



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**ACKWORTH SCHOOL**

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

**INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Ackworth School

Full Name of School	<b>Ackworth School</b>
DfE Number	<b>384/6000</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY336115</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>529280</b>
Address	<b>Ackworth School Ackworth Pontefract West Yorkshire WF7 7LT</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01977 611401</b>
Fax Number	<b>01977 616225</b>
Email Address	<b>reception@ackworthschool.com</b>
Head	<b>Kathryn Bell</b>
Clerk to the School Committee	<b>Alison Tyas</b>
Age Range	<b>2 to 19</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>494</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (248 boys and 246 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	2-3 (EYFS): <b>5</b> 5-11: <b>108</b> 3-5 (EYFS): <b>34</b> 11-19: <b>347</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mary Wilson</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection dates	<b>28<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> November 2012</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection occurs over a period of two continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2009.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted informal discussions with children and examined samples of work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the Clerk to the School Committee. They also held informal discussions with a sample of parents, observed a sample of before and after school care that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

.Ms Sheila Boyle    Early Years Lead Inspector

Ms Angela Beck    Team Inspector for Early Years, IAPS school

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Ackworth School was founded in 1779 on behalf of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), to educate the children of Quaker families 'not in affluence'. It is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged between two and nineteen and welcomes children of many faiths and from across the world. The Quaker ethos is translated into the school's aims, which seek to encourage a well-integrated and self-disciplined community, help pupils progress academically, consider others and equip them to lead a full and responsible life in the adult world. The school is held in charitable trust for the Religious Society of Friends. It is governed by the School Committee, and includes nine members who are nominated by the Religious Society of Friends, one treasurer, two members nominated by the staff, two current parents and two old scholars. The School Committee reports to Ackworth General Meeting composed of members of Britain Yearly Meeting of the Friends, which convenes annually at Ackworth.
- 1.2 The school is set in extensive grounds a few miles to the south west of Pontefract, West Yorkshire. The main school occupies historic listed buildings. The EYFS provision occupies two sites with the Reception class in the main school (Coram House) and the younger (Nursery) children in a separate Coram House Nursery some considerable distance from this. The children are taught in two distinct groups: one Nursery class and one Reception class. Although pupils in the main school come from a wide geographical area, including a range of countries around the world, those in the EYFS come mainly from the local area or within reasonable travelling distance. Across the school, English is not the principal language for 83 pupils, two of whom are in the EYFS.
- 1.3 The main school has a specialist unit for autistic pupils. In the school as a whole, seven pupils had statements of special educational needs. Forty-six pupils had been identified as having special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mainly dyslexia. None are in the EYFS provision.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 494 pupils in the school of whom 39 were in the EYFS (20 boys and 19 girls). Of these, five children were under the age of three, sixteen were aged three to four years and eighteen were aged four to five years. Nineteen were attending part-time. Two of these children have English as an additional language. Most of the children attend from the local area but some come from further afield. Before and after school care is provided so that the children can be cared for from 8.00am until 5.30pm. The School also offers a holiday club for five weeks each year for children who are rising four or older.
- 1.5 Since the last inspection the school has developed the provision in Reception, an additional classroom has been allocated and improved provision has been made for outdoor play.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. SUMMARY**

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

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

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

- 2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Provide more opportunities for Nursery children to mix with older children to increase their confidence and independence and aid transition.

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

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

3.1 The setting makes outstanding provision to meet the needs of the range of children who attend. The educational programme ensures that children's welfare, learning and development needs are exceptionally well met by caring staff, in a safe and supportive environment. Planning takes good account of the language levels of individual children, including those with English as an additional language (EAL). Children are enabled to make very good progress, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or starting point, as a result of excellent teaching. There are very good systems by which parents are kept informed about their child's learning and development and are encouraged to share what they know about their children. Results from parents' questionnaires, confirm they are overwhelmingly appreciative of the care and education provided for their children. Children enjoy themselves and there is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities in the indoor and outdoor setting, including the woodland learning environment. As a result, children are able to engage in imaginative play, investigations, and problem solving. They develop good language, communication and social skills and enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world. Key workers play an important role in children's learning and development by encouraging and supporting them to pursue their own interests. In the Nursery, for example, children regularly engage in role play of characters from fairy stories, such as Snow White or the Wizard of Oz. Reception children role play characters who help them, such as builders, policemen and firemen. Robust and regular assessment of progress enables staff to identify children's needs and plan effectively for their future learning. Those with additional needs and EAL are supported well. Structured daily teaching of phonics across the provision ensures that, children develop good early reading and writing skills. Similarly, the regular promotion of mathematical concepts, through topic work and practical activities, helps children to develop a secure foundation in number, and shape and space.

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

3.2 Provision for children's well-being is outstanding. Staff actively promote equality and respect diversity. Under the age of three children quickly form appropriate bonds, emotional attachments and acquire firm foundations for learning, because of the close links and co-operation between staff and parents. Those aged four to five (Reception) benefit from the many opportunities they have to interact with older children, including, assemblies, play times and joint trips to the woodland learning environment but, due in part to their location, Nursery children have few opportunities to mix with older children, apart from special events, such as music, forest school workshops and celebrations. Sensitively, staff promote independence, tolerance, co-operation, personal hygiene, appropriate behaviour, healthy eating and regular exercise. Creative use of the school's extensive grounds, contributes well to children's social development, self-esteem and their imagination. Reception children made stick men from materials they gathered and some created mud pictures. The pre-school sessions provide suitable care and activities for children who arrive before the start of the school day. Children benefit from specialist teaching in physical education, music and in some creative areas.

- 3.3 As a result, the children are well prepared for their transition from Nursery into the Coram House Reception class within the setting or into the junior school. Transition arrangements are good and procedures for reporting at age two are well established. Parents welcome the opportunity to be involved in their children's learning and they contribute regularly to reading records and learning journeys.

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

- 3.4 The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Governors take a keen interest in the provision and receive regular feedback from staff. Providers fulfil their responsibilities for overseeing the educational programmes. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Suitable policies and procedures, including child protection, risk assessments of premises, equipment and trips, are implemented consistently by staff. The staff are well qualified, suitably trained, and their performance is regularly monitored. Highly effective partnerships with parents and good links with local agencies contribute to the comprehensive understanding that adults have of each child. Staff regularly assess children's progress and information is passed on to parents at handovers, parents evenings and through end-of-year reports. Regular self-evaluation and monitoring of the provision is undertaken within the setting at all levels, ensuring the needs of every child are met and priorities for the future identified.

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

- 3.5 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are outstanding. Children, including those under the age of three and those with EAL, make good and often outstanding progress in relation to their starting points. Many reach consistently good levels of achievement. Most of the children who are under three enjoy role play activities. They make choices, take turns, feed themselves, know the initial sound of many everyday objects, and express their wishes clearly. They count confidently to five and recognise primary colours and some shapes, including squares, triangles and ovals. From the ages of three to five, the children develop good reading, writing and spelling skills supported by regular phonic activities. Reception children read well and enthusiastically and can write short sentences. They are familiar with addition and subtraction, can count forwards and backwards in twos, fives and tens, and are beginning to measure by comparing different objects. They confidently access information on a computer using a mouse. By the end of the EYFS, all children achieve and many exceed the Early Learning Goals in all required areas of learning. The children's excellent personal and emotional development is apparent. Exemplary behaviour is the norm and children quickly absorb the school's Quaker ethos, of respect, co-operation and tolerance of others. They share, take turns, play together harmoniously and show care and respect for each other. The management gives high priority to ensuring that children are safe and well cared for and that all policies and procedures are kept under review. As a result, the children feel safe, know how to remain so, and how to keep healthy. The management has a clear vision for the future development of the provision and this is shared by staff. The views of all other interested parties such as parents are regularly sought and considered in future planning, thus achieving continuous improvement. The effective use of plentiful and high quality resources leads to successful outcomes for all children, and the recommendations from the last report have been implemented successfully.