



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**SMALLWOOD MANOR PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE  
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Smallwood Manor Preparatory School

Full Name of School	<b>Smallwood Manor Preparatory School</b>
DfE Number	<b>860/6019</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY368046</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1102929</b>
Address	<b>Smallwood Manor Preparatory School Smallwood Manor Uttoxeter Staffordshire ST14 8NS</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01889 562083</b>
Fax Number	<b>01889 568682</b>
Email Address	<b><u><a href="mailto:enquiries@smallwoodmanor.co.uk">enquiries@smallwoodmanor.co.uk</a></u></b>
Head	<b>Mr Mike Harrison</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Steven Varley</b>
Age Range	<b>2 to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>143</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (51 boys; 56 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>0-2 (EYFS): 3      5-11: 107 3-5 (EYFS): 33</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Sue Edmonds</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed (24 boys; 12 girls)</b>
Inspection dates	<b>04 Feb 2014 to 05 Feb 2014</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 2011.

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.

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, with a governors' representative and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Dr Wendy Bowring

Early Years Lead Inspector

Mrs Karen Rogers

Team Inspector for Early Years (Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Smallwood Manor is a co-educational day school for pupils aged two to eleven years. It is part of the Woodard group of schools and is a charitable trust administered by an independent governing body led by a chair of governors who reports to the Woodard board. The school's aims are summarised as ensuring that every child enjoys coming to school, and that each individual's potential is fully realised so that academic achievement goes hand in hand with developing spiritual, cultural and physical maturity.
- 1.2 The school is situated in an extensive estate of around 50 acres set in a farming community about two miles from the small market town of Uttoxeter in Staffordshire. The school was founded by the Woodard Corporation in 1902 as the junior school to Denstone College and moved to its present site in the 1930s. It has been co-educational with a pre-prep department since the 1980s. The school now has an all-year round provision for children from two to four years of age. The main school building is a 19th century mansion surrounded by extra classroom blocks and other facilities, including a swimming pool. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is housed in its own unit with an outdoor area, near to the main school. The two to four year-olds are catered for in two classes that form the Nursery, and the four to five year-olds occupy one Reception class.
- 1.3 The EYFS has undergone significant change since the previous inspection. The rear outdoor play area has been re-designed and re-structured to provide considerably more play opportunities. The Reception class has been relocated to give access to larger indoor accommodation and new outdoor provision. There have also been changes to staffing in the EYFS in the last two years, including the appointment of a new head of Nursery in April 2011 along with one new teacher and six key people.
- 1.4 The school has 143 pupils on roll, with 36 children aged 2 to 5 in the EYFS, 12 of whom are full-time. Twenty-two are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom five receive specialist support within the EYFS. There are no pupils with a statement of educational need. No pupil has English as an additional language.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

### ***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Wrens	Nursery (age 2 – 3)
Robins	Nursery (age 3 – 4)
Reception	Reception (age 4 – 5)

## **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) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Make sure that all teachers have high expectations of children and provide the diverse range of experiences seen in the best lessons.
2. Make better use of the outdoor learning environment for all children in the EYFS.

### **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 good provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. The educational programmes for all areas of learning help almost all children to meet the expected levels of development, and in some cases exceed them. Those who do not have been identified with SEND. Children under the age of three achieve well in relation to their starting points, as was seen in their knowledge of number and colour, while Reception children showed good knowledge of phonics and rhyming pairs. Nursery children carefully used tweezers to pick up pop-poms of different sizes, and older Nursery children carefully drew lines through a maze on a whiteboard to lead Spiderman back to his web. However, few examples of child-led activities were evident in Reception, and opportunities for creative development and imaginative play were limited.
- 3.2 Well-trained and knowledgeable adults have, for the most part, high expectations and encourage children to think creatively and reflect on what they have learnt. However, not all staff consistently challenge children in this way.
- 3.3 Staff carefully match individual children's needs to appropriate teaching strategies that enable them to make good progress in reaching expected levels of development ready for the next stage in their learning. Careful assessment, monitoring and intervention ensure children with SEND receive appropriate support, and as a result they make good progress. One to one support was observed to effectively support the needs of children with SEND in class activities, for example a key worker with a Nursery child to manipulate modelling dough on the advice of the occupational therapist. Although exceeding expected levels of development, able children are not always sufficiently challenged to extend their learning.
- 3.4 Staff work closely with parents to help children settle. Parents find the various printed sources of information extremely useful, and electronic communications such as online observation files and regular blogs are greatly appreciated. Parents feel staff are extremely approachable; daily feedback and parents' evenings provide all the information needed about their children's achievements and progress.

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

- 3.5 The contribution of the early years provision to children's wellbeing is outstanding. Children of all ages form appropriate bonds and secure emotional attachments. They are warmly greeted by their carers on arrival, happily say farewell to their parents and eagerly join in activities.
- 3.6 Excellent relationships were observed in all age groups. Children learn to behave well, play co-operatively and respond positively to instructions from adults. Nursery children especially are encouraged to develop independence, as seen when two of the youngest children independently went to the toilet, washed their hands, helped themselves to a snack and cleared away afterwards. Children in Reception co-operated happily on a phonics activity they chose to do after finishing their set task.

- 3.7 Children develop an understanding of the importance of physical exercise. The outdoor provision has been significantly re-developed but is not yet being used to offer more physical challenges across the age range throughout the day. Lunchtime was an enjoyable experience for all age groups, and children heartily tucked into the cooked meal.
- 3.8 Children are well prepared for their transitions within the setting. Parents recognise the close links that exist between age groups and with Year 1, enabling a seamless transfer at each stage.

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

- 3.9 The leadership and management of the early years provision is good. Governors take care to oversee educational programmes, and policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current statutory requirements and practice.
- 3.10 The setting meets all the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS. Staff receive full training in child protection, first aid and safety procedures, and a thorough induction process is in place. As a result, the requirements are implemented successfully.
- 3.11 Effective systems for self-evaluation identify appropriate priorities for the setting and are used to set clear targets for improvement. The vision is shared by all staff who take every opportunity to attend worthwhile training as part of their professional development.
- 3.12 The pre-inspection questionnaire showed that parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the setting. Productive partnerships are quickly established and links with external agencies ensure that appropriate interventions are secured for children to receive the support they need at the earliest point.

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

- 3.13 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are good. Children of all abilities make good progress and achieve well relative to their starting points, including those with SEND. Children in Reception can order numbers to twenty and build simple addition sums. Children under three show good knowledge of shape and numbers to five. Nursery children discussed and selected the most appropriate shapes to build a circular train track. Baseline entry assessments are used to ensure that satisfactory progress has been made over the EYFS.
- 3.14 The children's personal and emotional development is extremely good. They feel safe, secure and happy, as seen when the younger children waited eagerly for a friend to arrive and welcomed him in with affectionate hugs; older children sat enthralled during a class-led assembly and chattered afterwards about what Jesus being the light of the world really meant.
- 3.15 Children's well-being is effectively promoted as all requirements for safeguarding and welfare are met. Staff have a shared understanding of how to protect children, and evaluate their practice to ensure continuous improvement to provide the best life chances for the children in their care.
- 3.16 Since the previous inspection the outdoor area has been developed, and significant progress has been made in strengthening the use of self-evaluation.