

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

Coworth-Flexlands School

Full Name of the School	Coworth-Flexlands School
DCSF Number	936/6543
Registered Charity Number	309109
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Headmistress	Mrs Sandy Stephen
Chair of Governors	Mr Peter Harris
Age Range (of the whole school)	3 to 11
Gender	Mixed to 7, Girls to 11
Inspection Dates	12th to 15th October 2009
Early Years Age Range	3 to 5
Early Years Gender	Mixed
Early Years Foundation Stage Inspection Dates	12th to 13th October 2009

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 162A(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002 as amended by the Education Act 2005, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31st August following their fifth birthday. The inspection was carried out by ISI, a body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting EYFS provision in schools belonging to the ISC Associations. Section 7 of this report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the EYFS 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 does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not

include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 Coworth-Flexlands School was formed in 2004 after a merger between Coworth Park School and Flexlands School. Coworth Park was a day school founded by the Sisters of the Resurrection. It became a parent-operated company in 1971. In 1992 it moved to its present site on the outskirts of Windlesham and Chobham. Flexlands School opened in May 1940 and remained on its original site in Chobham until its merger with Coworth Park when the school transferred to the Valley End site. School numbers have increased since the last inspection as a result of the merger. The present headmistress was appointed in April 2002, having previously been a member of staff for over twenty years.
- 1.2 The school buildings are situated on an attractive thirteen-acre site and recent building work has greatly improved the accommodation on offer. The building project has provided a new kitchen and dining room, Nursery, four new classrooms, information and communication technology (ICT) suite, science laboratory, modern foreign languages studio and a staffroom. An earlier development provided an art room, gymnasium and music room.
- 1.3 The school is an inter-denominational Christian school for pupils aged three to eleven; it is co-educational until the age of seven and thereafter caters only for girls. The board of governors consists of parents of former or current pupils and the headmistress of a local senior school. They are supported by three guardians, two of whom have experience in education, who provide advice on the constitution and on general educational matters
- 1.4 The number of pupils on the roll at the time of the inspection was 152. Of these, 22 were in the Nursery and 54 in the pre-prep department, which consists of Reception and Years 1 and 2; 76 pupils were in the prep department, which comprises Years 3 to 6. About one-sixth of pupils between the ages of three and seven were boys. Pupils are admitted to the school at any time up to the age of eleven.
- 1.5 The ability range of pupils upon entry to this non-selective school is wide but assessment and intelligence tests carried out by the school show the ability of most pupils to be slightly above the national average. Pupils do not take the national tests at the ages of seven and eleven. One-sixth of the pupils were born outside the United Kingdom, and four pupils do not have English as their first language, though they have no problems with their English. The school has identified 29 pupils as having specific learning needs and or disabilities (LDD), 26 of whom are receiving specialist support from the school; two pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN) and are funded by the local authority. Thirty pupils are funded through the government nursery scheme and four pupils are funded by the school. Almost all boys and girls gain places at the first school of their choice, with academic, music and art scholarships being regularly awarded.
- 1.6 The school aims to provide an all-round education, nurturing the special talents of all pupils so that they achieve their highest standards. It aims to give pupils a solid academic and social foundation by developing confidence, determination, enthusiasm, self-esteem, and a strong sense of moral responsibility within a Christian environment. The school also sees parents, governors and the community as key partners in pupils' learning. It seeks to create a family atmosphere that encourages interaction between pupils of different age groups, and to promote trust and friendship at all times. The school's aims are embodied in its motto, 'Love conquers all'.
- 1.7 See Section 7 for the report on the Early Years Foundation Stage.

2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The Educational Experience Provided

- 2.1 The school provides a good range of educational opportunities and experiences which promote its declared aims of providing an all-round education, nurturing the special talents of each pupil in a Christian environment. The curriculum is well supported by an outstanding programme of extra-curricular activities and enhanced by visits to places of educational interest. This matches the school's own evaluation and is an improvement since the last inspection. The school still has improvements to make to ensure appropriate provision for pupils of different abilities.
- 2.2 In the main, the educational experience enjoyed by pupils contributes effectively to their progress in all areas of learning. From the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through to Year 6 the curriculum is broad and balanced, with features of significant strength. In Years 1 to 6 it includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and gives pupils the opportunity to study French from Reception and Spanish in Year 6. The curriculum is suitable for the interests, aptitudes and needs of pupils of a wide ability range. Throughout the school, all the pupils have good opportunities to develop effective skills in listening and speaking in several subjects, and particularly through their study of English and modern foreign languages. Mathematics contributes strongly to their numeracy skills. Their experiences in science, ICT and design technology encourage their scientific and technological development whilst their physical development is helped through physical education and games. In music, drama and art pupils further their creative and aesthetic development. Several subjects, but particularly personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education (RE), provide opportunities for pupils to develop a strong moral understanding and commitment within a Christian environment.
- 2.3 The curriculum is planned effectively and offers equal opportunities for learning to all pupils. The thorough long-term and medium-term planning provides effectively for teachers' short-term planning. Schemes of work follow the National Curriculum, with modifications made to suit the pupils. Where planning is at its best it highlights cross-curricular opportunities and opportunities for the use of ICT, and makes provision for all abilities. Several subjects provide opportunities for pupils to make good progress through independent learning.
- 2.4 Overall provision for those pupils with LDD is good. The support given to pupils who are withdrawn from lessons is excellent and is based on a careful analysis of their strengths and weaknesses. Individual education plans are well-structured documents that provide guidance for teachers and parents. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive provision in line with the statement. Reviews on these pupils take place annually and a report is made to the local authority. The learning support department provides excellent support for staff, visiting some lessons and providing guidance through training courses and through informal contact. Provision of specific support for those who require it is inconsistent in mainstream lessons. The school has a policy for those pupils it identifies as gifted and talented which is also applied inconsistently and does not always ensure that these pupils make the progress they should. Nevertheless, the gifted and talented benefit from the setting arrangements, particularly for mathematics and English, and the special weekly classes set up for them in Year 6.
- 2.5 The school provides an extensive extra-curricular programme. This offers a rich variety of choice which includes a wide range of dance and musical activities. Team games, musical ensembles and in-school Rainbow and Brownie packs contribute effectively to pupils' understanding of the need for co-operation. Open access to the activities ensures that a high percentage of pupils take part each day. Individual instrumental provision is good, with a

number of peripatetic staff coming in to provide pupils with a wide range of skills. The residential trips to Yorkshire and Devon for Years 5 and 6 broaden pupils' social experience, teach them to live together and promote independence. Contacts with the local community and links with schools overseas encourage their understanding of communal welfare.

- 2.6 Pupils are thoroughly prepared for the next stage of their education, both academically and socially. Procedures are in place to ensure a smooth transition from the EYFS to Year 1 and from pre-prep to prep. Boys, all of whom leave at the age of seven, and their parents are given good advice about the choices for their next school. Girls in Year 6 are well prepared for the Common Entrance examination at the age of eleven, and in 2009 all moved on to the school of their choice, some with scholarships. The school gives close attention to guiding parents in the choice of senior school for their children.
- 2.7 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

Pupils' Learning and Achievements

- 2.8 Pupils are well educated and from the EYFS onwards achieve good standards of knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to their abilities. They make good progress in lessons, as was reported at the last inspection. Those with LDD also perform well. Several pupils achieve high standards in extra-curricular activities. Pupils' overall performance is in line with the school's evaluation and its aim to nurture the special talents of each child.
- 2.9 Although pupils do not take the national tests at the ages of seven or eleven, they take a series of standardised tests, including the National Foundation for Educational Research in mathematics, English, and verbal and non-verbal reasoning. The results indicate that pupils make secure progress and reach good standards by the age of eleven.
- 2.10 The good grounding that pupils gain in different subjects means that they read intelligently, are articulate and when given the opportunity, write creatively, as demonstrated in the English books of the most able pupils in Year 5. Pupils' numeracy skills are of a good quality; they handle number, problems and mathematical concepts well, demonstrated by Year 2 in a lesson on time and by older pupils in a Year 5 mathematics lesson when collecting data for a tally chart. Skills in ICT are well developed and pupils were observed to make effective use of the ICT suite. Pupils work independently and co-operatively to good effect, as seen in a Year 5 design technology lesson and in a Year 6 art lesson. They present their work in an organised fashion, as seen in most of their exercise books, which revealed good ability to think creatively, to take notes and organise their work thoughtfully.
- 2.11 No significant differences occur in relative attainment between different groups of pupils, subjects or curricular areas and in those lessons where teaching takes into consideration their specific needs, good progress is made by those with LDD. In these instances, the carefully planned lessons and the excellent relationships pupils have with their teachers work to pupils' benefit.
- 2.12 From the earliest age to the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in all areas of the curriculum and have become confident learners who derive great enjoyment from all the school offers. Pupils display positive attitudes, and throughout the school learning is purposeful and successful.

- 2.13 In out-of-class activities, individual pupils and teams perform well at local and national levels in such fields as swimming, chess and music. The choir was the recent winner at the Godalming Music Festival and has been winner for two successive years at the Chobham Festival. The U11 freestyle relay team came 15th in national swimming championships and a chess player has also performed well at national level.
- 2.14 Pupils demonstrate strong application and perseverance in lessons as a result of their excellent behaviour and their good relationships with staff. Throughout the school pupils study and work well, both on their own and co-operatively, supporting each other's learning. This was seen at its best in a Year 4 mathematics lesson where pupils worked together measuring weights and recording their results, which involved careful co-operation. They enjoy their studies and when asked which in particular, enthused about all of their subjects.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- 2.15 Pupils develop outstanding qualities in relation to their spiritual, moral and social life, and their cultural development is good. This is stronger than at the time of the last inspection. The school fulfils its aims well, helping pupils to develop confidence, determination, enthusiasm, self-esteem, and a strong sense of moral responsibility within a Christian environment. Pupils' personal development is an integral part of the daily life of the school ensuring strong, respectful relationships between all groups within its community. The genuine warmth of interaction, clearly in evidence at all times during the day, is a strength of the school.
- 2.16 Pupils develop excellent spiritual awareness through the ethos of the school and the range of opportunities offered. They develop in their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence, through the culture of praise and positive reinforcement that exists in the school at every stage. Whilst taking pleasure in their own success they have no hesitation in celebrating the achievements of their peers. They willingly involve themselves in creative endeavours in art, drama and music, which broaden their understanding of a world that they are beginning to see is more than secular. Consequently, they see as natural a positive response in assemblies and on occasions willingly take on the responsibility to lead them. Pupils are attentive when in prayer, sing hymns with great enthusiasm and make good use of the time to reflect. These times for reflection help pupils to develop insight and a sense of identity. They recognise a spiritual aspect to life.
- 2.17 Pupils of all ages have a strong moral commitment, recognising the difference between right and wrong in their relationships with their peers and their teachers. Adults give clear guidelines on expectations and act as good role models for the pupils. Pupils recognise the need for a community having rules and are involved in putting together those appropriate for each class. They understand the benefit that comes from helping others. Older pupils express their great delight in being able to provide support for their younger peers, particularly at break times when monitoring the 'Friendship Bench' to ensure every child has someone to play with and when using the 'Peace Garden' for confidential chats. Pupils contribute well to charities they have chosen themselves and to supporting those with difficulties such as children in Kosovo and Africa.
- 2.18 Pupils develop outstandingly well socially, showing themselves to be caring, confident, courteous and responsible members of the community. They successfully take on responsibility as they move through the school and in Year 6 they enjoy the roles of house captains, prefects and captains of teams. They show initiative and confidently form close relationships with children and adults alike, as demonstrated when they showed the inspectors around the school. The school council provides pupils with the opportunity to develop social skills and understand the process of democracy in the wider world. They

speak with great pride of their school council and the success they have had in encouraging the school to take up a number of its suggestions. The PSHE programme further develops their understanding of public institutions and citizenship, and older groups were able to explain who the Queen is, who is prime minister and where parliament meets. Pupils' excellent relationships with teachers and their peers have a positive effect on their understanding of the importance of social cohesion and the need to consider the common good. Their contributions to charity bear ample testimony to this.

- 2.19 Pupils' cultural development is good. They learn about other faiths such as Judaism and Islam in RE, and learn something of life and cultures in other lands in geography, French and Spanish. Pupils also learn about the lives of different peoples in a historical context. Displays of other musical cultures, events such as 'International Week' and the celebration of festivals such as Divali enhance their development further. Overall, pupils know of too few examples of writers, scientists and the like from other cultures who have contributed to mankind's development.
- 2.20 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)

- 2.21 Across the school, teaching is good and on occasions it is outstanding. The quality of teaching found at the last inspection has therefore been maintained and the school has sustained efforts to meet its aim to give pupils a solid foundation in knowledge, skills and understanding along with the development of their physical and creative attributes.
- 2.22 Teaching is knowledgeable, and this is a key factor in the high standards pupils reach and the progress that those of all abilities generally make. It is well planned and in the main offers suitable activities. At its best it uses effective methods and keeps a brisk pace. For instance, pupils in Year 4 enjoyed a pacy and active French lesson in which they quickly learned the parts of the body. In many lessons teaching responds to the pupils' needs well, and copes with the classes organised by ability effectively. Appropriate work was set across the ability range in several lessons observed, enabling, in these lessons, pupils of all abilities to make good progress. This was evident in a Year 3 geography lesson where pupils were developing an understanding of why people settle where they can find work.
- 2.23 Teachers make effective use of the school's stock of resources; in the EYFS there is however a limited range of outdoor equipment. In the main, resources are selected carefully so that they can be used to help pupils' learning and understanding of what they are being taught. This was observed in some excellent learning support lessons and in a Year 1 music lesson in which pupils used a wide range of musical instruments that furthered their musical expertise well. ICT is used at a high level in specialist lessons, as seen in a Year 5 lesson on advanced modelling, although it is not yet developed in other areas of the curriculum.
- 2.24 On the occasions when teaching does not reach such high standards, it does not provide different work for pupils of different ability, leading to pupils with LDD making insufficient progress. In others, insufficient use is made of ICT or the library to help pupils benefit from research or reference work, or a lack of expert questioning to challenge them to think creatively. In a number of instances too much reliance is placed on duplicated worksheets that do not suitably meet the varying needs of the pupils in a particular class. In addition, the rate at which pupils are expected to work is sometimes too slow. Pupils therefore lose interest and do not make progress in line with their abilities.

- 2.25 Teaching rooms are generally spacious and teachers have easy access to the good range of resources. Rooms are well served with electronic facilities such as interactive white-boards, which are used well. Teachers manage the classroom environment exceptionally well and pupils respond to expectations. Consequently, they consistently behave outstandingly well, have a positive attitude to study and demonstrate enthusiasm. They willingly take on those opportunities they are given to take responsibility for their own work and respond well to challenge.
- 2.26 High quality relationships between teachers and pupils exist throughout the school. These are based on mutual respect. Pupils also work well together in groups, as was evident in a Year 1 lesson in which they were counting tables and dinosaurs in pairs. In such lessons pupils are confident and feel able to express their views, ideas and opinions in a secure environment. Teachers know their pupils well and informally provide sensitive support.
- 2.27 The quality of assessment is variable from the EYFS through to Year 6 and the school's policy is not consistently followed. In the prep, the school carries out a series of standardised tests to enable teachers to identify those pupils with particular strengths and those who require extra support. These assessments are not systematically analysed or collated sufficiently. As a result the overall progress made by pupils year on year is not being properly identified and critical information from the tests is not being discussed among staff, evaluated against the school's aims or measured against national norms. The school is aware of this and is seeking to find a solution. Marking in many books is cursory, with ticks rather than comments; for example, pupils' exercise books showed little evidence of re-drafting or the setting of specific targets for improvement. On the other hand, an example of outstanding marking with clear and detailed advice on next steps to be taken by the pupils was seen in the Year 6 English books. It is general practice among teachers to give on the spot oral guidance to individual pupils in lessons.
- 2.28 The school meets the regulatory requirements for teaching [Standard 1].

3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils

- 3.1 The overall quality of pastoral care, welfare, health and safety is outstanding across the school and is better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils have excellent support from both teaching and support staff, and feel safe, secure and valued. As a result, the school has made very good progress towards its aims in this respect.
- 3.2 The school provides excellent support and guidance for all its pupils. The pastoral structure contributes to the close family approach from the EYFS through to Year 6. Class teachers have a key responsibility in supporting pupils and in the prep have an important role in teaching the well-structured PSHE programme, which provides a foundation for the good relationships that exist in the school. The house system provides a further arm of support, which pupils enjoy talking about. Indeed, these articulate pupils enjoy talking about all aspects of their school. In conversations with them, formally and informally, the vast majority stated that they feel secure and well cared for, and that staff take an interest in their wellbeing. In lessons too, a similar feeling of wellbeing exists. Pupils also take a role in supporting each other through the 'Friendship Bench' and 'Peace Garden'.
- 3.3 The school rules, regulations and procedures are appropriate; pupils respect them and know what behaviour the school expects of them. Having been involved in discussing the formulation of the school rules pupils feel committed to them, see their importance and abide by them. In the EYFS behaviour is excellent and this continues into the prep school. Pupils relate well to one another and inspectors found no evidence of bullying. A suitable anti-bullying policy is in place. Supervision for pupils' safety is adequate at break times.
- 3.4 Good child protection policies are in place; the staff know who is the child protection officer and they are kept up-to-date with the procedures, with regular in-service training. Risk assessments are well constructed throughout. Those for educational visits are detailed and provide clear advice to those in charge. Safety regulations in relation to electrical equipment are in place and appropriate checks are carried out regularly. The school benefits from its first-rate organisation in this area.
- 3.5 The procedures for recording admissions are appropriate. Registration is carried out efficiently throughout the school, with close detail being given to national guidelines. Registers are held centrally and so are readily accessible in case of emergency. Attendance registers are kept for extra-curricular activities.
- 3.6 The health and safety committee is chaired by a governor and has appropriate representation from key areas in the school. It carries out its responsibilities well. Procedures for protection against fire are thorough, with all fire appliances and evacuation procedures regularly tested and up-to-date. Most staff hold first aid qualifications; a good first aid policy is in place and first aid boxes are strategically placed around the school. Medical provision is well structured throughout. Care is taken to keep medication and other dangerous substances in locked cupboards.
- 3.7 Pupils enjoy school meals of good quality which are based on healthy menus. They have a good range of choices. The area supervisor visits regularly to oversee that high standards are being maintained. Pupils behave well in the dining hall, as they do around the school at all break times. They are guided as to the steps to healthy living.

- 3.8 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils [Standard 3].

The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community

- 3.9 The school has outstanding links with parents and with the community, an improvement on the findings of the previous report. Parents made positive responses about the quality of education and the values the school promotes in the pre-inspection questionnaire, demonstrating this through the support they give. The school's positive links with the community, local and in the wider context, provide a significant enrichment of pupils' educational experience.
- 3.10 Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated strong support for most of the school's provision. Parents particularly appreciate the way teaching helps the pupils to make progress and the way the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and values among their children. The inspectors found no evidence to support those who are dissatisfied with the information the school offers or with opportunities for parents to discuss the progress of their children with the school.
- 3.11 The school is keen to involve parents in the education of their children. Parents are invited to special occasions and provide supervision on occasions, such as extra-curricular activities and visits. Parents are able to communicate with the staff through the open door policy operated across the school. For their part parents are very supportive of the school, as was clearly demonstrated by the number supporting the Year 5 netball team who played in a match during the inspection and the Year 6 house assembly.
- 3.12 Parents appreciate the frequent communications they receive about the school's work and their children's progress. Parents new to the school receive a useful handbook outlining procedures and expectations, and enjoy occasions organised for them and their children such as the picnic in the summer term preceding the September when their children will be joining the school. This is followed up by a new parents' reception with staff and governors at the end of the first week of the year, an opportunity to meet the teachers on the first Monday of the year and a coffee morning in September.
- 3.13 Parents are provided with a very good range of information about their child. An excellent weekly newsletter is distributed to parents and appears on the well-constructed and informative web site. The parents' handbook contains detailed and helpful information on school procedures and policies. The school prospectus is well presented and useful. A range of information is provided to parents about their children's work. Parents receive well-structured and well-written reports annually, and parents' evenings are held at appropriate times during the year.
- 3.14 Parents are further involved through their social committee, chaired by a governor. Through this organisation, parents can actively support activities such as school productions and sport, and also contribute to fund-raising activities. The group has raised a good deal of money for the school and has provided a good range of social events. Across the school, parents are invited to support additional activities such as assemblies, musical concerts and on occasions school visits.
- 3.15 The outstanding links with the community make a significant contribution to pupils' education and personal development. The school has a flourishing and productive relationship with other local independent and maintained schools, and particularly with the schools to which pupils go after leaving. Visits locally and further afield to places such as Yorkshire and Devon broaden their experience, while support for local charities and for the

elderly through choir singing at Christmas raise pupils' awareness of contributing to society. The raising of money for Kosovo and Africa extends their commitment to, and growing knowledge of, a wider world.

- 3.16 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the provision of information and the manner in which complaints are to be handled [Standards 6 and 7].

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Quality of Governance

- 4.1 The governing body is highly committed to the school's mission and its efforts to achieve it. It has a good structure, with appropriate committees, which include the education committee and the finance and general purposes committee. The support it offers the head and the staff is good. Overall, the governors are providing stronger oversight than at the time of the previous inspection.
- 4.2 The governors are overseen by three guardians who seek to provide guidance as to the ethos of the two different schools that were merged in 2004 and on wider issues of an educational nature. Half the governors are current or previous parents, and act with commitment. Governors have a good awareness of their responsibilities. They oversee the school's finances well and have a good insight into the educational provision through the work of the committees. They also benefit from the headmistress' reports on matters of policy and strategic planning. The strategic committee plays a major role in the formulation of the school development plan.
- 4.3 Individual governors have responsibilities for specific areas of the school and serve on different committees. The education committee works closely with the staff representatives on the committee to provide support to, and stimulus for, the provision made for pupils' education, whilst the chair of governors meets with the staff termly to discuss any issues they may wish to raise. The governing body has ensured that the school has good resources and good quality staff.
- 4.4 Individual governors have particular responsibilities and ensure that the governing body is effective in discharging those for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils, and child protection. School policies are reviewed regularly. The headmistress is appraised by the chair or his delegate. A governor chairs the health and safety committee and another governor is the named person for child protection. Several have benefited from appropriate training.

The Quality of Leadership and Management

- 4.5 The school is well led and managed, an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. The aims of the school are clear and all staff enjoy the benefits of a shared vision. From the EYFS to Year 6, relationships among staff are strong and encourage commitment from all. Teachers work well together and carry out their responsibilities effectively. Overall, the staff are well motivated and contribute effectively to the fulfilment of the school's aims.
- 4.6 The senior management team, comprising the head, two deputies and the bursar, is a much tighter and more effective unit than at the time of the previous inspection. The roles of its members are clearly defined and the team has a sound knowledge of most of the school's strengths and areas for development. Subject leadership and management are also of good quality, with the result that planning is secure and pupils reach good standards. Much good work is done through informal contact. The system of appraisal is sound. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are less effective, as is analysis of the school's wide range of assessments. This makes it difficult to judge how well the school is working towards achieving the priorities in its development plan, the sharing of good practice, or the tracking of the achievements or progress of pupils from year to year. Not enough is done to ensure that the good practice seen in some areas is shared among all staff.

- 4.7 The school has a well-structured and detailed development plan that contains appropriate priorities. Time scales and expected costs are considered. The school has detailed and clear procedures and policies, well understood by staff and pupils, and readily available on the school's website or in the informative staff handbook.
- 4.8 Teaching and supply staff are carefully checked before appointment and all have appropriate Criminal Records Bureau checks. The same applies to the governing body. The school has adopted the national scheme for newly qualified teachers but has none at present. Induction policies for both newly qualified teachers and for experienced teachers new to the school are clearly defined and serve pupils well; new staff can quickly settle into the routines and ethos of the school. Staff have good in-service training opportunities, of which most take advantage.
- 4.9 The school's finances and staff's needs are managed effectively by the bursarial office, ensuring that teachers have appropriate resources, a factor demonstrated by the investment in the new ICT suite, and good teaching accommodation. The office staff support the school well, helping it to run smoothly. The school is tidy and well cared for.
- 4.10 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].
- 4.11 The school participates in the national scheme for the induction of newly qualified teachers and meets its requirements.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 The school has taken significant steps towards fulfilling its aims. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides a good educational experience for the pupils based on Christian principles. Provision for LDD pupils is good and on occasions outstanding. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. The extra-curricular programme is outstanding. Pupils reach good standards in relation to their abilities. They develop outstanding qualities in relation to their spiritual, moral and social life and their cultural development is good. They are confident pupils who have a sense of self-esteem and self-worth. They distinguish between right and wrong. They willingly take on responsibility as they move through the school. They learn about faiths and cultures different to their own. The quality of teaching is good and on occasions outstanding. Teaching is knowledgeable and the classroom environment is managed exceptionally well. It does not make sufficient use of ICT or the library to help pupils benefit from research during the school day and pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons. The quality of assessment is variable. The quality of pastoral care is outstanding, as is the provision for welfare, health and safety. Pupils feel safe and cared for. Excellent relationships exist throughout the school. The school has outstanding links with parents and the community. Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive. The links with the community make a significant contribution to pupils' education and personal development. The governing body is highly committed to the school's mission. The school is well led and managed, and runs smoothly.
- 5.2 The school has not yet tackled fully the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning which would enable it to ensure that pupils are suitably challenged in lessons. The same limitation applies to the analysis of assessments. However, the well-structured and detailed development plan and the careful management of the school's resources by the bursarial office indicate the school's awareness of what needs to be done.
- 5.3 The school meets all the regulatory requirements.

Next Steps

- 5.4 The school should take the following steps for improvement:
1. provide in-service training for staff aimed at developing teaching strategies:
 - to provide appropriate challenge for pupils;
 - to make the best use of ICT and the library to encourage pupils to research topics in more detail in lessons;
 2. introduce quickly the new system by which assessment results are to be collated and used to track pupils' short- and long-term progress;
 3. provide time so that the appropriate staff can monitor lessons and pupils' work and use the outcomes to share good practice and further improve the already good standards.
- 5.5 No action is required in respect of regulatory requirements.
- 5.6 Any failures to meet EYFS requirements are detailed in Section 7.

6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 12th to 15th October 2009. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.
- 6.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage was inspected on 12th and 13th October by two inspectors. The inspectors observed sessions, talked to the children, examined samples of work, and held discussions with staff and governors. Comments from parents and carers were considered, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

List of Inspectors

Mr Terry Dillon	Reporting Inspector
Ms Diane Gardiner	Headmistress, Pre-Prep School, IAPS School
Mr Adrian Palmer	Headmaster, Prep School, IAPS School
Mrs Deborah Parkman	Deputy Headmistress, Prep School, HMC School
Mrs Sara Wiggins	Early Years Lead Inspector
Miss Patricia Griffin	Early Years Team Inspector

7. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

- 7.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) of Coworth-Flexlands consists of a Nursery a Kindergarten and a Reception class. Twenty-two children (five boys and seventeen girls) who attend full- or part-time, attend the Nursery which is divided into two classes. Sixteen children (five boys and eleven girls) attend Reception full-time. All children share the grounds and facilities with the older pupils. Additionally there is a separate play area just for children in the EYFS. Admission is in order of registration. Since the previous inspection by Ofsted in 2008, the school has increased its resources to promote curriculum development in areas such as role play and phonics. Thirty pupils currently receive government funding. Two pupils require learning support and one has a statement of special educational needs. One child does not have English as the first language. The EYFS provides a good start to these young children's early educational experiences. Children are settled, polite and confident, and achieve well. Children thrive because staff care for them and ensure their wellbeing. Strong links with parents and other agencies, and an excellent staff to pupil ratio ensure children's needs are fully met. Provision is carefully evaluated and future actions are clearly stated in the development plan. Parents are highly positive in their appreciation of the school's provision for their children. The setting succeeds well in its aims to provide a happy, secure and welcoming environment.
- 7.2 The EYFS provision is well led and managed. Children's welfare, in all its aspects, is at the heart of the setting's work. Records, policies and procedures are of high quality, in place and regularly reviewed. Reporting arrangements provide an appropriate summary of children's achievements in the six areas of learning and parents have access to the EYFS assessment scales. The school is aware of the need for these to be included with the written summary. Risk assessments are extremely thorough and medical provision is properly reported and recorded. The school takes care to ensure all staff are suitably qualified, with the class teacher in Reception having the role of co-ordinating the EYFS provision. Although formal appraisal does take place, insufficient time is allocated to oversee the monitoring of teaching and learning, and to identify appropriate training needs for individual members of staff. Good links are established with local Early Years advisors. The helpful school website, meetings and an open door policy ensure highly effective relationships with parents and carers, which helps to meet the children's variety of needs and to include all children equally.
- 7.3 Committed, caring staff make appropriate observations and set targets in adult-led activities, and support children well in their learning. Children needing extra support are quickly identified. Their difficulties are addressed through effective support in class and, when necessary, by outside agencies who liaise closely with teachers. Learning resources, particularly those inside the classroom, are welcoming, safe and well organised to enable independent access. The school is aware that the outside area does not yet offer sufficient opportunities for children to explore and extend their learning from indoors. Staff use praise to encourage application and extend thinking. The enthusiasm and expertise of subject specialists in physical education, drama, music and information and communication technology enhance children's learning. Child-selected activities are not always supported by rigorous assessments and planning that appropriately determines what each child needs to learn next. The curriculum, with circle time, assemblies and regular opportunities for physical exercise, promotes self-esteem, helps children to understand their boundaries and teaches about the importance of healthy living. The school has received the Healthy Schools Award.

- 7.4 Children make good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points and most reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year. Children progress well in communicating, literacy, and numeracy because of the opportunities staff take to develop these skills in the daily routines. Children enjoy the many chances provided to select activities, promoting independent learning. Boys and girls play happily alongside each other. The excellent behaviour of the children and their highly developed listening skills reflect high expectations of mutual respect. Children understand how to keep safe, responding readily to adult guidance, such as when using wheeled toys. They co-operate well, taking turns to use the computer and sharing their toys.

What the Setting Should Do to Improve

- 7.5 To improve further the good quality of its provision, the setting should do the following.
1. Use the monitoring of teaching and learning to identify appropriate training needs for individual members of staff.
 2. Further develop the tracking of pupils' progress to ensure the data obtained is used consistently across all activities, to contribute effectively to planning.
 3. Use the outside dedicated play area to challenge children in all six areas of learning.
- 7.6 The school's provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.