



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION  
BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL**

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## Berkhampstead School

Full Name of School	<b>Berkhampstead School</b>
DfE Number	<b>916/6038</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>325018</b>
Address	<b>Berkhampstead School Pittville Circus Road Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL52 2QA</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01242 523263</b>
Email Address	<b>office@berkhampsteadschool.co.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Richard Cross</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Rowena Hope</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>255</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (116 boys;139 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5            62    5-11:        193</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Helen Roddy-Watts</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>11 to 14 November 2014</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2010.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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 31 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 Education (DfE) 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, although inspectors 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.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed 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, 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 Bridget Windley	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Susan Hulmes	Team Inspector (Head of Learning Support, IAPS school)
Mrs Charlotte Johnston	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Miss Katy Morgan	Team Inspector (Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)
Mr Peter Rushforth	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Jane Morgan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Berkhampstead School is a co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of three and eleven. Founded in 1945 in a residential area of Cheltenham, the school has three distinct sections, comprising the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and the pre-preparatory and preparatory departments. The school operates as a charitable trust which is administered by a board of governors. Since the previous inspection the school has provided new information and communication (ICT) technology, a food technology room and a refurbished science laboratory. A newly-opened Day Nursery for children from three months to four years of age operates as a subsidiary of Berkhampstead School (Cheltenham) Trust Limited; it is run independently from the main school and was inspected separately.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, there were 255 pupils on roll, of whom 139 were girls and 116 boys. There were 62 children in the EYFS, with 28 of those attending part-time. In Years 1 and 2 there were 63 pupils and 130 in Years 3 to 6. The pupils come predominantly from Cheltenham, Gloucester and from villages in the Cotswolds and are from business and professional families. Almost all pupils are of white British ethnicity with a very small number coming from other nationalities and cultures.
- 1.3 Standardised tests taken by the older pupils indicate that the ability profile of the school is above the national average. No pupil speaks English as an additional language (EAL) or has a statement of special educational needs. Eleven pupils have been identified as needing a degree of learning support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and they all receive extra specialist help.
- 1.4 The school seeks to create a happy, caring and fun environment, which encourages effort and achievement. It strives to foster a genuine feeling of community based on strong family and Christian values. Great importance is placed on the growth of pupils' self-confidence, creative ability and their development of social skills.
- 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 in the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the quality of the pupils' achievements is excellent. Pupils of all abilities are highly successful in their learning and the school successfully meets its aim to encourage effort and achievement in academic work and in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils benefit from an excellent curriculum whose breadth and richness prepares them thoroughly for their senior schools. The EYFS provides many exciting opportunities although outdoor provision is not used to give maximum impact in all areas of learning. Pupils are confident and independent. All pupils benefit from excellent teaching. Marking is regular and positive although there is an inconsistent approach to providing guidance for improvement. From the EYFS onward, support for pupils with SEND is excellent and more able and talented pupils are offered suitably challenging tasks which enable high levels of achievement. Assessment is appropriate and used effectively to track the pupils' excellent progress and individual needs.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development throughout the school is excellent. It is supported by strong pastoral care. Incidents of bullying are rare and pupils feel safe and valued. Pupils develop extremely well spiritually and they have highly developed social and moral awareness. Pupils appreciate strongly how cultural diversity enriches life, which meets the recommendation from the previous inspection. Secure relationships are built on mutual trust and respect, within a caring environment. Pupils welcome opportunities to take on roles of responsibility and the care they show for one another is excellent. Their behaviour is exemplary. Almost all pupils indicated that they like being at the school and they praised their teachers and the opportunities to be independent.
- 2.3 Excellent governance ensures that the aims of the school are fulfilled efficiently. Pupils are well educated and the governors are committed to the success and development of the school. Leadership of the school is excellent and, together with the recently formed senior management team, has a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A detailed school development plan clearly sets out priorities for the future. Statutory responsibilities are fulfilled effectively. The regulatory failure identified in the previous report regarding information for the EYFS parents has been rectified, as have the recommendations that were given to strengthen structures for monitoring and evaluation, to improve pupils' computing skills and to plan for the needs of the most able children in the EYFS. Excellent links exist between parents and the school. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of parents confirmed that they are highly satisfied with the school.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure marking provides pupils with consistent guidance for improvement.
2. In the EYFS maximise the impact of the outdoor provision in all areas of learning.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning**

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, pupils are extremely well educated in accordance with the school's aims. They develop excellent understanding, knowledge and skills in many subjects and extra-curricular activities. Literacy skills are well developed; pupils listen to each other and their teachers with respect, and they are ready to express their views most articulately. They are keen to ask questions and are able to give considered and interesting answers. Pupils read with excellent comprehension, they write fluently and they converse confidently. In mathematics they are able to apply their skills and understanding successfully in a range of problems. Pupils show high levels of logical and independent thought in science and use ICT most skilfully to support their work. Extremely good creativity is evident from the high quality artwork produced and pupils are capable of working independently and using their initiative. From the time they start school children in the EYFS enjoy their learning, make significant progress and develop their skills most successfully. Children in Reception read with fluency and understanding, they can confidently manipulate numbers to ten and beyond and are able to describe the properties of three dimensional shapes. In the Kindergarten the younger children enjoy mark making, listen attentively to stories and are developing their ability to recognise words that rhyme.
- 3.3 Excellent achievement is celebrated in many other areas. Pupils regularly represent the school in local and national chess competitions, frequently winning first place in both team and individual events. In sport, pupils achieve highly in athletics and cricket, both at local and county level, individual county cricket honours have been awarded for three pupils in the last two years. In music pupils are regularly selected for national orchestras and choirs. Considerable success is also recorded in a variety of categories both as groups and individuals in the local performing arts festival. Pupils' excellent artwork has been displayed at a national art exhibition for preparatory schools.
- 3.4 Throughout the school pupils with SEND make rapid progress and achieve as well as their peers, as evidenced through their reading tests and assessment scores. More able pupils achieve highly in a wide range of extension activities including chess club, mathematics and science challenges and in various literacy competitions. Pupils with particular talents such as music and sport make excellent progress as a result of the school's wide range of provision for them.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from the observation of lessons, scrutiny of work, and discussions with pupils, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make a high rate of progress in relation to others of similar ability. Almost all Year 6 leavers secure places at their chosen senior school and pupils regularly achieve scholarships and places in selective maintained schools.
- 3.6 Pupils have highly positive attitudes to their work and to their involvement in activities. Pupils settle to work quickly, show excellent application and perseverance, and work collaboratively and independently. In the EYFS children are active learners, they are able to work independently and they show excellent

creativity. Opportunities for exploration and investigations ensure their reasoning skills are well developed and enable them to think critically. The school motto, 'perseverance wins through', is fulfilled throughout school.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision**

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 Throughout the school, the rich and varied curriculum and the exciting extra-curricular provision provides extremely effective coverage of all areas of learning. Consequently, pupils of all ages are able to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding they need to make rapid progress and realise their potential. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress due to the high level of support given by learning support staff. Within the EYFS the curriculum provides many exciting opportunities for learning, playing, exploring and problem solving, both in the prime and specific areas of learning. In responses to pre-inspection questionnaires an overwhelming majority of parents considered that the school offers an appropriate range of subjects.
- 3.9 The curriculum promotes challenge and experience and it is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. It includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum with the addition of Spanish. It is carefully planned and regularly reviewed. Subject specialist teaching in phonics, music, French and physical education which is introduced in the Kindergarten, helps to ensure that pupils experience a smooth transition between departments. In Year 3 and above all subjects are taught by specialists. Personal development is enabled through an excellent citizenship and well-being (CWB) programme. Topics are effectively integrated into the curriculum and cover a useful range. The daily sessions used for reading, SEND programmes and weekly additional mathematics sessions further enhance provision in English and mathematics. A carousel programme for the older pupils successfully provides greater breadth in the curriculum by rotating subjects such as design and technology, pottery, street dance and food technology. Music is a strength of the school. Within the EYFS, an appropriate balance of adult led and child initiated activities enhances the children's independence and promotes the development of their core skills. Planning for more able children is evident which meets successfully the recommendation from the previous inspection. Provision for outdoor learning is not used to maximum effect in all areas of learning; this has been given high priority on the school development plan.
- 3.10 Following the recommendation from the previous inspection to further enhance the use of computing, the school has increased considerably its provision of tablet computers and laptops throughout the school. These are used effectively, both in specific computing lessons and in other curriculum subjects and extra-curricular activities. The use of interactive whiteboards is further helping to integrate ICT into the curriculum by enabling pupils to use their computing skills in a range of subjects. In addition, valuable opportunities now exist for pupils to access work at home from school and vice versa. Pupils' learning is enriched through the opportunities to use the new and refurbished resources such as the science laboratory, art room and the food technology room. A range of exciting library books have been selected, with the involvement of the pupils, to interest and inspire them to read and enjoy reading. Sport is given high priority and of particular note is the extremely inclusive level of participation in matches in that every child represents the school at least once every two weeks.

- 3.11 A comprehensive programme of trips, visits, visitors to school and, for the older pupils, residential trips, further strengthen the curriculum. Pupils of all ages benefit from these and trips have included those to a medieval castle and a safari park. The excellent extra-curricular programme is both exciting and varied and broadens the pupils' creative and physical experiences. Clubs and activities flourish around interests such as chess, table war games, sport, art and music. Many exciting competitions, productions and concerts are organised.
- 3.12 Links with the local community include celebratory services at the nearby church; carol singing at a residential home and the use of local facilities for sports activities. Each year, the school council selects and raises funds for charities which operate within the close neighbourhood. The school also sponsors events at the local performing arts and science festivals, demonstrating the school's interest and strong commitment to links with the community.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.13 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.14 Throughout the school teaching demonstrates an excellent rapport between teachers and pupils. These strong relationships enable the pupils to make excellent progress. In the pre-inspection questionnaire the overwhelming majority of pupils stated that their teachers help them to learn and make progress. Teaching is creatively planned to motivate the pupils in their learning, enabling them to achieve high standards. Planning shows firm understanding of the pupils' needs and makes strong provision for pupils with SEND. Excellent guidance for these pupils is provided to teaching staff by members of the learning support department. Most planning also includes useful activities which include extended challenges for the more able. In the pre-preparatory department, plans are annotated daily and used to aid teaching. Teachers within the EYFS have a thorough understanding of the development of young children and plan effectively to meet their varying needs and interests, setting high expectations.
- 3.15 Excellent teaching successfully fosters interest and independence and includes a variety of teaching methods such as high level questioning. The most successful teaching is well paced and includes an extremely good balance between supported work and activities that offer pupils independent challenge. Lively and enthusiastic teaching involves and engages the pupils, encouraging high levels of creativity particularly in music and art. Frequently pupils work together in pairs or groups supporting and encouraging each other to try out different ideas. In an art lesson younger pupils were encouraged to be independent, they were praised for taking risks and at the end of the lesson they assessed each other's work to inspire their own learning. In a very small amount of less effective teaching, a lack of stimulus and pace fails to fully maintain the pupils' interests. In the EYFS, skilful questioning helps children to become independent in their thinking and to share their ideas. Through excellent role modelling, teaching enthuses and motivates the children to become active learners and explore the world in which they live.
- 3.16 Specialist teaching ensures that excellent subject knowledge is demonstrated in many subjects. The benefits of the school's investment in ICT were evident when pupils worked on the design of party invitations on tablet computers; others used interactive software to discuss safety and the use of appropriate language online. Teaching is well resourced, with a variety of visual material used to inspire pupils in their learning. Classrooms are organised well and many use colourful wall displays

which provide attractive environments for learning. Worksheets and textbooks are used appropriately where needed, and the homework that is set reinforces successfully the work covered in lessons.

- 3.17 Regular marking encourages pupils with rewards or bonuses along with supportive comments. However there is an inconsistency in marking across different subjects, with target setting and guidance for improvement not always provided consistently. Pupils are regularly assessed by the use of standardised tests in English and mathematics and through the school's own annual assessments. These results are carefully analysed and the data used to predict future attainment and identify and respond to the pupils' needs. In the EYFS staff are highly committed to providing stimulating experiences to support and challenge the children as to what they have learned about a topic. Teaching shows a thorough understanding of the development of young children and plans effectively to meet their varying needs and interests, setting high expectations. The needs of the more able children are successfully taken into account, which meets the recommendation of the previous inspection. Observations are used to inform assessments and to identify individual next stages in learning.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 The quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils develop as confident and self-aware individuals who have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave Berkhampstead. In the EYFS liaison between year groups within the school is extremely strong ensuring that children are well prepared for their move into the next stage of their education.
- 4.3 Pupils show excellent spiritual awareness. Christian values underpin the school and pupils attend services in the church, say grace both before and after lunch, and participate in hymns and prayers in assemblies. Prayer boxes around the school allow pupils to request a prayer to be said on their behalf for something they feel concerned about or are thankful for. Their awareness of non-material aspects of life is enhanced through involvement in music, art and drama as well as experiences such as observing butterflies hatch from a chrysalis and first shoots appearing after growing bulbs and seeds. Pupils nurture the development of good relationships as they reflect upon the meaning of life. Pupils are emotionally mature for their age and considerable empathy was shown by all pupils in assemblies and lessons as they remembered young soldiers leaving to go to war.
- 4.4 Pupils throughout the school have excellent moral understanding and they fully appreciate each other's differences. They respond well to being taught to 'do as you would be done by' from the outset and their behaviour is exemplary. A strong sense of right and wrong permeates the whole school. In EYFS the children show considerable maturity and understanding of the need to respect each other as they willingly share and take turns. Circle time and the CWB programme focus specifically on honesty, consideration and fairness. Older pupils learn successfully how to empower themselves against bullying, and empathise with why a bully may carry out certain actions.
- 4.5 The pupils' social awareness is strong. All pupils in Year 6 become monitors and rotate duties such as helping to supervise classes during wet breaks, assisting the younger pupils in chess clubs and taking charge of a notice board in the foyer of the preparatory department. Elected class representatives gather regularly at school council meetings to make suggestions for school improvements and charitable activities. A strong house system enhances the feeling of community within the school and pupils are keen to gain bonus points for both house and individual benefit. Pupils have a strong economic awareness and appreciate that some of their school council requests have a cost factor and cannot always be sanctioned. They have an awareness of others less fortunate than themselves and enthusiastically fill Christmas shoeboxes, collect food for the local food bank and raise money for children's charities. The pupils' awareness of ecological issues is enhanced by their respect for the environment; pupils spoke enthusiastically about the visit by a representative of the local water authority who explained waste water treatment.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural development is excellent and this has improved considerably to meet the recommendation of the previous inspection. Pupils have a strong understanding of British values as well as those of other cultures and faiths. They show very good understanding of Western European traditions. In the preparatory department visits to the local synagogue raise the pupils' awareness of

different faiths, as do their displays on Indian life, culture and traditions and their celebrations of the festival of Diwali. Older pupils learn life skills by visiting a centre where a representation of a police station and courtroom enables them to learn about British law and order.

#### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care**

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 From the Kindergarten onwards the school is highly successful in meeting its aims to provide a happy, caring, family environment. Regularly updated comprehensive anti-bullying, discipline and behaviour policies are implemented effectively. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are excellent. In the EYFS the key person system ensures that children develop excellent relationships and strong bonds with staff. They are confident in sharing their concerns as well as celebrating their success with them. The pupils emulate the excellent role models provided by staff and are supportive of each other. There is very effective communication between staff to ensure that support is readily available to meet the needs of all pupils.
- 4.9 An all-inclusive programme of sport and exercise during lessons, in the playgrounds, in the extra-curricular activities and sports competitions ensures that children have ample opportunity for exercise. Pupils understand the importance of healthy eating. The lunches are nutritious and younger pupils are encouraged to try all foods. The pupils' views are sought on the menus on offer. In the EYFS children's health and welfare are given a priority with great attention given to establishing hygiene routines and healthy lifestyles. Independence is encouraged at snack times when the children pour their own drinks and select their healthy food option. Close supervision by staff at lunchtime ensures that the children develop appropriate social skills and excellent table manners.
- 4.10 The school's systems to promote good behaviour and guard against bullying are highly effective. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of pupils indicated that the school does not deal well with cases of bullying. When interviewed pupils were clear that bullying behaviour is very rare and were confident that it would be dealt with quickly and competently were it to arise. Class teachers monitor any incidents of unkind or poor behaviour to identify emerging patterns or concerns. A number of systems are in place to reward positive behaviour, effort and attainment, which is celebrated in weekly assemblies. Children have a clear understanding of the rewards and sanctions systems, which operate fairly.
- 4.11 A small minority of pupils reported in the pre-inspection questionnaire that the school does not ask for, nor responds to their opinions. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The pupils' views are regularly sought and responded to in school council meetings. In interviews, pupils confirmed that responses are made in a timely manner. The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.

**4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare health and safety is excellent.
- 4.13 The well-being of all pupils is promoted most effectively and staff deployment ensures that children are appropriately supervised at all times. Standards of welfare health and safety have improved considerably since the previous inspection. Excellent child protection and staff recruitment arrangements have regard to official guidance and the safeguarding of pupils is given high priority. All staff, including non-teaching staff, have undergone the correct level of training which is regularly updated. The inter-agency training for those with a designated safeguarding role is carried out by the local safeguarding board, with which the school has strong relationships.
- 4.14 A comprehensive health and safety policy is monitored effectively. All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire exits are kept free of obstruction and their signage is clear throughout the school. Fire safety procedures are thorough and regular fire drills are held. Risk assessments are comprehensive, and daily checks ensure that any hazards or faulty equipment are removed or repaired without delay. Potential risks on the school site and on visits out of school are carefully assessed.
- 4.15 Procedures in case of accidents, and for the administration of first aid, are efficient. All members of staff are trained in first aid and an appropriate number within the EYFS have the required paediatric qualification. The school makes suitable arrangements for pupils who are unwell during the day. The school's arrangements take full account of pupils with SEND. Admission and attendance registers are completed accurately and stored appropriately.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The board of governors successfully administers and oversees the work of the school, helping to secure the school's aim of creating a learning environment that is stimulating, exciting and varied. Governors offer an extensive range of expertise and experience, and some are past or current parents who have strong links with the school. Through the full board meetings twice a term and an efficient committee structure, the governors take responsibility for the financial aspects of the school and the school's educational provision, as they oversee staffing, accommodation, resources and pastoral matters. Good induction procedures and regular training ensures they are conversant with current educational standards and developments.
- 5.3 The chair of governors is in regular contact with the head and provides valuable advice and support. Regular presentations from members of staff and a termly report from the leadership provide the governors with detailed information about the school's successes and enable them to offer challenge for the future. An annual governors' strategy day also enables members of the board to discuss long-term issues and plans. Governors have a clear vision for the school and work together with the leadership to set priorities and evaluate how planning to meet these is progressing. They are well informed about the school through attendance at special events, such as concerts and performances, and regular visits during the school day to meet staff and pupils both in the EYFS setting and the main school.
- 5.4 The governing body discharges its statutory duties for safeguarding and an annual review is formally undertaken. The regulatory failure identified in the previous inspection regarding reporting information to parents within the EYFS has been rectified, and the recommendations have been met. A designated governor takes specific responsibility for the EYFS and attends appropriate training for this role. Health and safety issues are appropriately monitored through the designated committee and a competent person assists the board in these matters. Oversight of regulatory compliance is effective.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are highly successful in achieving and promoting the aims of the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection and indicates the excellent progress made in both the main school and the EYFS setting. The leadership works with energy and enthusiasm to give strong educational direction that focuses on the needs of each pupil. A new management structure has been introduced since the previous inspection. Staffing for SEND has also been effectively restructured to support and complement in-class teaching. Whilst these changes are proving highly successful, a few of these roles are still evolving and effective oversight in a small number of areas is not yet fully established.

- 5.7 Highly effective procedures and all requisite policies are implemented effectively, including those that ensure the welfare, health and safeguarding of pupils and these are in line with regulatory requirements. The central register of appointments indicates that all staff have had the appropriate recruitment checks. Health and safety matters and site maintenance are efficiently overseen. Staff training, which is regularly updated, provides opportunities for individual professional development as well as for liaison across all the school age groups and departments. Training ensures that all staff receive appropriate guidance in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Within the EYFS, regular supervisory meetings provide coaching opportunities and also a time for staff to reflect on their practice, discuss children and identify specific needs. Additionally, EYFS staff access external training through local authority courses and local cluster group meetings. Clear and detailed handbooks provide information on the school's aims, procedures and expectations. There is a very thorough, effective induction process for new staff and subject leaders carry out annual reviews.
- 5.8 A whole school development plan which includes the EYFS shows clear vision and outlines priorities for improvement. It assigns responsibility and indicates timescales, implications and an on-going evaluation. The plan is compiled as a result of the school's most effective systems of self-evaluation which highlight the school's needs. Continuous reflective practice is a strength of the EYFS. A new management information system ensures that all records are kept centrally and are easily accessible to staff. Regular meetings between staff, and between senior leaders and the leadership enable excellent communication. Since the previous inspection, more emphasis is being placed on appraisal, monitoring and tracking and the recommendation from the previous report to improve structures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school has been met in full.
- 5.9 The school has excellent relationships with parents. In response to questionnaires and in interviews, parents expressed their overwhelming appreciation of the warm, open and welcoming atmosphere in the school. This is evident from the daily contact parents have with staff and by staff accessibility via email or telephone to discuss any matters concerning pupils. They feel that the leadership and all staff are very accessible and approachable and that any concerns are handled quickly, sensibly and fairly. Detailed procedures for formal complaints are available to parents on the school's website which outline the handling of concerns in a timely and appropriate manner. Such procedures are implemented effectively.
- 5.10 In the EYFS strong partnerships with parents ensure their active involvement in the learning and progress of their children. Parents throughout the school are invited to be involved in school life through participation as class representatives, helping on trips, visits, events and leading the assemblies. The Parent Teacher Association is very active and highly supportive of the school. It has contributed significant funds to recent development.
- 5.11 Communication with parents is excellent. There are opportunities for parents to have informal conversations with all staff at the start and end of the day. A weekly newsletter, daily reading and homework diaries, provide further means of communication. Parents report that they feel very well informed about their children's progress through half termly reports, parents' evenings and an informative end-of-year report. They praise the way in which the older children are prepared for the transition to a secondary school appropriate for their needs and abilities.

**What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.**