



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INSPECTION

THE FROEBELIAN SCHOOL

MAY 2017



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SCHOOL'S DETAILS

School	The Froebelian School			
DfE number	383/6057			
Registered charity number	529111			
Address	Clarence Road Horsforth Leeds West Yorkshire LS18 4LB			
Telephone number	01132 583047			
Email address	office@froebelian.co.uk			
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Dodds			
Chair of governors	Mrs Katrina Paget			
Age range	3 to 11			
Number of pupils on roll	181			
	Boys	91	Girls	90
	Day pupils	181		
	Pre-prep including EYFS	98	Juniors	83
Inspection dates	24 to 25 May 2017			

PREFACE

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards following their inspection may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any unmet standards identified at their previous inspection.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is an EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection, reporting on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

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 specifically in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

All inspections of independent schools in England are conducted according to the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with a group of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form times and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Graham Gorton

Reporting inspector

Mr Giles Delaney

Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- 1.1 The Froebelian School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged between 3 and 11 years. It was founded in 1913. In 1973 it became a charitable educational trust, administered by a board of governors, known as the school council. A new head was appointed in September 2015.
- 1.2 The school is divided into two departments. The pre-prep caters for pupils from Nursery to Year 2 and the juniors for those in Years 3 to 6.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school seeks to provide a caring, supportive and structured learning environment where quality education develops the whole child, aiming to enable them to maximise their potential. It aims to foster good relationships throughout the Froebelian family and beyond to ensure a smooth transition for children towards the next phase of their learning.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Of the 181 pupils in the school at the time of the inspection, 47 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and 134 are in Years 1 to 6. Pupils come from a range of professional families, reflecting a range of ethnic backgrounds; most live within a 10-mile radius of the school. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils is above average. The school has identified seven pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, all of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. English is an additional language (EAL) for seven pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. Data used by the school have identified 54 pupils as being the more able in the school's population, and the curriculum is modified for them, and for 16 other pupils who have special talents in sport, art, music and drama.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. Where the school's own names differ from those used nationally, the details are given in the table below:

<i>School name</i>	<i>National Curriculum name</i>
Lower Kindergarten	Nursery
Kindergarten	Reception
Transition	Year 1
Remove	Year 2
Form I	Year 3
Form II	Year 4
Form III	Year 5
Form IV	Year 6

2. KEY FINDINGS

2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.

- The pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional.
- Pupils display outstanding communication skills.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve highly and make good, or in some cases, rapid progress.
- The high quality of the pupils' study skills is supported by an excellent understanding of their subjects.

2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.

- Pupils display a strong moral code from an early age.
- Pupils make an excellent contribution to the lives of others.
- Pupils display high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Mutual respect forms a cornerstone of all pupil interactions.

Recommendation

2.3 The school is advised to make the following improvement:

- Ensure more able pupils are given sufficient stimulus to fully engage and inspire them to make equally good progress in all subjects.

3. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 The pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional. Their capacity to work collaboratively is a significant strength promoted by the school. It has a positive impact on the quality of their progress and attainment. Pupils value the opportunities they are given to work independently and demonstrate excellent initiative when solving problems both of an academic and personal nature. Pupils demonstrate an infectious enthusiasm to learn and are fully engaged in open-ended tasks. Their confidence to offer observations and take risks in their learning is outstanding and serves to foster a most effective learning environment. From an early age in the EYFS, skilful teaching contributes to pupils' attitudes by encouraging them to use their initiative and 'have a go', and that making mistakes is a vital part of the learning process.
- 3.3 Pupils of all abilities display outstanding communication skills. They are thoughtful and reflective when talking to both adults and their peers. They are extremely articulate and able to interpret and answer questions with considerable maturity. From the youngest age, they are comfortable conversing with adults, which many do with poise and reflection. They are equally adept at listening to each other. This creates a particularly positive and open environment which produces the necessary space and opportunity for pupils to learn effectively. Pupils' writing skills are strong and they write skilfully for a variety of different purposes, using exciting vocabulary which engages the reader. Pupils' creative writing, including poetry, is of exceptionally high quality. Children's writing skills in the EYFS are excellent. The children love to write and by the time they leave the EYFS, most of them are able to form all their letters correctly and write meaningful sentences. Throughout the school, pupils read well and demonstrate a keen understanding of how they can engage their audience through creative use of their voices, pace and suspense. Pupils take advantage of the many opportunities throughout the school year to perform and speak in front of larger audiences.
- 3.4 Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with SEND or EAL, achieve highly and make excellent progress. The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2015, which are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at age 11 have been far above the average for maintained primary schools. These are notably strong in mathematics. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all pupils felt that the school gives them the opportunity to learn and make good progress. Pupils are extremely successful at the point of transfer to their chosen secondary schools. Some receive scholarships and awards for their academic, creative and physical aptitudes. A very small minority of parents felt their child's needs are not met effectively by the school. Inspection evidence partially supports this view. Whilst the vast majority of pupils achieve highly, more able pupils do not always progress as rapidly as they might when the teaching does not fully engage or inspire them to give of their best in all subject areas. An excellent range of curricular and extra-curricular provision engages the pupils and enables them to demonstrate their achievements. This includes the EYFS, where provision and practice is consistent across all age groups and is monitored effectively, enabling excellent progress. The recommendation from the previous inspection has been met very successfully. The high quality of the pupils' achievements reflects the aims of the school, ensuring they are realised. School governors are proactive in ensuring that the school is well resourced in terms of staffing and accommodation to enable pupils to be successful.
- 3.5 Pupils demonstrate excellent high order thinking skills. They develop mature investigative skills which they apply readily to a wide range of curricular activities. Pupils demonstrate that they can think logically in order to solve problems. The pupil's outstanding study skills are supported by an excellent understanding of their subjects. Their learning is characterised by more than simply acquiring skills: they can also apply these with increasing success to solve challenging

problems as they progress through the school. Children in the EYFS begin to develop this ability from a very early age when they show an excellent ability to make observations and draw conclusions. Older pupils demonstrate an extremely adept understanding of complex scientific concepts, such as fair testing and apply this accurately to their own experiments and analyses. Teaching, at its best, gives the pupils sufficient time to think problems through and to refine their learning skills, which they do very effectively. In their questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils did not feel that the marking helps them to improve their work or that they know how well they are doing in their subjects. Inspection evidence shows that marking is detailed and informative, showing clearly how pupils can improve their work. Pupils respond well to the colour coded system that shows areas of strength as well as areas for development. This is consistent across all subjects and fully meets a recommendation from the previous inspection.

- 3.6 Pupils display excellent levels of knowledge right across the curriculum, whether that be in history, retelling facts about World War 2 or when they demonstrate their prowess in street dance. Their creative skills are of a high order. They sing extremely well, with excellent diction and intonation. It is the pupils' capacity to apply their knowledge in a range of different scenarios that is a distinctive strength of their learning, promoted by the school's approach. The most successful teaching fosters this ability by posing challenging questions and providing a learning atmosphere that promotes risk-taking and independence, both in choice and learning style. Younger pupils in the school demonstrated such skills as they tackled their science experiments, displaying initiative in their planning and variety in their methods whilst maintaining focus on the key outcomes of their testing. The pupils' ability to scrutinise and analyse information and incorporate their own experiences and prior knowledge is also excellent. Pupils show a great depth of understanding in their learning and always want to extend their knowledge and skills base. In their questionnaire responses, most parents felt that teaching enables their child to make good progress and develop skills for the future. A very large majority of pupils felt that teachers are supportive and helpful if they have any problems with their work. Inspection evidence supports these views. The high quality of the pupils' achievements owes much to excellent leadership and management at all levels. Their meticulous attention to detail and care for each area of the school's operation ensures the excellent achievement for the pupils.
- 3.7 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of numeracy. Their number skills are extremely well developed and their capacity, from a very young age, to apply this knowledge to solve increasingly complex problems is excellent. Pupils have a strong understanding of numbers and their interplay and can manipulate these successfully. They are also able to reason and apply this knowledge outside of their mathematics lessons, such as in geography where older pupils interpreted a series of graphs successfully and another group used information on magnet strengths to create a table of results. Pupils have good information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The youngest children are able to programme robotic toys whilst older pupils code successfully. Pupils enjoy using their ICT skills in other areas of the curriculum for a wide range of purposes, including the consolidation of their learning. Pupils use ICT effectively to support their work and it is also utilised effectively for research.
- 3.8 Pupils display a wide range of skills and talents through the extensive extra-curricular programme. Pupils achieve highly in a broad range of activities both within the school and through clubs and organisations. They are involved in an extensive range of extra-curricular competitions and have enjoyed success in netball, football, cross-country, rugby and music at both local and regional levels. The choir performs to a particularly high standard and sings throughout the year at regional events. In their questionnaire responses, most parents felt that the school offers a suitable range of subjects for their child and that there is a good choice

of extra-curricular activities. Almost all pupils felt that they can be involved in a good range of activities.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils display a strong moral code from an early age. They understand right from wrong and they manage their own behaviour to a high level. This was witnessed in their behaviour around the school and their interactions with one another. The youngest pupils sit attentively in assembly for sustained periods whilst older pupils focus in their lessons and demonstrate excellent behaviour. Pupils understand the need for rules to ensure that all environments are peaceful and based on positivity and support. The pupils' self-discipline is excellent. They recognise the need to take responsibility for their actions and consequently there is an open atmosphere of co-operation where errors are accepted and forgiven. There is a clear trust that has been established between the staff and pupils and also between the pupils themselves. In their questionnaire responses, an overwhelming majority of parents felt that the school actively promotes good behaviour and every pupil who responded felt that the school encourages them to behave well and that they know the sanctions for poor behaviour.
- 4.3 Pupils make an excellent contribution to the lives of others. They see themselves as members of a community, in which everyone has a vital part to play. Their social maturity is outstanding and is reflected not only in fund-raising activities but also projects that support the local community. Pupils actively participate in activities such as picking up litter at a local park and playing fields to ensure their surrounding environment is cared for, and singing at a local home for the elderly at Christmas time. Within the school, the older pupils set an excellent example to younger pupils through their conduct and the leadership roles they fulfil. They are involved in an extremely wide range of local and national events, performances and visits. The high quality of the pupils' personal development in this area ensures that the aims of the school, as reflected in the school motto, 'giving a flying start to the citizens of tomorrow', are fully met.
- 4.4 Pupils display high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. Younger pupils possess a strong awareness of their own strengths but also recognise the importance of trying new things. Older pupils also demonstrate an eagerness to engage in their learning and possess the same positive attitude to their learning. They are willing to listen to advice and then redraft their initial pieces of work. Pupils have a clear sense of where they are in their learning and, with the support of their teachers, set credible targets for future improvement. These targets are in almost all circumstances highly reflective and specific in their focus. These skills really help pupils to make progress and prepare well for the next stage of their education. In their questionnaire responses, most parents felt that the school promotes an environment which successfully supports their children's personal development.
- 4.5 The pupils' engagement and obvious interest in the school's cultural diversity far exceeds a sense of toleration. They speak engagingly about each other's culture and religion and their relationships and friendships are predicated on these strengths. They demonstrate an excellent knowledge of other religions and the older pupils can rationalise world events in light of their knowledge. Pupils are encouraged to share their individual religious beliefs, and celebrate festivities with other pupils and often prepare presentations that celebrate their individual heritage. Pupils get on well with everyone instinctively and respect is a cornerstone in the way in which pupils interact with one another. From a very early age, children demonstrate an awareness of the world around them both geographically and culturally and this provides an invaluable foundation upon which their future relationships evolve. In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents and most pupils felt that the school actively promotes values of democracy, respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 4.6 Pupils display an excellent social awareness and their social development is a particular strength. They develop genuine and deep friendships which are built on a positive engagement

with each other. Excellent social skills are demonstrated when pupils arrive at the school as they mix extremely happily. Their play and conversation is very natural, enabling a positive start to the school day. Pupils are able to achieve outstanding results through collaborative work, such as a 'Mini-Enterprises' activity in which they developed a marketing programme for merchandise throughout the school. They enjoy working together and can understand how effective collective work is the key to achieving positive outcomes for all involved.

- 4.7 Pupils understand the importance of taking responsibility for their learning and behaviour. There is a strong sense of acceptance of each other throughout the school and this supports pupils growing through their mistakes. Pupils' capacity to make decisions is outstanding. They are also able to reflect very sensitively on the impact of their decisions on those around them. As an example, pupils played a significant role in reviewing the code of conduct through the pupil council. Pupils develop excellent decision-making skills and teamwork, strengthening their understanding of effective collective work within the extra-curricular activities programme, in particular through residential visits. The collaborative atmosphere which exists in the school is valued greatly by the pupils and has a positive impact on pupil attainment, confidence and motivation. The pupils' excellent personal development begins and permeates down from the outstanding leadership and management. Their care for each individual within the community ensures the best outcomes for the pupils.
- 4.8 Pupils have a deep sense of spirituality. Within the school day, they are provided with time to reflect and relax, which helps to develop the depth of their appreciation of both themselves and others. Pupils are particularly committed to art and music, which enables their appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. Pupils share their own spirituality which stems from their own religious observances.
- 4.9 Pupils show a strong understanding about the need to stay safe. This includes awareness of online safety and cyber-bullying. They appreciate the need for a balanced diet and that physical activity is an important aspect of staying fit. Their self-discipline is excellent and they pay due regard to the school's rules and regulations, which are there to ensure their safety. In the questionnaires, most pupils agreed that they felt safe in school whilst almost all said they understood how to stay safe online.