

# Lincoln Minster Preparatory School

## — Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Nursery Education

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## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The provider must give a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must give a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Day Care and Childminding (inspection) (England) Regulations 2005 No 2300 Regulations 5 and 6).

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding:* this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

*Good:* this aspect of the provision is strong

*Satisfactory:* this aspect of the provision is sound

*Inadequate:* this aspect of the provision is not good enough

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## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lincoln Minster School Pre-Preparatory Department is situated in the centre of the city of Lincoln and was opened in 1996. It is based in a converted Victorian house

and has extensive grounds. The Foundation Stage Unit and Nursery are housed in seven classrooms alongside the main building. There is an enclosed playground area available for outdoor play and children also have the use of the extended grounds and school hall for activities. The school serves the immediate locality and surrounding villages.

There are currently 98 children from two and a half to seven years on roll. This includes 17 funded three-year-olds and 20 funded four-year-olds. At present, the school supports a number of children who have special educational needs and all children speak English as their first language.

The unit is open during school term-times from 08.50 until 15.30.

One full-time and eight part-time staff work with the children. All staff have an appropriate early years qualification. The setting works closely with the local authority early years advisory service.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. All staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage. Activities are extremely well researched, planned and resourced, which ensures that children learn through interesting and varied experiences that they remember because they enjoy participating. Children have an eager disposition towards learning, and enthusiastically contribute to group discussions about the day ahead. Staff provide children with a descriptive account of the day so that children know what is going to happen and how this will be organised. Children's independence is greatly encouraged in this nursery as there is an expectation that they will take care of their own needs by getting their sun hats for themselves, help take resources outdoors and help tidy away at the end of the session. Children are helpful and work harmoniously as a group. They follow the excellent example of the staff who work exceptionally well together as a team. Staff know children well and meet their individual needs by providing each child with the necessary support or challenge they need to reach their full potential. Interaction is first class. They constantly observe what children are doing and the progress they are making. Cameras are used to keep records of children at play and at work, and these, coupled with the evaluations made on focus activities, are used effectively by staff to inform future planning. Comprehensive developmental records are maintained for each child and these clearly demonstrate the rapid progress children are making towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

The indoor and outdoor learning environment is organised extremely well so that children make continuous use of both environments throughout the day. All types of

indoor learning also takes place outdoors and this helps children to develop their skills as they apply ideas in different ways.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They are polite and helpful, and they listen and respond well to instruction. They concentrate and persevere with tasks, often helping each other when difficulties arise such as cutting a length of string. A couple of children working together work out that if the string is pulled tight it will be easier to cut. Children are confident, express their needs and take the initiative in a variety of situations. They relate well to each other and staff, and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging to a group. Children are motivated to learn and show a keen interest in the activities that are provided. Through topic work they are developing a strong awareness of self and those from different cultures and beliefs.

Children are developing extensive vocabulary and are extremely confident in their use of language. They learn the conventions of reading, respond enthusiastically to stories and develop awareness of story language through participation. Children link sounds to letters with ease and can read and write simple words. They make excellent use of the writing materials on offer and independently attempt writing for different purposes during role play.

Children count with ease and have a strong grasp of large numbers beyond ten. They recognise and write numbers and use their knowledge spontaneously during activities, conversations and general play situations. Children develop excellent problem solving skills and show a clear understanding of size, weight, measure and volume during a suitcase activity. They use language well to compare shape, position and size, for example, when discussing the need to take two suitcases if someone took one hundred tops with them on holiday.

Children learn about the natural world and living things as they have regular opportunities to explore the environment and use their senses to describe materials, design and construct. They develop an awareness of the local area and its features through planned trips into the community. They visit places of interest and develop a strong sense of belonging and partnership, as parents and members of their family join in with some events. They talk about experiences in their own lives and learn about the lives of others, including those from other cultures. Children develop a deep sense of respect as they learn to value the differences between people. They make excellent use of computers and technology and develop a strong understanding of how things work.

Children develop exceptional small hand skills and whole body movements. They are extremely skilful when using scissors and can cut intricate shapes with precision. Children roll large tyres with speed and manage to keep these upright as they negotiate around other children and equipment with ease. They have good spatial awareness and use all kinds of large and small equipment with confidence and co-ordination.

Children use their imaginations well during role play and free play activities. Tyres become a place to sit in, and string is used to move tyres and rotate discs along its

length. Children make towers and castles with bricks and invent stories about these as they chat to each other. Children explore colour, texture and shape through a wide range of creative activities that fully extend their knowledge and capabilities. Children enjoy singing, listening to music, and creating their own with a range of instruments. They learn songs well and are animated when they recite poetry or participate in action rhymes.

## — **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn right from wrong and how to behave with consideration towards each other. Children thrive in an environment that provides them with clear, consistent guidelines and from observing the excellent role modelling from the staff. They display their sense of self-discipline by taking turns, sharing and listening well to others. Children respond extremely well to staff instruction and are helpful and kind. They enjoy being involved with setting out equipment and volunteer to be helpers. The staff fully include children in this setting and ensure that they participate in everything on offer and are active contributors. Children show caring and concern for others when they make sure that children in their group have the things they need to complete tasks, such as left-handed scissors or sun hats. They are forming strong friendships with others as they ask to be in the same group as a particular friend. Children learn to value differences in others and develop an understanding of the wider world, cultures and beliefs. They recognise and can speak simple words from a range of countries and learn about festivals in addition to those on the Christian calendar.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are fully involved in their child's learning, and staff make an exceptional effort to ensure that parents' wishes are respected and are reflected in their teaching practice. Staff have formed strong relationships with parents and fully appreciate parents as their child's primary educator. Comprehensive records are maintained for each child and this enables parents to see the progress their child is making towards the early learning goals. They have extensive information about the curriculum and how this is delivered to children, and are regularly provided with photographs of their child at work and play. Staff welcome parents at all times and operate an open-door policy so that parents can visit the nursery to see their child's work or to discuss any issues that may arise. Photographs are stored on the computer and are frequently used to provide parents with a meaningful insight into the work that their child participates in throughout the year. They are fully informed of nursery and school events through the use of well-constructed newsletters and an information notice board. Parents are invited to special events such as picnics, poetry and singing recitals, and sports days. These are extremely well attended, which demonstrates a strong partnership, excellent inclusive practice and a deep commitment and dedication on behalf of the staff. In return parents clearly recognise and value the hard work and devotion that the staff have towards providing a stimulating and purposeful learning environment for their children.

## Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The leadership and management is outstanding. There is an established line management structure in place and all staff work exceptionally well together and successfully provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment for the children. Staff meet regularly to plan and organise the curriculum and to ensure that the quality of this is effectively monitored. Observations of teaching practice take place as part of a quality assurance scheme, and any training needs are identified and the appropriate support provided. Staff share their specialised knowledge and individual skills with each other and form a strong, committed staff team. All staff are highly qualified in early years education and regularly participate in training that further develops their existing skills. They are currently introducing the Early Years Foundation Stage and developing new systems for monitoring this. The staff in this setting are motivated and enthusiastic. They are completely dedicated and take their responsibilities towards children very seriously. They make very good use of local authority advisory staff and keep themselves well informed through current early years literature and contemporary practice.

## Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the point for consideration raised at the last inspection, each room has been equipped with a camera. Photographic evidence is regularly obtained of the work that children are participating in. Staff use this evidence extremely well as a tool to inform future planning. This ensures that children receive appropriate support and challenge in their learning.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

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