



ST MICHAEL'S
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INSPECTION REPORT

WELCOME

I am delighted to share with you the Independent Schools Inspectorate Report on St Michael's Preparatory School.

The new 'British Schools Overseas' inspection framework focuses on three key areas: Pupil Achievement, Personal Development and Regulatory Compliance.

We welcomed a team of 4 inspectors who were able to observe in particular the compliance, academic and pastoral aspects of St Michael's. They met pupils, staff, parents and Governors, spent time in lessons, reviewed extensive documentation and requested that parents and pupils complete a pre-inspection questionnaire.

Throughout the four day inspection, there was an amazing atmosphere of mutual support and teamwork within the school. My thanks to everyone who spoke with the Inspectors or gave up their time to complete a survey or collate documentation.

I am thrilled to report that the inspectors found both the quality of pupils' academic and other achievements, as well as the quality of their personal development to be 'excellent'. This is the highest grading that can be awarded.

The key themes that emerge throughout the Inspection Report include excellent progress, highly developed creativity, excellent communication, high levels of participation and achievement, outstandingly positive attitudes to work and learning, high expectations and highly productive relationships between pupils and staff.

With regards to the personal development, the inspectors recognised a high degree of self-confidence and self-knowledge. They noted the ability to make informed decisions, their strong sense of right and wrong, the capacity to think deeply and express a considered opinion, exemplary manners and an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

During the course of the Compliance Inspection, the Inspectors thoroughly assessed us against the stringent regulatory requirements of independent schools, set by the Department of Education. I am very pleased to report that St Michael's Preparatory School is fully compliant in all areas.

I am delighted that the Inspectors recognised and endorsed our school community and learning environment at St Michael's. This is a report that everyone should feel proud of and it is my privilege to share it with you.



Mike Rees

Head Teacher - St Michael's School

CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	7
About the school	7
What the school seeks to do	7
About the pupils	7
2. INSPECTION OF STANDARDS FOR BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS	9
Preface	9
Key Findings	9
PART 1 - Quality of education provided	10
PART 2 - Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils	12
PART 3 - Welfare, health and safety of pupils	12
PART 4 - Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors	14
PART 5 - Premises of and accomodation at schools	14
PART 6 - Provision of information	14
PART 7 - Manner in which complaints are handled	15
PART 8 - Quality of leadership in management of schools	15
3. INSPECTION OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY	17
Preface	17
Key findings	17
Recommendations	18
The quality of pupils' learning and achievements	18
The quality of pupils' personal development	23
4. INSPECTION EVIDENCE	28

SCHOOL DETAILS

School	St Michael's Preparatory School																		
Address	La Rue de la Hougette Five Oaks St Saviour Jersey JE2 7UG																		
Telephone Number	+44(0)1534 856904																		
Email Address	office@stmichaels.je																		
Headmaster	Mr Mike Rees																		
Chair of Governors	Mr Nicholas Taylor																		
Age Range	3 to 14																		
Number of Pupils on Roll	<table><tr><td>311</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Boys</td><td>161</td><td>Girls</td><td>150</td></tr><tr><td>EYFS</td><td>50</td><td>Juniors</td><td>207</td></tr><tr><td>Seniors</td><td>54</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			311				Boys	161	Girls	150	EYFS	50	Juniors	207	Seniors	54		
311																			
Boys	161	Girls	150																
EYFS	50	Juniors	207																
Seniors	54																		
Inspection Dates	10th to 13th October 2017																		



I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About the school

- I. 1 St Michael's is a co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of 3 and 14 years. It opened as a boys' school in St Helier in 1949, added a pre-preparatory department in 1951 and moved to its current site in a rural location close to St Helier in 1952. St Michael's is the only school on Jersey to prepare pupils for Common Entrance and senior school scholarships in the United Kingdom (UK). Following a move to co-education in 1968, a charitable trust was formed to administer the school in 1974. When boarding ceased in 1992, a Nursery was established. A new charitable trust was formed in 2002 and, under new governance, adjoining property and several surrounding fields were acquired to accommodate increasing numbers. The headmaster has been in post since 2014.

What the school seeks to do

- I. 2 The school places strong emphasis on encouraging each individual to do a little better than anyone thought possible across a wide variety of academic, creative and sporting activities, and to enable each to discover, through experience, their hidden talents and preferences. Particular priority is given to developing high standards of care, courtesy and consideration.

About the Pupils

- I. 3 Pupils come mainly from business and professional backgrounds, and a very small minority do not have European ethnicity. Nationally standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the school is above UK averages. The school has identified 48 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 43 receive specialist learning support for dyslexia, social, communication, processing and other difficulties. Two pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) receive additional support. The school has identified a tenth of its pupil population in Years 5 to 8 as more able and arranges additional activities within and outside of the curriculum to provide them with further challenge.



2. INSPECTION OF STANDARDS FOR BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting independent schools in England and overseas.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the Standards for British Schools Overseas. It also takes account, where relevant, of compliance with any local requirements.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include: an exhaustive health and safety audit; an indepth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures; an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment or company law; in-depth consideration of the extent to which the school meets the requirements of local law and custom.

Headline judgements against the Standards for British Schools Overseas indicate that the Standards have been 'met' or 'not met' for accreditation.

Accreditation as a British school overseas lasts for three years. This is the school's first inspection.

"Children in the Nursery quickly become confident and resourceful."

Key Findings

- 2.1 The school meets all the Standards for British Schools Overseas and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART I - Quality of education provided

2.2 The Standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.

- 2.3 Pupils follow a curriculum which is closely aligned to that of the UK. Children in Nursery and Reception follow a programme approved by the States of Jersey which is similar to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in England, and the programme for pupils from Years 1 to 5 is based on the UK National Curriculum. Older pupils follow the Common Entrance syllabus, taught mainly by specialist teachers, and are also prepared for scholarships to senior schools in England. The curriculum is broadened by additional provision for games, swimming, and the creative and performing arts, as well as the introduction of French in Year 3, and Latin and Spanish from Year 5. The educational programme is supported by appropriate schemes of work which cover all the required areas.
-

“Pupils with SEND do particularly well according to their abilities as a result of the excellent specialist teaching that they receive in small groups.”

- 2.4 The school provides all pupils with the opportunity to learn and make progress. Most pupils speak English, but support is provided to enable any who have EAL to reach a good standard of English. The school makes suitable provision to identify and support pupils with SEND, both through work tailored to their needs in class and small-group or individual support. Older pupils who have been identified as the most able in the school's population are offered enrichment activities using resources from a British charity for able children, as well as more challenging class work. The oldest pupils are introduced to potential careers in an enrichment week which includes workshops, visits and visiting speakers. The curriculum is extended and enriched by a suitable programme of extra-curricular activities which take place before school, at lunchtime and when lessons finish. For older pupils, these are compulsory.

“The teachers’ comprehensive knowledge of the requirements of 13+ and scholarship entrance is a strong factor in their success.”

2. 5 Pupils make good progress due to effective teaching which is systematically organised and supported by an appropriate range of resources. Behaviour in lessons is conducive to effective learning due to teaching which encompasses strong subject knowledge, excites pupils’ interest and generally utilises appropriate methods. The school has a suitable framework to assess pupils’ performance and to track their progress. Teachers use information from this to plan work which takes into account the individual needs of their pupils.
2. 6 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils’ learning and achievements and the contribution that the curriculum and teaching make to these outcomes.

“Specialist teaching in both sports and the creative arts and performing arts develops skills at a higher level and enables pupils to attain well.”

PART 2 - Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

2. 7 The Standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.

2. 8 The pupils' personal development is promoted by the school's ethos which places the promotion of British values at its heart. Pupils are enabled to develop their self-knowledge and self-confidence through speaking and performance opportunities and regular affirmation of their successes, such as in assembly. Pupils develop the ability to distinguish right from wrong through talks in assembly, discussions in subjects such as PSHE and their adherence to the school's behavioural code. Their understanding of the law and government is promoted through activities and visits, as part of the Jersey citizenship programme, which enable them to compare and contrast Jersey with England and also teach them about Jersey's historical links with England. Pupils understand that moral values are the same in Jersey as in England. Older pupils are given opportunities to exercise responsibility as prefects, and pupils are involved in choosing the charities they would like to support. The personal, social and health education programme (PSHE), together with that for religious education (RE), promotes pupils' knowledge and understanding of British values and enables them to develop a suitable understanding of a range of faiths and cultures.
2. 9 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the quality of the pupils' personal development and the factors which contribute to their development.

PART 3 - Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2. 10 The Standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 1-6] are met.

2. 11 The school makes suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means which pay regard to both local and UK statutory requirements. The safeguarding and related policies are up to date and are implemented effectively. All staff, including the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), are appropriately trained at a level commensurate with their responsibilities, and the staff receive regular safeguarding updates. The school maintains effective links with Jersey Children's Services and its multi-agency support teams. A governor has been suitably trained to monitor the school's procedures at governance level and the full governing body undertakes an annual review of safeguarding. The school keeps suitable records of staff training as well as of children of concern. Pupils state that they feel safe in school.

2. 12 The school has an appropriate policy to promote good behaviour. Guidance is provided to staff and there is a suitable system of celebrating success as well as an escalating range of sanctions when necessary. Incidents and sanctions are carefully recorded to enable senior staff to monitor both behavioural trends and individual pupils' behaviour. The school's procedures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, and its response to any incidents, are clearly set out in its policy, which is implemented effectively. The awareness of staff is raised through regular training which includes visits from British child protection charities. Staff use assemblies, PSHE and form time to teach pupils about bullying. Pupils assert that there is little bullying in school and are confident that should they witness it or be a victim, staff are approachable and will immediately address it.
2. 13 The school's arrangements for health and safety conform with Jersey legislation. Records of the required maintenance of plant and equipment, such as electrical installations, portable appliances, gas and water, confirm regular checking and action to address defects. Measures to prevent fire conform with UK requirements and the school has addressed each recommendation of its recent externally conducted fire risk assessment. Hazardous and flammable materials are securely stored and firefighting equipment and evacuation routes are routinely checked. The school carries out regular fire drills so pupils know what to do should the fire alarm sound. The school's approach to risk assessment is informed by a suitable policy. Staff receive appropriate guidance in carrying out risk assessments, which are reviewed annually or as necessary. A comprehensive library of risk assessments is maintained, for the site, on-site activities and trips and visits, both on Jersey and elsewhere.

“Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate excellent standards
of communication and literacy.”

2. 14 The school's first-aid procedures are supervised by a member of staff who is a qualified nurse. Many staff are also trained in first aid, including all EYFS staff who have paediatric first aid certification, so that there is always first aid available both on site and on trips. Arrangements to administer prescribed medication are suitable, and accidents correctly recorded. Pupils with ongoing medical conditions have health care plans, of which all staff are made aware. Pupils are properly supervised at break times and confirm that they can always readily locate a member of staff. The admission register is suitably maintained and daily registration conforms with local requirements.

PART 4 - Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

- 2. 15 The Standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**
2. 16 All the school's staff and governors have been fully checked to ensure their suitability. These checks include prohibition, barred list and disqualification, criminal records and checks in any overseas country they have lived. All checks are suitably recorded on a central register of all staff and governors.

PART 5 - Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2. 17 The Standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**
2. 18 Suitable toilet, showering and changing facilities are provided for pupils and maintained in a clean condition. The school provides appropriate accommodation for the short-term care of ill or injured pupils. The buildings and site are maintained in good condition, and acoustics and lighting are suitable. The school's provision for water meets the environmental recommendations of the States of Jersey, and drinking water is clearly labelled. Pupils have suitable space outside for play, including hard surface areas and fields for physical education.

PART 6 - Provision of information

- 2. 19 The Standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] are met.**
2. 20 The school provides or makes available to parents a range of information, much of it on its website. This includes contact details of the school and its head, details about governors, the ethos of the school and its curriculum. The safeguarding policy and school's arrangements for admissions, the promotion of good behaviour, the prevention of bullying, health and safety, first aid, its complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, are published on the school's website. The destination schools of leavers and the provision for pupils with SEND or EAL are also made available. Parents receive a written report about their children's progress and attainment once or twice a year depending on the age of their children, supplemented by information at parents' evenings.

PART 7 - Manner in which complaints are handled

2. 21 The Standards relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] are met.

2. 22 The school has a suitable complaints procedure, published on its website, which allows for a three stage process. If concerns cannot be resolved on an informal basis, they are made in writing and considered formally by the headmaster. Further provision is made for a complaint to go to a hearing before a panel which includes a person independent of the school. Parents may attend and be accompanied if they wish. This panel may make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant and, where appropriate, to the person complained about. Each stage has clear timescales. Records of complaints are maintained confidentially and include the action taken by the school, whether or not a complaint has been successful. The school's logs indicate that concerns are invariably resolved at the informal stage.

PART 8 - Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2. 23 The Standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

2. 24 The governing body has sufficient breadth of experience and expertise to ensure that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Therefore, the Standards for British Schools Overseas are all met and the well-being of pupils is actively promoted.
2. 25 Section 3 of this report provides a more detailed evaluation of the impact of leadership and management on the pupils' learning, achievement and personal development.

“Pupils are confident users of technology across the curriculum due to the Governors' investment in ICT which allows ready availability of devices to support learning.”



3. INSPECTION OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

Preface

In addition to evaluating whether or not the school met all of the Standards for British schools overseas, this inspection evaluated the quality of the school's work, focusing on the two key outcomes for pupils:

- the quality of the pupils' learning and achievement;
- the quality of the pupils' personal development;

Headline judgements of educational quality include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'. In addition, the text identifies clearly the impact of the curriculum, teaching, pastoral care, leadership and management on outcomes for pupils.

As ISI inspections of British schools overseas are for the benefit of the pupils, inspections aim to:

- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain;
- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education.

The report refers to year groups in accordance with the system most commonly used in England.

Key Findings

- 3.1 **The quality of the pupils' learning and achievements is excellent.**
- 3.2 **The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.**

Recommendations

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes, the school might wish to consider:
- ensuring that teaching consistently allows pupils to engage actively with their learning by balancing teacher instruction with more varied pupil activities;
 - giving pupils across the school more regular responsibilities and a means of offering their ideas, so that they feel they are contributing even more to the school community.

The quality of the pupils' learning and achievements

- 3.4 **The quality of the pupils' learning and achievements is excellent.**
- 3.5 Children in the EYFS make rapid progress so that they leave Reception with an excellent level of development across the seven areas of learning, relative to their starting points. Results in nationally standardised tests for spelling, reading and mathematics are above age-related expectations for pupils in England. Over the last two years, the school has developed a rigorous system of using assessment results to track pupils' progress so any reduction in attainment or effort is promptly identified, shared with staff and action taken to address it. As a result of these measures and teaching which uses assessment information to plan suitable activities, pupils' progress overall is at least good, and often rapid. As a result of senior leaders' clear vision for continuous improvement, the school has also recently introduced a system whereby pupils undertake self-assessment and then compare and discuss with their teachers before their grades are issued. They are proving adept at doing this and, therefore, understand and relate to the targets they are working towards.

“The pupils' confidence and fluency reflect mathematics teaching which is exemplified throughout the school by dynamic, challenging and varied tasks, rapid pace of lessons and teachers' strong subject knowledge.”

- 3.6 The school's own data confirm that there is no substantial difference in the rate of progress between pupils of varying abilities and year groups, and this is confirmed by lesson observation, scrutiny of their written work and interviews with them. Pupils with SEND do particularly well according to their abilities as a result of the excellent specialist teaching

that they receive in small groups. This is particularly effective since each age group has a different specialist teacher so that their maturity and stage of development are taken into account when planning and implementing their support. Strategies initiated by learning support specialists are incorporated into class work so that activities are modified to match pupils' learning needs. As a result of these measures, by the time they are in Year 8, pupils in lower sets produce work of a similar standard to their peers in both English and mathematics. Pupils achieve well in gaining entrance to the schools of their choice, and many gain awards to senior schools on the UK mainland. The teachers' comprehensive knowledge of the requirements of I3+ and scholarship entrance is a strong factor in their success. The overwhelming majority of pupils and most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires agreed that the school enables pupils to learn and make good progress.

"Throughout the school, pupils acquire high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills across a broad curriculum, which challenges all abilities across a wide range of subjects."

3. 7 Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate excellent standards of communication and literacy. Children in the EYFS learn to speak confidently since they play in an environment which is rich in oral language, teachers model good vocabulary and constantly enter into conversation with them. They go on to develop effective early literacy skills as a result of well-planned and interesting learning activities. These enable them to develop phonetic skills employed in achieving phonetically plausible writing, and in learning to read. As they progress through the school, pupils become confident communicators able to debate, discuss and converse effectively both in and out of the classroom. They articulate their thoughts and views readily in paired and group discussions due to the provision of a supportive learning environment with excellent working relationships, where the ideas of all are valued and used as a basis for learning. Standards in reading and writing are high overall because thorough schemes of work form the basis for systematic and well-organised teaching. Pupils write capably for a wide range of creative and factual purposes. They express themselves efficiently and creatively in their extended writing, as has been recognised by their track record of success in the Commonwealth Essay Writing Competition. Pupils read confidently for enjoyment as well as to gain knowledge, through the priority given by the school to reading, which is supported by well-stocked libraries. Therefore, the oldest pupils read fluently and critically, such as to evaluate source texts in history or to critically analyse a poem in English. Pupils acquire capable standards in French and Spanish as a result of specialist teaching which fully engages their interest and enthusiasm.

3. 8 Mathematical skills are well-developed across the school. From Nursery, where children learn to count through much practical experience, younger pupils develop excellent computation skills. Their competence with a multi-sensory approach to arithmetic results in rapid progress, for example, when subtracting number bonds to 20. Secure foundations of numeracy are evident because pupils are given tasks adapted to their differing abilities. Pupils' progress is also facilitated by the availability and use of a wide variety of information and communication technology (ICT) and practical resources. Older pupils demonstrate rapid, accurate and confident recall of number bonds and facts, which enables them to make excellent progress in acquiring advanced skills such as prime factorisation. The pupils' confidence and fluency reflect mathematics teaching which is exemplified throughout the school by dynamic, challenging and varied tasks, rapid pace of lessons and teachers' strong subject knowledge. As a result of teachers' high expectations and instruction, pupils present their mathematical working methodically which aids accuracy. They apply their knowledge and skills successfully into other areas of learning, such as science when measuring temperature increases or calculating averages, and geography, when constructing bar graphs.
-

“Children in the EYFS make rapid progress so that they leave Reception with an excellent level of development across the seven areas of learning, relative to their starting points.”

3. 9 Pupils are confident users of technology across the curriculum due to the governors' investment in ICT which allows ready availability of devices to support learning. Devices are used effectively by teachers to make lessons more interesting and enjoyable, and by pupils, to aid their research and presentation. In the EYFS, children use tablet computers and interactive whiteboards confidently to promote their skills and wider learning. In Nursery, children confidently match shapes on tablets and in Reception where they extend their understanding of repeating patterns on the whiteboard. Younger pupils access multiplication facts independently by scanning matrix barcodes in their tablets. Across the school, pupils use ICT capably to undertake research for their topics. For example, as a result of investigating many different sunflower pictures, pupils were able to adopt similar techniques to create their own interpretations. Older pupils' geography projects were enhanced considerably as they annotated photographs they had taken during a field trip. Pupils who attend an ICT extra-curricular activity achieve extremely well in their coding skills due to teaching which displays excellent specialist knowledge which enables them to use software effectively.

3. 10 Throughout the school, pupils acquire high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills across a broad curriculum, which challenges all abilities across a wide range of subjects, and in which teaching is of a high standard overall. This is in accordance with the school's aim to encourage each individual to do better than was thought possible. Children in the EYFS develop excellent skills for learning across all areas of development since they are very well supported by adults who enter into their play and discoveries and who make sensitive judgments about when to intervene with questions or suggestions. The children's natural inquisitiveness is stimulated through the provision of a wealth of good-quality toys and equipment arranged to make a highly interesting and attractive learning environment. Following careful observation by staff, activities are meticulously planned, evaluated and adapted to ensure they are meeting the children's needs and interests. As they progress through the school, pupils' high standards are the result of well-organised teaching which often utilises crosscurricular links to enable them to transfer skills and knowledge. They invariably enjoy lessons because they are made interesting by competent teaching which exhibits strong subject knowledge and makes effective use of high-quality resources. Specialist teaching in both sports and the creative and performing arts develops skills at a higher level and enables the pupils to attain well.

“Pupils achieve success across a broad range of activities because they are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills and to discover and develop their interests and abilities in line with the school's aims.”

3. 11 As they grow older, pupils develop and refine the skills they need to work independently. This is effectively supported by the inclusion of study skills as a regular part of prep for older pupils. From an early age where their natural inclination is to investigate and draw conclusions, pupils develop the ability to explain their reasoning. They are highly efficient at drawing on existing knowledge to make estimations and predictions, such as in science. Pupils develop efficient memory skills because they are given frequent opportunities to learn songs and, when older, their lines for productions. They are usually given the time to analyse material in order to refine their outcomes and ideas and are, therefore, willing to offer a hypothesis, since staff are approachable and encourage them to take risks. Older pupils use source materials effectively, such as when extending their knowledge of the Black Death in history, and think at a deeper level as a result of teachers' challenging questioning. They are effective in analysing texts and synthesising information, for example, when considering

the moral teachings of the Bible in RE or when analysing a poem in English. Occasionally, pupils lose focus and, therefore, make slower progress due to less successful teaching which reduces their ability to think deeply and show initiative in their learning. Characteristically, such teaching does not allow them to engage in active learning because the teacher spends too long talking, asks closed questions or provides tasks which offer insufficient challenge.

3. 12 Pupils achieve success across a broad range of activities because they are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills and to discover and develop their interests and abilities in line with the school's aims. Two-thirds play a musical instrument and they consistently attain high standards in external music examinations. Musical pupils enjoy the many opportunities they are given to perform in the wide range of ensembles and choirs that take place in school. They show well developed musical competencies, for example singing tunelessly in two or three parts in junior choir; and reading from notation capably to play well together in orchestras. Pupils of all ages take part regularly in productions such as the recent performance of Tom Sawyer in St Helier Arts Centre and gain awards at the Jersey music, French, Spanish and art Eisteddfods. During the inspection, several pupils received the news that they had gained gold, silver and bronze awards for their essays entitled 'A toolbox for Peace' in the Commonwealth Essay Competition. Pupils are also successful in a range of sports. Last year, older girls won their hockey, netball and rounders leagues, and the boys' first rugby team was unbeaten and did well in the IAPS small schools' rugby sevens tournament. Increasing numbers of girls and boys represent the island for hockey, netball, football, rugby, cricket and athletics. These successes are due to specialist coaching and access to a variety of sports.

"Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate their respect for rules
by their generally excellent behaviour."

3. 13 Throughout the school, most pupils demonstrate a very strong work ethic. This means that they settle to work quickly and maintain focus. They are willing to persevere in order to present their work well and are enthusiastic, responding to challenges with initiative and an 'I can do' attitude. Pupils are exceptionally willing to contribute and share their ideas and, as a result, they work well together and are respectful and supportive of one another's efforts. Activities which are planned to give scope both for independence and collaborative working, and clear and consistent boundaries for classroom behaviour, are strong factors contributing to pupils' positive approach to learning.

3. 14 The pupils' successes are promoted and sustained through excellent and committed leadership and management. Senior leaders and the governors have high expectations for pupils and monitor their work very effectively, by observing lessons and scrutinising books regularly, so that consistency is assured. Standards are driven forward further through effective arrangements for staff appraisal, the first cycle of which has recently been completed. Governors who live in Jersey play a full role in attending functions and meeting staff. These measures ensure that staff receive both support and challenge. The management structure of the school enables effective delegation of responsibilities for its sections so specific educational and pastoral issues relating to the various age groups are addressed effectively.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

3. 15 **The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.**

3. 16 Pupils display well-developed personal values and skills appropriate to their ages since the leadership places a high priority on ensuring that the whole school environment plays a key role in supporting the well-being of the pupils. Through careful deliberation, senior leaders have gained a clear understanding of areas which are working well and those which require improvement. To this end, the leadership team has recently been extended to include a senior member of staff with responsibility for monitoring and coordinating pastoral care. This focus has initiated a coordinated PSHE programme throughout the school and weekly meetings where staff can share concerns about pupils and agree a united approach to support them. As a result of scrupulous attention to pastoral care, pupils are confident they are well looked after and state that they have someone to speak to should they face difficulties. They also demonstrate a clear understanding of topics relating to their personal well-being and living in a community.

“Throughout the school, pupils acquire high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills across a broad curriculum, which challenges all abilities across a wide range of subjects.”

3. 17 Children in the Nursery quickly become confident and resourceful. They feel safe and secure because staff have created a friendly environment and established regular routines. Staff in the early years use professional judgement about when to intervene in play wisely. At this early stage of the children's education, warm and trusting relationships between teachers

and children are built, which persist throughout the school. As they grow older, pupils demonstrate self-discipline and strong selfawareness with a developing capacity for resilience so that they are unafraid of failure, recognising it is part of the learning process. Whilst many pupils strive to be self-reliant, they are confident they may obtain support when necessary. Pupils understand what they need to do to improve due to the consistent implementation of the school's marking policy and encouragement by teachers to selfassess their work. They are self-confident as a result of the school's nurturing environment where emphasis is placed on what they can, rather than cannot do. In the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of pupils agreed that they are making good progress in their work. The leadership has a clear shared vision for pastoral care which has supported initiatives such as the introduction of mindfulness, which is valued and supported by both pupils and staff. Early indicators of success are that the pupils are relaxed, aware of their emotions, and ready to learn. An atmosphere of calm purposefulness pervades the school. Pupils who are approaching the end of their time at the school told inspectors they are highly confident that they are being well prepared for the next stage in their education. Inspection evidence agrees with this view.

“Pupils are also successful in a range of sports.

These successes are due to specialist coaching and access to a variety of sports.”

- 3. 18 Children in the EYFS choose resources and games independently in rooms that are well organised for self-selection. They make confident choices about their learning since staff respond to their interests, such as by changing the direction of planned topics. In Nursery, children show great resourcefulness in helping to set up and tidy away activities. Many older pupils think beyond the superficial and make well-reasoned conclusions after weighing up arguments in lessons such as RE, where they are encouraged to justify their opinions in mini-debates on topics such as Education is a human right. In many lessons, such as one on food chains observed for younger pupils, pupils make confident decisions after evaluating information. However, on occasion, opportunities for independent decision making are limited, such as when the style of teaching does not encourage pupils to think carefully for themselves and explore choices.
- 3. 19 Pupils assert that assembly themes encourage them to reflect on core values and provide an important opportunity to stimulate discussion in form time, RE or PSHE. Children in the EYFS are curious about the natural world, and their interest is promoted very successfully through frequent opportunities to ask questions and discuss possible explanations.

This was particularly evident during the inspection when a newt found in the school's grounds was tenderly cared for by Nursery children, stimulating much fascination and discussion. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of the major world religions which are introduced in RE. As they grow older, they consider the moral messages found in sacred texts and senior pupils demonstrate an understanding of the place of religion in society, such as the influence of the church in medieval England, gained through cross-curricular links between subjects such as history and RE. Pupils show a mature appreciation for the non-material aspects of life, understanding qualities such as compassion, kindness and loyalty. In an assembly observed during the inspection, they participated respectfully in a prayer and a joyous rendition of a hymn, as well as reflecting on the message of making the right choices. Older pupils state that they appreciate the space in the playground set aside for quiet and say teachers are sensitive as to whether they want to talk or be left alone. In the questionnaires, almost all the parents agreed that the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and views.

“Pupils display well-developed personal values and skills appropriate to their ages since the leadership places a high priority on ensuring that the whole school environment plays a key role in supporting the well-being of the pupils.”

3. 20 Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate their respect for rules by their generally excellent behaviour. This is in full accordance with the school's aims and ethos. From an early age, they are involved in discussing and agreeing values and rules and encouraged to refer back to them, so that sharing and kindness are embedded in their personal development. Pupils across the school are notably co-operative and exhibit exemplary manners. They are willing to take responsibility for their own behaviour and told inspectors that a reprimand is normally enough to make them stop and think about their actions. Through the regular discussion of ethical issues, which are linked to their studies such as in English and history, they demonstrate a mature understanding of the difference between right and wrong and that actions have consequences. Pupils exhibit the capacity to think deeply and express a considered opinion because most teaching provides many opportunities for critical thinking and discussion.
-

“Throughout the school, most pupils demonstrate a very strong work ethic.”

3. 21 Pupils across the school show well-developed social skills. In the EYFS, much work and play is collaborative and children learn to value teamwork through praise from staff who model desired cooperative behaviour. Inspection evidence from interviews with pupils, talking to a group of parents and observation, confirms that pupils of all ages are very happy to be at school and from an early age keen to work with each other to achieve successful outcomes. Older pupils say they enjoy the teamworking tasks they are given in activity weeks after exams. They work well as a team to solve problems in many lessons, and house competitions provide them with useful opportunities to co-operate with one another to achieve a desired outcome. Pupils demonstrate a real sense of fair play and sensitivity towards others and state that they would not intentionally hurt anyone. Older pupils assert maturely that they consider it a privilege to help to look after younger pupils because the atmosphere in school is one of inclusivity and family.
3. 22 Pupils take their positions of responsibility seriously and say that the house captains and prefects fulfil a useful role and are kind and fair. Children in the EYFS quickly become accustomed to carrying out small tasks; for example, they help to tidy up, take responsibility for signing themselves in, help to get snacks and change their reading books. Pupils across the school are given jobs within class. The oldest pupils read to children in Reception, show prospective parents around on open days and act as ushers at school performances. Pupils are immensely proud of their school and have many ideas about how it could be further improved. A minority of pupils in the questionnaire did not agree that they have sufficient opportunities to take responsibility and a small minority of pupils did not agree that the school listens and responds to their views. Whilst there are responsibilities for the oldest pupils, younger pupils have more limited opportunities to contribute. Pupils may informally share their ideas with staff, such as when they sit with them at lunchtime, but there is no forum for pupils of varying ages to seek and represent the suggestions of their peers, to debate them and to receive feedback from senior leaders. Pupils contribute to the local community by taking part in local festivals and singing at nursing homes. They are proud of their efforts to support charities such as bringing in tins of food for the homeless in Jersey, filling shoe boxes for Romania and manning stalls for the school's major fund-raising effort, the Christmas Sale.

“As they progress through the school, pupils’ high standards are the result of well-organised teaching which often utilises crosscurricular links to enable them to transfer skills and knowledge.”

3. 23 While the pupils mainly come from similar cultural backgrounds, they demonstrate an appropriate knowledge and understanding of other cultural traditions and a positive attitude to diversity. Observation and acceptance of similarity and difference are encouraged as part of the children's natural curiosity in the EYFS and becomes engrained as part of the inclusive culture of the school. Pupils of all ages are aware of the values and traditions of other cultures, as well as their own, as a result of themed activity days such as an Indian cultural day, and well-resourced and planned topics for younger pupils such as on China and its festivals. Older pupils show an excellent understanding the impact of culture within history, comparing Roman and Greek cultures with that of the medieval western world. Younger pupils discuss their opinions about slavery, understanding that branding marked a lack of respect and tolerance within society at that point in history. As a result of the school's active promotion of diversity, which includes teaching about different countries and religions, and its pastoral and inclusive ethos, pupils embrace a harmonious acceptance of other faiths and cultures.
-

“Pupils have a good understanding of the role of exercise in maintaining physical and mental health, gained through PE and mindfulness sessions.”

3. 24 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. This is promoted through the establishment of familiar routines in the EYFS and a comprehensive PSHE programme throughout the school. Due to teaching in ICT about e-safety, they know how to protect themselves on the internet. They demonstrate a strong understanding of physical safety such as in science when using Bunsen burners, when crossing the lane to the sports hall and in the swimming pool. Pupils have a good understanding of the role of exercise in maintaining physical and mental health, gained through PE and mindfulness sessions. They are very aware of the merits of a balanced diet and show a willingness to try new foods. The provision of healthy and appetising school lunches, which are enjoyed by most pupils, further promotes the pupils' understanding of healthy eating. In the questionnaires, and confirmed in interviews, a very large majority of parents and pupils said they are happy with the pastoral support and guidance given.

4. INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and a group of governors including the chair, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick and injured 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 regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Jan Preece	Reporting inspector
Mr Mark Albini	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school, UK)
Mr Jonathan Eyles	Team inspector (Head of Primary, IAPS school, Czech Republic)
Mrs Alison Peterson	Team inspector (Deputy head, IAPS school, Kuwait)

“Musical pupils enjoy the many opportunities they are given to perform in the wide range of ensembles and choirs that take place in school”

Inspection and report carried out and published by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)



'The quality of the pupils'
learning and achievement is excellent'



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

St Michael's Preparatory School

La Rue de la Houguette, Five Oaks, St Saviour, Jersey, JE2 7UG
+44(0)1534 856904 | office@stmichaels.je | www.stmichaels.je

