

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

Rastrick Independent School

Full Name of the School	Rastrick Independent School
DCSF Number	381/6007
Early Years Number	EY290475
Registered Charity Number	N/A
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Headmistress	Mrs Susan Vaughey
Proprietor	Mrs Susan Vaughey
Age Range (of the whole school)	0 to 16
Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	23rd to 26th November 2009
Early Years Age Range	0 to 5
Early Years Gender	Mixed
Early Years Foundation Stage Inspection Dates	16th and 17th November 2009

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 31st 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 registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the Statutory Framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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	12
	The Quality of Governance	12
	The Quality of Leadership and Management	12
5.	CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS	14
	Overall Conclusions	14
	Next Steps	15
6.	SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE	16
	List of Inspectors	16
7.	THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)	17
	What the Setting Should Do to Improve	18
	Complaints Since the Last Inspection	18

1. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 Rastrick Independent School is privately owned, the headmistress being the proprietor and one of the two directors of the school company, supported by nine advisory governors who include several local authority councillors. The school opened in 1994 and is on the site of Rastrick Grammar School which was founded in 1623. Phoenix House Nursery caters for the youngest children up to two years old, and Close Lea House for two to four year olds. Nursery care is provided throughout the year. The main school building – the old grammar school with a number of additions – houses the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), known as the Kindergarten, the Preparatory School (Lower Preparatory ages five to seven, Upper Preparatory ages seven to 11), and the Grammar School, which opened in 2004, for pupils aged eleven to sixteen. The school also offers all the year round care between 7.30 am and 6.30 pm.
- 1.2 The roll at the time of the inspection of the main school was 167 (84 boys and 83 girls): 54 in the Nursery and Pre-prep (from birth to age 5), which is four less than at the time of the EYFS inspection, 36 in Lower Prep, 50 in Upper Prep, and 27 in the Grammar School. Numbers are similar to those at the last inspection, with additions in the Grammar School and rather fewer in EYFS. Most pupils come from professional and business backgrounds in the immediate area of West Yorkshire although a few travel from further afield. A number have joined the school in recent years from two independent schools that have closed. Most pupils joining in the Lower Prep continue to Year 6 and a growing number stay on into the Grammar School. Leavers at 11+ are mostly moving to local maintained grammar schools or independent secondary schools. At 16+, leavers will continue to senior independent school sixth forms or to sixth form colleges. The make-up of the student body now reflects the considerable ethnic mix in the area more closely than in the past.
- 1.3 The ability range of pupils is wide and entrance is non-selective, although the school formally assesses those entering the Prep and the Grammar School for diagnostic purposes. Most, but not all, pupils are in the top half of the ability range nationally, based on nationally standardised tests taken in each year in the Upper Prep and the Grammar School, although that proportion is smaller in the Grammar School than in the Prep School. Thus the ability profile of the school is above the national average in the Prep School and, if pupils are performing in line with their abilities, their results in national tests at ages 7 and 11 will be above the average for all maintained primary schools. In the Grammar School the ability profile is a little above the national average, with fewer pupils in the top quartile nationally; too few pupils have taken GCSE examinations to enable comparisons with national data to be made. The school emphasises its provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. At present, one pupil has a private statement of special educational needs and the school has identified a further fourteen pupils as having learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD). Most of these pupils receive specialist extra help from the school. No pupils at present have English as an additional language. The school also identifies and makes specific provision for gifted and talented pupils. The school offers scholarships to gifted and talented pupils and bursaries where needed, at the Grammar School stage.
- 1.4 The school aims to provide quality experiences in all aspects of school life so enabling the children to be happy, successful and keen to learn, as well as helping them to grow into young people who are fulfilled and able to make a positive contribution to society. The school believes that children should develop a happy way of being together, and that their self-respect leads to a respect for the rights and needs of other children and adults, from whatever culture, background or gender. The intention is to educate the whole child by

presenting a total experience which is right and relevant to his or her individuality, and which fosters each child's intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual development.

- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used in the Grammar School and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Preparatory School and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage

School	Age of children
Phoenix House Nursery	0 to 2
Close Lea House Pre-preparatory and Lower Kindergarten	2 to 4
Kindergarten	4 to 5

- 1.6 See Section 7 for the report on the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Preparatory School

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

2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The Educational Experience Provided

- 2.1 Pupils enjoy a good educational experience, which is consistent with the aims of the school to provide a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum, accessible to all of its pupils. The planning of the curriculum and the monitoring of its provision has been improved since the last inspection in 2004. The current pupil numbers and limited accommodation places some constraints on the provision in the Grammar School and the headmistress is aware of this.
- 2.2 The quality of education provided in the EYFS is excellent. The curriculum in the Prep and Grammar Schools successfully provides pupils with many opportunities for linguistic, mathematical, scientific, art and design, human and social, aesthetic and creative development. A particular strength of the school is the provision for developing skills in literacy, speaking, listening and numeracy. All pupils are taught information and communications technology (ICT) skills, but ICT is rarely used in the classroom in other subjects, and only occasionally appears in pupils' written work in either the Prep or Grammar School. Provision for technology in the Grammar School is also limited.
- 2.3 The school has a wide-ranging personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme which fully supports the school's aims and ethos and which is incorporated into all aspects of school life. This includes, in the Grammar School, help with study skills and some careers work. A healthy attitude to living is promoted through a number of extra-curricular activities, including an annual visit by Years 5 and 6 to Robinwood Activity Centre; around the school, displays show work based on healthy eating and the dangers linked to smoking.
- 2.4 Transfer arrangements and strong pastoral links ensure a smooth continuity of education between each school stage. Teachers arrange a meeting with the next class teacher to make a verbal handover supported by copies of formative and summative assessments. Appropriate attention is given to preparing pupils in the Grammar School for making A-level choices. External careers advisors visit the school to advise on career choices and to interview each pupil in Years 10 and 11. Links with local employers are fostered to enable and encourage these pupils to arrange work experience.
- 2.5 The planning of the curriculum is extremely detailed and thorough in the Prep School, and is carefully monitored by the headmistress. Throughout the school, planning ensures equality of access and opportunities for all pupils to participate in the wide range of academic and other activities. In the Grammar School, GCSE programmes of work are chosen to match the needs of individual pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to go on educational outings to enrich their learning, and visitors are invited in to school to talk to the pupils. However, these opportunities are limited, especially in the Grammar School, and the headmistress is seeking to extend their range and encourage greater participation.
- 2.6 The school is committed to meeting the curricular requirements of all those pupils requiring learning support, including those with a statement of special educational needs and the gifted and talented. Arrangements are made to identify any pupils who may have LDD following concerns expressed by their teachers. Where appropriate, individual education plans (IEPs) are formed and used to support the pupil's learning in class. At present twelve pupils, from all age groups, are given regular additional one-to-one tuition, which enables them to make good progress and gain the confidence they need to work effectively alongside their peers. Similarly, the gifted and able pupils are identified across the school. Work providing extra challenge for the most able pupils was seen in teachers' planning and followed up in lessons.

Sometimes extra activities are laid on for these pupils, for example in a mathematics club arranged at break time for the more able mathematicians in Years 4, 5 and 6.

- 2.7 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

Pupils' Learning and Achievements

- 2.8 The quality of pupils' learning and achievement is good overall in relation to their abilities, and in line with the school's aim that all pupils should be successful and keen to learn. Standards achieved at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
- 2.9 Children in the EYFS achieve well and their behaviour is outstandingly good. Pupils in the Prep School and the Grammar School achieve good levels of knowledge, skills and critical understanding in their subjects and learn to apply these abilities effectively. Pupils learn rapidly, and both numeracy and literacy skills are strong throughout the schools. Number work is consistently accurate and logically presented. Language develops quickly; pupils in Year 2 write with correct use of speech marks, the poetry produced by pupils in Years 3 and 4 is reflective and imaginative, and Year 6 pupils express their views, for example on cruelty to animals, effectively and with insight. Pupils speak well and listen attentively: in assembly, in class to their teachers and to each other. As they get older, pupils express their opinions with increasing clarity and precision.
- 2.10 Pupils learn to read confidently, for example when reading clear grammatical sentences of their findings in a science lesson in Year 2 and in an assembly presented by Year 3. Creative writing was often in evidence in displays throughout the school, and creative work was seen in music lessons and in expressive portrait work in art by Years 8 and 9. Pupils' ICT skills, seen in ICT lessons in the Grammar School were satisfactory. Year 7 had those skills reinforced and extended in a lesson on data collection.
- 2.11 The relative attainment between different groups of pupils, subjects or curricular areas is consistent with their ability. Boys and girls make equivalent progress and thorough planning for the ability range within the classes maximises the attainment of all pupils, so that they make consistently good progress.
- 2.12 Pupils' results in national tests at the end of Year 2 over the three years from 2006 to 2008, were well above the national average, so that pupils' attainment was good in relation to their ability, as they were again in 2009. The school's focus on monitoring learning and achievement and relating this to subsequent planning is fundamental to these results. Pupils' results in national tests at the end of Year 6 from 2006 to 2008 were far above the national average and high for their ability. However in 2009, the ability range was lower and results were satisfactory in relation to ability. At GCSE, the results of a small number of pupils over the last three years have reflected good progress for individual pupils.
- 2.13 Pupils enjoy success in music, drama and dance. This September the Associated Board of the Royal School of Music awarded 21 certificates at grade 1, 2 and 3 to pupils learning the piano, violin, cello, saxophone, cornet, clarinet and guitar. The school choirs perform both in and out of school. In LAMDA examinations 59 pupils were awarded certificates, at all levels from introductory to level 5, in recognition of their choral speaking, verse and prose speaking, acting, mime and communication. A small group of girls are also working towards dance examinations later in the year and the school usually takes part in the National Primary Maths Challenge awards, in which several pupils were awarded gold certificates last year. Pupils taking part in competitive sport do so out of school.

- 2.14 The quality of pupils' learning is mostly good and their behaviour in class is responsible and positive. Pupils' work is well organised. They are equipped for their lessons, positive about their work and keen to develop it in class, in groups or individually. Research skills are developed in some homework tasks, for example when pupils in Year 8 investigated the role of Parliament. Examples of efficient note taking were seen in Year 5 English books.
- 2.15 Throughout the school, pupils study and work cooperatively with others. Year 1 pupils worked together to make a friendship web in circle time PSHCE; Year 8 enthusiastically took part in role play in a history lesson; and the senior and junior choirs thoroughly enjoyed singing together in their weekly rehearsal. More informally, pupils quietly supported their neighbours in their work in class, for example in science and ICT lessons in the Grammar School.
- 2.16 From work scrutiny, displays, lesson observation and from discussions with pupils, it is clear that most pupils apply themselves well, persevere with their work and often enjoy what they are doing. They are enthusiastic and want to achieve their best, knowing that the staff are there to help them.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- 2.17 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with some aspects outstanding, remaining a strong area of the school's provision. The school is successful in achieving its aim that the children should be happy and fulfilled, confident in their own self-respect and learning to respect others. In the EYFS, the celebration of a breadth of cultures and religions ensures that no-one is disadvantaged.
- 2.18 In the Prep and Grammar Schools, pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Their self-esteem is carefully fostered so that they have a strong sense of self-awareness and feel valued. This is founded on the good and caring relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves. Through links with the local parish church, assemblies, written work, art and music, pupils are given ample opportunities to explore values and beliefs, including religious ones, and the ways in which these affect people's lives. Pupils are encouraged to care about the world around them and to appreciate the wonders of the natural world as well as the achievements of mankind in music or art.
- 2.19 Pupils' moral development is outstanding. Parents have expressed their appreciation of the strong and worthwhile values the school instils, which are upheld and supported by the staff who are excellent role models for the pupils. Pupils know the high standards expected of them. In the Prep School they respect their 'Golden Rules'. All pupils are courteous to visitors, whom they welcome to their school, and are considerate to one another. They show respect for each other and listen to one another's opinions in class. Their written work and their discussions in class show that they are developing a strong ethical sense in relation to the world in which they live. The reaction of older pupils to an assembly which presented themes of forgiveness and revenge was thoughtful and strongly felt. Good behaviour is a strong feature of the school.
- 2.20 Pupils' social development is good. The school has a strong sense of being a community. Pupils show self-discipline and respect others in the school. They care for their environment as they move around the school. Opportunities for socialisation and responsibility in the Grammar School are inevitably more limited at this stage in its development and the Grammar School staff are keen to encourage this aspect of the pupils' lives. In the Prep School, Year 3 children have become Junior Wardens in a local authority initiative and in school they enjoy responsibilities such as acting as librarians or class monitors. In the wider community, pupils show care and concern for the environment by studying global issues and

looking at ways to recycle. Events are held to support local charities and, in their citizenship lessons, GCSE pupils in the Grammar School learn about public institutions and services in England. In a Years 7 and 8 PSHCE lesson pupils acquired a good understanding of the role of parliament. A number of Grammar School pupils take part in work experience in the Phoenix House Nursery or in Close Lea House.

- 2.21 Pupils' cultural development is also good. The school is successful in helping pupils to acquire an appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures. This is achieved through a range of different activities including topic work, celebrations, assemblies, art, drama and music. Year 3 presented an excellent Thanksgiving Day assembly showing many aspects of early settler life in America. High quality displays around the school also encourage engagement with other cultures and faiths.
- 2.22 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)

- 2.23 The quality of teaching in the Prep School is good and occasionally outstanding. In the Grammar School it is fully satisfactory and quite often good. Teaching supports the aims of the school and effectively encourages all pupils to work hard and make good progress. Teachers recognise that pupils learn in different ways and have different needs; they have developed strategies that allow all pupils to learn in ways that best suit them. Staff in the EYFS have high expectations of the children and a detailed understanding of their development so that good planning ensures stimulating and challenging activities for each child.

Prep School

- 2.24 In the Prep School, teaching provides a secure foundation for pupils, including those with LDD, to acquire new knowledge, increase their understanding according to their ability and develop new skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils worked confidently in four different ability groups. A well-planned literacy lesson in Years 5 and 6 used different approaches for each group, who were well supported as they worked on different tasks. Class teaching supports LDD pupils well and these pupils also gain very helpful support in their one-to-one sessions. Teachers are concerned that all pupils should progress well and, where necessary, extra support is made available outside lessons.
- 2.25 Teaching encourages pupils to work hard and persevere in their written tasks and projects. The best teaching nurtures interest and enjoyment of learning and encourages the development of pupils' intellectual, physical and creative abilities. In Years 1 and 2, the enthusiastic teaching leads to very positive achievement, for example in a Year 2 music lesson where the pupils learned about pitch and beat, notating their work and then performing with delight.
- 2.26 Good relationships between pupils and teachers are based on mutual respect, which helps pupils to feel confident about expressing their ideas and asking for help when it is needed. Pupils are encouraged to be supportive of each other's learning; Year 1 pupils worked supportively in pairs and small groups in a PE and dance class. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and the ethos of the school encourages pupils to conduct themselves responsibly. Class teachers have a secure understanding of all the subjects they are required to teach.

- 2.27 Resources are adequate but not as widely used as they might be. Each class has a computer but this arrangement does not allow ICT to be used to its full potential to support interactive teaching and learning. Classrooms, although sometimes quite small when the number of pupils is large, provide a comfortable, stimulating and secure learning environment, and displays are varied and colourful. The library, which is looked after very well by its pupil librarians, is a welcoming and attractive area, and it provides good resources to support teaching and independent reading. Full use is made of the school site for imaginative outdoor play.

Grammar School

- 2.28 In the Grammar School, teaching enables nearly all pupils, including those with LDD, to acquire new knowledge, make sound progress in their understanding and to develop their basic, as well as new subject, skills. Teachers deal effectively with small groups of varying ages and with classes of pupils from different year groups. Although little planning for LDD or the more able pupils is explicit, these pupils are supported effectively in class. IEPs are used appropriately as necessary. In a Year 7 English class, for example, careful support during a comprehension task was given to those pupils who needed help; in a French lesson with pupils from Years 9 and 11 attention was focused effectively on each individual and his or her different tasks.
- 2.29 Pupils are motivated well by the teaching and are encouraged to work hard. They perceive their teachers as being wholly supportive and caring about their success. They know that teachers will provide extra teaching outside class time if it is needed as well as in form time at the end of the day. Teaching encourages pupils to behave responsibly and enjoy learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are purposeful and friendly, and create an atmosphere in which pupils want to learn. In a Years 7 and 8 mathematics lesson, pupils clearly enjoyed their work on probability problems using dice.
- 2.30 Pupils are encouraged to 'think aloud' and are praised when they offer answers that are hypothesising or tentative. Pupils are expected to undertake research for themselves, often as part of their homework. The best teaching employs a wide variety of activities in lessons, sets an appropriate pace and has high expectations of pupils. For instance, in a Year 8 history lesson good use was made of an exercise in which pupils had to play the parts of Elizabeth I and her potential suitors. Similarly, when good use was made of resources, practical tasks and well-focused questioning, pupils behaved well, enjoyed their learning and applied themselves fully.
- 2.31 In the Grammar School all teaching is carried out by specialist teachers. Teachers have a secure command of the subjects they teach. Teaching is supported by a suitable range of resources of good quality, although there is some sharing of resources such as televisions. Access can be obtained to the ICT suite, but the hardware there has not yet been upgraded to enable the use of more recent software. As in the Prep School, ICT is not yet fully integrated into all subjects of the curriculum, mainly because the classrooms are not equipped to allow convenient access to ICT for teaching and learning at this level. The school recognises that this is an area for development. The small library provides adequate resources to support teaching and independent reading.

Whole School

- 2.32 Throughout the school, teachers know their pupils well, and plan their teaching accordingly. The great majority of teaching is very well planned, and planning, as well as pupils' work, is regularly monitored.
- 2.33 Pupils' work is marked diligently and thoroughly in all subjects, with appropriate correction, encouraging comments and often with suggestions of ways to improve. In the Prep School, indications are frequently given to parents of what was achieved by pupils and the extent of support from teachers. In the Grammar School, pupils may be set individual learning targets to guide their progress. Year 8 art and design pupils receive very thorough feedback on their work and helpful intervention was also seen in history and geography exercise books.
- 2.34 Assessment is comprehensive throughout the school. Pupils are tested at entrance for diagnostic purposes. In Years 1 and 2, assessment in mathematics and English is used effectively to inform rigorous planning. The school has suitable assessment, recording and tracking systems in core subjects in Years 3 to 6. Some self-assessment is also encouraged, for example in a Year 3 literacy topic geared to preparation for 11+ tests, and in science in the Grammar School to establish pupils' levels of understanding relative to National Curriculum norms; in addition, an element of peer review was seen in some classes, providing effective reinforcement for pupils' own level of understanding and attainment. National tests at each level and nationally standardised tests annually, as well as twice-yearly school examinations, provide data on pupils' ability, achievement and progress. The information is used by the headmistress and teachers to guide planning, to monitor overall school performance and to provide information for tutors and class teachers. This work is supported by a consultant who has particular responsibility for the entrance and diagnostic testing.
- 2.35 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 outstanding standards of pastoral care and comprehensive measures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are notable features of the school, as they were at the last inspection. The children in the EYFS enjoy excellent pastoral care and their welfare is sensitively supported. Staff in the Prep and Grammar Schools show a concern and interest in the well being of all the pupils and give time and attention at registration, in enrichment and enhancement sessions or whenever needed. Teachers are good role models. They help their pupils grow into confident young people, ready to take on responsibility and concerned for others, thereby meeting the school's aim to provide good quality pastoral care which encourages pupils to feel fulfilled and ready to make a positive contribution to society.
- 3.2 All staff play an important part in pastoral care. Class teachers in the Prep School and tutors in the Grammar School have specific responsibilities for pupils in their class or year group. They are supported by the playground nannies and dining hall staff who encourage good table manners and etiquette. The school ensures that every pupil has an adult to turn to when needed and pupils indicated that they would readily seek help from a teacher, probably in the Grammar School after first seeking to sort out areas of concerns themselves. In turn, the staff are well supported by the headmistress and the school's guidelines in the provision of care. In the Grammar School, tutors also offer guidance on prospective further education and A-level subject choice. A communications book is used actively to ensure that all part-time staff are fully aware of any ongoing concerns.
- 3.3 The qualities of relationships between staff and pupils, and between the pupils themselves are excellent. All members of the school community show each other respect. Most pupils say that the school is ready to listen to their concerns and opinions, and this communication is soon to be formalised with the creation of a school council.
- 3.4 The school operates an Early Bird and Night Owl facility which is much appreciated by parents who can deliver and collect their children at times convenient to the families. Class teachers are aware of pupils attending these sessions and ensure that the pupils are confident with the arrangements.
- 3.5 Discipline and behaviour throughout the school are excellent. Classes in the Prep School devise their own classroom rules each September. All staff are fully aware of the school behaviour and anti-bullying policies, which indicate appropriate sanctions for each level in the school and the actions to be taken on the rare occasions that bullying occurs. A system of house points, together with credit and merit marks, rewards good behaviour, work and punctuality. These are popular with many pupils.
- 3.6 Child protection measures are in place and staff are fully aware of these measures. The relevant Childline notices are displayed in both Prep School and Grammar School.
- 3.7 All necessary measures are taken to minimise the risk of fire. Tests and fire drills are undertaken regularly. Many staff are trained first-aiders and all staff are made aware of pupils with allergies, asthma or other medical conditions. There is a dedicated sick room. The school's admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and formal registration takes place at the start of each morning and afternoon.

- 3.8 The school is keen to promote healthy eating habits and takes part in related initiatives to engage the pupils and extend their understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Fruit is provided for morning breaks and pupils are encouraged to drink plenty of water. A four-weekly rota of menus ensures variety and due care is taken to provide for pupils with allergies or religious requirements. Nonetheless, some pupils are unhappy with the menus on offer and the quantities of food provided. Inspection findings indicated that they have some justification for their concerns, especially in the older age groups. The school encourages exercise and a suitable programme of games and physical education (PE) form part of the weekly programme. The Grammar School pupils can visit a local park at some lunch times so that pupils can engage safely in larger group games.
- 3.9 The school makes appropriate arrangements for pupils with disabilities, including any with special educational needs. The current three-year plan covers the access of all pupils to the curriculum and their physical access to the school
- 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 The school has good links with parents and provides them with detailed information about the school and the progress of their children. It has established worthwhile links with the community. The school continues to recognise the major value and importance to both parties of working in partnership with parents, and the contribution this makes to the provision of a happy, caring and stable school environment for all pupils. The headmistress is also very keen that the school should play, and be seen to play, a full part in the local community. The links established benefit children in the EYFS. It is made clear that everyone, pupils and staff alike, has an important role to play in developing positive relationships in and outside the school.
- 3.12 Returns to parental questionnaires were largely positive and often strongly so; parents are clearly very satisfied with the education provided by the school. Parents praised particularly the committed leadership and the quality of teaching, which helps their children to make progress and to grow in confidence, the pastoral care and the school's dealing with concerns. Parents are also pleased with pupils' academic progress, their behaviour, and the school's attitude and ethos. Parents of older pupils were mostly appreciative of the opportunities for extra-curricular activities, albeit with some criticism of too little sport and in other cases of the extra cost of many activities. A small number wanted more involvement in the life and work of the school; and others were unhappy with aspects of the information provided, mainly a concern about the lack of a parents' evening in the Prep School. The inspectors believe that the quantity and quality of information provided to parents is good and that staff are available for discussion of pupils' progress if requested. However, it is true that, with notable exceptions such as the choirs, relatively few activities are run by members of the teaching staff. Consequently, many of the extra activities, some of which, such as dance and gymnastics, as well as instrumental music, take place within the timetable, are run by visiting teachers and coaches at extra cost to parents.
- 3.13 Parents of pupils of all ages are given good opportunities to become involved with the activities of the school, and in the work and progress of their children. Regular meetings in the Grammar School enable parents to discuss work and progress and ensure that they have a chance to hear about the curriculum and to ask questions. In the Prep School parents are invited to Open Days where they can see their children's work. Parents generally are encouraged to meet staff at the start and end of each day, and the small size of the school allows for an easy informal dialogue. Homework diaries are used effectively to sustain a

dialogue between home and school. The school warmly welcomes parents to all school activities. The Friends of Rastrick School hold an annual charity ball to which all are invited. Membership of the Friends is open to all parents and members are encouraged by the headmistress to assist in the school in various ways.

- 3.14 The school works hard to maintain good links with parents, keeping them suitably informed. The flow of information between school and home is good. The homework planner, the prospectus, the termly newsletter, departmental handbooks, and the updated and comprehensive website provide parents of pupils with the information they need as their children move through the school. Prospective parents are invited to visit the school on Open Days. Twice-yearly reports are thorough and well detailed, giving parents a full insight into their children's work and progress. Target setting is clear and detailed and some marking is designed to give parents clear information about progress and achievement. The reports include an opportunity for self assessment, and achievement is correlated with National Curriculum criteria.
- 3.15 Parents view the staff as sympathetic and efficiently responsive when concerns are raised. Parental concerns are dealt with according to the published complaints procedure, and the school handles complaints and concerns promptly and with due care.
- 3.16 The school actively and successfully promotes links with the wider community. There is a strong connection to the local church, and the parish clergy visit the school to conduct assemblies on a regular basis. Services at the parish church are well attended by parents. Produce from the Harvest Festival is distributed in the local community. Some pupils are Calderdale wardens and as such are involved in local environmental initiatives. The school governors provide a good link with the local town hall and several pupils are members of the Calderdale Music School. The school actively supports its chosen charity "Save the Children" in a variety of ways.
- 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 The proprietor is successful in setting appropriate aims and values for the school and, as headmistress and one of two directors of the school company, provides strong leadership to secure them. The governors form an advisory board to support the proprietor and to provide a consultative body, familiar with the aspirations of the school and its circumstances.
- 4.2 The proprietor reports each term to a meeting of the nine governors, who also take a particular interest in an aspect of the school related to their particular expertise. Thus, informal subcommittees of governors are involved with health and safety, child protection, parental complaints, staff recruitment, premises and the curriculum, all of which are the direct responsibility of the proprietor.
- 4.3 Apart from those governors who sit on the school's health and safety committee, form a complaints panel or assist the proprietor in interviewing teaching staff, governors have little direct contact with the school except for social and public occasions in the school year. They have no involvement with financial matters and no responsibility to ensure educational provision or investment in human and material resources. The proprietor shares with governors her development planning for the school but takes responsibility herself, with her co-director, for the financial well-being of the school and the provision of appropriate and sufficient resources.
- 4.4 The proprietor successfully discharges her responsibility for the welfare, and health and safety of pupils. The governors, at a personal level, offer an important measure of support for the proprietor, and so for the well-being and success of the school.

The Quality of Leadership and Management

- 4.5 The school's aim to provide a quality experience in all aspects of school life, and to foster each child's intellectual, physical, cultural and spiritual development, is successfully achieved. The headmistress continues to promote the distinctive ethos that is a feature of the school, with strong leadership and detailed direction of all its aspects. The atmosphere and standards achieved are appreciated and applauded by the parents.
- 4.6 Leadership and management in the EYFS are outstanding. In the rest of the school, senior management responsibility is exercised exclusively by the headmistress, so that all staff in the Prep and Grammar Schools report directly to her. In turn the headmistress takes direct responsibility for the curriculum, for support for pupils with LDD and for those who are gifted and talented, for pupils' welfare and pastoral care, for school premises and facilities, and for staff recruitment and development. Management in all these areas is well defined and effective. Marketing the school is also now beginning to feature more prominently.
- 4.7 Long-term development planning has been extended since the last inspection to cover all areas of the school while still prioritising, in greater detail, potential developments of the curriculum resulting from recent changes in the National Curriculum. Plans, which are developed in the main by the headmistress and her co-director, are discussed with teachers at all levels in the school and given to the advisory governors for information and comment.

- 4.8 At middle management level a number of staff have subject responsibilities in either the Prep or the Grammar School. Subject planning is well done and where possible an element of monitoring, for example of written work, is achieved, although timetables and circumstances rarely allow for full monitoring of teaching and learning. Further, very helpful support for staff is provided by the headmistress, and in the Prep School also by the mathematics consultant. Pastoral care in the Prep School is based on the work of the class teacher and in the Grammar School by the teachers responsible as tutors for different year groups.
- 4.9 This simple and direct management structure has continued to work very effectively but, as the Grammar School has grown and its need for its own identity has become more apparent, and as the burden on the headmistress of day-to-day management has increased, the lack of leaders in the Grammar School and, to a lesser extent, in the Prep School, each dedicated to their distinct communities, has become more significant in maintaining direction for both staff and pupils. The headmistress is fully aware of this issue and already considering changes to strengthen the management team.
- 4.10 Over the years, a comprehensive and detailed set of policies and procedures has been compiled, which have been periodically reviewed and updated. They cover all the mandatory areas, are well known to staff and are properly implemented. However, the policies now show considerable overlap and some have extensive appendices listing good practice and a variety of approaches. Volume and complexity is making these documents unwieldy and increasingly difficult to access, so that the policies no longer provide concise directions directly relevant to the school at this time.
- 4.11 Teachers in both the Grammar School and the Prep School are well qualified, and form strong teams committed to the development and welfare of their pupils. New staff are welcomed and helped to settle into their role, and care is taken to provide opportunities for the professional development for all teachers. Appropriate induction programmes are provided for newly qualified teachers. All staff are carefully vetted for their suitability to work with children.
- 4.12 Finance is made available to secure appropriate facilities and resources, human and physical, to meet the needs of all the pupils and to support their all-round development. The administration of the school is effective. Non-teaching staff make up a loyal team supporting the teachers and helping to ensure the welfare of the pupils. They form an essential and valued part of the whole school community.
- 4.13 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].

5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 The school very successfully meets its aims and aspirations, and meets the educational needs of all its pupils. The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is outstanding. In the Prep and Grammar Schools, high standards of pastoral care and welfare, and excellent personal development, underpin the confidence and mutual respect of pupils, and help to establish a happy school with a positive atmosphere. Pupils perform well academically according to their ability. They achieve good results in national tests in the Prep School and individuals progress well towards GCSE in the Grammar School. Pupils enjoy a broad and generally well-balanced curriculum supported by a small but popular range of extra activities, which includes some excellent music as well as good opportunities for drama and dance. The curriculum makes good provision for pupils with LDD and ensures that the most able pupils are suitably challenged. More limited in scope is the provision for design technology and the use of ICT across the curriculum. Pupils become good learners, showing perseverance and often enjoyment, as well as satisfaction from their success in academic and other activities. The quality of much teaching is good and all teachers are strongly committed to supporting their pupils' learning and development. In this they are assisted by a comprehensive and well-used programme of assessment and consistently thorough, helpful and encouraging marking of pupils' work. However, resources for teaching are not always used as well as they might be and the ICT available in the classroom does not support teaching and learning effectively. Relationships between staff and pupils, between the pupils themselves and between the school and the parents are strong. Parents have access to good information about the school and about their child's progress, and they remain very supportive of their school.
- 5.2 The school continues to be led with vision and strength. Since the last inspection more attention has been paid to planning and monitoring, especially in regard to the curriculum. The committed staff, both teachers and non-teachers, ensure the smooth functioning of the school. However, as the school is aware, the direction and development of the Grammar School is impeded by the lacks of a senior manager dedicated to it. In the main school as a whole, policies and guidelines have become too extensive and unwieldy, and, in the EYFS, the records of attainment on entry do not allow effective analysis of trends and progress.
- 5.3 The school meets all the regulatory requirements.

Next Steps

- 5.4 The school has no major weaknesses. To continue to develop the good quality of education it already provides it should take the following steps.
1. Delegate more responsibility to staff to reduce the headmistress' commitment to day-to-day management. In particular:
 - develop focused leadership for the Grammar School to raise its profile and further its development;
 - involve more staff in both Grammar and Prep Schools in revising the schools' policies and procedures to meet present and future needs.
 2. When funds allow, upgrade ICT provision in classrooms to provide more effective support for teaching and learning.
- 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 23rd to 26th November 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 and honorary 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 16th and 17th November 2009 by two inspectors. The inspectors 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 inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

List of Inspectors

Mr Michael Higginbottom	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Linda Chiverrell	Headteacher, ISA school
Mr Andrew Waddington	Head of Department, HMC school
Mrs Val Weakley	Deputy Head, ISA school
Mr Christopher Sanderson	Early Years Lead Inspector
Mrs Yvonne Parry	Early Years Team Inspector

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

- 7.1 The Early Years setting at Rastrick Independent School, which caters for children from birth to 5, is an integrated part of the school. The Reception class is accommodated in the main school building, whilst Phoenix House, for children from birth to 2, and Close Lea House, for 2 to 4 year olds, have separate accommodation in the school grounds, including recently developed covered outdoor space, which is also used by Reception children. All classes use some of the main school facilities and Reception children have tuition in a private swimming pool very close to the school. At the time of this inspection there were 58 children, comprising 33 aged 0 to 3, of whom 29 attend part-time, and 25 aged 3 to 5, of whom 14 are full-time. Children come from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds and cultures. Currently none has EAL or a statement of special educational needs.
- 7.2 The setting aims to provide a happy, stimulating environment, where children are offered the best care and education and helped to fulfil their potential and achieve the outcomes of Every Child Matters. It aims to meet individual needs, promote equal opportunities and develop respect and a sense of community.
- 7.3 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is outstanding. Through detailed knowledge of each child and strong home-school links, individual needs are met. Children enjoy excellent personal support and the celebration of a breadth of cultures and religions ensures that no-one is disadvantaged. Together with an understanding of children's interests, observations are well focused and carefully used to inform planning and teaching, ensuring strong progress in learning and development. Welfare is sensitively promoted. Thorough safeguarding measures are carefully monitored by the headmistress and governors. Education and care benefit from extensive partnerships in the community, including use of the local church and library and a network which supports staff training. Main school pupils support the children well, some undertaking work experience in the setting. All staff are involved in self-evaluation exercises, ensuring that planning for improvement is well focused and staff have a sense of ownership. As a result, since the last inspection, the setting has developed an excellent new outdoor teaching area and raised the profile of staff training.
- 7.4 Leadership and management are outstanding. Regularly reviewed policies and procedures are robust, ensuring clear management of the setting and safeguarding of the children. Staff are appropriately qualified. Risk assessments are carefully monitored by the headmistress, who ensures a high level of safety awareness. Adults have an infectious enthusiasm for improvement, work confidently together and are highly motivated to provide exemplary care and education. Through a broad range of management measures, the headmistress monitors provision carefully, celebrates success and achievement and establishes areas for development. Carefully maintained records detail welfare needs, including allergies and dietary requirements, ensuring that they are addressed well. Close analysis of assessments and individual attention ensure that children's learning needs are clearly identified and well met. However, recording attainment on entry data solely in individual files limits its use for analysing trends and measuring progress. The setting has strong links with the local authority, useful training links with another school and a strong sense of identity within the village, all of which promote learning and development.
- 7.5 The quality of provision is excellent; it is at least good in all major aspects and is exemplary in most. The warm, welcoming environment, with its colourful displays of children's work, provides a vivid indication of their interests and achievements across all areas of learning. Experienced staff, with high expectations and detailed knowledge of children's developmental stages, observe meticulously and then plan stimulating and challenging

activities for each child. An appropriate balance of child-led and adult-led activities strongly supports children's developing independence, creativity and problem-solving skills and learning is greatly enhanced by the new outdoor classroom. Children's health, safety and well-being are protected and rigorously promoted. Road safety issues, for example, are fully utilised to teach children how they can keep safe.

- 7.6 Most children achieve well overall. They are active learners who enjoy being at school and demonstrate a high degree of interest and excitement in the rich and varied activities. Behaviour is outstanding, due to the positive approach to behaviour management. Children's varied backgrounds and cultures do not prevent them from relating strongly to each other and the staff. Independence is evident from an early age and children enjoy taking responsibility for small tasks, such as collecting aprons after lunch and taking messages. Understanding of how to keep safe, eat healthily and take exercise is evident from an early age; younger children indicate that they need to wash their hands, and older ones remind each other how to carry equipment correctly. Trust and confidence in the staff is such that children willingly share worries and concerns with key people.

What the Setting Should Do to Improve

- 7.7 To improve still further the high quality of its provision, the setting should take the following steps.
1. Present attainment on entry data in an aggregated format so that:
 - whole-class data is readily accessible to facilitate measuring future progress;
 - trends can then be identified and analysed to support the monitoring of teaching and learning.

- 7.8 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Childcare Act 2006.

Complaints Since the Last Inspection

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