

# SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

*Independent professional inspection of schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, schools accredited as members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, and those schools belonging to the Cognita Group which are not members of the Independent Schools Council and its constituent associations*

## INSPECTION REPORT

**INSPECTION CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO SECTION 162A  
OF THE EDUCATION ACT 2002**

<b>Name of school:</b>	Huddersfield Grammar School
<b>DfE number:</b>	382/6005
<b>Inspection team:</b>	<b>Reporting Inspector:</b> Mr Mike Thirkell <b>Supporting Inspectors:</b> Mr Simon Bennett Mr Tony Hubbard
<b>Dates of inspection:</b>	3-6 February 2014

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Huddersfield Grammar School	
Address of school:	Royds Mount, Luck Lane, Huddersfield, HD1 4QX	
Telephone number:	01484 424549	
Fax number:	01484 430973	
Email address:	thoyle@huddersfield-grammar.co.uk	
Proprietor:	Cognita	
DfE number:	382/6005	
Type of school:	Independent school	
Age range of pupils and students:	3-16	
Gender of pupils:	Male and female	
Total number on roll:	Boys: 203	Girls: 196
(Full-time)	Boys: 0	Girls: 1
(Part-time)		
Number of children under 5:	Boys: 27	Girls: 25
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need:	Boys: 0	Girls: 0
Annual fees:	£6,330-£7,845	
Type of inspection:	Section 162A of the Education Act 2002	
Inspection Team:		
Reporting Inspector:	Mr Mike Thirkell	
Supporting Inspectors:	Mr Simon Bennett Mr Tony Hubbard	
Dates of inspection:	3-6 February 2014	

## **SECTION A: INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

### **Purpose and scope of the inspection:**

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service in accordance with Section 162(A) (1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, and it follows the inspection framework laid down by the Cognita Group and agreed with the Department for Education (DfE). It was conducted by independent professional inspectors, who looked at all aspects of the school's provision as required by the current regulations. Aspects of the school's management and ethos are summarised in Section C of this document, but this section is not a statutory part of the inspection process.

### **Information about the school:**

Huddersfield Grammar School is an independent school for boys and girls set in the attractive grounds of a Grade Two listed building in the Marsh area of the town. Pupils represent a range of ability, but intake is broadly selective. The original buildings, formerly the home of a local mill owner, have been developed to provide the current school. The school is now in the process of extending its teaching facilities further within the grounds. Founded in its present form in 1995 from the amalgamation of two former schools, the school became part of the Cognita Group in 2007.

There are currently 399 pupils attending between the ages of three to sixteen. At the time of the inspection there were fifty-two children between the ages of three to five in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), in the Kindergarten and Reception classes; fifty-two in the pre-preparatory department (Years 1 and 2); 126 in the preparatory department (Years 3 to 6); and 126 in the senior school (Years 7 to 11). There are no pupils with statements of special educational need, although twenty pupils are identified by the school as having a range of special educational needs (SEN). Because of the nature of the site, there are no pupils with physical disabilities. Thirty-three pupils are deemed by the school to be able, gifted and talented (AG&T).

The school's stated aim is *'to provide a supportive, caring and nurturing environment' and 'to ensure that children between the ages of three and sixteen receive a balanced, challenging and exciting educational experience in which every child can realise their full individual aspirations and potential'*. The school was last inspected in February 2011.

### **Summary of main findings:**

Huddersfield Grammar School meets its aims and provides a high quality of education for pupils of all ages. Provision for pupils in Kindergarten and Reception classes in the EYFS is excellent. The school has continued to develop and shows further significant improvements in its provision since the last inspection. The quality of the curriculum is good throughout the school, with a number of outstanding features. It provides a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities, enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. Teaching and assessment are good and a significant proportion of the teaching is of outstanding quality. The quality of the educational provision enables pupils to make at least good

progress, and GCSE results at the end of Year 11 show that a high number of pupils exceed their predicted academic expectations. The opportunities provided for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are now excellent. This represents significant improvement. Behaviour is excellent. All matters related to safeguarding are thorough, and procedures relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils are excellent. This also represents marked improvement since the last inspection. Pupils confirm that they are happy at the school, and in a pre-inspection questionnaire the vast majority of parents indicated their satisfaction with the progress being made by their children.

#### **What the school does well:**

- it provides a range of good learning opportunities, which encourage pupils of all ages and abilities to enjoy learning, and the school has positive relationships with parents, and communications with them are good;
- lessons are managed well and classes conducted in a positive atmosphere that is conducive to learning;
- the progress of pupils is effectively monitored to ensure that they are fulfilling their academic potential;
- excellent behaviour is founded on the school's expectations of the pupils, and relationships at all levels, including those between teachers and pupils, are of high quality;
- it provides effective support for pupils with SEN and a good range of extension opportunities for pupils identified as AG&T; and
- it provides a firm basis for children's further education from the Kindergarten, where children learn quickly to listen carefully to teachers and each other.

#### **What the school must do to comply with the regulations:**

- all the regulations for registration as an independent school are met.

#### **What the school must do to comply with the Equality Act 2010:**

- the school complies fully with the requirements.

#### **Next Steps:**

Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might consider the following points for development:

- ensure greater consistency in the format of lesson planning; and
- improve sound insulation in relation to music education as soon as feasible.

## **SECTION B: COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION**

### **PART 1 - The quality of education provided by the school**

#### **The quality of the curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum provision is good with a number of outstanding features. The school has a clear view of further developments required, for example in relation to the range and organisation of some aspects of pupils' experiences of technological activities and the further development of their personal, social and health education (PSHE). Curriculum provision is broad and balanced and relevant to the needs of pupils throughout the school. It provides a wide range of opportunities for all pupils to learn and to make progress. It ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and are able to benefit from the development of skills they acquire that prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The quality of transition between each class and part of the school is supported well by co-operation among teachers. The curriculum is now supported by an effective curriculum policy, subject handbooks and schemes of work. The provision ensures that pupils of compulsory school age have access to the full range of areas of learning. Technological education is firmly established within curriculum subjects, including ICT and science, and includes the development of control technology from the pre-preparatory department and a range of extra-curricular opportunities for older pupils such as a Technology Challenge and Enterprise Day. In art, Year 9 pupils' sketch books show that they learn to express their creative ideas systematically through annotated drawings. The school provides good opportunities to develop pupils' skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy from the Kindergarten onwards. The development of speaking and listening skills is effectively supported by the numerous opportunities that pupils have for discussions and for expressing their views in lessons. Teachers frequently use group work effectively for such activities. Pupils in the school become confident communicators and express their views clearly.

A broad range of sporting activities is enjoyed by pupils, both within the planned curriculum and through use of local sports facilities. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the sporting opportunities that they have. The school has established a range of team games for boys and girls against other local schools, as well as those within the Cognita Group, for example in football, netball and swimming. Such features of the sports provision are reflected in the wide range of external links established by the school, which also support pupils' wider academic and personal development, such as the National Maths School and Creative Writing competitions; during the inspection, the whole of Year 11 attended a poetry day at Leeds Town Hall. The range of extra-curricular and curriculum enrichment activities is extensive. The range of opportunities available through these activities and clubs contributes most effectively to pupils' personal as well as academic development. Creative development is well supported through art, music and drama in the curriculum. Over a quarter of the pupils in the school are learning individually to play a musical instrument from a wide range of options. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop skills in speaking a foreign language. French is taken by all, except for a few pupils who require additional support for their learning needs. From Year 7 all pupils take Spanish, with lessons supported by an optional Spanish club. Italian is

offered as an extension activity to pupils from Year 9. The school emphasises that its GCSE provision is designed flexibly to meet pupils' individual needs and aspirations.

Provision for pupils who have SEN is good. The needs of all these pupils are clearly recorded and understood by the specialist coordinator for special needs (SENCO) and there are established procedures for passing information about their special needs to class and subject teachers. Pupils' individual education plans are well prepared and serve as helpful documents. The school makes use of specialist support from outside the school as necessary, and benefits from good links with the local authority (LA). A co-ordinator for pupils who are identified as AG&T has been appointed. The school makes good provision for these pupils through extension activities, both within classes and through a programme of activities relevant to their needs, including field trips.

The school now has an effectively planned programme for PSHE and citizenship. The work undertaken and requirements relevant to each stage of the pupils' development are set out in a policy for PSHE and citizenship. Observations confirm the strengths already established in this provision, for example when a Year 9 class were seen engaged in a lesson that emphasised effectively the dangers related to drugs and social pressures. Specific aspects of the PSHE programme are provided through form tutor periods that have sufficient time for effective teaching, as well as being included where relevant within other curriculum subjects. Pupils in a Year 5 science class learned about the importance of a balanced diet and the nutritional value of specific foods; this ensured the development of pupils' understanding in relation to leading a healthy life. Careers education is provided from Year 7 and supported by an appropriate policy. This is part of the PSHE programme and is supported by additional activities, such as a Year 10 Enterprise Day. Year 10 pupils have the opportunity to benefit from work experience. Pupils benefit from regular occasions when parents come into the school to explain their work in business lunchtime talks.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The quality of teaching is good and much is outstanding. The best teaching is characterised by strong subject knowledge and expertise and evident enthusiasm for imparting these to pupils. The effectiveness stems from at times excellent and always thorough planning, with clear emphasis on the needs of the pupils in the class whether as individuals or as a group. It is characterised by a variety of activity and effective use of resources, a learning atmosphere of mutual respect and an excellent balance between pace and reflection. Further quality develops from well-placed questions and pupil-based tasks which encourage enquiry and response and give space to pupils to express themselves clearly. Planning for lessons is generally good and a variety of formats is used, although occasionally an over-emphasis is placed on content. The majority of lessons focus clearly on continuity, purpose, awareness of the needs of individuals and groups, the range of activities and the techniques to be used. Attention is also given to success criteria. Consequently, the lessons provide a rich variety of activity, focus on participation, identification of progress, and opportunities to contribute individually, or in group or paired work. The visits programme is well planned and organised and supplements the learning

process. Field trips in French for Year 8, and in geography and science for Year 11, are examples of visits and excursions that have enriched the pupils' experience.

Almost all lessons were characterised by good use of time. Introductions were clear and pupils welcomed and greeted with courtesy. Classroom management was seen to be good, teachers' voices were never raised, and no problems with behaviour and restlessness were encountered. On occasions, the use of resources was not exploited to full effect to support learning. Pupils were seen to be mutually supportive and interested in what each other had to say. Opening questions were well targeted, clear and challenging for response. There was usually a rush of hands to take up the chance of contributing, and teachers were careful to spread the opportunities across the ability range. Pupils frequently initiated questioning and discussion. Lessons seen were characterised by a strong sense of purpose whether in a reflective physics experiment in Year 10 or class discussion in Year 11 on the interpretation of particular poems prior to attending a conference on poetry attended by the Poet Laureate at Leeds Town Hall. The management and variation of pace were generally effective; almost all lessons allowed space for reflection. Lessons never ended abruptly. Teachers were clear of the importance of rounding off lessons to confirm what progress pupils had made in their learning. The commitment of staff was matched by the response of pupils and their desire to learn. Behaviour and attentiveness in class were excellent. The development of literacy and numeracy is strong. Less effective lessons were characterised by a failure to give sufficient space to pupils' enquiries and by periods when a large amount of information was given over a relatively short period without enough clarification, explanation or time for reflection. Pupils were seen to make good progress in developing their skills and understanding. When they were less involved, or the pace was too rapid and the teaching unvaried, such good progress was less evident. Pupils' books are generally well presented, and pride is taken in keeping them neat and tidy.

The high quality of the teaching is largely as a result of teachers knowing their pupils very well and working to ensure that their aspirations are met, whether in pupils' general learning and progress or in their preparation for external tests. Pupils confirm that they have confidence in the support provided by their teachers.

The school has a clear framework for assessment set out in marking and assessment policies. Assessment data is used well by the school at all levels to monitor and to support pupils' progress. This represents an important improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are tested when they enter the school to determine their educational needs, and the data derived is built upon as they move through the school, through tests and teacher observation. The school maintains good records of pupils' progress at all stages of their education, and the importance of ensuring that teachers have regular opportunities to talk individually to children is not overlooked, for example in the senior school when regular half-termly meetings involve pupils in one-to-one meetings with form tutors and academic mentors. Good use is made of a range of means of assessing pupils' progress, including national tests in the preparatory school in English, mathematics and science, which are moderated by Cognita, and Early Years tracking supported by the LA. Opportunities for discussions between pupils and their teachers are supported by the small size of classes, which ensures that teachers have opportunities to use questioning as a way of assessing understanding across a range of ability.

The school has good systems in place to ensure that all teachers receive appropriate information about the abilities and educational needs of each pupil in their class or subject. The school is in the process of further improving this process with the support of software provided by Cognita. Observations of lessons confirm that teachers understand their pupils' individual learning and personal needs well. Discussions with pupils in the preparatory school confirmed that they have a good understanding of their progress, including National Curriculum grades in English, mathematics and science, and have a clear view of their targets for further improvement. Marking is undertaken consistently by teachers throughout the school and in most respects follows the school's guidance. However, the quality of feedback is variable and not always entirely appropriate to the age of the pupil. For example, comments seen in exercise books did not always support pupils developing literacy and the handwriting was not always sufficiently legible.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**PART 2 - The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The development of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, deemed satisfactory at the last inspection, is now excellent. This improvement results from the school's determination to offer, in all aspects of its curriculum provision, opportunities for its pupils to grow up as young people sensitive to each other and the world around them, while encouraging them to contribute as positively as possible to the school and the wider community. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed through regular and daily opportunities for reflection, and this is augmented within the curriculum through a coherent and wide-ranging PSHE course, and through religious education (RE) where a wide range of religious study is pursued. Pupils are enabled to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence without arrogance in a context where mutual respect is important and is evident in pupils' relations with each other and with staff. Staff show respect to the pupils and there is a prevailing sense of courtesy. Pupils distinguish right from wrong; a Year 9 drama class was particularly effective in developing understanding of the impact of unkindness or lack of consideration for others. Pupils in Year 6 RE were given time to reflect on Sikh sayings and interpret these for themselves and each other.

The school is a harmonious community where pupils feel safe, but are also articulate, independent and communicative. They are offered, and participate in, a wide range of cultural opportunities such as art, drama and music and are introduced to British institutions, having visited Leeds Armouries and the Leeds Water Works. They have also been to the Houses of Parliament and attended the Law Courts. Recent visitors to the school have included the local MP, the former Chief Inspector of Schools to talk about creative work, and legal and medical practitioners.

The school has worked hard to sustain balance and interest in what it offers. The prevalent ethos of the school is illustrated in the serious commitment of pupils and others to enhance the grounds, using available space to good effect. Pupils in Year 11 have cleared an overgrown area of the grounds to provide a rest and recreation area for senior pupils and have drawn up ambitious plans to complete it before they



leave the school, as a legacy to those who follow. This supplements areas already developed and established, such as the 'story teller' and 'performance' gardens. The School Council approved the headmaster's plans for establishing the first of a series of shelters to enhance the outside environment further. The pupils are imbued with a clear sense of purpose across the school. This is epitomised by Pupil Voice (the name for the School Council), which has two outlets, one in the Senior School and one in the Preparatory School. Their meetings are formally scheduled, and pupils meet as elected representatives of their year group. The senior Pupil Voice group has sub groups who attend to matters relating to uniform, environment and school meals. These representatives present their aspirations to the headmaster to make their case, and their views have been influential in areas such as the development of the school uniform and lunch menus.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

**PART 3 - The welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The school's provision for safeguarding and promoting the welfare, health and safety of pupils is outstanding. Pupils at all ages say they enjoy their time at the school, that they feel safe and that their teachers are concerned for their personal happiness and success. This is strikingly apparent in the excellent relationships, which prevail throughout the school among pupils and between pupils and their teachers and tutors. This is because key persons in the early years' setting and tutors throughout the rest of the school know and respond to the needs and circumstances of their pupils extremely well. They in turn are supported by a comprehensive system of consultation, reporting and oversight, which ensures that the needs of every pupil in the school receive full consideration and response. The thoroughness and vigilance of management at all levels, the high quality of recording and the excellent links with outside bodies are key contributors to the excellence of the school's procedures that ensure the welfare and personal care of pupils.

The school has effective arrangements for achieving the high standard of behaviour it expects. These are sensibly balanced between the use of reward, encouragement and sanction. They include a comprehensive and up-to-date policy to discourage and combat all forms of bullying. Both staff, through training and guidance, and pupils, through the PSHE programme, are aware of this. All significant sanctions and any allegations of bullying are rigorously recorded, together with their outcomes, and closely monitored by pastoral leaders. Senior pupils in both the preparatory and senior parts of the school take seriously their roles as prefects or 'buddies', in supporting any pupil who feels harassed or excluded. The arrangements for safeguarding are exemplary. The school's policy has full regard for all current guidance and is closely linked to the guidance and procedures of the local child safeguarding board, to which they submit their rigorous annual audit of compliance. The senior designated person, as well as two other managers have up-to-date training in interagency working and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the issues relating to identifying and responding to concerns, including reporting to and consulting with outside agencies. All staff and volunteers, as well as contracted staff are inducted into the system and receive update training at the required intervals. All

this is overseen by officers of the proprietors. Recording and monitoring in relation to welfare matters are scrupulously thorough.

The arrangements for ensuring pupils' health and safety are equally secure. The school has a written First Aid policy. Policies and guidance relating to fire protection are appropriate and servicing and testing of all fire equipment, electrical equipment and appliances, as well as regular fire drills, are meticulously logged. Training of staff with key roles in safety, including first aid, is fully recorded on a matrix, which guarantees that update training is always carried out in good time. Consistently more staff are trained than the requirements demand, so that there is always back-up. Systems are stress tested, for example by removing a child from a fire drill to make sure that the gap was picked up in the roll call. Children are aware of the arrangements and encouraged by their teachers to take care of their own safety. Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained.

The school gives pupils every encouragement to keep fit and healthy. This is embedded in the curriculum at every stage of their development and education, and pupils show a clear understanding of the importance of eating well and taking regular and vigorous exercise.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

#### **PART 4 - Suitability of the staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school has clearly established procedures, supported by Cognita, for ensuring that all the required checks on staff employed by the school are undertaken. A record of all the checks undertaken is maintained carefully in a register of staff checks. Appropriate records relating to the checks undertaken are maintained meticulously in school files by the headmaster's personal assistant. Procedures meet the regulations fully.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

#### **PART 5 - Suitability of the premises and accommodation**

The premises and accommodation are suitable. They have some strong features. The school has identified some limitations and, as it expands, is developing new buildings to improve provision and accommodate the increasing number of pupils. Construction is already underway. The premises include large and attractive grounds, enjoyed by pupils for recreation and study. The Victorian architecture is a distinguishing feature, well used to enrich pupils' education, in history for example, and valued by the pupils. The accommodation is well maintained and decorated. Suitable specialist accommodation is available for subjects such as science, art and music. For music, it is adequate. However, sound from music accommodation can on occasions be too easily heard in other classrooms. There is appropriate provision for PE and indoor sports, and suitable use is made of nearby swimming facilities and playing fields. Otherwise, classrooms are pleasant and well equipped. The quality and use of display, both in class and around the school, to educate and celebrate

achievement is very good. All the necessary washing and toilet facilities are provided and kept clean and hygienic. Older pupils make use of the clean and serviceable changing and showering facilities. Storage for students' bags and equipment is adequate in most parts of the school, but one locker area is untidy and of an inadequate standard. The buildings and grounds are very well maintained and decorated.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

## **PART 6 - The quality of information for parents**

The school has developed excellent relationships with its parental body. This was endorsed by the findings of the parental questionnaire, which were extremely positive. Almost all parents endorsed the school's care for their children. The school's website contains all the requisite documents and is very informative and easy to access, as is the complaints procedure. Parents say that they are happy that they can connect to the school at any time. Parents are welcomed to the school, and those encountered by the inspectors were highly positive about the quality of education and care their children receive.

Reports on effort and progress provide helpful information and are sent out on a regular basis. The full report provided at least once a year is detailed, informative and evaluative. This is supplemented by regular interim, streamlined reports and regular meetings with parents. The shorter reports focus on attitude, effort and, in particular, progress.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

## **PART 7 - The effectiveness of the school's complaints procedure**

The school policy is based on Cognita guidance and meets the requirements in full. There have been no formal complaints during the twelve months prior to the inspection.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes

## **SECTION C: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

*This section is not a requirement of the Education Act 2002.*

### **The quality of the organisation and management of the school**

The school is part of the Cognita Group and benefits from the investment, oversight and practical support the group provides in terms of advice and shared policies, ensuring regulatory compliance. This school is making great progress under its current senior leadership team, where the headmaster is supported by a strong and purposeful group. The headmaster has a clearly expressed and defined vision of the direction in which the school should go, and this is evident in the details of both the school development plan and the school improvement plan. The school has met all the demands put upon it throughout the inspection in an efficient and helpful way, and the secretarial staff played a strong role in that respect.

The school clearly has the whole-hearted support of nearly all the parental body, and the school community as a whole is characterised by an ethos of cooperation with the interests of the pupil foremost. The staff at all levels, whether in the classroom or the wide variety of activities, reflect the ethos and those who work behind the scenes, whether in administration, the kitchen or the well-maintained grounds, contribute to the strong community. The school is adding to its facilities through a major building project and has managed this to good effect with minimal disruption.

## **PART D: EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **The overall quality and standards of the early years' provision**

The overall quality and standards of the early years' provision are outstanding. As at the last inspection, outcomes in Reception at the end of 2013 are high: all children achieved at least the expected levels in all main areas of learning and about one-third exceeded them. The school's reliable externally moderated assessments predict further improvements at the end of 2014, with about half the children set to exceed the expected standard. Progress in sessions observed is rapid. Children in the Kindergarten listen carefully to teachers and each other, needing only occasional reminders. As they move through the setting they are able express themselves with growing clarity, using wider vocabulary and more complex sentence structures. They make rapid progress in phonics and, as they are ready, begin to recognise and reproduce letters and then to read and write with growing confidence. All in Reception can count to 20 and many much higher. Pupils' personal development is strong. They are confident and able to understand their own and others' feelings, as when a small group in the Kindergarten talked about whether they felt happy, sad or neutral during circle time, responding to each other. They are independent in changing their clothes and visiting the toilet and washing themselves afterwards. Physical development is strong as pupils climb, balance and run with increasing assurance. Above all, they are helped to think and communicate independently and creatively. The pupils leave Reception eager to learn and fully prepared to profit from their experiences in Year 1.

### **How well the early years' provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

The early years' provision meets the needs of all the children who attend extremely well. It is faithful to the principle that every child be treated as a unique person. This is evident in the sensitivity that teachers show to the way children learn best. For example, in the Kindergarten, though teachers actively encourage children to work together, a child determined to build a house of large plastic bricks for the third little pig by himself, was left undisturbed by other curious children. It was evident also in the teaching of addition to pupils in Reception, where effective strategies were used to accommodate children who naturally learned in different ways. Planning is very thorough and children of different abilities are individually supported and encouraged. Teachers strike a suitable balance between teacher and child-initiated learning. However, although child-initiated activities are generally productive and carefully reviewed at the end, they are not always as purposeful as they could be, in relation to the pupils' age because teachers do not routinely have children articulate what they intend to do and achieve before they start. Teaching is almost invariably good and in most cases either good with some very strong elements or outstanding. Teaching of literacy and numeracy shows both expertise and sensitivity to each pupil's stage of development and need. The planning and assessment take full account of the areas for learning, and teachers make sure that balance of concentration shifts from the prime areas to cover all the areas more evenly as children become ready. The provision is enriched by a good variety of voluntary lunchtime and after school activities, such as 'singing stars' and 'board games', all of

which have a clear educational value and are well attended. The setting has met the recommendation of the last report and established a through and reliable system for establishing the developmental stages children have reached when they arrive, and their progress in each area of learning is then tracked through and passed on to the teachers in Year 1. Further continuity is achieved by the use of the same basic schemes for literacy and numeracy throughout the pre-preparatory department. The provision of resources and accommodation is good. The provision has been greatly strengthened since the last inspection by the addition of readily accessible and well-equipped outside space.

### **The contribution of the early years' provision to children's well-being**

The early years' provision makes an outstanding contribution to children's well-being. All the early years' staff combine a high level of understanding of child development with a deep commitment to the success, happiness and safety of all the children, guided by rigorous policy, training and monitoring. The result is that the children are secure in the knowledge that they are the first concern of their 'key person'. Parents also know this and comment on the close partnership that exists between them and the early years' staff. Staff fully understand and implement the requirements for safeguarding, including those for reporting and consulting with the relevant outside agencies about any child protection concerns. All EYFS staff have up-to-date training in paediatric first aid, and great care is taken to ensure that any medication is administered with written consent of the parent and that on each occasion the parent is informed. The teaching areas, both inside and out, are checked daily to minimise risk and all the school's rigorous procedures for health and safety are followed. Teachers show constant vigilance but make sure that children learn to be aware of danger and keep themselves safe. Children eagerly and accurately described the procedures for evacuating in the event of a fire. Care is taken to ensure that there are sufficient adults to ensure safety. Teachers are effective in managing behaviour and in teaching children to be considerate of others and not treat each other roughly or unkindly.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management in the early years' provision**

Leadership and management are extremely effective. The aspirations of the setting are ambitious and are based on realistic monitoring and self-evaluation, using also external moderation of their marking and external audit of their provision by Kirklees and by officers from the Cognita Group. Monitoring of individual progress over time has improved since the last inspection, although comparative overall data is not used to monitor trends over time. Staff have used their information to identify that outcomes in numeracy, though strong, are not as strong as those for literacy, and have set in hand plans to close the gap. Staff, both in Kindergarten and Reception classes, meet frequently to plan together and to compare methods and discuss individual children's needs. As a result, there is good consistency in practice throughout the setting. There is good delegation of responsibilities. Teaching observation is carried out sensitively and leads to helpful guidance on how to improve. Staff development is a strong feature, as has been seen from the recent training in the literacy scheme used in early years. Oversight by the head of the pre-

preparatory department successfully ensures continuity of education and care between Reception and Year 1.

***Does the school meet the statutory requirements?***

Yes

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools belonging to the Cognita Group which are not members of the ISC and its constituent associations. Further copies of the report are available from the School Inspection Service website: [www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk](http://www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk)