



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST ANNE'S SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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St Anne's School

Full Name of School	St Anne's School
DfE Number	881/6002
Address	St Anne's School 154 London Road Chelmsford Essex CM2 0AW
Telephone Number	01245 353488
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Email Address	headmistress@stannesprep.essex.sch.uk
Head	Mrs Fiona Pirrie
Chair of Governors	Mrs Sheila Robson
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	151
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (58 boys; 93 girls;)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 106 3-5 (EYFS): 45
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 151
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Pam Baker
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	30 Apr 2013 to 03 May 2013

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 February 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. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website 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.

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

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 proprietor, 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

Mr William Ibbetson-Price

Mrs Lynn Maggs-Wellings

Mr Richard Balding

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Anne's is an independent day school in Chelmsford for boys and girls aged three to eleven, founded in 1925. The school is spread over three floors of a large Victorian house located close to the town centre. Its grounds offer space for play and learning; as well as a playground there is an artificial grass pitch and gardens where the pupils grow vegetables and which houses an outdoor classroom. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is located on the ground floor of the building and has direct access to its own outdoor area. St Anne's is a proprietorial school. The owner took over the school in 1990 and acts as bursar, administrator and registrar, as well as sole governor.
- 1.2 The school is not academically selective in its intake. The ability profile of the school is above the national average. The school has identified thirteen pupils as needing support for special educational needs (SEND) and nine of these receive specialist one-to-one teaching. Although a number of pupils speak another language in addition to English, there are currently no pupils requiring support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 151 pupils on roll, of whom approximately two-thirds are girls. There were 45 children in the EYFS. The school is divided into four distinct departments: the Nursery for children from the ages of three to four; the Kindergarten for children aged four to five; a pre-prep for pupils aged five to seven; and a prep department with pupils aged from eight to eleven.
- 1.4 Pupils are drawn from a range of professional backgrounds; most live within ten miles of the school. Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds and the school promotes its inclusive nature, and the variety of religions and cultures that result, as giving pupils an opportunity to develop tolerance and understanding. The school aims to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential academically, aesthetically, spiritually and physically in a happy and purposeful community which offers a well-balanced education that incorporates the best of traditional and modern teaching methods.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the pre-preparatory and preparatory departments. The year group nomenclature used by the EYFS and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Kindergarten 1	Nursery
Kindergarten 2	Reception

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils achieve excellent standards; this fulfils the school's aims well. Children in the EYFS achieve equally well as a result of the excellent provision they receive. The pupils' literacy and numeracy are very well developed, as are their creative and physical skills. Pupils with SEND receive one-to-one support outside the classroom, enabling them to progress well. Some opportunities for more able pupils are provided in English, and mathematics, where forms at the top of the school are set by ability, but these are not consistent across all subject areas. Pupils are excellent learners, sharing their views with confidence, working well together and invariably participating with enthusiasm. They enjoy their work and school. The good quality of the curriculum, with its range of subjects and the extra-curricular programme, including creative arts and sport, plays a significant role in allowing pupils to achieve their full potential. Excellent teaching provides a wide range of stimulating activities supported by good resources which are used to good effect.
- 2.2 The pupils' excellent personal development is supported by equally strong pastoral care throughout the school. Pupils are very aware of the needs of others, raise money for a range of charities and mix easily in a multi-cultural community. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent, and in the questionnaire almost all pupils were confident that staff are fair and are easy to talk to, views with which inspectors concurred. Both in the EYFS and elsewhere, arrangements for the pupils' safeguarding and welfare are highly effective, and all parents say that their children feel safe at school. Pupils are unfailingly polite to visitors and treat their peers and staff with great respect. Their care for one another is embedded in all aspects of school life. All the policies and procedures for health and safety, including fire procedures and precautions, are of high quality and implemented effectively.
- 2.3 The high quality of the pupils' education is enabled by good governance, leadership and management. The leadership team brings a clear sense of vision and purpose to the school, which is shared by staff as they turn the vision into practice. Safeguarding is given a high priority and staff receive appropriate training. The school has responded well to previous inspection recommendations. The role of subject leaders has been strengthened and they have a clear overview of the curriculum. Although some monitoring of teaching takes place through the staff appraisal system, further opportunities, such as lesson observation, are limited.

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 that subject co-ordinators monitor teaching and learning effectively and consistently to enable the wider sharing of the most effective teaching methods.
2. Improve the curricular provision for more able pupils and ensure that teaching meets the needs of individual pupils across all subject areas and ages.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupil's achievement and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aims in that pupils develop a responsible and independent attitude towards work, enjoy the excitement of learning and take pride in the standards they achieve.
- 3.3 Throughout the school, pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding very effectively in all subject areas and in the extra-curricular activities they undertake. By the end of Nursery children can write their own name and begin to form other letters using cursive script. As they progress, pupils become adept in the use of an ever-widening variety of writing genres. Year 5 pupils created a radio advert and showed a sophisticated understanding of the use of persuasive language, rhyming phrases, jingles and alliteration. A high standard of creativity is evident in art and creative writing displays around the school and in the singing of the whole school in assemblies.
- 3.4 From the earliest age, pupils absorb information well and ask sophisticated and well-considered questions. They are able to think logically and work independently, and demonstrate an excellent level of perseverance when faced with more complex tasks. Children in the EYFS hugely enjoy role play, particularly in the 'Research Laboratory' which also enhances creative and imaginative development. The children enjoy choosing from the wide selection of construction kits and puzzles that develop their problem-solving and manual dexterity skills.
- 3.5 Pupils are highly numerate and develop into skilled mathematicians who are able to apply their knowledge successfully to solving problems and carrying out investigations. They use well the many opportunities they have to use information and communication technology (ICT) skills in the discrete lessons provided, across a range of curriculum areas and in successful use of the internet to research topics across the broader curriculum. In science lessons pupils can predict and hypothesize. From a young age pupils develop a strong awareness of their physical self and demonstrate good skills in a range of physical activities.
- 3.6 Pupils with SEND make good progress because they have effective support outside the classroom, although limited support or variation in tasks is offered within lessons. More able pupils and those with particular talents make rapid progress when they are given high level challenges; however, this is not always consistent in teaching in all year groups and subjects which hinders progress.
- 3.7 Pupils are highly successful in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and these achievements make an effective contribution to their personal development. They enjoy success both as individuals and in teams when participating in a range of sporting activities, including winning local cricket and rounders tournaments. Pupils also achieve excellent results in speech and drama examinations and the choir have enjoyed success in local festivals. Pupils enjoy sharing their talents at achievement assemblies where they confidently perform and present music and dance numbers.
- 3.8 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at ages seven and eleven have been excellent in relation to

the national average for maintained primary schools. Results in maths and reading at age seven were exceptional in 2010. This excellent attainment is confirmed by inspection evidence as seen in lesson observations and the pupils' work and in interviews. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability. A very high percentage of pupils each year gain places at competitive maintained and independent selective schools, with a number also gaining scholarships.

- 3.9 The success of the pupils' achievements owes much to their active engagement in and positive attitudes towards their learning. They work industriously both co-operatively and independently in lessons taking advantage of all the learning experiences presented to them. Throughout the school, pupils are very proud of their work and present themselves extremely well in all aspects of school life.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.11 Throughout the school, the curriculum covers the requisite areas of learning and fulfils the school's aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and prepare and equip young people for life.
- 3.12 The EYFS setting meets the children's needs very well. It develops their self-esteem, spiritual well-being and sense of social justice, as well as supporting their educational development. The excellent quality of education and care are founded on close attention to the needs of every child, which are met well through a diverse range of activities. The high quality of the outdoor play areas and regular physical education (PE) sessions enhances their physical development and provides many opportunities to develop their ability to be independent, make choices, and learning to interact sociably with others. The curriculum prepares the children well for moving to Year 1, thus ensuring that they continue to enjoy learning and school life. The three recommendations from the previous report; to strengthen links between Nursery and Reception to ensure a cohesive approach to planning; to provide further opportunities for children in EYFS to develop their decision-making and problem-solving skills; and to provide children in EYFS with more opportunities to work on the same activity both indoors and outside, have all been addressed very successfully.
- 3.13 From Year 1, specialist teaching brings expertise to subjects such as music, drama, PE and ICT, and the wide variety of extra-curricular activities greatly enrich the pupils' academic, aesthetic and physical development providing a rich learning experience overall. The time allocated to all subjects is suitable, with an increasing emphasis on mathematics and English as pupils prepare for 11+ transfer. The generous allocation of PE provision contributes greatly to the pupils' physical development. The pupils' personal development is supported very well through the personal, social and health education programme (PSHE), which permeates all areas of school life, including assemblies and collective worship, as well as in discrete lessons..
- 3.14 Many areas of learning benefit from a cross-curricular approach with research opportunities provided through ICT and the pupils' expression of their understanding through artwork, drama presentations, music and dance. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 thoroughly enjoy working together on their summer production which includes all elements of the performing arts.

- 3.15 Curriculum planning across all subjects is good, comprehensively covering programmes of study and how pupils will be assessed, and is well monitored by subject co-ordinators. Older pupils are set by ability in mathematics but there is however, little systematic planning for how pupils of higher ability may be challenged. Identification of such pupils is limited in scope. Pupils identified with SEND all have IEPs which are reviewed regularly in consultation with parents and are very well tracked by specialist staff although the levels of provision within lessons vary.
- 3.16 The pupils' experiences are broadened further via a good range of trips and visits. Years 4 and 5 take part in a residential trip to the Isle of Wight and Years 5 and 6 visit France. Throughout the school, visits to museums develop the pupils' understanding of the past, while trips to the fire station help pupils learn about people who help us in the local community. Visitors to school who provide pupils with practical experiences such as playing steel drums, Shakespearian workshops, and design technology (DT) projects and puzzle days, also make a valuable contribution to the pupils' education. During the time of the inspection Years 3 and 4 were presented with an excellent opportunity to build a Viking boat on the school site. Links with the local community are good. Pupils develop a good understanding about the lives of others locally and the wider world through charity work.
- 3.17 Pupils take advantage of the excellent range of activities and clubs on offer both at lunch time and after school, which serve to enhance the pupils' achievement greatly. They cater for a range of interests. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education by the end of Year 6.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.19 Throughout the school teaching is well planned and organised and seeks to capture the pupils' interest at the outset and to check their understanding at the end of lessons. Teaching uses question and answer techniques very effectively, both to establish prior knowledge and to stimulate the pupils' thinking and challenge them to progress further. The most skilful questioning deepens the pupils' understanding well. In the EYFS, language is used very effectively to extend and develop the children's communication skills, enabling them to take part in highly articulate conversations.
- 3.20 Teaching fosters excellent relationships and ensures that all pupils are involved. In the most successful teaching humour and praise enthuse the pupils in an inspirational way, and a brisk pace and good time management ensure that pupils are challenged. This enables excellent progress and achievement. In the small amount of less effective teaching, a lack of stimulus and pace fails to fully maintain the pupils' interests and progress is hindered.
- 3.21 Practical and investigative activities are often used well such as when younger pupils were enthralled when comparing the tap root of a dandelion with the fibrous roots of a buttercup. Teaching frequently provides opportunities for creative, independent and collaborative work as in drama when groups of pupils had to portray different emotions with each pupil taking in turn to be the director.
- 3.22 Teachers know their pupils very well, and teaching is structured to build upon their prior achievements and understanding. In the EYFS, the children's progress is tracked using a 'Progress Wheel', and detailed, regular assessment is used to plan

the next steps in each child's learning and also highlights those children who need extra help. Pupils throughout the school are given a high level of personal attention, and benefit greatly from working in an environment where hard work is praised and celebrated. In interviews, they confirmed the kindness and care they receive and that teaching helps them to learn. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Pupils know that they can ask for, and will receive, help when they need it. Teaching shows excellent subject knowledge. Good quality resources are employed well, including effective use of interactive whiteboards, to bring subjects to life and to stimulate enthusiasm and learning.

- 3.23 More able pupils are sometimes given challenging work in English and mathematics, however, the pupils' capabilities are not always fully recognised in other subject areas where all pupils frequently work on similar activities at the same pace. Appropriate help for those children with SEND is provided by specialist staff on a one-to-one basis when pupils are withdrawn from class. However, provision within classes is variable, with little work provided which is specifically focused on the pupils' individual needs with the result that they are not always engaged productively.
- 3.24 Overall, marking is thorough, accurate and frequent and often gives pupils helpful advice as to how to improve. Comments are generally constructive and informative, explaining clearly to pupils how they can improve their work. Pupils said they were in favour of the school's merit system as a reward for their efforts. They value the individual verbal feedback that they receive. A small amount of the marking is more limited in scope and gives pupils insufficient information to help them to improve their work. The recommendation of the previous inspection to standardise the assessment of the pupils' work has been acted upon and the school now uses a detailed system of standardised assessments from the end of Reception to Year 6. These are wide ranging and cover English, mathematics, science and verbal reasoning, and allow tracking of the progress of individual pupils, as well as whole year groups. Subject co-ordinators scrutinise the assessment results and pupils who are underachieving are highlighted and discussed at staff meetings.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Staff set an excellent example in promoting the school's ethos and thus ensure that the pupils are valued and grow in self-esteem, so fulfilling the school's aim of developing tolerance and understanding with respect for the rights, views and properties of others.
- 4.3 From an early age the pupils demonstrate excellent spiritual awareness and religious education lessons together with a comprehensive PSHE programme and assemblies enable them to develop a strong understanding of various religious beliefs, many of which are reflected in the pupils' own ethnic backgrounds. Comprehensive prominent wall displays inform pupils about diverse religions of the world and these are enhanced by special assemblies such as one about Diwali. Morning assemblies provide key moments for reflection and prayer and pupils respect and value this. Pupils share and celebrate in the achievements of others as is demonstrated at the weekly celebration assemblies. All pupils gain an excellent appreciation of non-material aspects of life through discussion in PSHE and other lessons. Older pupils demonstrated maturity and insight in a PSHE lesson on the subject of choices.
- 4.4 Pupils display a well-developed sense of right and wrong and they clearly abide by the 'Golden Rules' that are displayed in every classroom. In the EYFS, children's personal and emotional development is excellent and they work well together sharing happily and taking turns. Throughout the school the pupils' behaviour is exemplary, they listen to and respond to instructions from adults and help each other. All pupils move calmly around the school displaying impeccable manners and from an early age, they are aware of the needs of others. Any pupil sitting on the 'friendship bench' in the playground is not alone for long, for others will soon come forward to comfort and help. All pupils respect each other, they are eager to help, take turns and share.
- 4.5 The pupils' social awareness is very well developed. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to take on areas of responsibility appropriate to their age. Both in formal roles such as prefects or house captains or informally, such as when acting as play leaders and organising games for the youngest, they learn skills of management and organisation as well as tolerance and compassion. All Year 6 pupils lead the prayers at the Harvest Festival and Christingle service and these roles help boost their self-confidence. Pupils accept responsibility willingly, contributing to the society of the school and the world beyond, helping those in need through community service and charity fundraising. Pupils and parents respond very generously to any charities which the school adopts such as collecting items for the Christmas shoebox appeal and a coffee morning organised by Year 1 pupils for Children in Need. Pupils display a very good knowledge and understanding of public institutions and citizenship.
- 4.6 Children's cultural experiences are enhanced by experiences of music in assemblies. The prep choir sings at local venues as well as entering singing competitions. Parents are warmly welcomed to share their expertise in the classroom, for example, providing enrichment to geography lessons for older pupils through sharing knowledge about mehndi patterns. The visits to France for Years 5

and 6 enable pupils to experience another culture at first hand and develop their language skills. Educational visits, including those to local churches and mosques and Chelmsford Cathedral, further broaden the pupils' educational experience.

- 4.7 By the time the pupils leave the school they have an excellent level of personal development and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Pupils enjoy coming to school and being part of this community which is both happy and caring in accordance with the school's aims. Relationships in the EYFS are extremely good and children feel safe, secure and valued. The staff expect courtesy and endeavour; they demonstrate these qualities themselves and encourage children to do the same. The children have their own 'key person' who promotes the high standards of courtesy and behaviour expected and high priority is given to the children's happiness, health and safety so that children form strong relationships with each other and with adults as they develop their independence.
- 4.10 Equally strong relationships exist through the rest of the school, both amongst pupils and between pupils and the supportive staff that oversee their development. Form tutors keep a watchful eye over the pupils in their care enabling each pupil's development to be monitored closely. A small minority of parents raised issues about bullying in pre-inspection questionnaires, but inspectors found no evidence to support their views. The school has a thorough and effective anti-bullying strategy. Pupils say that all members of staff look after them very well and that in the rare event that bullying takes place they would know who to turn to, confident that the matter would be dealt with swiftly and with tact.
- 4.11 Behaviour is exceedingly good and is supported by a range of appropriate rewards and sanctions that are listed in the code of conduct booklet and these are understood well by the pupils. Stickers and house points are collected eagerly and achievements are publicly acknowledged at celebration assemblies that are valued highly by the pupils. The pupils regard the accumulation of house points and the consequent running total to be a high point at these assemblies. These measures successfully promote good behaviour.
- 4.12 A full programme of games together with regular discussions in class about healthy eating ensure that pupils throughout the school develop the knowledge of what is required to achieve a healthy lifestyle. In the EYFS, children are taught about developing personal hygienic routines, and about being safe,
- 4.13 The school has in place an effective equal opportunities policy and has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.14 Pupils contribute to the school community through the school council. This meets at least once a term and is made up from elected representatives from each form from Year 1 to Year 6. This is a forum for pupils to raise any current issues, express possible ideas for future improvements and is one of the ways that the school listens to the views of the pupils.
- 4.15 In the pupils' questionnaire, the pupils were overwhelmingly supportive of all that the school does, the opportunities it offers them and the support they receive. These

views were confirmed at interview. The children are very proud of their school and enjoy their time here.

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

- 4.16 The quality of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.17 Arrangements for safeguarding, including in the EYFS, are robust and in line with official guidance. Staff receive appropriate training in child protection, both when they first arrive and at appropriate intervals; those who act as designated persons attend additional training courses with the local safeguarding children board as required. As a result, staff are aware of the action to take if issues arise and the school liaises appropriately with local agencies. All the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that their children feel safe at school. The improvements in arrangements for recruiting staff required by the previous inspection have been made.
- 4.18 The school takes the pupils' safety very seriously. Policies relating to health and safety are detailed and wide ranging. Pupils are alerted to e-safety issues; all use of the computer network is monitored and pupils are given clear instructions about appropriate and unacceptable use of the internet. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Fire practices are held regularly and fire protection measures are in order, with regular monitoring of equipment throughout the school, both by staff and by external agencies. Appropriate risk assessments have been carried out for all areas of the school and for offsite educational activities.
- 4.19 The school gives careful attention to any pupils who have particular medical or learning support needs, and takes appropriate care of any pupils who are ill or injured, in a conveniently located medical room. Systematic records of any accidents and incidents are kept, with a note of any medicines which have been dispensed at school. The first-aid policy is comprehensive, and all staff have first-aid training and the majority have paediatric first-aid qualifications. This enables the school to fulfil its aims extremely successfully to provide a safe caring environment for its pupils. Attendance and admission registers are completed properly in accordance with the regulations.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 In close collaboration with senior staff, diligent and effective oversight of educational standards, financial and strategic planning, investment in staff, resources, welfare, health and safety, and child protection is provided. The proprietor undertakes an annual review of the implementation and effectiveness of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including overseeing the maintenance of a centralised register that records the recruitment checks undertaken on the appointment of staff. The contents and implementation of some other policies have not, however, until very recently, been regularly monitored.
- 5.3 There is good awareness of the need to obtain outside expertise in certain areas to support the proprietor's governing role and good use is made of outside agencies to meet this need, for example in areas such as fire risk analysis and the headmistress' appraisal. All the regulatory failings from the previous inspection have been addressed and all recommendations have been acted upon.
- 5.4 Governance shows excellent awareness of all aspects of the life and work of the school. The proprietor's frequent presence in the school, coupled with attendance at all staff meetings ensures that the school's aims are met and that any contributions to decision making are well informed. Involvement with the EYFS is highly effective, informed by regular visits to the setting and attendance at EYFS staff meetings, and results in wide-ranging resources and facilities. The expectation of high standards in every area supports the pupils' excellent academic performance and pastoral care.
- 5.5 The proprietor is fully involved in the production of the school development plan and in its implementation and review, and so provides the stimulus for constant improvement.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is good.
- 5.7 The high standard of leadership provided by senior and middle managers, including in the EYFS, demonstrates their very strong and successful commitment to furthering the aims of the school, and has ensured clear progress in all areas since the previous inspection. Throughout the school, the recruitment of staff is well managed, and procedures for checking staff prior to their appointment are secure. A comprehensive staff handbook gives staff useful guidance. There is an induction process for new staff, which ensures that new appointees are well informed of school routines and safeguarding arrangements; this is informal to reflect the intimate nature and size of the school but includes all required elements. The school has a stable, highly committed and hard-working staff, who work together well for the benefit of the pupils, ensuring a welcoming, safe and stimulating environments for all pupils. Teaching assistants and support staff are highly valued and make a significant contribution to the school.

- 5.8 The school's self-evaluation is extremely thorough and rigorous. It enables very detailed analysis of the school's needs. The school is thus very aware of the areas where it can improve and the school development plan, into which all staff have an input, reflects the identified areas for improvement. This process extends to the EYFS where regular meetings enable staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the setting. There are effective and thorough systems of supervision within the EYFS. Appraisal throughout the school incorporates self-evaluation, monitoring and feedback, and promotes the professional development of all staff in the school. There is a clear and ambitious vision for the continued development of all sections of the school. The EYFS setting has developed strong links with the local authority and other local agencies such as a speech therapist to receive training and help with children's development where needed.
- 5.9 The commitment of all staff to fulfilling the school's mission and supporting its ethos is clearly reflected in the high quality of teaching and the excellent pastoral care provided for pupils. The excellent levels of personal development and academic achievement shown by the pupils are a direct result of the dedication, hard work and professionalism of leaders and managers at all levels.
- 5.10 Within the school, very good systems of communication, both formal and informal, ensure a sense of corporate involvement and purpose; they also enable any difficulties to be tackled at an early stage. Members of the senior team are accessible and this is appreciated by staff and pupils.
- 5.11 There is a senior management team, but this does not have regular or formal, minuted meetings. The weekly full staff meeting provides the opportunity for discussion of any pupil's academic and general progress.
- 5.12 The recommendation of the previous inspection to further develop the role of the subject coordinator has been partially addressed and subject leaders monitor schemes of work and the teachers' planning, and scrutinise the pupils' work to ensure consistency of marking. However, monitoring is limited in scope. There is limited observation of lessons within subject areas to support colleagues which restricts sharing of the most effective methods of teaching. Provision for more able pupils and those with SEND is not routinely included in planning. Well-constructed systems for tracking and recording the pupils' progress ensure that their academic development and welfare are monitored at every stage, with constructive action being taken when necessary.
- 5.13 Almost all parents completing questionnaires express great satisfaction with the education and support provided for their children. The school has responded positively to the recommendation of the previous inspection report to strengthen communication with parents which has vastly improved. However, some parents expressed concerns about the information they are given about their child's progress, and untimely response to questions. Inspection evidence does not support these views. Reports are sent out twice a year. The first, an interim report, outlines progress early in the year and in the summer term a comprehensive report provides detailed information about the progress their children have made and the achievements they have attained. Consultation evenings are arranged bi-annually in the autumn and spring terms.
- 5.14 All information required is provided or made available for prospective and current parents. Information books are provided for all age groups. Events are listed and sent out at the beginning of each term with weekly updates emailed to parents,

acting as an aide memoire. A well-presented and informative newsletter is distributed each half term, highlighting trips and visits and celebrating pupils' success in curricular and extra-curricular activities, which include articles written by the pupils. The current website enables access to a selection of policies via the parent area and the school is working to update this facility to further improve accessibility to information about the school. Parents of children in the EYFS particularly value the two-way communication provided by the reading diary and Learning Journeys. They also welcome the regular reports about their child's achievement and progress and opportunities to talk to staff at drop-off and collection times.

- 5.15 Parents have a wealth of opportunities to be involved in the life of the school through membership of the inclusive parent-teacher association (PTA). Throughout the year they organise a variety of events including a summer ball, a Christmas disco, plant, cake and uniform sales and a fun day for the pupils at the end of the summer term. These not only enrich the school community socially, but also allow them to raise funds to provide added extras including the funding for the outdoor classroom. The PTA meets termly with senior staff to discuss school-related issues. Each year they are given the opportunity to express their views via an annual questionnaire and any concerns are then followed up.
- 5.16 Parents are warmly welcomed to share their expertise in the classroom, for example, through participating in lessons and helping with activities and attending assemblies. Parents support the PSHE curriculum by talking about the jobs they may have in the local community and are welcomed to join the trips and visits that enrich the education of their children.
- 5.17 The school has a clear and appropriate complaints procedure. Parents' concerns are heard promptly and treated with care and consideration; as a result the vast majority are dealt with swiftly and informally.

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