



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

HARROGATE LADIES' COLLEGE

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Harrogate Ladies' College

Full Name of School	Harrogate Ladies' College
DfE Number	815/6012
EYFS Number	EY400425
Registered Charity Number	529579
Address	Harrogate Ladies' College Clarence Drive Harrogate North Yorkshire HG1 2QG
Telephone Number	01423 504543
Fax Number	01423 568893
Email Address	enquire@hlc.org.uk
Principal	Mrs Sylvia Brett
Chair of Governors	Mrs Sarah Pullan
Age Range	2 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	634
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (122 boys; 512 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 21 5-11: 213 (EYFS): 3-5 63 11-18: 337 (EYFS):
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	16 Jan 2014 to 17 Jan 2014

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 May 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 and with the chair of 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 to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Anne McConway

Early Years Lead Inspector

Mrs Glynis Holmes

Team Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Harrogate Ladies' College is a family of three schools for pupils from two to eighteen years of age. Founded as a girls school in 1893, it moved to its present site in 1904. The three parts of the school are located on the same site. Bankfield, opened in 1997, caters for boys and girls aged from two to four years, while Highfield, opened in 2000, is a co-educational preparatory school for pupils from four to eleven years of age. The school's senior section, known as College, provides day and boarding education for girls aged from 11 to 18. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) covers all of the pupils in Bankfield together with the Reception class in Highfield. The school is a registered charity with a single governing body covering all three parts.
- 1.2 The school's aim is to inspire and nurture children so as to engender in them a deep passion for learning and a love of life and to fulfill their potential. The school, a Christian foundation, also seeks to provide children with a secure, caring, stable, nurturing and stimulating environment and the confidence to experiment and take the appropriate risks through a broad, relevant and balanced curriculum throughout which staff meet the needs of individual children.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, an extension at Bankfield provides full-time care for children between 0800 and 1800 and a new principal was appointed in 2013.
- 1.4 The EYFS caters for 84 children aged from two to five years of whom 30 attend full-time and 54 attend on a part-time basis. Twenty-one children are under 3 years of age and 63 attend the Nursery and Reception classes. The ability profile of the setting is in line with the national average. The setting has identified three children as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and four with English as an additional language (EAL). No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 The pupils are mainly from White British or Asian professional families. Some are from military families.
- 1.6 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.

School	NC name
Minors 2-3	EYFS Under 3
Majors 3-4	EYFS Nursery
Upstairs Majors	EYFS Nursery
Reception	EYFS Reception

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) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement:
1. To extend the children's independence by allowing them more time to solve problems and challenges on their own.

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 children who attend. Standards are consistently very high throughout all aspects of the care and the educational programmes on offer. All children attain the level of development typical for their age, and many exceed this. The high quality of teaching enables children under three years to progress effectively in personal, social and emotional development and in language development, while those aged three to five years are actively engaged in learning to use phonics for reading and spelling, and to recognise numerals. Staff have high expectations of all children leading to exceptionally good listening skills and high standards of behaviour.
- 3.2 Teaching strategies match individual children's needs in a way that ensures that they make good progress. Teachers provide challenging activities and use open questions in order to develop children's critical thinking skills. Staff are skilled in motivating children to learn and concentrate for extended periods of time to develop the characteristics of effective learning. A wide range of high quality resources is used effectively by staff with children of all ages and abilities to ensure that they are well prepared for the next step in their learning. The staff excel in settling new children into the setting and keeping parents well informed about their child's progress and achievements. Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire praise the high quality support given to the development and learning of their children. The key person system provides for secure attachments and accurate assessments and includes all those involved in the child's learning. Teachers have a comprehensive knowledge of the needs of each child and their family and use this to target challenges and support them effectively.
- 3.3 The focus on the development of communication and language skills in the under threes and the wider programme for the over threes, which includes sport and swimming, prepares them exceptionally well for the next stages of their learning.

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

- 3.4 The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being is outstanding. Care practices are excellent. The key person system works very effectively, helping the children under three to form secure attachments and promoting their well-being, and all staff know every child and understand their needs extremely well. Children over three are encouraged to achieve through the appropriate use of praise. They enjoy playing and learning, using their imagination, exploring the rich resources available and conversing with adults. Practitioners are always ready to help children resolve problems, although this sometimes means that children do not meet challenges on their own, and thus develop independence in learning. Adults are excellent role models. Relationships are excellent at all levels and children respect each other's differences.
- 3.5 Children show that they feel safe and secure by being able to question adults and share their concerns with them. Staff discuss with children the reasons why it is important to have a healthy diet at every opportunity. For example, the youngest

children helped 'Geraldine Giraffe' sort her supermarket shopping into healthy food and treats. Children develop a good awareness of the need for physical exercise through physical education lessons, outdoor play and extended walks in the surrounding area. A welcoming, caring, safe and well-resourced environment, both in and outdoors, supports children's overall development and emotional well-being, and aims to provide a range of experiences that develop children's confidence and co-operation. Children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning because practitioners provide good support.

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

- 3.6 The leadership and management of the early years are outstanding. The governors fully support the EYFS and play an effective part in overseeing its work. The setting fulfils the school's responsibilities in meeting the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. The educational programmes ensure a broad range of experiences which enable children to make outstanding progress in their learning. The progress check at the age of two is effective in identifying learning priorities for each child together with ways in which learning can be supported at home.
- 3.7 Policies are reviewed regularly and detailed procedures are in place to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS at all times. Staff implement the policies consistently, creating a warm, welcoming, stimulating and safe environment.
- 3.8 Self-evaluation practices are embedded securely to provide continuous review of practice; challenging targets are set for improvement. Staff have regular first aid and child protection training. Suitable systems are in place for performance management and appraisal and the continuous professional development of the staff. These have had a significant positive impact on teaching quality and thus on the learning and development of the children. The recommendations of the previous inspection have been fully met. Well-established partnerships are in place with both parents and external agencies to identify and meet the needs of children with SEND so that they receive the support they need.

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

- 3.9 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision is outstanding. Children make excellent progress relative to their starting points. Children aged three to five years are learning to recognise letters, read simple text, segment and blend sounds in words and to write numbers and letters independently. Children under three sustain concentration over a significant period of time while learning vocabulary in small groups, counting objects, communicating with each other while happily engaged in play, mark making and learning phonics and action songs.
- 3.10 The setting's caring practice keeps all children safe, secure and happy, and enables them to do well, make progress and prepares them very well for the next stage of their learning. The learning and care provided meet the needs of the range of children who attend. The way in which teaching is based upon a careful review of each child's progress ensures that those with particular needs are supported very well. Children with EAL are fully supported by all adults, enabling them to make excellent progress in their language development. Higher ability children are given challenging activities in order extend their learning.

- 3.11 Practitioners know how to deal with safeguarding issues and have a shared understanding of the need to take appropriate action to protect and support children in their care. Leadership and management are effective in evaluating practice and establishing how continuous improvements can be made for the benefit of the children. The response to the recommendations from the previous inspection was positive. All requirements for the children's safeguarding and welfare have been met.