

6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 21st to 24th September 2009. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.
- 6.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage was inspected on 21st and 22nd September 2009 by one inspector. The inspector observed sessions, talked to the children, examined samples of work, and held discussions with staff and governors. Comments from parents and carers were considered, and the inspector examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

List of Inspectors

Mr Martin Bussey Reporting Inspector
Mrs Jackie Davies Deputy Head, GSA school
Ms Sarah Evans Head, GSA school
Miss Joanna Gay Deputy Head, IAPS school
Mr Alasdair McBay Senior Tutor, HMC school
Mrs Frances Proud Head of Department, HMC school
Miss Mary Regan Former Head, GSA preparatory school
Mr Paul Shannon Head of Department, HMC school
Mrs Elizabeth Coley Early Years Lead Inspector

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

- 7.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage setting at Leicester High School for Girls strives to provide a warm, stimulating environment within a family atmosphere, laying the foundations for a love of school and learning. At the time of the inspection, thirty-four children were on roll: nineteen in the Foundation class aged three to four, and fifteen in the Reception class aged four to five. No child has a statement of special educational needs, and none has been identified as needing extra support with their learning. Approximately two-thirds of children come from ethnic minority backgrounds, and just over one in four speaks English as an additional language, of whom one is at an early stage of acquiring English. Before- and after-school care is provided. The previous inspection of the Early Years Foundation Stage setting took place in May 2008 and was carried out by Ofsted.
- 7.2 The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding, with a strong commitment to continuous improvement. The needs of all children are met very well. Leadership and management are excellent. Parents are overwhelmingly pleased with all aspects of provision for their children, and positive partnerships concerning children's welfare and learning are promoted. The setting has a clear vision for improvement through a thorough self-evaluation, in which the views of all stakeholders are taken into account, although this is not yet formulated into a written development plan. High-quality resources, for both indoors and outdoors, are used extremely well to support children's learning. This multi-cultural community values the importance of inclusive practice. Policies and procedures are implemented consistently and regularly reviewed. Adults put a high priority on welfare and safeguarding children. Staff are suitably qualified and have undergone the required recruitment checks. An oversight occurred in the re-checking of the suitability of a long-standing member of staff, and this has now been rectified.
- 7.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. All adults support children exceptionally well in their learning and development, by providing stimulating, enjoyable and challenging experiences both indoors and out. All areas of learning are covered well, and staff undertake regular observations and assessments to inform them of what each child needs to learn next. Until recently, this was not always reflected in written planning, but there is an awareness and willingness to continue to develop these links. Children have many opportunities to choose their own activities and explore, for example when using a magnifying glass to investigate fruit and vegetables. Stories are used to reinforce children's understanding of why it is important to wash their hands, and healthy living is followed through in other areas of learning. Children are encouraged to respect one another when taking turns in activities, and they collaborate very well in joint tasks. Suitable risk assessments are undertaken which ensure that the environment is safe. Care of children is of a high standard across the setting. Encouragement to understand safety was given when children were reminded to keep their hands and feet safe while sitting on the carpet.
- 7.4 Outcomes for children are excellent. They enjoy and are actively involved in their learning, with consistently good and sometimes outstanding levels of achievement. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are exemplary. Their concentration and responses to questions indicate a high level of sustained collaborative thinking, demonstrated in circle time when discussing how to prevent spreading germs. Most children are able to work well independently, for example when using computers. They enjoy excellent relationships with staff and feel safe and secure with their key person. They enjoy taking responsibility as day leader. Physical activity is an important part of their day, with small bursts of exercises to develop co-ordination. Children are encouraged to bring healthy snacks for break consisting of fruit and vegetables, and school lunch is nutritious. Water is continually available.

Children know how to keep safe when playing outside, and walking through the building and up stairs. They re-enact activities from the wider world in their imaginative play, such as hanging the washing on the line and ironing. Their skills are developing very well, particularly in speaking, listening, reasoning and numeracy.

What the Setting Should Do to Improve

- 7.5 To improve still further the high quality of its provision, the setting should:
1. formulate its clear vision into a written Early Years Foundation Stage development plan.
- 7.6 The school's provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.