



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

DALE HOUSE SCHOOL

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Dale House School

Full Name of School	Dale House School
DfE Number	382/6022
EYFS Number	EY304757
Address	Dale House School Ruby Street Carlinghow Batley West Yorkshire WF17 8HL
Telephone Number	01924 422215
Fax Number	01924 422215
Email Address	admin@dhschool.freemove.co.uk
Head	Mrs S M G Fletcher
Chair of Foundation Committee	Mrs L J Davies
Age Range	2 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	89
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (46 boys; 43 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 10 5-11: 53 3-5 (EYFS): 26
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs S M G Fletcher
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	01 Oct 2013 to 02 Oct 2013

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 September 2010.

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 and with the Chair of the Foundation Committee, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, 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

Miss Valerie Craven

Early Years Lead Inspector

Mrs Anne Robinson

Team Inspector for Early Years
(Early Years Coordinator, ISA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Dale House School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged from two to eleven years. It opened in 1999 and is located in the industrial town of Batley, West Yorkshire. It occupies a former Edwardian Sunday School building, which has been extended over the life of the school, as it developed its age range, originally accepting three- to five-year-olds only. The school is divided into two sections; the Lower School, comprising the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2, and the Junior School, for Years 3 to 6. It is a limited company, its headmistress and her husband, the bursar, being the founders and sole proprietors. The headmistress is advised by a Foundation Committee.
- 1.2 The school aims, within a happy, secure, caring, Christian-based environment, to enable children to reach their potential and develop lively inquiring minds. It seeks to ensure that learning is exciting and enjoyable. Through expanding children's knowledge, skills and reasoning, it aims to provide a firm foundation for future learning. Through a school community which encourages individuals to grow in confidence and friendship, it aims to develop children's self-image, self-motivation and independence and their ability to express emotions and demonstrate moral values and respect for others.
- 1.3 Pupils may join the EYFS at the age of two; some join the school at other ages when places are available. At the age of 11, pupils continue their education locally either in independent or maintained secondary schools. Since the school's previous inspection, a leadership team has been created and an EYFS co-ordinator has been appointed. There have also been improvements to the facilities, including those for information and communication technology (ICT), and a new Library.
- 1.4 At the time of inspection, there were 89 pupils on roll, with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls in the school overall. The EYFS caters for 36 children, nine of whom attend part-time. There are slightly more girls than boys. Results of standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the school is above the national average, although groups differ in their levels and ranges of ability from year to year. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, the majority of parents being involved in business or professional employment. Pupils are of white British heritage and also from ethnic backgrounds. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs and three have English as an additional language (EAL). Ten pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist support from the school.
- 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
Nursery	Nursery (age 2/3)
Prep	Nursery (age 3/4)
Transition	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 improvement.
1. Enhance creative and sensory outdoor play opportunities for the older children.

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 in meeting the needs of the range of pupils who attend. The educational programmes are excellent and very wide ranging, covering all of the areas of learning and enabling all children, including the under-threes to reach their full potential. This strong provision enables children who have been identified as having SEND and EAL to make appropriate progress.
- 3.2 Very caring and supportive staff have successfully created a homely environment where children can achieve well, in line with the school's values and ethos, and develop their skills effectively. Assessment is accurate in identifying children's needs, enabling staff to plan work appropriate to the needs of each child. Assessment checks for two-year-olds are completed and shared with parents and carers as required.
- 3.3 Staff provide high quality exploration and investigation experiences, particularly during creative and sensory outdoor play activities for younger Nursery children, including the under-threes. Older Nursery children have suitable opportunities to develop their language and mathematical skills in topic-based activities, highlighted well in attractive displays. Staff make learning stimulating and enjoyable, as observed in a Reception class during a literacy focused lesson, where children were experimenting with printing letters and using resources to blend words. All children respond very well to the staff's high expectations of them, and as a result they are very enthusiastic and motivated learners.
- 3.4 Staff have established excellent partnerships with children's parents and carers, as seen in the overall positive responses to the pre-inspection parent questionnaire. Parents were particularly positive about the school's attitude towards bullying and its timely response to parents' concerns. A small number of criticisms about the information provided by the school, and how it handles parents' concerns, were not supported by the inspection evidence. Parents are involved in activities, including school concerts and fundraising, and staff are available to discuss achievements and progress on a daily basis as well as giving guidance within progress reports.

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 well-being is outstanding. Members of staff are very caring and supportive, particularly of the youngest children, and as a result, children form secure emotional attachments with adults. Key people work closely with all children's parents and carers to ensure that smooth transitions take place, for example from the Nursery and from Reception into Year 1. Parents comment about how staff have supported and reassured them during this time. At all levels, staff, including those in Year 1, work closely together to share information about each child contained in detailed records, enabling staff to be aware of children's individual needs. Key people have established excellent relationships with children, which have a positive impact on meeting their educational and welfare needs. Children feel very secure, are able to explore their surroundings, and can investigate with confidence. The children's awareness of the

need for a healthy diet and physical exercise is enhanced by visitors to the school, such as the dentist, topics on healthy eating, and also through the use of the school's hall and playground games. Children of all ages understand the importance of washing their hands after going to the toilet, after messy activities, and before meals.

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

- 3.6 Leadership and management are outstanding. Aspirations are very high and there is a clear vision that is communicated well by the EYFS leadership, enabling staff to share outstanding practice within the school. Very effective teamwork contributes greatly to the progress and development of all children.
- 3.7 Members of the Foundation Committee and the proprietors are effectively involved in the work of the EYFS and this has had an excellent impact on the overall provision, particularly in the formulation and implementation of policies and procedures. All responsibilities are discharged correctly. These arrangements promote a positive and inclusive atmosphere in which children thrive. The children's well-being and safeguarding are central to all that the school does and are enhanced through comprehensive risk assessments and a genuine concern for the welfare and personal development of children. Senior staff evaluate and monitor the educational programmes and other provision thoroughly, and accurate self-evaluation provides a secure basis for planning the school's development, for example in the quality and improvement plan for the under-fives at the school. They had already identified the areas for improvement in this report as needing attention.
- 3.8 Excellent partnerships have been established with parents and external agencies, all contributing significantly to improving outcomes for the children. Suitable staff appraisals and one-to-one supervisions are completed on a regular basis, focusing on key strengths and areas for development, and are used very effectively to identify professional training needs. The school actively encourages the development of staff's knowledge and understanding, for example, through nursery nurses working towards higher qualifications

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

- 3.9 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are outstanding. The children's achievements and progress exceed age-related expectations in all areas of learning in relation to their various starting points. Physical development is promoted well for the under-threes, such as through threading cotton reels. Older Nursery children are developing varied speaking and listening skills, for example through story times, when they participate and predict what is going to happen next. The children in Reception are learning about blending letter sounds to build words during reading and writing activities, and by the end of the Reception year, can write simple sentences with a high degree of accuracy. These skills are further enhanced through daily reading and writing practice at home. They are also able to write, understand and manipulate basic numbers. Children are learning suitable skills for the future by operating a suitable range of ICT equipment, for example in the Reception class, where a group of children were participating in a phonics game on an interactive whiteboard.
- 3.10 The learning and care provided by key people ensures that all of the children's needs are identified and met, highlighted well through the staff's comprehensive evaluation and planning processes. Children who have been identified as having

SEND and EAL have their needs met very effectively through additional support by a specialist teacher.

- 3.11 All of the children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered well through their interactions with very caring and supportive staff. Children display exemplary behaviour, are courteous and respectful towards each other, visitors and staff, and know how to stay safe. They take delight in receiving praise through a wide variety of rewards for their behaviour and work. Secure leadership and management ensure that safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Since the previous inspection, the setting has responded well to the recommendations to extend opportunities for children to use ICT resources to support their learning, to further develop the outdoor provision, to increase the level of focus within the EYFS development plan, and to strengthen the EYFS management team.