



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BRABYNS PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

**INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Brabyns Preparatory School

Full Name of School	<b>Brabyns Preparatory School</b>
DfE Number	<b>356/6004</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY421480</b>
Address	<b>Brabyns Preparatory School 34-36 Arkwright Road Marple Stockport Cheshire SK6 7DB</b>
Telephone Number	<b>0161 427 2395</b>
Fax Number	<b>0161 449 0704</b>
Email Address	<b>admin@brabynsprepschool.co.uk</b>
Head	<b>Mr Lee Sanders</b>
Chairman of Education Committee	<b>Mr Steven Wade</b>
Age Range	<b>2 to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>128</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (56 boys; 72 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>0-2 (EYFS): 4      5-11: 97 3-5 (EYFS): 27</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Miss Janine Sharp</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>23 Sep 2014 to 24 Sep 2014</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection occurs over a period of two continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in May 2011.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State 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. 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 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 Education (DfE) 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, although inspectors 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.

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

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted informal discussions with children and examined samples of work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with a Bellevue director, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Bridget Forrest

Early Years Lead Inspector

Miss Victoria Plenderleith

Team Inspector for Early Years

(Former Head of Pre-Preparatory School, IAPS school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Brabyns Preparatory School is a co-educational independent day school for pupils from two to eleven years of age. It seeks to maintain a family ethos and to value pupils as individuals, and to encourage them to achieve to the best of their ability. The school aims to instil each child with confidence. It strives to inspire and support pupils to participate in every area of school life by offering them the maximum opportunity to develop intellectually, emotionally and socially, within a safe, happy and stimulating environment. Since the previous inspection, the school has joined the Bellevue Education Group. The chief executive of the group has appointed an education committee of five current or former school heads as directors.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1898 and is located in Marple, on the Cheshire/Derbyshire border. Set on a one-acre site, the school occupies two buildings in a suburban environment. The main building and grounds had major renovation in 1999, providing a multi-purpose hall and specialist Nursery classrooms. Since the previous inspection, the grounds have been further developed to extend facilities for outdoor learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is accommodated on the lower ground floor of the main building, with the Nursery classes in inter-connected rooms. The setting has its own outdoor learning and play area. Before- and after-school care for all children is provided within the Nursery setting.
- 1.3 Currently, 128 pupils attend the school, of whom 31 are in the EYFS; 4 children are aged 2, and 27 are between 3 and 5 years. The majority of pupils come from families whose parents work in the professions or in business, and live within a ten-mile radius of the school. They are largely of white British origin, which reflects the local area.
- 1.4 At the time of inspection, no EYFS children had been identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, and all children speak English as their principal language.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

### ***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Little Gems	Nursery (2 years)
Kindergarten	Nursery (3 to 4 years)
Reception	Reception

## **2. SUMMARY**

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

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

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Develop online data analysis to ensure that the system for tracking children is as efficient as possible.

### **3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

#### **3.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

- 3.1 The EYFS setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the children who attend. Consistently high standards of teaching and of care, together with challenging experiences and an effective balance of adult-led and child-initiated tasks, enable children to reach, and often exceed their expected levels of development. A broad, exciting and lively curriculum is provided throughout every area of learning, with the added expertise of specialist teaching in Spanish, music, drama and physical education. Highly qualified and conscientious staff know their children's needs.
- 3.2 Excellent and often inspirational teaching was observed throughout the setting, enthusing and motivating children to acquire the skills for the next stages in their learning. For example, the teacher's interactive use of a puppet during a 'magic mathematics' session engaged and delighted all Reception children. There are many opportunities for children to develop their ICT skills, by using recordable clipboards, remote-controlled programmable toys and interactive whiteboards. Nursery children were encouraged to develop their thinking through the critical questioning of their teacher. Teachers gave Reception children the opportunity to evaluate their own learning by deciding which was the hardest phonic sound they learnt, and to problem solve by discovering the best way to cut a strawberry fairly into two. Staff have very high expectations of the children.
- 3.3 Staff plan exciting and challenging experiences in the vibrant indoor and outdoor learning areas, which develop imagination, creativity, perseverance and calculated risk taking. Outdoor learning is a strength of the setting. The recommendation from the previous inspection has been implemented; observation and assessment records clearly identify the next steps to be taken and planning for individuals is shown on lesson plans.
- 3.4 The response of parents to the pre-inspection questionnaire was overwhelmingly positive. Links with parents are excellent. Staff excel in settling new children by working sensitively with parents. Parents are highly satisfied with the education their children are receiving, and feel very well informed about their progress and achievements. Reports are of a high quality and include targets. Parents have many opportunities to be involved in their children's learning, amongst other things by contributing to their learning journals, by supporting them in the gymnastics club and by signing up to observe lessons in a parents' open week. Parents greatly value the nurturing and caring approach of the staff and the exceptional range of activities offered.

### **3.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being**

- 3.5 Provision for children's well-being is outstanding. Key people form very secure and warm relationships with the children in their care, supporting them where needed and encouraging them to manage their own personal needs and hygiene. Children with medical and dietary needs are strongly supported by staff. The school has a happy family environment, and Reception children form strong bonds with Year 5 'buddies'. The youngest children are supported with care and sensitivity to progress effectively in personal, social and emotional development. New to the setting, they gain confidence to share an activity with their new key person. Staff give children many opportunities to develop independence, for example they encourage Nursery children to find the best way of putting on their own socks and shoes. Staff encourage high standards and reinforce good behaviour and manners at all times within a calm atmosphere. Children gain an understanding about the importance of a healthy diet through the clear messages of staff. Stimulating, exciting and challenging child-accessible resources in both indoor and outdoor areas promote learning. Outdoor areas have been resourcefully extended since the previous inspection. Staff have been well trained to prepare children emotionally for their transition to the next stage of their learning.

### **3.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision**

- 3.6 Leadership and management are outstanding. Highly effective governance supports and oversees every aspect of the EYFS. Directors work regularly with staff to review and update safeguarding policies and the complaints procedure. They organise cluster meetings and training with other Bellevue schools. The head ensures that staff have regular child protection training. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are met and implemented consistently, promoting a welcoming, stimulating and safe environment. Strong recruitment procedures ensure that children are kept safe. Risk assessment is thorough and ongoing. The learning and development requirements of the EYFS are met, and very effectively overseen by EYFS management. Staff use data analysis to track the progress of pupils, but recognise a need to develop this further to ensure that it is time efficient.
- 3.7 Senior managers strongly support EYFS leaders, emphasising the happy family atmosphere and the caring relationships between staff and children. Staff work very successfully together as a highly professional and dedicated team, evaluating their practice and ensuring continuous improvement. The supervision role is well implemented. Staff have many opportunities to further their own professional development, which contributes positively to their teaching and consequently to children's learning and development. They form very productive partnerships with parents and external agencies, such as speech therapists and the local authority.

### **3.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision**

- 3.8 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are outstanding. Children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. In the very early weeks of the academic year, Reception children were able to use their phonics to read and write simple words accurately. Most children can write numbers to 10 and some to 15. Two-year-olds sustain concentration while joining in with simple rhymes, actions and songs and while listening to stories. They are able to use expressive vocabulary to describe toys. Older Nursery children happily engage in role play together, create rainbow pictures on the computer, learn letter sounds and recognise their names. Children throughout the setting speak confidently and happily to adults. They learn to be independent, for example washing their hands and clearing away their trays at lunchtime. They understand about healthy eating and the need to keep hydrated. They are kind friends to one another. Two-year-olds help each other to do up their buttons. Children's behaviour is exemplary.
- 3.9 Requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare have been met. Staff have an excellent understanding of every child's needs and the support they require in different situations. This is a strength of the setting. Their caring practice promotes children's safety, security and happiness, and enables them to make progress, preparing them for the next stage of their learning.
- 3.10 Leadership and management are of a high standard, and all staff strive for continuous improvement within their resourceful and imaginative setting, thereby enhancing children's life chances.