



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**HULME HALL GRAMMAR SCHOOL
INTERIM INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Hulme Hall Grammar School

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|-----------|-------------------|
| Full Name of School | Hulme Hall Grammar School | | |
| DfE Number | 356/6009 | | |
| EYFS Number | EY347271 | | |
| Registered Charity Number | 525931 | | |
| Address | Hulme Hall Grammar School 75 Hulme Hall Road Cheadle Hulme Cheadle Cheshire SK8 6LA | | |
| Telephone Number | 0161 485 3524 | | |
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| Email Address | secretary@hulmehallschool.org | | |
| Head | Mr Philip Marland | | |
| Chair of Governors | Mr Peter John Robinson | | |
| Age Range | 2 to 16 | | |
| Total Number of Pupils | 304 | | |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (180 boys; 124 girls) | | |
| Numbers by Age | 0-2 (EYFS): | 32 | 5-11: 41 |
| | 3-5 (EYFS): | 23 | 11-18: 208 |
| Head of EYFS Setting | Mrs Harjinda Khinda | | |
| EYFS Gender | Mixed | | |
| Inspection dates | 22 Mar 2011 to 23 Mar 2011 | | |

PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) schedule for INTERIM inspections*. The inspection is a two-day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in March 2007.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 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 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 31st August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection 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.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Hulme Hall Grammar School was founded in 1928 as a boys school. It is now a co-educational day school for pupils aged from two to sixteen. In 1963 it merged with a nearby girls school and became a charitable trust with a board of governors. The school is situated in a residential district on the edge of Stockport and owns playing fields about a mile distant. Until 1998, the junior school for Years 1 to 6, and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), were on a separate site. Now, they are an integral part of the main school.
- 1.2 The school aims to enable pupils of all abilities to realise their academic and personal potential in a nurturing environment. Emphasis is placed on developing the whole person, and on encouraging pupils to become confident individuals with high levels of self-esteem. Since the previous inspection the school has developed a new management structure and created a new all-weather sports area.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 304 pupils on roll, 55 of whom were in the EYFS. The overall ability profile of the school is in line with the national average, although a wide range of abilities is represented across the pupil body. The pupils come from families of diverse faiths and nationalities. They travel to the school from a wide catchment area within and beyond the town, many using the school's own coach company for their transport.
- 1.4 The school has identified 101 pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). Three pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN). Fourteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom seven receive extra support as the rest are fluent English speakers. Pupils leave at the age of eleven or sixteen and transfer to a range of independent and maintained schools and colleges. Almost all pupils subsequently continue to further education.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school in the EYFS setting and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| School | NC name |
| Nursery | Nursery |
| Kindergarten 1 | Nursery |
| Kindergarten 2 | Reception |

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

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

- 2.1 The pupils' overall achievement is good. Pupils are well educated in accordance with school's aims. They are appropriately prepared for each stage of their education and for life beyond school. Pupils of all abilities demonstrate good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in their subjects and activities. They are attentive listeners, confident in speaking, write well and can apply their mathematical skills effectively. Pupils think critically and creatively, and take a logical approach to their work when undertaking investigations in design and technology and science. Their information and communication technology (ICT) skills are good. The pupils' musical and physical skills are well developed. Their dramatic skills are strong.
- 2.2 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2007 to 2009, the most recent three-year period for which comparative statistics are currently available. Attainment in the junior school cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence available it is judged to be good. Results in GCSE have been above the national average for all maintained schools. In relation to their varied levels of ability, and the relatively high number who need additional support, pupils make good, and frequently rapid progress relative to pupils of similar ability. Pupils usually gain places to their first choice of senior school or college. A few pupils achieve places to senior schools with highly competitive entry requirements.
- 2.3 The pupils' achievements are strongly supported by their positive attitudes to their work, their co-operative skills and determination to complete tasks. They become increasingly confident in their ability to work independently as they progress through the school.
- 2.4 Pupils of all abilities benefit from the excellent curriculum which is carefully planned and regularly reviewed. It is organised efficiently to meet the varied needs of individual pupils. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, the curriculum focuses appropriately on core skills. The structure of the personalised programme for pupils in the senior school is highly successful. The GCSE option system offers a wide range of subject choices combined with useful vocational courses. Pupils also benefit from a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. These bring pupils success in county or regional competitions in soccer, athletics, cross-country and badminton, and nationally in lacrosse. Many co-curricular activities provide useful extension and reinforcement opportunities. A termly programme of enrichment days, visits from speakers and activities within the community broaden the pupils' experiences.
- 2.5 Good, and sometimes excellent teaching ensures that pupils fulfil their academic potential. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They usually provide appropriate challenges and encouragement to enable pupils to share their ideas and work independently. However, at times, the most able pupils do not receive sufficient additional challenge to ensure that they achieve to their highest level. A major strength of the teaching is the understanding that teachers have of the complex needs of pupils who need additional help. The systems used to identify and support these pupils are outstanding. The strong learning support team teach individual pupils extremely well. They also provide subject teachers with detailed information on the best strategies and activities to support these pupils. Pupils trust

their teachers, and know that they will receive help. Lessons are carefully planned, and resources used efficiently. While teachers use ICT effectively in their own teaching, not all ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to use ICT in their learning. Overall, the quality of marking is good with positive and helpful suggestions for improvement. However, some is limited with little guidance. Excellent systems for assessment have been introduced since the previous inspection.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.6 The pupils' personal development is outstanding. The ethos of individual support and mutual respect in the school enables pupils to develop self-esteem and confidence. Pupils of all ages are self-confident, courteous and respectful of each other and adults. Spirituality is nurtured through the restructured assembly programme, and fostered through many activities within the curriculum. Pupils have excellent moral awareness, and their values are reinforced by strong relationships and their willingness to abide by the clear school guidelines on behaviour. Teachers and older pupils are excellent role models for younger pupils, and the prefects take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils are proud of their school and appreciate the opportunity to be treated as individuals.
- 2.7 Pupils are socially aware and enjoy opportunities to act as leaders. A student committee plans frequent fund-raising projects, and the school council has been involved in drafting whole-school guidelines on topics such as anti-bullying. Pupils show empathy and understanding of the diversity of world cultures, strongly supported by the citizenship, personal, social and health education programme. The harmonious multi-cultural school community enables pupils to develop a natural tolerance for each other, whatever their background.
- 2.8 The pupils' success is enhanced by the excellent pastoral care, and by efficient systems to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Safeguarding is carefully considered and staff have appropriate training in child protection. In an atmosphere of mutual respect, relationships across the school are excellent. The anti-bullying policy and strategies are effective. Pupils are confident that incidents are rare and dealt with promptly. Fire procedures are efficient. Pupils who are unwell are looked after properly. Registration and admissions registers are accurate, and trips are carefully planned. Pupils greatly enjoy the nutritious lunches, and they take regular exercise to develop healthy lifestyles.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.9 The governance of the school is good. The small governing body is strongly committed to the school and its members have close connections with the school. They have a clear understanding of the ethos of the school that they wish to maintain, and they have ensured appropriate investment in human and material resources. Governors have relevant skills in most areas, particularly in business and financial matters. However, no member of the board currently has direct educational experience to provide appropriate support and challenge for the school. Governors are well informed about the school and its activities. They attend school functions and meet the staff regularly. The most recent school development plan has just come to its end. The governors are considering the most effective way to devise a new one as part of a strategic review for the future of the school. They have an awareness of their legal responsibilities relating to the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. They have reviewed the policy and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils, but they have not ensured that the necessary full recruitment checks on support staff are in place. At no time have pupils been put at risk, and action to remedy the situation was taken immediately.
- 2.10 The quality of leadership and management is good overall. Strong leadership has ensured that the school is highly effective in meeting its aims. The vision to create an environment in which pupils of all abilities can thrive and achieve well is strongly supported by the whole school community. All staff work together closely for the good of the pupils. Since the previous inspection, the management structures have been strengthened. A new senior leadership team has been formed and middle managers have more clearly defined roles. This has ensured that the monitoring of teaching and learning is more effective, although it is not yet consistent across the whole school. Recruitment systems are now thorough, and the central register is completed correctly.
- 2.11 Links with parents are excellent. The school fulfils its commitment to work with parents for the success of every child. Parents have plenty of opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. They are a welcome part of the community. The school's 'open door' policy ensures that any concerns are dealt with carefully and promptly. Regular parents' evenings and clear reports provide parents with accurate information. Communication works well. Parents of pupils and prospective pupils are provided with almost all the required information about the school. The school has a clear complaints policy which has not been invoked. However, the school has not yet informed parents about the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure.
- 2.12 Comments in the parents' questionnaire reveal overwhelming support for nearly all aspects of the education provided. Parents particularly appreciate the help given to those with additional needs. They also appreciate the ease of communication with the school. A few expressed concerns about the quality of the pupils' behaviour and the provision of extra-curricular activities. The pupils' behaviour is judged to be excellent, and the range of the extra-curricular activities is good.

3. ACTION POINTS

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

3.1 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore must:

- ensure that all staff appointed have enhanced CRB checks in addition to List 99 [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(c), 22.(3)(d) and 22.(4), under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors];
- ensure that parents are informed of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year [Part 6, paragraph 24.(3)(g), under Provision of Information].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

3.2 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. In lessons, ensure that tasks and activities to extend the most able pupils are provided consistently across the curriculum.
2. Further develop the appropriate use of ICT for pupils in all subjects.
3. In the EYFS, implement a detailed development plan.
4. In the EYFS, strengthen the role of the EYFS co-ordinator and develop systems for the formal monitoring and evaluation of the provision.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

4.1 The overall effectiveness is outstanding. The staff recognise the unique qualities of each child and show excellent understanding of how to meet their individual needs. The children respond to the carefully planned and caring environment with a growing awareness of their own individual talents and interests. The children's self-confidence and interest in their work are evident, and they make excellent progress, ensuring a firm start to their education. Detailed self-evaluation is at present informal, and planning for improvement is not yet sufficiently developed. Parents are most supportive of the setting and are encouraged to play an active part in the learning process.

4.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.2 Leadership and management are good. All records, policies and procedures necessary for the efficient management of the setting and safeguarding of the children are in place and implemented well. Staff are well qualified and effectively deployed. Their professional development is encouraged through external and internal training to ensure excellent outcomes for the children. Each child has an equal opportunity to succeed, supported by a wide range of appropriate resources. Areas for development have been identified, but the EYFS co-ordinator has insufficient time to develop and carry out her role. Formal monitoring of the setting has not been established. Outstanding relationships exist with parents; their views are carefully considered. Helpful links with local agencies have been established, and a pro-active and sensitive approach to early intervention ensures that all children are fully supported and integrated.

4.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.3 Provision is outstanding. Children in Nursery and Reception learn and develop well through excellent teaching, play and valuable first-hand experiences. Thorough assessment identifies what children can do, and the next steps they need to take to progress. An appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities means that children enjoy a wide variety of experiences. Nursery children have invaluable opportunities for a range of free-flow play and exploration. Although Reception has no direct access to outdoor areas, regular imaginative and purposeful activities are carefully planned. Children are extremely well supported by their key person, who promotes their welfare and guides them towards self-sufficiency, enabling their personal skills to develop very well.

4.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.4 Outcomes for children are outstanding. In both Nursery and Reception, literacy and numeracy are strongly promoted. By the end of Reception most children make particularly rapid progress in these areas. Nursery children begin to learn phonics and Reception children build on this to excellent effect. Nursery children are confident in counting to ten, and by the end of Reception they use numbers spontaneously in everyday routines and apply their growing mathematical knowledge to their chosen pursuit. Children speak confidently in Nursery and in Reception talk about their learning activities with exuberance. Their enthusiastic interest and understanding of the world around them is developed through first-hand experiences. Children feel safe developing relationships that are strong at all levels. They respect and tolerate each other's differences as they develop skills for the future. Children understand that physical exercise, healthy eating and personal hygiene are all needed to achieve a healthy lifestyle.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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

Complaints since the last inspection

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

Section 3 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Lady Fiona Mynors

Mr Bill Ibbetson-Price

Mr Roger Tapping

Mrs Linda Donowho

Reporting Inspector

Head, IAPS school

Director of Academic Development, GSA school

Early Years Lead Inspector