



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BARLBOROUGH HALL SCHOOL INTERIM INSPECTION

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Barlborough Hall School

The senior college was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	Barlborough Hall School		
DfE Number	830/6015		
Registered Charity Number	230166		
Address	Barlborough Hall School Barlborough Park Barlborough Chesterfield Derbyshire S43 4TJ		
Telephone Number	01246 810511		
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Email Address			
Head	Mrs Wanda Parkinson		
Chair of Governors	Mr James Kelly		
Age Range	3 to 11		
Total Number of Pupils	237		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (121 boys; 116 girls)		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	50	5-11: 187
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	237	
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	16 Nov 2010 to 17 Nov 2010		

PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) schedule for INTERIM inspections*. The inspection is a two-day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in October 2006

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

*These Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

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

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31st August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Barlborough Hall School is an independent Jesuit Preparatory school for pupils age three to eleven. It is situated to the east of Chesterfield, in Derbyshire, in a Grade I listed building with extensive grounds and gardens. The school was established as a separate preparatory school in 1939 and within the last twelve years has undergone many changes. In 1998 it moved from being a boarding preparatory school educating pupils up to thirteen years of age, to becoming a more conventional primary school educating pupils up to eleven.
- 1.2 Within the last three years the school has become part of The Mount St Mary's Trust, whilst still maintaining its Jesuit character. The school is administered by a board of governors who also administer Mount St Mary's, which is the senior school to which the majority of pupils transfer automatically at the age of eleven. There are four trustees of the school, the chair of governors and three Jesuits, all appointed by The Society of the Order of Jesus; together with a significant number of other members, they make up the governing body of the school.
- 1.3 The school currently has on roll 237 pupils, with an even distribution between boys and girls. Fifty children, of whom twenty-four are part time, are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The overall ability profile of the school is above the national average, but with a wide spread of abilities in the school as a whole. Two of the pupils have a language other than English as their mother tongue, one of whom receives support for his English. Twenty-one pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), and one has a statement of special educational needs (SEN).
- 1.4 Pupils are drawn from the local community and the outlying rural area. Most come from professional or business backgrounds. The school's primary aim is to provide an environment to enable children to live by the principles based on Ignation ethos and in the tradition of the Catholic faith. This broad vision provides the basis for the aims which focus on the development of the whole child, providing pupils with opportunities for the growth of self-knowledge, spiritual awareness and an understanding of their own values and beliefs and those of others. The main motto of the school is 'men and women for others'. The school strives to offer a broad curriculum and an extensive range of extra-curricular activities

- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting.

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery
Reception	Reception

Pre-preparatory/Preparatory/Junior Department

School	NC name
Pre-prep 2	Year 1
Pre-prep 1	Year 2
Preparatory	Year 3
Elements 3	Year 4
Elements 2	Year 5
Elements 1	Year 6

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills

- 2.1 From the EYFS and throughout the school, pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills are excellent. The school's aims are fully fulfilled; exemplified by pupils who are confident, articulate, and motivated to do well by an excellent curriculum and outstanding teaching. Their achievement is rooted in their exemplary attitudes to learning. They work very well collaboratively and show great enjoyment and perseverance. Pupils' skills in literacy are extremely well developed. They are articulate and confident speakers and listen attentively to each other and their teachers. They display good reasoning skills, and write fluently and confidently in a variety of writing styles. They are often successful in sports competitions against similar schools, in drama performances and in musical festivals.
- 2.2 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national norm, but inspection judgments, including observed performance in relation to national targets, and the school's own standardised measures, is judged to be high in relation to age-related expectations. This supports the evidence of pupil's excellent learning and achievement in relation to their ability, which although wide ranging is above the national average. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make exceptional progress when compared with those of similar above average ability. By the time they leave Year 6, their level of attainment is exceptional.
- 2.3 The school's strongly inclusive approach to learning reflects its aims; and the requirements for pupils with SEN, LDD and English as an additional language (EAL) are met effectively. They are supported both in lessons and individually and individual educational plans, regularly reviewed, help pupils to make good progress. The more able pupils are equally well supported through a careful assessment system that tracks their progress and identifies their strengths and needs. Setting in mathematics and English allows more challenge for the most able pupils. However, formal individual target setting for pupils is not a regular practice.
- 2.4 The excellent, well-planned curriculum is enhanced by the introduction of French from Nursery, Latin from Year 5 and specialist subject teaching across all subjects from Year 3. The curriculum enables pupils to acquire a wide range of knowledge and skills and to become confident, articulate young people. Their experiences are extended by a range of extra-curricular activities providing opportunities for enjoyment, competition and excellence. Visits to places of educational interest, often linked to their topics, the residential trips offered in Years 5 and 6, and the strong links with the Mount St Mary's College, all contribute effectively to the pupils' learning experience.
- 2.5 The standard of teaching is excellent. Teachers have very good subject knowledge which they combine with an enthusiasm and communicate to the pupils. They are suitably pedantic, insisting on accuracy and precision when this is required, but they also encourage independent thought and creativity. The teachers create a highly encouraging atmosphere, offering the pupils regular verbal praise for their efforts. They know their pupils well and are able to tailor their questions to their abilities, making use of a variety of styles of questioning to maintain the pupils' interest. Both

within and between lessons activities are varied, with the result that the pupils are stimulated to think and make good progress.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.6 The personal development of the pupils is outstanding. The school is explicit in its hope that its pupils become 'men and women for others' and inspection findings confirm that it is very successful in this. Pupils have a genuine awareness of a non-material side to life which is linked to a sense of responsibility to others. The vision card which each child possesses is not a token gesture, but is a source of genuine reflection; and the celebration of the Mass is a significant event for both the Catholic pupils and those whose families may belong to other faith backgrounds or to none.
- 2.7 Pupils have a keen understanding of right and wrong; a sense which goes beyond a simple notion of rules and is grounded on a sense of mutual and collaborative responsibility. Formal sanctions are few and they are not required; indeed, it is significant that the only official disciplinary measure, a blank, was drawn up by pupils some time ago. These are perceived by pupils as being a serious measure, not least because they require the offender to explain his or her misdeed to the fellow members of their house. The inspectors witnessed many instances of pupils carrying out acts of simple, genuine courtesy in an unforced fashion.
- 2.8 The pupils have deep sense of being partners in a society of which they are but one member. In addition, they are highly socially confident, being able to interact with adults in a mature manner: they are, in a very positive sense, charming. Within school they can show kindness to others spontaneously. The school has made a deliberate decision to use informal and flexible strategies to promote caring relationships and this has allowed an air of genuine friendship to exist between the pupils. Pupils learn about and show respect for other faiths and cultures, and they demonstrate a good understanding of other practices and ways of life. The strong link between the school and the Jesuit mission school at Makumbi has given pupils a first-hand awareness of global issues and responsibilities. Charitable giving is keenly undertaken.
- 2.9 The school provides a safe and secure environment. Pastoral care is a strength of the school and pupils feel extremely safe and happy. Relationships are particularly warm and relaxed. All necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards have been diligently taken. Admission and attendance registers and procedures are efficiently maintained and organised. Pupils are supervised well throughout the day and during break and lunchtimes. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out for activities within the school and when taking pupils on educational visits. Suitable systems and policies are in place, including those for safeguarding, anti-bullying and promoting good behaviour.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.10 The school benefits from outstanding leadership and management, supported by governance of excellent quality enabling the school to make excellent progress in all areas. The governing body provides strong support and is committed to the aims and purposes of the school. The board benefits from a wide range of expertise and an efficient committee structure ensures that governors maintain an effective overview of the school. Governors are kept informed of the school's progress, receiving regular reports from the head teacher. Relationships between governors and staff are enhanced by their regular visits to the school. They provide the school leaders with much appreciated help, advice and where appropriate, challenge, while recognising their operational autonomy. They are fully aware of their responsibilities and determined through financial planning to ensure that the school's accommodation and human and material resources are of a high quality to meet pupils' educational needs. They fulfil their obligations for monitoring both health and safety and child protection, and specific governors have been allocated responsibility for these areas, ensuring that policies relating to them are regularly and properly reviewed. They recognise their responsibility for the school's compliance with regulatory and legal requirements, for example in relation to safer recruitment and the safeguarding of pupils. However, the school does not provide the appropriate number of washbasins to toilets.
- 2.11 Strong, efficient leadership and management have ensured that self-assessment, review, lesson observation and assessment of training needs have been effective in securing highly positive outcomes at every level. A strong sense of teamwork is evident. All required documentation is comprehensive and ready to hand, clear and well organised. Policies are effectively implemented and reflected in practice. The head teacher and her senior management team provide the school with clear educational direction. This is reflected in the achievement of the pupils, and their excellent personal and social skills.
- 2.12 Parental concerns, usually minor and few in number, are dealt with promptly, and records show they are handled sensitively and effectively. The clear complaints policy has not been invoked. The school receives a strong response to its regular parental surveys. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents had few concerns. They were overwhelmingly supportive of the education that their children receive. Their comments indicated that pupils enjoy coming to school and love to learn.

3. ACTION POINTS

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

3.1 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore must:

- provide the appropriate ratio of washbasins to toilets [Part 5, paragraph 23 (j), under Premises and accommodation)].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

3.2 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Implement more formal systems of individual target setting for pupils to inform them of what they are required to do to further improve.
2. In the EYFS, continue to seek ways of developing the learning opportunities in the outdoor environment.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

4.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.1 This outstanding setting achieves its aims. The children respond to this carefully planned and nurturing environment with a growing awareness of their own individual talents and interests and by making rapid progress in their learning. Exemplary partnerships between providers, parents and other agencies ensure that children's needs are met and their protection assured. Highly effective systems lead to improvement. Since the last inspection the setting has continued to monitor rigorously all aspects of its provision.

4.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.2 Leadership and management are outstanding, with exceptionally high aspirations for quality through ongoing improvement, establishing and communicating clear and relevant priorities. All records, policies and procedures necessary for the safe and efficient management of the setting are implemented rigorously. Risk assessments are comprehensive, fully detailed and reviewed regularly. Staff are suitably qualified and well deployed. Their professional development is encouraged through both external and internal training to ensure excellent outcomes for the children. Strong home-school links are swiftly established and parents' views considered and, where appropriate, acted upon. This inclusivity extends to advisory agencies, community members and visitors who all enrich the provision and improve outcomes for children. A proactive and sensitive approach to early intervention ensures that all children are fully supported and integrated. The consistency of policy implementation promotes equality very well.

4.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

4.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. Adults support pupils' learning and development extremely well. They listen carefully to them and respond with encouragement and praise, building on their responses and steering them towards clearer understanding. All children gain excellent first-hand experiences of the natural world through exploration of a woodland area. An immediate outside area affords space for climbing, running, bike-riding and tower building, as well as opportunities for reading, reflecting or simply sweeping the leaves. The high quality of lesson planning, based on careful assessment of individuals, stimulates children's interest and contributes to excellent standards. Teaching effectively balances core skills in numeracy and literacy with the development of children as individual learners, able to think and make connections for themselves. Children are extremely well supported by their key person, who promotes their welfare and guides them towards self-sufficiency.

4.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 4.4 Children's achievement is outstanding, most attaining the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning and many exceeding them. Through clearly focused teaching children practise essential skills in ICT and music, learn endeavour and perseverance in their weekly swimming lessons and enjoy the freedom to explore interests and concepts through practical activities in science, art and knowledge and understanding of the world. They learn to communicate fluently, enjoy books and express their thoughts and feelings with developing confidence. Children are inquisitive, enthusiastic and self-motivated. They are happy in group activities and socialise well, but are equally able to work independently with concentration. Behaviour is exemplary and consideration and respect are consistently shown to others. Children engage with adults and each other in an openly friendly and accepting way and the importance of the clear moral values embedded in the school ethos guides them towards an instinctive concern for and interest in others. Children show a strong understanding of the importance of exercise, healthy eating and personal safety.

Section 3 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed a sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and an additional governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Linda Donowho

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Reporting Inspector

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Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector