

# SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

*Independent professional inspection of schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, schools accredited as members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, and those schools belonging to the Cognita Group which are not members of the Independent Schools Council and its constituent associations*

## INSPECTION REPORT

**INSPECTION CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO SECTION 162A  
OF THE EDUCATION ACT 2002**

<b>Name of school:</b>	St Mary's School Henley
<b>DfE number:</b>	931/6021
<b>Inspection team:</b>	<b>Reporting Inspector:</b> Mr Mike Thirkell  <b>Supporting Inspectors:</b> Mr Simon Bennett Mrs Jane Cooper
<b>Dates of inspection:</b>	7-9 October 2014

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	St Mary's School
Address of school:	13 St Andrew's Road Henley on Thames Oxon RG9 1HS
Telephone number	01491 573118
Email address:	info@stmarys-henley.co.uk
Proprietor:	Cognita
Headmaster:	Mr Rob Harmer
DfE number:	931/6021
Type of school:	Independent school
Age range of pupils and students:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Male and female
Total number on roll:	Boys: 67    Girls: 54 (Full-time) (Part-time)    Boys: 7    Girls: 10
Number of children under 5:	Boys: 9    Girls: 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need:	Boys: 0    Girls: 0
Annual fees:	Main School    £3,195 Nursery    £1,255-£3,040
Type of inspection:	Section 162A of the Education Act 2002
Inspection Team:	
Reporting Inspector:	Mr Mike Thirkell
Supporting Inspectors:	Mr Simon Bennett Mrs Jane Cooper
Dates of inspection:	7-9 October 2014

## **SECTION A: INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

### **Purpose and scope of the inspection:**

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service in accordance with Section 162(A) (1)(b) of the Education Act 2002, and it follows the inspection framework laid down by the Cognita Group and agreed with the Department for Education (DfE). It was conducted by independent professional inspectors, who looked at all aspects of the school's provision as required by the current regulations. The professional inspectors were accompanied by a trained lay inspector, who looked at agreed aspects of the school's management and ethos and reported on these to the Cognita Group. These findings are summarised in Section C of this document, but this section is not a statutory part of the inspection process.

### **Information about the school:**

St Mary's School is an independent, non-denominational, co-educational primary school situated on a residential street in Henley on Thames. It has a non-selective intake. It was established on its present site in 1925. The school has been a member of the Cognita group of schools since 2006. There are currently 138 pupils attending the school, including seventeen children who attend the Nursery on a part-time basis and fifteen in the Reception class. There are no pupils with statements with special educational needs, although seventeen boys and six girls are identified by the school as requiring additional support for learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia. The school emphasises the small size of classes and the high percentage of specialist teaching as important features of its provision. French is taught from the Nursery onwards. In the early years physical education (PE) is taught by specialist PE staff as is music. Drama lessons are introduced in the Reception class.

*The school's aim is 'to provide an inspiring, enjoyable educational experience where all children develop their talents, whether academic, creative or sporting. Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is confidence and self-esteem is grown in a happy, caring and stimulating environment. Ultimately, we want our pupils to develop a love of learning for life'.*

The school was last inspected in July 2008, by Ofsted.

### **Summary of main findings:**

St Mary's provides an excellent environment for learning in which pupils of all abilities are able to flourish and make at least good progress academically and personally. Many pupils make outstanding progress. The school has developed further since the last inspection in several respects and provides an outstanding quality of education which ensures that the school meets its aims and is successful at providing a wide range of learning opportunities for pupils, who say that they enjoy being at the school and that they feel safe. Their positive comments, in particular that they are happy to be at the school, are reinforced overwhelmingly by the comments received from parents. The quality and standards of the early years' provision are good overall with a significant number of particularly good and outstanding features. The school curriculum is outstanding. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent, and supports their outstanding progress. The broad and balanced range of learning opportunities provided for pupils during the

school day is supported by a extensive range of extra-curricular activities and school visits. The quality of teaching is outstanding overall, particularly in the upper part of the school, and is supported by specialist teaching and teachers' excellent subject knowledge. Teachers work hard to provide interesting lessons. Pupils say that they like their teachers, and appreciate the help and support that they receive from them. Teachers are invariably positive and encouraging when working with children. The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, and their behaviour exemplary. The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils have many excellent features and pupils are well cared for in a strongly nurturing environment, but there is a significant weakness in the child protection records which renders the judgement unsatisfactory overall. The school meets all but one of the regulatory requirements.

#### **What the school does well:**

- pupils develop excellent communication skills, supported by the strong emphasis on developing literacy throughout the school;
- relationships at all levels, including between teachers and pupils, are very good;
- the curriculum, and in particular the provision of French, provides an outstanding opportunity for pupils from the earliest age; and
- the high quality of art, music and drama pervades the school.

#### **What the school must do to comply with the regulations:**

*In order to comply with the regulations, the school should:*

- ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

#### **Next Steps:**

Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might consider the following points for development:

- ensure that continuity of expertise in safeguarding is achieved through designated staff undertaking the planned enhanced training; and
- improve the systems for tracking and recording safeguarding concerns.

## **SECTION B: COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION**

### **PART 1 - The quality of education provided by the school**

#### **The quality of the curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. This is an area of significant improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is broad and balanced and supported by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and visits to places linked to topics being studied. The curriculum is guided by the National Curriculum and effectively ensures that pupils have good access to all the required areas of learning plus additional opportunities such as French, music and PE from the Nursery onwards.

The school provides a programme of activities that are well suited to the pupils' needs and ensures that pupils of all abilities are provided with excellent opportunities to learn and make progress relative to their ability. Schemes of work have been developed further since the last inspection and now provide clear information about what pupils will learn each year. This is supported by an effective structure of meetings between staff and exchange of information to secure effective transition for pupils between each class as they move through the school. The quality of the curriculum is supported by the high proportion of specialist teaching throughout the school, but particularly for the older pupils. Specialist teaching is a feature that develops through the age range. Eight to eleven year old pupils have specialist teachers for art, drama, information and communication technology (ICT), music, mathematics, English, humanities, PE and French. Children in the earlier years have the security of a form teacher who teaches most subjects for a substantial part of the day but receive specialist teaching for music, French and PE. English, mathematics, science and humanities are taught by form teachers until the end of Key Stage 1. The opportunity to study French from the Nursery is a notably strong feature of the curriculum. The arts, including drama, art and music, are a clear strength which pervades the school.

Pupils effectively acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. They are articulate and confident communicators supported by the high quality of drama and classroom discussions. Clear expectations with regard to classroom management and behaviour help pupils to learn to listen carefully to their teachers. Their communication skills are developed through drama and ongoing opportunities for discussion are provided throughout the curriculum. Pupils' listening and concentration skills were powerfully demonstrated in outdoor sports activities observed. Humanities extend the range of pupils' learning experience to include a wide range of topics, including ancient Greek civilisations, with emphasis placed on class discussion and creative work. The curriculum for art ensures that pupils undertake an imaginative range of activities and the experience of using an appropriately wide range of materials. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is provided through regular lessons in each year but are reinforced in subjects throughout the curriculum, in assemblies and by other activities.

Provision for pupils with special learning needs is excellent and a high quality of support for pupils is provided both within classes and through withdrawal for one-to-one teaching as required. Pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress. Pupils are tested as well as observed by their teachers to identify learning

needs. The two-way transfer of information between staff and the head of learning support demonstrates exceptionally strong features. Teachers are provided regularly with up-dated information about the specific needs of pupils by the head of learning support and they have received appropriate training for dealing with particular special needs and guidance on dealing with those needs. Centrally held information and data are used effectively to identify and monitor pupils' learning needs and to monitor their progress. Teaching assistants understand their roles well and are used particularly effectively to support pupils with special educational needs in lessons. Successful strategies are used to support pupils identified as gifted or talented. Planning for differentiated activities in lessons, teachers' knowledge of pupils' individual needs and additional challenges provided through the curriculum, are strengths of this provision. An illustration of this was the visit to the school by a poet, an activity shared with groups of gifted and talented pupils from other local independent and maintained schools.

The high quality of the curriculum, including the rich range of opportunities for learning provided by school visits and extra-curricular activities, enables pupils of all abilities to make progress, ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and have the basic skills to enable them to make the most of the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

Teaching is outstanding overall and enables all pupils to acquire new knowledge and make at least good progress while many make outstanding progress, increasing their understanding and the development of their thinking skills. Lessons seen were almost always good and frequently outstanding across a range of subjects and year groups. They were founded on excellent relationships between staff and pupils, on planning of high quality, on enthusiasm and on strong subject knowledge. In all lessons observed, behaviour was excellent, creating a positive atmosphere for learning. Aims and objectives were clearly explained, activities were varied in terms of the use of space, individual contribution or paired and group work, and opportunities readily taken through well-directed questioning. Well-modulated variation of pace contributed to the sustaining of pupils' concentration.

The best lessons were characterised by teachers' high expectations of what pupils could do, provision of regular opportunities for engagement and interaction, and the generation of a sense of excitement, allied to the stimulation of intellectual curiosity and imagination. Such creative opportunities were evident, both in class and around the school, through the high quality of art work displayed in the corridors, and illustrated further by a lesson in Year 4 focused on a recent and much enjoyed visit to the Tower of London. The pupils were enabled to focus on the costumes worn by the Tudors, identifying who might have been in the Tower, then transferring skills to creating their own version of brass rubbings on to dark paper with gold or silver sticks. Similar excitement was generated in a Year 5 Humanities lesson on Greek myths where the pupils were drawn into thinking in pairs about creating story sticks which illustrated the significance of specific Greek myths. These were eventually to be shared with Year 2. In that lesson, when a pupil arrived after the start of the lesson, the teacher invited the pupils to explain 'in a nutshell' what they were doing and what needed to be done. The opportunity was taken and executed by a pupil with aplomb. Similar engagement was seen in many lessons, and in a drama class in Year 5 not only were the activities very well organised but they facilitated participation. Pupils were listened to and their ideas valued. Teachers' ability to give space to and understand the need of pupils to think for themselves was a strong

characteristic of all the best lessons. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils of a range of ability were enabled to make real progress in their understanding of numbers and their ability to talk about what they were learning and to identify any difficulties. In a Year 4 French lesson, pupils of all abilities made excellent progress, pronouncing words exceptionally well and displaying acute grammatical awareness. They were able to adapt the language for their own purposes.

Pupils' high standards of literacy and numeracy are supported effectively by the excellent quality of teaching, as are their oral confidence and articulacy. A beneficial characteristic of the teaching was the backing of extra-curricular activity with the engagement in class of such experience. For example, allied to the debriefing of the trip to the Tower was the work by pupils displayed on the walls around the school, and a booklet of the children's visit to and time spent with the elderly residents of a care home which illustrated great awareness of the lives and experiences of the residents.

Evidence of strong progress in learning was identified in virtually all lessons seen and suitably embedded in the planning. The progress of pupils with identified learning needs was of exceptionally high quality. Progress was evident in a different context in an assembly observed where a well-planned and highly fruitful discussion enabled pupils to explore the benefits of the law demanding that children under fourteen, when cycling, must wear safety helmets. This was an excellent example of open discussion without self-consciousness. Such confidence was seen in a wide range of lessons across the school. The quality of teaching is strengthened by the cheerful and lively displays in the classrooms including pupils work and the generally supportive availability of resources, including the new and stimulating library area.

Lessons illustrate concern to engage successfully with the needs of children of a wide range of ability, and the use of subject specialism throughout the school, for instance in French, emphasis the importance given to all subjects over and above the core curriculum, where personalised targets are set for literacy and numeracy. Externally marked and moderated Key Stage 2 national test results and moderated teacher assessments provide evidence of achievement of a high level overall, above the national average. Teaching is observed on a regular basis with the objective of turning good practice into outstanding practice, with an increasing emphasis on meeting the needs of the most able pupils. The school has successfully created an ambience where what happens in the classroom merges with what happens beyond it, whether in the playground, on the sports field, in the arts or in assembly, all combining to produce a stimulating and invigorating learning experience for the pupils.

Strategies used for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress are good. The school has a clear framework for assessment. Pupils' progress is monitored regularly by teachers and senior management maintains a close oversight of each pupil's progress. Central data is maintained for English, mathematics and science and formal systems for passing information about pupils' progress are well established. Teachers' individual records in all subjects are carefully maintained and used well to monitor pupils' progress. This information and that derived from the school's central tracking are used effectively to support planning, including lesson planning. The school's central systems for monitoring pupils' progress are supported by small classes, which ensure that teachers have frequent opportunities to talk to pupils about their work. The school is in the process of extending the use of its central records to further improve its response to instances where pupils need additional support or are falling below their expected levels of achievement.

Overall strategies for assessing pupils' work have improved since the last inspection. The use of tracking to monitor pupils' progress has been extended and a marking policy is now in place. Pupils' work is marked regularly and they receive helpful feedback generally about how they can improve further. Pupils confirm that they receive helpful information about their progress in each subject. Targets are set and overall used effectively to clarify to the pupils what they need to do to improve. Sometimes targets set for pupils are not so precise. Targets are particularly well used in mathematics. Although older pupils sometimes mark their own work, the school is aware of the need to develop the use of self-assessment further. The use of individual pupils' progress books provide a notably clear record of the development of their progress in extended writing.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**PART 2 - The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The development of pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness has improved still further since the last inspection, and is now excellent. The school actively promotes and progressively develops pupils' understanding of British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs relative to the ages of the pupils through curriculum, including PSHCE, and the wide range of extra-curricular visits and activities. Whether in a school assembly taken by the headmaster, or in classes, pupils are given many opportunities to reflect and to think about the world. They are able to consider the moral and social aspects of their lives and of those around them in a spiritual context, which generates awe and wonder and encapsulates much of what they experience and learn at school. This is evident in their excellent behaviour, their enthusiasm for learning and their participation.

The school day is notable for the absence of raised voices and this reflects the positive relationships between pupils and staff and pupils and each other, based on high expectations and mutual respect and the exercise of responsibility. An example was seen in the thoughtful, active and effective operations of the school council, and the pleasure of those who are members, at being able to participate in making a difference. The plentiful opportunities given by the increasing clubs and activities programme provides a wide range of opportunities for participation, and pupils expressed their delight at being involved on an almost daily basis. Beyond the classroom, pupils enjoy and use to good effect the playground, are firmly positive about the food and know to whom to turn at times of difficulty, and these attributes were firmly endorsed by parents in their questionnaire responses.

The high expectations and the quality of care provided by staff have created a strong sense of a vibrant, interactive and successful school community where individuals feel safe, enjoy school and develop as confident and articulate young people. Partnership and responsibility are evident and are based on participation, as shown in the commitment to clubs and other extra-curricular activities, in group work, in class, and in much enjoyed art, drama and music activities, all of high quality. Pupils' clear understanding of right from wrong, is demonstrated in their excellent behaviour and response to their teachers. They demonstrate a clear strength of fairness through the guidance provided by and the expectations of their teachers. They experience a range of links with the local community thorough links with local

maintained and independent schools and. such activities as the visit to a retirement home for the elderly. Work in the school, for example in art, reflected the success of this activity. Pupils spoke with pleasure about their experience and their opportunity to spend time with the elderly residents. Collapsed curriculum events over a week based on such topics as Africa, India and Water, provided pupils with a developing understanding of the world around them. This is supplemented by a well-planned programme of PSHCE and by the Year 6 pupils' work as buddies for the Kindergarten.

Pupils develop as thoughtful, responsible and articulate members of the school community who evidently enjoy school immensely and play their full part in all that it offers.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**PART 3 - The welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The school pays excellent attention to almost all aspects of pupils' welfare, health and safety, but it does not comply with the requirements of the independent school standards because there has been an area of serious weakness which requires urgent improvement. This relates to safeguarding. The school's child protection records have not been kept in good order and are incomplete. There is no record of how, when or whether the notes of potentially serious concerns were followed up or what action was taken, and this could leave vulnerable children at risk. The school has taken immediate action to rectify the situation by creating a clearer system for recording and tracking child protection concerns and contacting the local children's service. The school has a clear safeguarding policy which reflects the latest government guidance. All staff are aware of it and have received recent safeguarding training provided by the local authority, but it has not been implemented effectively. There is a designated safeguarding lead officer who has recently taken over the role and for whom enhanced safeguarding training is booked in the week after this inspection, but it has not yet taken place. A deputy safeguarding lead is to be trained at the same time.

In all other aspects, the school's provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is excellent. The ethos and culture focus strongly on nurturing each child. They are all well known to staff and the pupils themselves report that they feel safe and have a range of adults to whom they could turn with any concerns. Excellent attention is given to health and safety both on and off the school site. The school is clean and well maintained throughout. A sensible and practical approach is taken to assessing and managing risks, so that children realise potential dangers and know how to keep themselves and others safe. The school regularly and rigorously conducts a range of checks on the premises, equipment, minibuses, water quality and temperature. Scrutiny of accident records helps to eliminate hazards. Medical arrangements are good: all medicines are stored and recorded appropriately; almost all staff are trained to administer first aid. Arrangements for fire precautions are very good, regular fire drills are held and staff training is up to date.

The clear behaviour policy encourages and rewards good behaviour and sets out suitable sanctions when the boundaries are crossed. Pupils behave courteously and respect others. They are very well supervised throughout the school day. Through PSHCE, assemblies and discussions, pupils gain a good understanding of what

bullying is and the different forms it can take. They report that bullying is rare but have every confidence that their teachers would deal with any incidents promptly and effectively. Mobile telephones are not allowed in school and the school ensures that there are sensible restrictions placed on internet access. Nonetheless, pupils are made aware of the potential dangers online and the harmful impact of bullying through texts and social media. They learn how to keep fit and healthy and eat a balanced diet. The school canteen has recently received a five-star rating from the Environmental Health Authority, and the school has a gold star for healthy eating. Pupils' attendance is very good and above the national average. The school records attendance appropriately and monitors absence closely and the admission register fully meets requirements.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

No.

***What does the school need to do in order to comply with the regulations?***

*In order to comply with the Independent Schools' Standards Regulations 2014 the school should:*

- ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school (paragraph 7(a)).

**PART 4 - Suitability of the staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school takes very good care of pupils' safety by operating rigorous recruitment procedures which ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to have contact with children. Senior staff have undertaken safe recruitment training. The clear policy for recruiting and vetting staff is followed consistently. The single central register of staff appointments contains all the required information in the appropriate form and this is supported by information contained in well-ordered staff files.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**PART 5 - Suitability of the premises and accommodation**

The school occupies a large Victorian house with modern extensions and a newer building in which the canteen, multi-purpose hall, music room and Kindergarten classes are located. Inside, every inch of space has been used to create a pleasant learning environment which supports the curriculum at every stage. The school benefits from specialist teaching areas for art, French, music and other subjects which are well organised and benefit from attractive and informative displays. The science laboratory is well designed and equipped to enable pupils from Year 3 onwards to learn from practical experiments. There is an attractive small library for reading and research in the heart of the school which supports the strong emphasis on pupils' literacy.

Outdoor space is limited but best use has been made of it to create hard surface and 'tiger turf' areas used for PE and recreation. Older pupils are taken by minibus to nearby facilities which provide a high-quality environment for sports for both boys and girls. Excellent use has been made of the external terraces and verandas to make an under-cover area for outdoor learning by children in the Early Years

Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school premises and accommodation are clean and well maintained. Close attention is given to the pupils' health and safety at work and play, and they have good access to drinking water at all times.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **PART 6 - The quality of information for parents**

The school provides all the required, relevant information to parents, and it is available on the school's website. The school complied with all requests for information relevant to the inspection.

Parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses strongly endorsed the provision for their children, together with the quality and ease of communication with the school. They receive good quality reports every term and each class has regular parents' meetings at least once a term.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **PART 7 - The effectiveness of the school's complaints procedure**

The school's policy and procedures for handling complaints meet the requirements of the independent school standards in full. No complaints have been received in the last twelve months.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **SECTION C: ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT, AND MAINTENANCE OF THE ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

*This section is not a requirement of the Education Act 2002. The business organisation and management of the school were inspected by the Lay Inspector, who has written this section of the report.*

### **The quality of the organisation and management of the school**

St Mary's Henley offers education for pupils from Nursery until the end of Key Stage 2. It is generally very well run, with a small leadership team who work with their staff on a strongly collaborative basis. However, oversight has not always been effective. The school is part of the Cognita group and benefits from its support in terms of policy provision and quality assurance, guidance in such matters as compliance, and the on-site availability of ICT support from a Cognita schools' area facilitator.

The school's provision and care for its children were strongly endorsed by parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, as was the case in a recent questionnaire prepared by the school. Pupils themselves expressed their real pleasure at being part of the school, and at the support and guidance they receive. The school has a flat management structure where specific responsibilities and expectations are clearly defined. The behaviour of pupils is excellent, and that stems from the sense of nurture, both in and beyond the classroom.

Staff are fully engaged in all aspects of the school's life. The EYFS coordinator oversees not only the planning of after-school clubs, but also the development of the older pupils' extra-curricular opportunities. There is a strong sense of common purpose. The school office is highly effective in ensuring that the school runs well on a daily basis. The grounds and buildings are very well maintained, the kitchens recently received a five-star endorsement, and facilities are used to the full. There is a strong partnership between all parts of the school community.

### ***Could the organisation and management of the school be improved?***

- ensure full exercise of the oversight of all aspects of welfare.

## **PART D: EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **The overall quality and standards of the early years' provision**

The quality and standards of the early years provision are good overall with a significant number of particularly good and outstanding features in both the nursery class (rising three to rising four) and the Kindergarten (Reception year rising four to five). Children make particularly good progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The staff have high expectations which support the children's developing skills and positive attitudes towards learning. This ensures that the needs of the range of children attending are met effectively, including the needs of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children's personal and emotional development is outstanding. They feel safe and secure, and are happy. The requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare are extremely well met. Leadership and management are effective in evaluating practice and securing continuous improvement to improve children's life chances. Parents spoke very positively of the work of the school.

### **How well the early years' provision meets the range of needs of children who attend**

The educational programmes for children's learning are outstanding. They are strongly supported by the use of computer-based recording of assessments, which includes the use of photographs to show how children are learning and what they are achieving. This recording enables the staff to identify children's strengths and areas for development, and then to take action to address these. At times opportunities for extended exploratory and practical learning are less well developed than other activities. Both the Nursery and Kindergarten classes make a number of visits to places of local interest including the library, an arboretum, the market and the Earth Trust, where once a term a visit enables the children to have a taste of forest school work. The staff have high expectations of the children and are able to enthuse, engage and motivate them. This was evident in an outstanding French lesson where well-paced activities maintained good levels of challenge to which the children responded well in following instructions and in naming parts of the body. Discussion during a visit by a former member of staff with her seven-month-old baby to the Kindergarten class was extremely skilfully developed by the teacher, including a discussion as to why certain foods are appropriate for a baby and others are not. The children showed a good knowledge of healthy eating and were fascinated by comments on baby development and care. Practitioners work well with parents to settle the children into school and to inform parents of their child's development and learning in school, as well as how this can be supported at home. Parents can contribute to the computer-based assessments by providing photographic and other evidence for their child's records. The 'tea club' provides after-school support for children from the Nursery class to Year 6. This useful provision is staffed by members of the school staff and a healthy snack is provided.

### **The contribution of early years' provision to children's well being**

The good practice ensures that all children are able to form appropriate bonds and secure emotional attachments with the staff. There is a well-developed key person system in both the Nursery and the Kindergarten. The children are happy. They enjoy what they are doing, learn to behave well, use their imagination and talk and play with adults and each other. Where individual children have yet to acquire fully

the social skills of working in a group, contributing to group discussions and listening to others, the staff deal with their behaviour extremely well. The staff encourage the children to understand the importance of physical exercise and a healthy diet as well as to manage their own hygiene and personal needs. The transition from the Nursery into Kindergarten is seamless and that into Year 1 is also good. This is helped by specialist staff working with the children for specific lessons and by the contribution made by the school's Head of Learning Support to the work of the EYFS, including promoting links with parents.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The leadership and management are good and promote the learning and development requirements of the EYFS effectively. The safeguarding and welfare requirements are met at all times and are consistently implemented. This creates an environment which is welcoming, safe and stimulating. Recent work to promote team working in the Nursery has been extremely effective: staff support one another very well to sustain the continuity of the children's experiences. Staff have developed excellent empathy with one another so that they are able to take over from each other to develop activities to meet the needs of different children smoothly and without disruption. Self-evaluation is good: it informs the EYFS priorities and sets targets for improvement. Performance management is in place and supports the continuous professional development (CPD) of staff, although aspects such as the implications of the EYFS revised requirements from September 2014 have not yet been addressed by detailed CPD. Partnerships with parents are effective, as are those with external agencies when help is needed to secure appropriate interventions for children to receive the support they need.

#### ***Does the school meet the mandatory requirements?***

Yes.

#### ***What does the school need to do in order to fully meet the requirements?***

*The school fully meets the requirements.*

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools belonging to the Cognita Group which are not members of the ISC and its constituent associations. Further copies of the report are available from the School Inspection Service website: [www.schoolinspectionservice.co.uk](http://www.schoolinspectionservice.co.uk)