



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

FINBOROUGH SCHOOL

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Finborough School

Full Name of School	Finborough School		
DfE Number	935/6062		
EYFS Number	EY311246		
Address	Finborough School The Hall Great Finborough Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 3EF		
Telephone Number	01449 773600		
Fax Number	01449 773601		
Email Address	admin@finboroughschool.co.uk		
Principal	Mr James Sinclair		
Proprietor	Mr James Sinclair		
Age Range	2 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	315		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (163 boys; 152 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	3	5-11: 119
	3-5 (EYFS):	28	11-18: 165
Head of EYFS Setting	Mr Ashley Martin		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	24 Sep 2014 to 25 Sep 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 October 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 proprietor and attended registration sessions. 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

Miss Jenifer Hillman

Team Inspector for Early Years (Head of Pre-Preparatory Department, ISA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Finborough School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the ages of 2 to 18 years. The school is set in a 40-acre site, centred on a late eighteenth-century hall with a number of additional buildings nearby. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is housed in the main building and consists of two adjacent Nursery rooms and two Reception classrooms either side of the main staircase. The EYFS makes use of a shared messy area, an art room, library, information and communication technology (ICT) suite and sports hall; outside they have access to the grounds, the vegetable garden and the adventure play area. The EYFS department admits children either part-time or full-time. Nearly all the children move into Year 1 at the end of the Reception year. Before-school care is offered from 8.00 am, and after-school care is available until 5.30 pm.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide each pupil with the best preparation for life and its motto, 'Strive for the Highest', is applied to all aspects of life, including academic, sporting performing arts and cultural activities. The current proprietor took over the running of the school in 2009. The proprietor, who is also the principal, is assisted by a head of senior school and head of preparatory school. They, along with the human resources director and the operations manager, form the senior leadership team who are known as the executive body.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the role of the EYFS co-ordinator has been shared between two members of staff, and early years children now receive tuition from specialist music and drama teachers.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 315 pupils in the school, of whom 31 are in the EYFS setting, including 13 who attend the Nursery part-time. Three children are under the age of three. Currently no child in the EYFS has a statement of special education needs, although one child has been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and one child has English as an additional language (EAL).
- 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
N	Nursery (ages 2 to4)
R	Reception (ages 4 to 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 In addition to the above action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Strengthen and formalise fully the induction procedure for new members of staff to ensure familiarity with all aspects of practice and procedures.
 2. Identify the means whereby the early years co-ordinators can be more fully involved in formulating policy and monitoring its implementation.

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 provision is outstanding in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. An excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities provides a high level of challenge across all areas of learning, suitably varied according to children's individual needs. Targeted provision is given for children with SEND and EAL through early identification and support provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator and external agencies as required.
- 3.2 Many engaging opportunities for playing and exploring, active learning and creating, and thinking critically are provided; for example, Nursery children made model boats to investigate floating and sinking, and explored the life of toy penguins in a trough of shaving foam 'snow'. Reception children used their imagination by creating handmade tickets for a holiday. Excellent use is made of the bright, well-equipped indoor learning environment, although insufficient core activities are planned for outside.
- 3.3 Staff have high expectations for the children in their care and they have a thorough understanding of how to challenge, motivate and support individual children. For example, the youngest children were encouraged to play a magnetic fishing game to support fine motor skill development. Staff carefully questioned Reception children individually about the content of their reading books to develop vocabulary and draw out the meaning. Children develop their skills well in all areas of learning so that they are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- 3.4 Partnerships with parents are extremely strong. They feel fully informed of their child's academic achievements and progress through parents' evenings, constructive and helpful written reports, and through informal meetings with the staff at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about what the setting offers their children. They especially appreciate the strong family ethos, the attention to individual learning needs and the happiness that radiates from the children.

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. Key people are used effectively to build strong relationships with children and their families. Staff provide excellent role models for the children in their care, who feel safe and secure within the setting. Children are confident in their daily routines and co-operate well with their peers. They use mature vocabulary to describe their thoughts and feelings, and happily accept advice and guidance to resolve problems by themselves.
- 3.6 Staff support children's development of their personal skills and independence; for example, the youngest Nursery children dried their own hands and chose their own snack from a selection offered to them. They could explain that they washed their hands to stop putting germs in their mouths. Reception children went to the toilet independently. They knew why they were getting hot when they were exercising in

physical education. They made healthy choices at lunchtime and cleared their own plates.

- 3.7 Children are extremely well prepared for their transitions within the EYFS and from Reception to Year 1. During the summer term, weekly visits to the next class enable children to become familiar with the staff, the classroom and wider learning environment so that the transition to the next stage of education is seamless.

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

- 3.8 The effectiveness of leadership and management of the EYFS is outstanding. The proprietor has close involvement in the day-to-day running of the school, and brings a wealth of transferable skills to the effective management of the setting. The senior leadership team consists of experienced people who give a strong lead in their areas, and external consultants are regularly used to ensure best practice and compliance with EYFS requirements. All appropriate checks are undertaken and recorded correctly when new staff are appointed. Comprehensive health and safety practices are secure, safeguarding procedures are strong and children are cared for extremely well within a welcoming, safe and caring environment. Staff receive rigorous training in child protection and first aid, updated as necessary within the correct time-frame, but arrangements for the induction of new staff are not fully formalised.
- 3.9 The strategy of monitoring pupil progress across the EYFS gives a clear and thorough picture of children's achievements across the areas of learning, and the educational programmes are overseen effectively. Arrangements for the supervision of staff in the EYFS have recently been implemented. Annual staff appraisal successfully links to performance management and continuing professional development. Relevant training needs are identified and realistic targets set. EYFS staff meet regularly to discuss all aspects of their practice. However, they are not yet fully involved in formulating EYFS policies, this being currently undertaken by senior managers, and they are in the early stages of developing their programme of peer monitoring.
- 3.10 Partnership with parents is extremely strong and external agencies are engaged to access early interventions to support the needs of children, for example speech and language therapy.

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

- 3.11 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision is outstanding. The quality of attainment and progress of children in the EYFS, including those with SEND and EAL, is high. Children of all abilities achieve extremely well according to their starting points. Children under three form simple letters and numerals, and older Nursery children count confidently to 12 and identify initial sounds. Reception children can order numbers to 100, perform simple addition sums within ten successfully and use the correct pencil grip when forming letters in their basic sentence writing.
- 3.12 Children's behaviour is exemplary, and excellent relationships are forged between children, their carers and their parents. They feel safe and secure, and this is reflected in the confidence and independence they demonstrate in their daily activities. Close attention is given by the senior leadership team to ensuring children are safe and well protected, an aspect of welfare for which all EYFS staff take

responsibility, and their focus on evaluating and continually striving to improve early years' practice ultimately enhances the life chances of all children in the setting.

- 3.13 Since the previous inspection, the setting has ensured that the needs of children are written within the daily planning, and individual children's targets are included in written reports to parents.