assume responsibilities within the house system, such as serving the lunches, and know they are to set an example as the senior pupils in the school. Younger pupils are keen to be 'helping hands' and sensibly carry out duties designated by their teachers.
- 2.20 An outstanding contribution through the curriculum, visitors and visits enables pupils to have an excellent appreciation for their age of different cultures. Pupils come from a range of countries and represent several faith groups. Every opportunity is taken to invite parents in to talk about the countries they come from, including the art and religious festivals they celebrate. Mandarin is a popular club where the language and Chinese heritage is celebrated. Pupils benefit from many visits to sites such as castles and museums, through which they gain an appreciation of British history and its culture. Visits from local police, for example to discuss safety in the streets of London, enable pupils to understand much about the community in Britain today. Pupils from a very wide range of backgrounds, speaking different home languages, play and work together exceedingly well.
- 2.21 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

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

- 2.22 The quality of teaching is good and of a better standard than at the time of the last inspection. The school's aim, that teaching and learning should focus on helping each pupil to develop personally and intellectually, is well met. EYFS classes are well taught, with on-going assessment helping to achieve challenging, active learning.
- 2.23 Staff know their pupils exceptionally well and work to enable all, of whatever background and ability, to succeed and make good progress in developing their skills and understanding. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those with statements of special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are taught well and receive effective additional specialist support where appropriate.
- 2.24 Excellent relationships between staff and pupils and a well-taught broad curriculum enable pupils to develop an enjoyment of, and interest in, learning. Staff provide a wide range of very effective physical activity sessions in which pupils participate energetically. Practical

- science lessons motivate pupils to learn, and challenging English and mathematics lessons provide opportunities for pupils to think and learn for themselves. Creative and enquiry-based learning have insufficient emphasis in lessons, with the result that these aspects are less well developed.
- 2.25 Teachers and support staff are firm, fair and friendly. They gain the boys' respect and generate good learning behaviour in lessons. Pupils enjoy lessons, are encouraged to behave responsibly at all times and respond quickly to clear guidelines as to what is acceptable conduct.
- 2.26 Planning for lessons is helpful; it refers to prior learning and intended learning outcomes. What they are expected to learn is not always made clear to the pupils, however, and key questions to elicit from pupils the extent of their understanding are not usually included. Teachers tend to talk rather more than is necessary at times and too great a priority is given to recording factual information in some lessons. This form of teaching results in pupils working effectively as individuals, but less successfully on co-operative tasks. The complex timetable, which tries to maximise the use of the available accommodation and specialist staff, results in a number of split lessons, where subjects are started and then returned to at a later stage in the day. Such arrangements make the teaching process more difficult and tend to reduce pupils' opportunities for becoming involved in extended tasks.
- 2.27 Teachers' knowledge of the pupils' abilities, skills and development are exceptionally good. The grouping of pupils into mature and young learners is very helpful, supporting teachers in matching work to the pupils' varying needs. In an extremely effective mathematics lesson for young learners, for example, the differentiated practical experiences planned to meet individual needs enabled all pupils to gain a clear understanding of capacity. Higher attainers were using three and four digit numbers and units with confidence.
- 2.28 In most lessons teachers have good or better understanding of the material being taught. All aspects of mathematics and English, including phonics, are secure. Specialist teaching in chess, judo and French provide pupils with good learning opportunities.
- 2.29 Teaching makes effective use of the very good range and quality of resources available. Reading books of an appropriate style and difficulty are complemented by modern text books. Practical equipment for design and technology, mathematics and science is sufficient and of good quality. Difficulties occasionally arise when planning results in the same practical equipment being needed for different lessons at one time. The ICT facilities are sound and well used by all pupils. Teaching assistants work very well with teachers, supporting the learning of individuals and groups of pupils.
- 2.30 Marking is frequent and pupils receive generous praise for their endeavours, as staff respond to the stated expectations in the school policy. Stars and 'best effort awards' are appreciated by pupils. Spellings are frequently corrected. Few constructively critical comments are made, however, or clear targets set indicating how work can be improved. Where such statements are made, some of the language used by staff is too complex for pupils to understand, they tend not to follow them up and teachers' efforts in marking are wasted. Staff assess pupils' progress regularly. Nationally standardised tests enable the school to measure attainment and relative progress. A wide range of evidence is retained, including portfolio work as a reference point for staff. This assessment information is used to good effect, informing planning and intervention strategies if underachievement is identified. All pupils benefit from the rigorous assessment system, including high attainers and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

2.31 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 provision of pastoral care, and the welfare, health and safety of pupils is outstanding throughout the school, from the Nursery class to Year 3, and has improved since the last inspection. It now fully satisfies the school's aims to provide a caring environment and an ethos that is based on mutual respect and consideration.
- 3.2 Teachers and non-teaching staff are totally committed to the care of the pupils and provide excellent support and guidance. In discussions, pupils of all ages stated they were very well supported by staff. Adults are watchful and ready to intervene, anticipating any issues. The form teacher, meeting pupils at registration and frequently during the day, plays an important role in the pastoral care of each child. Pertinent questions are asked of pupils as staff check on their welfare.
- 3.3 Pastoral arrangements are very effective and supportive. An excellent behaviour policy is in place, with clear guidelines on expectations. This is understood and consistently applied by all staff. Members of staff are fully supported by the senior management team, both in following the policy and in their dealings with pupils and their parents.
- 3.4 The school is justifiably proud of the very high quality of relationships between its staff and pupils. The teachers know their pupils extremely well and pupils are very positive about their teachers. During lessons pupils listen attentively to each other and are mostly very supportive of one another.
- 3.5 Measures to promote good discipline and behaviour are excellent. The school has a comprehensive and effective anti-bullying policy. Pupils in discussions said that they were unaware of any instances of bullying. They value the reward system greatly, both the points awarded to houses and the gold stars collected towards their own personal certificate. Each week, one pupil in every class is awarded the much valued 'community spirit badge' for doing something special of social merit, and parents are invited into assembly to watch these being awarded.
- 3.6 Thorough child protection measures are in place and are understood by all staff. All staff, including the designated persons for child protection, have received appropriate training from local authority specialists. Admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained.
- 3.7 The school has an extremely comprehensive first aid policy and a sanatorium that meets all requirements. All necessary measures have been taken to minimise the risk of fire. Tests and fire drills are undertaken regularly and a fire drill plan can be found in each room.
- 3.8 The school has a very thorough health and safety policy. The proprietor ensures that this policy is reviewed and is followed effectively. Any concerns about safety are dealt with promptly by the headmistress. Walking the pupils in the local area is extremely well organised with careful consideration given to any risks involved.
- 3.9 The pupils are encouraged to be healthy by sensible guidance given in lessons. The school provides healthy lunches for all pupils and although there is no choice, vegetarian and individual dietary needs are catered for. All the pupils enjoy their meals and look forward to their favourite lunch. The pupils are encouraged to try a wide variety of foods as presented to them. The imaginative opportunities provided for the pupils to take exercise more than make up for the restricted play space on the school premises.

- 3.10 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**

- 3.11 Throughout the school, the strong links identified at the time of the last inspection have been enhanced and are now excellent. The school's aim of parents, pupils and staff working together to create a sense of community is completely met.
- 3.12 Parents are extremely pleased with all aspects of the education provided for their children. In their responses to a questionnaire about the school they expressed particular pleasure at the attitudes and values promoted, the help and guidance provided, the quality of the curriculum, the children's progress and their behaviour, the way they are welcomed into the school and the helpful informative information that they receive. In all these areas, what the school provides and the outcomes for the pupils were found by inspectors to be good or excellent.
- 3.13 Many opportunities are provided for parents to be involved in school life. They are invited to a wide range of activities, such as Friday assemblies and drinks parties. They join staff in accompanying pupils on walks, meet their child's teacher at the start of the year, and are invited to attend meetings three times a year to discuss their child's progress and development. The headmistress has an open door policy and welcomes enquiries of whatever form. Any questions raised by parents are invariably resolved quickly and effectively. The headmistress gives all communication with parents a very high priority.
- 3.14 Parents receive informative termly reports on their children's achievements. These helpful documents include some targets but these tend to be somewhat generic rather than identifying specific points where improvement would be helpful in raising standards further. The school website is well constructed and provides all required information, including the school prospectus and aims. Policies about important areas of school life such as anti-bullying, health and safety and behaviour are informative and accessible to all parties. All aspects concerning statemented pupils are appropriately communicated to the various groups involved. Parents are kept regularly informed about interesting facets of school life, important dates and successes through regular newsletters.
- 3.15 Procedures to deal with complaints are clear, comprehensive and appropriate, and parents have access to them, both electronically and as paper copies.
- 3.16 Exceptionally strong links have been forged with the wider community. The school benefits from the support of local authority specialists, for example in providing guidance to ensure provision of a high quality Early Years curriculum, and training of staff in child protection and first aid. A vicar regularly visits the school to take assemblies and the police and fire brigade come into school to educate the pupils about various safety points. The high quality of the visiting speakers' communications is such that pupils develop a very good understanding for the topics discussed and a healthy respect for authority. Links with other Nursery settings and maintained sector primary schools are constructive and helpful to all involved. Discussions between primary school headteachers and the headmistress have been particularly beneficial in both directions, in developing the quality of education provided. Contacts with specialist staff in the teaching of pupils with hearing impairments are excellent and ongoing. Parents, pupils and staff raise substantial sums of money for charities, intent on helping others where possible.
- 3.17 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 Governance has been effective in bringing about substantial improvements since the last inspection, for both EYFS and the main school. Relationships between the proprietor and headmistress are professional and productive and have ensured that the school meets its clearly stated aims and values.
- 4.2 Regular thrice termly meetings between the proprietor and headmistress result in well documented concise records, with clear points for action. The focus of discussions and analysis tends to be more concerned with management and administrative issues, but the curriculum, teaching and learning, and pupils' well-being and achievements are addressed. Points for action are followed up and they result in improvements in the quality of education provided. These sessions, complemented by an annual scrutiny of the pupils' written work, and a termly report prepared by the headmistress, enable the proprietor to gain a sound overview of what is taking place at the school. Consideration is being given to establishing a board of visitors for the school, to give the proprietor and the headmistress access to a wider range of professional expertise in supporting and evaluating the school's success. The proprietor is fully aware of the excellent impact the headmistress has had on helping Hawkesdown House to evolve and improve, and of the school's many strengths.
- 4.3 Policies and procedures are reviewed as required, such as the annual check of the child protection policy and its effective implementation. Financial planning is detailed and robust. The school has the staff and resources that it needs to provide the pupils with a high quality education, and maximises the effective and efficient use of the limited accommodation. The proprietor, through the headmistress, ensures that all requirements concerning pupils' welfare, health and safety are met.

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

- 4.4 The leadership and management of the school, including EYFS, are good with several strong elements. The vision is thoroughly implemented, which means that the school fulfils its overarching aim to provide a caring environment in which young boys are nurtured as individuals. The quality of leadership and management reported at the time of the previous inspection has been enhanced, leading to significant improvements across the school.
- 4.5 Members of the senior management team give the headmistress effective support so that her positive leadership is successful in promoting the vision for the school. The sense of purpose and commitment, which members of the senior team generate, permeates the school and involves all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching. The outcome for the pupils is the good quality of education and excellent care provided. The headmistress or another member of the staff is on duty at the front door each morning, greeting boys and their parents and setting an excellent tone for the day. At the end of the day a similar procedure takes place as the boys leave. These confidence and politeness boosting exercises, and many others of a similar nature, help to ensure that the school fulfils its aim that each pupil develops personally; they are much appreciated by parents.
- 4.6 The management team meets regularly and formally to analyse the needs of the school, resolve current issues and set priorities. A management matrix includes systematic reviews of all aspects of the school and the good school development plan gives clear targets for the next three years. It indicates which members of staff will be responsible for putting each

- item into practice and includes clear success criteria. This practice makes a valuable contribution to improving the quality of education provided.
- 4.7 Policies and procedures have evolved over time into thorough, helpful documents. Members of the management team and subject leaders check and assess their effectiveness but a lack of time away from classroom duties during the school day makes this evaluation less productive, especially in the sharing of good practice and providing support.
- 4.8 Appraisals of teaching staff are conducted by the headmistress and are very useful in enhancing their professional development. Teaching assistants are encouraged to develop their skills and some have gone on to teacher training courses.
- 4.9 Good in-service training sessions are arranged for the whole staff. Recent topics have included standardised testing and assessment, run by a member of the management team. These have resulted in a better use of data in assessing pupils' needs. Effective training in phonics and practical mathematics are having a good impact on teaching and learning. Subject leaders are developing their subjects, but a shortfall in available time is unhelpful in achieving consistently effective practice in teaching and learning. Although it does not currently have a newly qualified teacher (NQT), the school participates in the national scheme for the induction of NQTs and arrangements are good. Recruitment procedures are robust and all checks on staff, including those carried out through the Criminal Records Bureau, are carried out efficiently. A central register of all staff is kept accurately.
- 4.10 Financial management is very effective and ensures that the needs of pupils are met. Resources are plentiful and of good quality. Where a cogent argument is made for improved equipment and facilities, these are invariably provided.
- 4.11 The routine administration of the school is highly efficient and the atmosphere in the school office is welcoming to visitors, staff, parents and pupils. Requests and enquiries are treated with courtesy, matching the ethos of the school. Arrangements for caretaking are at present not clearly defined and result in added work for the headmistress, taking time away from useful curriculum, teaching and learning development.
- 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 Hawkesdown House School has an excellent ethos where pupils thrive. The school successfully meets its aim that all pupils are cared for and nurtured as individuals. Staff care greatly for pupils' well being, working closely together to provide an outstanding quality of pastoral care. Health, safety, care and support have a very high priority in the school, a point appreciated by pupils and their parents. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are exceptionally polite and well mannered, and show levels of personal development, substantially in excess of those expected of pupils of their age. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress in their studies. A broad and well-balanced curriculum, including a good range of clubs and visits, provides pupils with an enjoyable combination of subjects. A strong focus on English and mathematics in all years, and physical activity in a variety of ways, enables pupils to grow into highly literate, numerate and healthy young pupils. The creative and investigative aspects of the curriculum have a lower priority than other areas, as there is a strong focus on pupils recording information. The quality of teaching is good overall but with some unhelpful inconsistencies in approach. Marking is regular and systematic, although few constructive comments or targets are provided. Pupils benefit from extremely successful links with the community. High quality relationships have been established with nearby maintained primary schools. Leadership and management are clear and effective, and driven by a wish to maximise pupils' development and enjoyment. The vision for the school is clearly communicated to parents and highly appreciated. Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's successes and its potential to improve further.
- 5.2 The recommendations of the last inspection report have been met and pupils are benefiting from the improvements that have been made. The school now has accurate assessment data on individual pupils and uses this information to help match work to their needs. The amount of time used to teach mathematics is now appropriate and there is increasing use of practical equipment to help pupils learn. The school hall is effectively timetabled for pupil play throughout the day.
- 5.3 The school meets all the regulatory requirements.

### Next Steps

- 5.4 In order to enhance further the overall quality of education provided, the school should take the following actions.
1. Improve the overall quality of teaching through effective evaluation of current practice and the provision of training where appropriate.
  2. Ensure that the marking of all pupils' work provides constructive criticism and clear targets for improvement.
  3. Place greater emphasis on creative and investigative aspects of the curriculum.
- 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 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> May 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 the proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the sanatorium. The responses of parents 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 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009 by one inspector. The inspector observed sessions, talked to the children, examined samples of work, and held discussions with staff and the proprietor. Comments from parents and carers were considered, and the inspector examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

### **List of Inspectors**

Mr Peter McGregor	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Glynis Holmes	Head, IAPS school
Mr Jim Turner	Head, IAPS school
Mr Christopher Sanderson	Early Years Lead Inspector

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

- 7.1 The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) section comprises a Nursery with fourteen boys, aged three to four, and two Reception classes, accommodating 41 boys aged four to five. They represent a wide range of cultural backgrounds, reflecting the neighbourhood's international composition. Many live locally and walk to school. A significant proportion is bilingual or has English as an additional language. The school clearly meets its aim to provide a caring environment, in which boys are nurtured as individuals, and healthy and happy relationships are promoted in a safe, supportive atmosphere that fosters learning and development.
- 7.2 Boys benefit strongly from the school's excellent partnership with parents and thrive in a culture characterised by praise and reward. On-going monitoring ensures that boys make good progress. Staff take great care to ensure that boys' welfare is strongly promoted and their independence fostered. The children develop a clear understanding of how to maintain their own safety and well-being. A productive partnership with the local borough, strong links with feeder Nursery schools and good relationships with other local settings are well used to promote high standards of education and care. Regular review of policies and procedures, ensures that they remain relevant and effective. A valuable appraisal system establishes targets, which are closely linked to the school's needs and teachers' interests and is well used to identify priorities for professional development.
- 7.3 Boys achieve well in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Carefully planned and linked topics ensure that their knowledge and understanding develop consistently well across all learning areas. Information gained from measuring attainment against national norms is carefully used to establish ability on entry and measure progress. Portfolios of pupils' work, built up over time, are well used and show significant progress by the end of the EYFS, with many boys attaining the Early Learning Goals and working beyond them. They benefit from the opportunities to evaluate their own learning. An exciting curriculum and a variety of strategies and practical activities ensure that boys become active learners. Open-ended questioning and the use of 'Thinking Caps' enable them to think for themselves. They develop an ability to think critically through encouragement to ask each other questions. Active learning is strongly promoted through the provision of an exciting balance of child-led and teacher-led practical activities and is evident in role play and in the boys' creativity when using construction toys. It is further developed through good use of the outdoor courtyard, activities in local parks and discovery walks, through which boys reinforce what they learn in class. They use information and communication technology (ICT) creatively across the curriculum, notably the interactive whiteboards and the internet for research. Boys respond well to individual responsibilities, such as taking the register to the office and they develop independence and inquisitive minds working in small groups, in pairs and on their own. They are confident learners and articulate and confident communicators. Role play in numeracy lessons, using a till at the travel agents, for example, demonstrates a good understanding of number and shows their ability to transfer the skills learnt into their play.
- 7.4 Welfare is an outstanding strength. Boys have a mature understanding of keeping safe and excellent awareness of road safety; they use strategies they have learnt with confidence. Their scooter training clearly benefits their safety awareness between home and school. An extensive and varied practical curriculum consistently reinforces a mature understanding of healthy habits and healthy eating. They have good access to milk, water and fresh fruit. Boys enjoy and understand the importance of exercise and maintain high standards of personal hygiene. Enthusiasm and enjoyment pervade everything the boys do. They respond well to behaviour strategies founded on clear and consistent expectations and guidance. A

strong sense of community spirit and a well-judged focus on being a good role model effectively encourage positive attitudes towards learning and relationships with peers. The presentation of stickers at lunch time and the 'kindness trees' and 'helping hands' in the classrooms reward the boys for making a positive contribution. Self-esteem is high and boys develop skills for the future well.

- 7.5 Adults work well with boys to support their learning. Curriculum co-ordinators ensure that topics are interesting and move at a good pace, so that enthusiasm and excitement for learning are sustained. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and staff use a range of strategies to appeal to different learning styles and ensure that the boys develop good learning habits. The learning environment strongly promotes progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Classrooms are very stimulating; attractive interactive displays encourage a genuine desire to share learning. Lunchtime extends the learning environment well. Staff make good use of limited outdoor space and extremely good use of the local area and amenities. However, the number of pupils in the Reception classes, in relation to the classroom space available, places limitations on the range and success of the activities undertaken. Planning takes careful account of individual strengths and needs and reflects pupils' talents and interests, providing a firm foundation for enjoyment and ensuring that support and extension are provided as necessary. Grouping into mature and young learners ensures that work is suitably challenging. Regular observations ensure that work is carefully tailored to meet the needs of all learners so that boys are well motivated to achieve. Ongoing assessment, to which all staff contribute, results in that achievement remaining good in relation to ability and stage of development. Provision for individual needs is supported by secure procedures and policies and regular review of individual education plans. Timetabling makes good provision for both indoor and outdoor activities and planning ensures a balance between adult-led and child-led activities. The use of the courtyard is a significant recent development.
- 7.6 A key member of staff for each child establishes close working relationships with the boy and his family, ensuring close monitoring of his welfare, which is strongly promoted by the school's nurturing atmosphere and thorough child protection measures. Health and well-being are strongly promoted, both in the everyday life of the school and in curriculum topics which develop the awareness of, for example, hand-washing and dental hygiene. Circle time and visitors to assemblies enable staff to reinforce the boys' understanding. The school's travel plan encourages pupils to come to school on foot and provides training for those who come by scooter. Outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys are maintained in a suitable and safe condition; half-termly inspections of the classrooms ensure a safe working environment, which is well supported by the daily routines of the staff, boys and cleaners. Outings are prepared for carefully and are supported by thorough risk assessments and detailed briefings for adult helpers. The school has an appropriate number of staff with first aid qualifications and information about boys with allergies and other medical needs is communicated well.
- 7.7 Leadership and management in the EYFS are strong. Appointment procedures are rigorous and ensure that staff are appropriately trained and qualified and are suitable to work with children. Staff are dedicated to ensuring high levels of care and an education appropriate to the boys' needs. Resources are very efficiently deployed. Careful cataloguing and the auditing of the need for resources ensure that they are well used and shared effectively. Regular meetings to share information and discuss issues and comprehensive monitoring of provision and outcomes provide the leadership with a clear understanding of areas for improvement. The school has responded well to recommendations at the last inspection which related to the EYFS classes. It has increased the range of construction toys and the number of outdoor activities and focussed successfully on developing handwriting. The

caring, inclusive approach of the staff recognises the boys' diversity of backgrounds and ensures that the uniqueness of each child is acknowledged and that pastoral and educational support is provided as necessary. Boys benefit from the school's close links with parents and staff enjoy strong support and provision for professional development.

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

- 7.8 To improve still further the high quality of its provision, the setting should:
1. review the space limitations in the Reception classrooms with a view to improving the range and success of activities that can be undertaken by the pupils concerned.
- 7.9 The school's provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage