



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**ST LAWRENCE COLLEGE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

**STANDARD INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## St Lawrence College Junior School

The senior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	<b>St Lawrence College Junior School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>886/6040</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>307921</b>		
Address	<b>St Lawrence College Junior School College Road Ramsgate Kent CT11 7AF</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01843 572912</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01843 572913</b>		
Email Address	<b>hjs@slcuk.com</b>		
Head	<b>Mr Simon Whittle</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr David Taylor</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>172</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (100 boys; 72 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>41</b>	5-11: <b>131</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>159</b>	Capacity for flexi-boarding: <b>3</b>
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>13</b>	
	Full:	<b>13</b>	Weekly: <b>0</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>11 Oct 2011 to 12 Oct 2011</b> <b>09 Nov 2011 to 11Nov 2011</b>		

## PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The inspection of boarding was not carried out in conjunction with the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills, and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education and development in general. The full Ofsted report refers to an inspection in June 2011 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) under Children's social care/Boarding school.

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

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features

- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(a) Main findings</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(b) Action points</b>	<b>3</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendation(s) for further improvement	3
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>7</b>
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	8
(c) The quality of boarding education	8
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>10</b>
(a) The quality of governance	10
(b) The quality of leadership and management	10
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	11
<b>6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	<b>13</b>
(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	13
(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	13
(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	13
(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	14
<b>INSPECTION EVIDENCE</b>	<b>15</b>

## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Lawrence College is an independent co-educational day and boarding school for 514 pupils aged three to eighteen. The school is set in its own grounds and is situated close to the centre of Ramsgate in Kent. The junior school was founded in 1884 as a boys' preparatory school and following a restructuring of the school in 1999, caters for pupils aged three to eleven. Since the last inspection improvements have been made to the fabric of the school. Boarding accommodation has been moved from the junior school main building; junior boarders now share purpose built accommodation with pupils in Years 7 and 8 of the senior school.
- 1.2 The junior school is an integral part of St Lawrence College. It shares the same site and facilities and the same Christian evangelical tradition and educational philosophy. The school aims to provide a rich learning experience and to instill personal confidence. It seeks to nurture Christian values and to foster a sense of service. It aims to forge strong partnerships with parents. All stages of the school are administered by a board of governors known as the Council.
- 1.3 The pupils are drawn from neighbouring towns in East Kent. They come from a wide range of urban and rural backgrounds; a small proportion represents ethnic minority groups. Approximately half of the pupils continue their education at the senior school. The remainder move mainly to selective maintained secondary schools.
- 1.4 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) was established in 1996 and caters for 41 pupils aged 3 to 5 years. Twenty-six are in the nursery and attend on a flexible part-time basis. Fifteen are in Reception. The EYFS setting is located together with Years 1 and 2 in a separate building linked to the main junior school buildings by a Victorian tunnel. There are thirteen boarders, all of whom are boys from families serving in the armed forces. The boarding accommodation is located in Kirby House in the senior school and is shared with pupils from Years 7 and 8.
- 1.5 Standardised data indicates that the ability profile of the school is above the national average overall; however the range is broad and includes a small minority whose ability level is below the national average. The school identifies 40 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), twenty of whom receive specialist help in school. Twelve of the nineteen pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) receive support for their English. No pupil has a statement of special educational need.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

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

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

- 2.1 From the youngest age, pupils achieve high standards in their work and activities and make good and sometimes rapid progress. Their literacy and numeracy skills are well developed and they use their excellent ICT skills very effectively. Pupils show strong creativity. They are eager and responsive learners who work together very well and have the confidence to work independently. Results in national tests are good in relation to both national standards and pupils' abilities. A well-planned curriculum provides strong support for pupils' learning. The provision for pupils with EAL and SEND and for extra-curricular activities is excellent. The quality of teaching is high overall and occasionally it is outstanding; only in a small minority of lessons does teaching, whilst satisfactory, fall below this level. Most teaching is characterised by high expectations, careful planning and strong relationships. Assessment processes are thorough and are used effectively to track both individual and group progress.
- 2.2 Pupils demonstrate outstanding levels of personal development. Their self-esteem is high because they live in a positive environment and know that they are valued. The school's Christian ethos forms the basis for pupils' personal development. Pupils show strong moral awareness and willingly abide by the rules of the school community. They take responsibility confidently and show a thoughtful concern for one another. Their participation in dramatic and musical performances fosters their cultural awareness and they show respect and appreciation of other cultural and religious perspectives. The excellent pastoral care provided for pupils and the careful provision for their welfare, health and safety support their excellent personal development strongly. Boarding contributes very effectively to pupils' educational experience.
- 2.3 Governance is good and fully in line with the aims of the school. The structures of governance are clear. The two governors who are nominated to have oversight of the junior school provide strong support. No arrangement for the appraisal of the junior school head has yet been made by governors. Leadership and management are strong. The senior leadership team provide committed and stimulating pastoral and academic leadership and clear educational direction. Pupils' learning is monitored effectively but the monitoring of teaching is insufficient. Development planning is detailed but does not include mechanisms for review and evaluation. Since the last inspection, the working environment of pupils has been improved. The roles of subject coordinators have been developed and curricular links with the senior school have been established. All procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are followed meticulously. The school fulfils its aim to work in close partnership with parents. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed parents to be strongly supportive of all aspects of the school's provision. Parents are provided with an excellent range of information and detailed reports about their children's progress. Parents have plentiful opportunities to be involved in school life.

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

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

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

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

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement.**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Develop procedures for the systematic monitoring of teaching.
2. Integrate the various strands of development planning and establish methods of review and evaluation.
3. In the EYFS, ensure that all identified individual targets for children are recorded as part of on-going assessment.

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

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

- 3.1 Pupils of all abilities achieve highly, in all aspects of their learning, at all stages of the school. The school meets its aim to develop intellectual curiosity, celebrate creativity and enable pupils to think for themselves well.
- 3.2 Pupils are articulate. In discussion they listen carefully, respond thoughtfully and explain their ideas clearly; older pupils are able to reason and discuss opposing ideas. Literacy and numeracy skills are strong. Fluency in reading and technical accuracy in writing develop well as pupils move up the school. Whether recording the results of a scientific experiment, or writing about a historical event, pupils apply their skills effectively to their work across the curriculum. By Year 2 strong numeracy skills are evident in pupils' confident mental calculations, and at all stages pupils apply their well-developed mathematical skills to tasks such as data-handling with confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils use their excellent information and communication technology (ICT) skills competently to investigate topics and to prepare presentations. Strong creativity is evident in their work in art, imaginative writing and musical composition. They learn successfully because their lessons take place in a friendly and stimulating learning environment in which they are challenged and encouraged.
- 3.3 Pupils are highly successful in individual and group activities in many areas of school life. In their individual music examinations a large proportion are awarded passes at merit or distinction level. They achieve sporting success in a variety of sports. Choirs and musical groups participate successfully in local music festivals. Each year several pupils are awarded St Lawrence College scholarships and others take the Kent 11+ examination and gain places at maintained selective secondary schools.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses national data for the years 2008 to 2010, which are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results of national tests taken at age 11 have been good in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Evidence from lessons, work and discussion during the inspection confirms this good, and sometimes rapid, progress. The good progress made by pupils with SEND is evident in improvement over time in reading and writing skills. Pupils with EAL make good and sometimes rapid progress which can be seen in the quality of their oral and written work. Very able pupils achieve highly because they are stimulated and challenged to give of their best.
- 3.5 Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons. They are energetic and responsive learners who show a lively interest in their work, and behave very well. They take their work seriously, stay focused and persevere with tasks. A few of the pupils with SEND find it more difficult to sustain their concentration; however, they are carefully supported. Pupils generally have the confidence to work independently. They show excellent skills of co-operation; they work successfully together, in pairs, small groups or as a whole class, and they support and appreciate one another's efforts.

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

- 3.6 A stimulating and carefully planned curriculum provides good, and in some areas excellent, support for pupils' learning. The school fulfils its aim to provide a rich learning experience. Since the last inspection provision for pupils with SEND and for ICT have been enhanced.
- 3.7 The curriculum meets the needs of pupils of all abilities, at all stages of the school, and encompasses all the required areas of learning. It places strong emphasis on the core subjects and provides well-balanced coverage of the broader curriculum. The curriculum is firmly based on the National Curriculum. It is extended to include religious education and enhanced by the development of a programme of thinking skills for all pupils and the introduction of French from Year 3. From the start, pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music and physical education. Class teaching provides a secure base for pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2. The transition to entirely specialist teaching in the course of Years 3 to 6 is well managed.
- 3.8 The use of setting in mathematics and English in Years 4 to 6 is effective because the arrangement is flexible and the staff involved co-operate closely. In Years 3 and 4 the combining of the two small classes in the year group for a small minority of lessons is generally very successful but occasionally a lesson takes place in a classroom which is not arranged to accommodate all pupils comfortably.
- 3.9 Excellent provision is made for pupils with SEND or EAL; pupils are quickly identified, and their needs carefully assessed. The school places an emphasis on the provision of high quality teaching and additional support within the classroom, where possible, to meet the needs of these pupils. In addition, when necessary, pupils are also withdrawn for individual or small group lessons. Detailed individual targets or individual education plans (IEPs) are compiled. Curriculum planning at all stages reflects an awareness of the needs of the most able pupils.
- 3.10 The quality of extracurricular activities is excellent. An optional Saturday morning programme of activities for Years 3 to 6 includes a wide range of physical, practical and ICT activities. More than three-quarters of pupils participate and say that they thoroughly enjoy these sessions. In addition, good provision for drama, music and a Christian club is made during the week. A suitable range of activities is provided for pupils in Year 1 and 2. This includes a free choice activity time during Friday afternoon as well as after school clubs such as drama and swimming.
- 3.11 Well-planned educational visits and the strong contributions of visitors to school enrich the curriculum. Year 6 pupils benefit from a residential trip to Normandy. A recent visitor to school provided first-hand knowledge of World War II and another gave younger pupils opportunities to participate in a film making project. The junior school benefits from its involvement in whole school events such as major musical productions, as well as the use of excellent whole school facilities such as the swimming pool and design technology suite.
- 3.12 Involvement in the community is strong. Pupils participate in local music and drama festivals and join those from local schools for sporting events and competitions. During the school's recent science week, teams from nearby schools were invited to the school to take part in a science challenge. Pupils participate in some church-based activities and elderly people living nearby are invited to a Christmas

entertainment. These activities reflect the strong emphasis placed by St Lawrence College as a whole on community involvement.

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

- 3.13 High quality teaching enables pupils to learn effectively and to progress well. The school is successful in meeting its aim to provide a rich learning experience in an environment where academic expectations are high. The large majority of teaching is at least good and occasionally it is outstanding. At all stages of the school, teachers' demonstrate high levels of commitment and relate very well with their pupils; lessons are conducted on a basis of mutual respect and in a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere.
- 3.14 Teachers have high expectations. Lessons are presented with clarity and proceed at a brisk pace. Whether directing a scientific investigation, guiding musical composition or explaining a historical event, teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge, transmit enthusiasm and arouse their pupils' interest. Skilful questioning enables pupils to develop their ideas and extend their understanding. Lesson planning is detailed; it incorporates a wide range of activities appropriate for pupils' differing needs and identifies opportunities for pupils to learn independently. Teachers communicate well with one another and make good use of opportunities to create cross-curricular links. A small minority of teaching, whilst satisfactory, is less successful because activities offer insufficient challenge and stimulus. Pupils therefore make slower progress because they have fewer opportunities to play an active part in their learning.
- 3.15 Plentiful, good quality resources for teaching are used effectively to promote pupils' learning. Teachers are skilled in their use of ICT, including the use of the classroom interactive white boards. Resources are used imaginatively; for example a tasting exercise provided a popular stimulus for creative writing about the senses, and working with local tourist maps made a grid referencing exercise more relevant to pupils.
- 3.16 Systems of assessment are thorough and are used effectively to guide planning and to track both individual and group progress. At all stages the results of standardised tests are carefully analysed. In addition, teachers are guided in their teaching by their detailed on-going assessments of pupils' understanding. The tracking of the progress of pupils with SEND is careful and thorough. The quality of teachers' marking is generally high; it is regular and constructive and much of the marking is detailed and indicates the next step for pupils.

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

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

- 4.1 The personal development of the pupils is outstanding. The school fulfils its aim to nurture Christian values, encourage pupils to develop a real sense of spirituality and to foster a sense of service.
- 4.2 Pupils show excellent spiritual awareness. The school's Christian ethos is important to its daily life. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the world in which they are growing up. They develop a sense of identity and self-worth, within a supportive community which gives them ample opportunities to explore values and beliefs. In assemblies they benefit from opportunities to consider the deeper meaning of hymns. A Christian group, led by the college chaplain is a forum for discussion and provides additional depth to the spiritual life of some pupils. Displays around the school reflect pupils' engagement with the natural world and their awareness of ecological issues. Most pupils have high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence because they know that they are valued and that their views are respected.
- 4.3 Moral development is excellent and pupils understand the well-established core values which permeate the school, demonstrating thoughtful and helpful behaviour and support for each other. Younger pupils show a thorough understanding of the Golden Rules. Well-planned programmes of personal, social and health education (PSHE) enhance pupils' understanding of moral issues. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 spoke confidently and knowledgeably about the importance of making the right choices. The pupils are proud of their various charitable endeavours. A sensitive awareness of the needs of others is reflected in their strong commitment to their fund raising efforts for a school in the Himalayas.
- 4.4 The social development of pupils is excellent and is reflected both in their friendliness and courtesy to visitors and in their cheerful independence. Pupils talk confidently with each other and with adults. They show a strong awareness of responsible citizenship. They have benefitted from a recent initiative which, using fishing as an analogy, focused on 'catching pupils doing the right thing' and rewarded their acts of good citizenship. Year 6 pupils fulfil their roles as prefects, house captains or librarians conscientiously and enjoy carrying out their responsibilities towards younger members of the school community. Older pupils enjoy sharing stories they have written with younger pupils and all those involved benefit from the experience. Within the school council, pupils debate issues of concern and gain confidence from seeing some ideas put into practice. The successful use of a suggestions box confirms to the pupils that their ideas are appreciated.
- 4.5 Pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures is excellent. It is enhanced by their study of many and varied traditions in art, literature and music. Their participation in dramatic productions and concerts deepens their cultural appreciation. Pupils show a sensitive awareness of cultures other than their own through the stimulating activities and excursions they enjoy. Year 6 pupils enjoy the residential trip to France, which provides a first-hand opportunity for pupils to experience daily life in another cultural setting. Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of other faiths, for instance older pupils spoke knowledgeably about Hinduism. A recent enrichment day, during which pupils were able to learn about Nepalese traditions and culture, fostered understanding amongst pupils in a school

community which includes some Nepalese pupils. Their high quality work in many areas of school life reflects pupils' strong cultural development.

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

- 4.6 The pastoral care of pupils is excellent and arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are thorough and careful. The school succeeds in its mission to provide a secure, supportive and caring environment.
- 4.7 The school provides outstanding pastoral care for pupils. Teachers understand thoroughly their pupils' social and academic needs. Avenues of formal and informal communication amongst staff are strong. Relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils, are excellent. Pupils feel secure and well-supported and the availability of an independent listener in the school counsellor strengthens the school's provision. Pupils flourish in a genuinely child-centred environment because teachers and other adults in the school community work together very effectively to ensure all aspects of their wellbeing.
- 4.8 Pupils understand the positive rules that govern the school community and abide by them willingly because the purpose of the rules is clear. They enjoy the age-appropriate rewards and encouragement they receive. Pupils understand the less frequently required system of sanctions. Very good provision is made for any pupil who has behavioural difficulties. The anti-bullying policy is clear and pupils understand that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. They say that they know who to turn to if a problem arises and are confident that difficulties will be sorted out quickly.
- 4.9 Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are thorough and comprehensive. Staff receive the required training in safeguarding and all the procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are carefully implemented. All necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are taken. Excellent provision is made for pupils who are ill; the medical centre is well equipped and fully staffed. Records are detailed and more than the required number of staff have first aid training. The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with disabilities.
- 4.10 Balanced and nutritious school lunches are served in a pleasant environment. Pupils are encouraged to make healthy choices and their understanding of diet is enhanced through their work in PSHE, science and food technology lessons. Frequent and regular opportunities are provided for pupils to take physical exercise. Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored.

#### **4.(c) The quality of boarding education**

- 4.11 Boarding makes an excellent contribution to pupils' learning and achievement and to their personal development; the school fulfils its aim to develop the whole person through the boarding experience. The school has fulfilled the recommendations of the most recent statutory boarding inspection.
- 4.12 There is no separate boarding accommodation for junior school pupils; they are secure and happy in the boarding house which they share with Year 7 and 8 pupils. The school provides a friendly and supportive environment for boarders and relationships between staff and boarders are excellent. Boarding and teaching staff communicate regularly and frequently to ensure that pupils' needs are well understood. Boarders with EAL are very well supported.

- 4.13 Pupils describe boarding as fun and say that they enjoy the varied programme of activities provided in the evenings and during weekends. The quality of sleeping, working and bathroom accommodation is high. Resources in the boarding house are excellent; these include a well-stocked library, recreational resources and appropriately monitored ICT. Meals are varied, appetising and sufficient.

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

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

- 5.1 The governing body provides good and thoughtful oversight and leadership fully in line with the aims of the school. The structures of governance are clear; meetings of the full board and of the marketing, education, and the finance, fabric and administration committees are regular and frequent. Governors offer professional expertise in many fields including education, finance and law. Some offer a useful perspective as parents of past pupils.
- 5.2 Recent training for governors, including an induction programme for new members of the governing body, reflects the board's awareness of their expanding roles and duties. Governors exercise strong financial oversight and discharge carefully their legal responsibilities for child protection and health and safety. A nominated governor has particular responsibility for all child protection matters. Governors are fully involved in the strategic planning for St Lawrence College as a whole.
- 5.3 Two governors have a particular responsibility for the junior school and provide very effective support. They know the junior school well and ensure its positive representation on the board. A system to ensure the regular review of school policies and procedures has been established. The working party set up to direct the junior school's response to the recommendations of the previous inspection has made substantial progress in improving the fabric of the school and enhancing many aspects of educational provision. No arrangement for the appraisal of the junior school head has yet been made.
- 5.4 Governors are kept well informed about the workings of the school; the head of the junior school presents regular detailed reports to the governors and his contact with the governors who have particular oversight of the junior school matters is regular and frequent. They, and other members of the council, attend school events and visit the school informally.

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

- 5.5 Strong and effective leadership and management of the junior school are reflected in the high quality of pupils' learning and their excellent personal development. The school meets its aim to provide an education in which academic expectations are high and pupils have every opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- 5.6 The head has autonomy in all aspects of the management and running of the junior school as a separate educational entity; the school's independence strengthens its individual character and identity. The senior leadership team provide committed and stimulating pastoral and academic leadership and clear educational direction. Detailed policies and thorough procedures are fully implemented. Subject coordinators provide effective leadership and ensure progress and continuity in curricular planning in their subject.
- 5.7 The school has worked hard in response to the recommendations of the last inspection and in many respects has made excellent progress. The school now provides an attractive and well maintained working environment for pupils. The roles of subject coordinators have been developed and links with curriculum leaders from the senior school have been improved to ensure a smooth transition from Year 6 to

Year 7. The monitoring of pupils' learning is now thorough. Some monitoring of teaching takes place within the staff appraisal system but this is insufficient and is not linked to the monitoring of learning, resulting in some inconsistencies in pupils' experience.

- 5.8 Thoughtful and detailed development planning reflects a thorough understanding of school needs and includes realistic time scales, costings and completion dates. However, clear mechanisms for review and evaluation are not established and development planning in subject areas is not clearly linked to wider development planning for the junior school.
- 5.9 The school values its hard-working staff and they in turn show high levels of commitment. The staff appraisal system is well established and appropriately linked to the school's needs and to individual professional development. Opportunities for in-service training are good and promote pupils' learning well. Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are clear and are implemented fully. All staff receive the required child protection and health and safety training. Support and administrative staff fulfil their roles effectively and contribute well to the smooth running and friendly educational environment of the school.
- 5.10 Shared governance, regular meetings between the heads of the junior and senior schools, and twice termly meetings of a whole college senior management team ensure that the junior school functions smoothly within the framework of the whole college in areas of interdependence. The head of St Lawrence College is ultimately responsible for all matters of whole-College significance. The linking of junior school planning with strategic planning for St Lawrence College is a careful on-going process in which common aims are identified and the differing needs of the two sections of the college are acknowledged.

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

- 5.11 The school maintains excellent links with parents. This fulfils its aim to work in close partnership with parents, to keep them well informed and involve them in their children's education.
- 5.12 The responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed parents to be highly supportive of all aspects of the school's provision. They particularly appreciate the high quality of pastoral care, the ease with which they can communicate with the school and the worthwhile attitudes and views the school promotes. Inspectors agreed with these views. There were no issues raised by a significant number of parents.
- 5.13 Parents provide strong support for their children and the school by their presence at concerts, plays and 'sharing' assemblies. They accompany pupils on educational visits, assist with sporting activities and support match teams. Parents are sometimes invited into school to share their expertise with pupils. The quality of information for parents is excellent. Parents are kept well informed about school life via the website, a weekly e-bulletin and regular newsletters; they receive all the information that is required. A parents' handbook provides key pieces of information and details of school routines. The school is pro-active in seeking parents' views and suggestions. The Junior School magazine provides a comprehensive retrospective of the school year.
- 5.14 Parents are provided with clear information about their children's work and progress by means of bi-annual school reports supplemented by interim grade sheets.

Parents' consultation evenings and informal meetings ensure that parents have good opportunities for discussion. Meetings at the start of the academic year enable parents to meet their children's new teachers and to be familiarised with curricular details for the forthcoming academic year. Each term a seminar open to all parents focuses on a key aspect of children's learning. A flourishing parents' association promotes social events for parents and engages in fund raising to support the school.

- 5.15 The school handles the concerns of the parents with great care and in accordance with its published procedures. Parents know how to proceed should the need to make a formal complaint arise. Avenues of communication are strong, staff are readily available and almost all concerns can be dealt with informally and rapidly.

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

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

### **6.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

6.1 The setting successfully fulfils its aim to develop curiosity by creating a stimulating environment which gives children opportunities to explore and discover independently as well as through teacher-directed learning activities. The individual needs of the children are well met at the class level and through the additional support provided to children with EAL. IEPs are written when required and differentiated tasks are planned to offer appropriate challenge to the most able. Outcomes are consistently good and often outstanding. Excellent teaching in a nurturing environment ensures that all children achieve high standards in their learning and development. Recent self-evaluation reveals a clear vision for future developments and the capacity for sustained improvement, as well as the maintenance of the existing good standards.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are good overall with many excellent features. Teachers successfully implement detailed policies which provide clear guidance, promote equality, eliminate discrimination and ensure that pupils are properly safeguarded. A positive relationship exists between parents and staff; parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were strongly supportive of the school's provision. Good communication ensures that parents are familiar with well-established routines. Risk assessments are detailed. Staff meet weekly on a formal basis, as well as informally on frequent occasions, to discuss their practice and areas for development. Children's progress is monitored closely through on-going teacher assessments. Children's individual targets are clearly identified but are not always explicitly recorded. Extensive and informative EYFS profiles are carefully compiled. A wide range of good quality resources are accessible to all the children.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision is good and the setting benefits greatly from excellent facilities shared with the main school. An adventure playground and a well-equipped play area adjacent to the classrooms provide excellent opportunities for physical and creative development. Nursery children have direct access to a covered outdoor area which is used effectively for self-initiated learning. The curriculum provides well-balanced coverage of the early learning goals. Planning is detailed; it takes account of the needs of the individual child and provides challenge for the most able. The need to further develop book resources to support children's learning across all areas of learning has been identified by the school. Staff work closely with parents to promote children's welfare. Teachers manage children's behaviour sensitively, rewarding good work and behaviour and providing a secure emotional environment in which children are happy and confident.

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

- 6.4 Outcomes for children in the EYFS are outstanding. By the end of the reception year, many achieve high standards and the most able exceed the expectations of the early learning goals. Children are self-assured and happy. They are articulate, listen attentively and are able to follow directions. Nursery children learn the words and associated actions for songs quickly. They show excellent creativity in spontaneous improvisation when playing freely. They use their well-developed physical skills to balance and travel confidently across the outside climbing apparatus. Reception children can identify letter sounds, build simple words and are beginning to write simple sentences. They can recognise and work confidently with numbers to twenty. They use computers competently for a range of activities and know how to print their work independently. Their social skills and attitudes are excellent. Children take responsibility for putting equipment away and follow rules for good hygiene throughout the day. They understand about being safe and are aware of the need to make healthy choices about what to eat and drink.

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

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

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

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Jill Moore

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Sabine Fellows

Headmistress IAPS school

Dr Simon Willcocks

Former Headmaster IAPS school

Mrs Mary Regan

Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector