



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

GATEWAYS SCHOOL

INTERIM INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Gateways School

Full Name of School/College **Gateways School**

DCSF Number **383/6007**

EYFS Number **EY309575**

Registered Charity Number **529206**

Address **Gateways School**
Harewood
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS17 9LE

Telephone Number **0113 2886345**

Fax Number **0113 2886148**

Email Address **head@gatewayschool.co.uk**

Head **Mrs Yvonne Wilkinson**

Chair of Governors **Mr Martin Shaw**

Age Range **2 to 18**

Total Number of Pupils **462**

Gender of Pupils **Girls**

Numbers by Age **0-2 (EYFS): - 5-11: 105**
2-5 (EYFS): 96 11-18: 261

Number of Day Pupils **462** **Capacity for flexi-boarding: N/A**

Number of Boarders **Total: N/A**
Full: - Weekly: -

Head of EYFS Setting **Mrs Carole Bartle**

EYFS Gender **Mixed**

Inspection Dates **01 Dec 2009 to 02 Dec 2009**

PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) schedule* for INTERIM inspections. The inspection is a two day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in February 2006.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard is as follows.

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

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

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

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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INSPECTION EVIDENCE

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Gateways School was founded in the early 1940s and moved to its present rural site, between Harrogate and Leeds, in 1947. It has since grown to provide education for 462 pupils; 31 boys from two to five years of age, and 431 girls from two to eighteen years. Since the last inspection a co-educational nursery has opened for children two to three years. The school comprises two sections, the Preparatory School and the High School, but is managed as one school with one governing body. The headmistress was appointed in September 2009.
- 1.2 As the school has grown and the curriculum expanded, the original eighteenth century house has been extended and additional accommodation built on the twenty-acre site. Pupils come from families with a broad range of professional and managerial backgrounds. The school seeks to provide a caring environment where emphasis is placed on treating each pupil as an individual. Through a challenging academic programme, it aims to encourage pupils to become confident, reflective learners, who are supportive members of the community, and enterprising leaders equipped to lead fulfilling lives in a world in which global communications and travel are becoming increasingly important. Whilst maintaining a Christian ethos in the Church of England tradition, the school admits pupils of all faiths and none.
- 1.3 The results of standardised tests, confirm the ability range of pupils is wide, but overall the average ability is above the national average. The school is not academically selective and admission is based on the school's own selection arrangements. Four pupils have statements of special educational need (SEN) and the school has identified 74 who require learning support. Whilst the great majority of pupils were born in Britain, fourteen pupils do not have English as a first language of whom four receive support with written and spoken English. Almost all pupils transfer to the High School at the end of Year 6, and approximately two-thirds continue into the sixth form after GCSE. With very few exceptions, sixth-form leavers proceed to higher education.
- 1.4 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 Setting

School	NC name
Nursery	2 to 3 years
Lower Reception	3 to 4 years
Upper Reception	4 to 5 years

Preparatory School

School	NC name
Transition	Year 1
Lower 1	Year 2
Upper 1	Year 3
Lower 2	Year 4
Upper 2	Year 5
Lower 3	Year 6

High School

School	NC name
Upper 3	Year 7
Lower 4	Year 8
Upper 4	Year 9
Lower 5	Year 10
Upper 5	Year 11
Lower 6	Year 12
Upper 6	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills

- 2.1 The pupils' progress is good in relation to their above average ability. Pupils in the Preparatory School build on the secure foundations laid in the EYFS and by Year 6 their achievement is good. At all levels of the school, the pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills (ICT) skills develop well, enabling them to access and succeed in the curriculum. Results in the GCSE and A level over the last three years for which comparative data are available have been high in comparison with the national average for girls' maintained schools. Over half of GCSE grades are A* and A, and at A level, two-thirds of grades are A or B. Most pupils gain places at the universities of their choice. Pupils achieve success in many extra-curricular activities, both individually and collectively, for example in debating, music and sports, notably netball.
- 2.2 For the size of school the breadth of the curriculum is wide. In the Preparatory School, emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy, with appropriate time for science, humanities and creative subjects, French and physical education and games. The curriculum in the High School continues to be balanced and based on National Curriculum subjects, including three modern foreign languages, Latin and separate sciences. Every effort is made to accommodate pupils' choices at GCSE and in the extensive range of A level subjects. The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) is offered in mathematics and science. The wide-range of extra-curricular activities complements the pupils' educational experience strongly. Through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and numerous other opportunities, pupils are involved in voluntary service in the community.
- 2.3 Small classes foster a relaxed and good working atmosphere in which pupils feel supported by effective teaching. The pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and pupils contribute well in lessons. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the Preparatory School, well planned lessons and enthusiastic teaching inspire similar enthusiasm amongst pupils. In the High School, where teaching was well planned, interesting and conducted at a brisk pace, the progress of pupils was good. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects. Work is usually marked thoroughly and regularly with some teachers making good use of benchmark data to assess the pupils' progress. The enrichment programme in the sixth form and the provision for careers education are good and much appreciated by pupils.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.4 The pupils' personal development is excellent. Through the expectations of teachers, the ethos of the school and the high quality personal, social and health education programme, pupils grow in self-esteem and in confidence. Regular assemblies provide good opportunities to participate in reflective worship. From an early age they understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are polite to visitors and at ease when talking with them. Their behaviour both in class and around the school is exemplary. Through visits, assemblies and the example of teachers, pupils learn to appreciate and respect those from different cultural backgrounds. Pupils have a broad knowledge and appreciation of public institutions and services, including the role of government. They take on positions of responsibility, such as monitors, prefects, games team captains, school council

representatives and respond well to the challenges leadership brings. Through their highly developed commitment to charitable causes, pupils demonstrate their concern for others in this country and overseas.

- 2.5 Pupils and their parents value the excellent quality of pastoral care. It provides a happy caring community in which pupils feel safe and secure. Class teachers and form tutors, who know pupils well, are at the heart of the provision, providing strong support for the pupils' academic and personal development. Successful systems are in place to promote the pupils' well-being and in the inspection questionnaire, they said there was always someone to turn to if they had a problem. The school has a close-knit feeling and relationships between teachers and pupils, and amongst pupils themselves, are warm and friendly. Pupils appreciate the high quality nutritious food served at lunch time and they understand how, together with regular exercise, it forms part of a healthy lifestyle. The school has good arrangements for pupils who are ill during the day. Health and safety procedures are well understood and implemented effectively.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.6 Governors provide clear strategic direction and over the years have had a strong influence on the school's development. They bring to their work a broad range of relevant experience and are committed to the future success of the school. Through their regular visits they have a secure understanding of the work of the school, its strengths and areas for development. They have effective arrangements for overseeing many areas of the school's work including welfare, health and safety. The school gives close attention to the recruitment procedures of all those working in the school, but the checking and recording of staff on the centralised register of appointments has not been implemented rigorously in all cases and it is now actively seeking to rectify this. The school is strongly led by the new experienced headmistress, who together with members of the senior leadership team (SLT), is reviewing all aspects of the school's work prior to updating plans for future development. Her high visibility around the school, and notably outside the school at the beginning and end of the school day, is valued by pupils and parents alike. The SMT, several of whom are new, bring enthusiasm to their work and provide a clear sense of direction. The school is effectively and efficiently managed with clear lines of communication and accountability.
- 2.7 The school has excellent links with parents. They receive regular information about the school and the work and progress of their children. They have numerous opportunities to visit. They like the improved website and the increased use being made of it. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire singled out for particular praise the quality of pastoral care, high standards of behaviour, the promotion of worthwhile attitudes and views and they are satisfied with the governance and management of the school. Appraisal arrangements are securely in place. In-service training needs emerge through priorities in development planning and individual needs of staff. The premises and accommodation are of high quality and all subjects are supported with a good range of resources, including for ICT. Staff recently appointed said they found the induction arrangements helpful and that they are enjoying being in a school with a strong community spirit. The complaints procedure is comprehensive and covers all necessary requirements.

3. MAIN SCHOOL: ACTION POINTS

(a) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- 3.1 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended, with the exception of those indicated below.

Under Standard 4 (The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors) it must:

- ensure the appointment procedures for staff are adhered to rigorously. [Regulation 4 (2)(a), 4C(2)(c), 4C(3) and for the same reason 3(2)(b); Regulation 4 [Previous legislation].

(b) Recommended action

- 3.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement:

1. enhance further the teaching by sharing good practice to provide more variety and greater pace into all lessons.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

- 4.1 The EYFS has 96 pupils. The Nursery is purpose built and opened in 1996. Reception classes have dedicated secure rooms in a modern building separate from the Nursery. Both areas have well equipped playgrounds immediately adjacent which are also used as outdoor classrooms. The EYFS is integral to the school's estate and community and uses well the extensive grounds. All children lunch in the dining hall, enjoy physical education in the sports hall and music in the music school, both with specialist teachers. Such activities strongly enhance children's experiences. Ofsted last inspected the nursery in 1999. Since then the new EYFS building has opened and the new EYFS curriculum introduced. In 2006 Ofsted inspected out of school care and the action points have been addressed satisfactorily. Fifty-seven under-fives receive government funding. A very small number has been identified needing learning support or extension work. The setting received a significant resources grant in 2009 and, in 2010, will receive nearly £25000 from Leeds City Council for further outdoor facilities development.
- 4.2 Overall pupils' needs are met outstandingly well. The aims of valuing individuals and personalising educational programmes are strongly achieved. Good challenges and excellent experiences ensure a strong educational start in the safe, caring environment although, occasionally, highly able pupils are under-challenged. The highly committed staff team has detailed pupil knowledge, supported by excellent records, and undertakes considerable professional self evaluation, especially at weekly, formal meetings where much information is shared. The effect of the meetings is strengthened by time dedicated to planning, specific reflection and modification of policies and procedures. Smooth, efficient pupil transfer between year groups and on to Year I transition classes is therefore ensured. Resources and information sharing are strong. As a result all pupils make strong overall progress.
- 4.3 Outstanding leadership and management are provided by the pre-prep head, who works closely with the prep head. Comprehensive, clear documents underpin all requirements, helping ensure outstanding procedures and particularly good pupil outcomes. Both receive regular review as do the uniformly thorough, high quality, risk assessments which are diligently and comprehensively performed. Staff are appropriately qualified and checked, are well aware of their child protection and welfare responsibilities, and benefit from efficient, well-targeted, professional development. Good informal and formal relationships exist with parents who expressed much all round satisfaction through responses to the inspection questionnaire. Parents receive full curriculum information and especially helpful, regular reports. As a result children are strongly supported.
- 4.4 Provision in the setting strongly supports the outstanding learning and development. Through detailed understanding of individuals and frequent, thorough observations, staff make well-targeted plans, refining them effectively. Consequently they provide an excellent, enjoyable range of child-initiated activities each day, appropriate to all abilities in the six areas of learning. Pupils respond strongly to staff expectations and their excellent example which gives an especially good understanding of welfare considerations. Key staff work well with their pupils. Good staffing ratios, together with adults' warm, caring dispositions both in school and in the popular out-of-school care, ensure all pupils feel confident and accepted.

- 4.5 Outcomes for all pupils, particularly by the end of Reception, are good. Their diverse starting points have been assessed using EYFS profiles within each pupil's first half term. These are repeated annually with further, thorough information gleaned from various formal and informal observations. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school, working well, as individuals or small groups, appreciating books and being particularly competent with number tasks. Speaking and listening skills, coupled with individual and group ability to concentrate, are outstanding. Pupils show good physical co-ordination, strong problem solving skills, and are highly creative in areas such as music and simple design. Personal development is outstanding, as are their relationships with each other and teachers. Matters of hygiene, healthy eating, fitness and exercise are well understood. Pupils are well behaved, most friendly and co-operative.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE: ACTION POINTS

(a) Compliance with the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements

- 5.1 The school's provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and no action is required.

Complaints since the last inspection

- 5.2 Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required any action to meet national requirements.

(b) Recommended action

- 5.3 The Early Years Foundation Stage setting should take the following action to improve:
1. ensure that highly able pupils are identified and always fully challenged.

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 Margaret Banks	Reporting inspector
Mr Nicholas Park	Junior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS)
Mr Philip Cantwell	Senior Team Inspector (Head, HMC)
Mr Robin Lewis	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mrs Eileen Parris	Early Years Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA)