



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
OUR LADY'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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Our Lady's Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Our Lady's Preparatory School
DfE Number	872/6007
EYFS Number	EY270982
Registered Charity Number	309107
Address	Our Lady's Preparatory School The Avenue Crowthorne Berkshire RG45 6PB
Telephone Number	01344 773394
Email Address	office@olps.co.uk
Head	Mrs Helene Robinson
Chair of Trustees	Mr Michael Halpin
Age Range	3 months to 11
Total Number of Pupils	173
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (77 boys; 96 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 26 5-11: 29 3-5 (EYFS): 118
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 173
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	06 May 2014 to 09 May 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous Ofsted inspection was in January 2011.

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. 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. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' 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 chair of trustees, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Richard Johnson

Mr David Callender

Mrs Kathryn Stokes

Miss Mary Regan

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)

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Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Our Lady's Preparatory School is a Roman Catholic co-educational, independent day school, which has been developed around two large houses in a residential area of the village of Crowthorne in Berkshire. It was established by Father Daniel Boyle in 1961, and the following year a charitable trust was established and a board of trustees was formed. The trustees are the proprietors of the school. Further additions to the school buildings have provided additional classroom space, a multi-purpose hall area and enhanced facilities in Nursery. The kitchen has recently been extended. Extensive new facilities, including additional classrooms, are currently under construction.
- 1.2 The school provides a traditional Catholic education; it aims to provide the maximum opportunity for each child to develop his or her character and potential within a caring environment. The school seeks to enable them to develop their self-confidence whilst pursuing academic excellence.
- 1.3 Education is provided for pupils aged from 3 months to 11 years of age and pupils may join at any age. Currently the school has 173 pupils on roll, 77 boys and 96 girls. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) there are total of 144 children, many of whom attend Nursery part time. These children are housed in areas adjacent to the older pupils, and share a number of facilities. There are 29 pupils, aged from 5 to 8, in the preparatory section. The school takes pupils up to Year 6, although there are currently no pupils above Year 3.
- 1.4 In the preparatory section, four pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Three of these receive extra learning support. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. One pupil in the EYFS requires and receives support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.5 The school has a broad range of ability, which includes some pupils of below average ability. The overall average ability is considered to be above the national average. Pupils generally come from the local area, and their parents from professional backgrounds. Most current pupils in the preparatory section have moved up from the nursery section. Entry for older pupils is by interview.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Our Lady's Preparatory School is successful in meeting its aims, and this is reflected in the good educational experience of its pupils. The pupils achieve well in all areas of the school. All pupils, including those with SEND and EAL and the more able, make progress that is good. Secure foundations are laid in numeracy and literacy. The curriculum provided is good; it is broad, and notable for its emphasis on modern foreign languages (MFL) and the inclusion of outdoor learning experiences. Teaching is good, characterised by strong relationships between staff and pupils. These help to promote excellent attitudes towards learning. The process to monitor the outcomes of teaching and assessment process in the school is still evolving. Pupils display a good range of skills that prepare them well for their subsequent learning.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is good throughout the school. They show growing confidence and are strongly supported in their development by the nurturing atmosphere of the school although some spiritual opportunities are limited. The pastoral care of the pupils is excellent. Parents feel that the care shown for their children is a great strength of the school. The pupils' behaviour is excellent, and there are good opportunities for them to take responsibilities appropriate to their age. The provision for welfare, health and safety is sound. The school's monitoring and implementation of some aspects of health and safety and awareness of safeguarding requirements lack rigour.
- 2.3 Governance of the school provides strong support and effective challenge to the management team. Prudent budgeting and husbanding of resources has resulted in a major new development. The board recognises the need to increase its expertise in some areas. Leadership and management are good. Strengths are evident in the personal involvement of the senior leaders in the care of the pupils, reflected in a culture that is apparent through the school. The lack of an effective administrative support structure for senior staff means that some aspects of management and monitoring are too informal to be fully effective.
- 2.4 The recommendations and requirements of the previous inspection have mostly been met with an enhanced curriculum and increased opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures introduced, but those regarding planning and assessment in the EYFS have not been fully met. The regulatory failings that were highlighted have also been remedied.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Institute a central forum, which meets regularly, to monitor health and safety and ensure comprehensive identification of potential hazards.
2. Provide suitable administrative support to enable senior leaders to carry out their roles with full effectiveness.
3. Strengthen the strategies to monitor the outcomes of teaching and learning in the school.
4. Improve systems in the EYFS to ensure greater rigour in the monitoring of planning, assessment procedures and in reporting to parents.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to be a place where they grow in confidence whilst pursuing academic excellence. They fulfil their individual potential in many different ways and accrue good knowledge and skills in all aspects of their curriculum. They are confident, conscientious and articulate. They achieve well in literacy and numeracy, and these skills are used effectively in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils have been successful in national creative writing competitions. Recent focus on developing handwriting skills has resulted in high levels of achievement.
- 3.3 The pupils' linguistic skills are excellent, enhanced by the specialist teaching they receive. They develop a good understanding of scientific concepts and use information and communication technology (ICT) skills appropriately. They show imagination and creativity in their art and pottery work.
- 3.4 Given the size of the school, and the age of the pupils, their achievements beyond the curriculum are good. Their physical skills are developing appropriately through a range of sporting activities, including football. Achievement in swimming is at a high level. Pupils take part in local art and drama competitions with good results. They take pleasure from activities such as dance and drama productions and other opportunities to perform in public. These help pupils to build confidence and to develop good speaking skills.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to a fixed national average. Based upon evidence from observed lessons and a scrutiny of work during the inspection it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils make progress that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities.
- 3.6 The small number of pupils with SEND and EAL achieve standards that are good in relation to their abilities, and the support they are given enables them to make good progress in all areas of their learning. This is evident from the steady improvement in the scope and structure of their writing. Classroom observations indicate that the most able pupils make progress that is good in relation to their abilities, especially when teaching provides tasks to allow them to show their imaginative and creative abilities.
- 3.7 The pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They listen with care, respond appropriately and apply themselves diligently. They take pride in their work, and are keen to discuss it. In interviews, pupils said that they really appreciate the opportunities they are given in many of their lessons, and they felt that they work well, both individually or as part of a group or team. Inspectors agree. This was seen when the use of role play effectively increased the road safety awareness of younger pupils.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision for pupils is good.
- 3.9 This supports the school's aims and contributes well to the pupils' good achievement and progress. The curriculum covers the appropriate areas of learning including ICT, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education (RE). Additionally, pupils at all ages study three MFL, French, Spanish and Mandarin.
- 3.10 The academic curriculum throughout the school is good. It is broad, varied and well balanced. It is appropriate to the age and needs of all pupils, and lesson planning includes well-planned activities for pupils of differing abilities. A register identifies able, gifted and talented pupils and records potential means of support in and out of school to enhance their learning needs. Pupils with SEND and EAL are well supported, including by carefully planned use of additional staff in lessons where appropriate. Pupils have a weekly opportunity to experience the creative and expressive subjects; music, art and cookery add further breadth to the curriculum.
- 3.11 Pupils benefit from a physical education (PE) and games programme which provides opportunities for physical exercise and specialist teaching in a limited range of sports. A strength of the curriculum is the weekly visit to the woodland learning environment. This is much enjoyed by the pupils and provides valuable outdoor learning opportunities.
- 3.12 The academic curriculum is supported by an extra-curricular programme consisting of clubs such as dance; drama, ICT, games and a film club. These are very popular with pupils. Additionally there are a number of activities, namely karate, ballet and instrumental lessons, offered by outside providers. Many pupils stay at school beyond the end of the curriculum day to take advantage of the good quality after-school care.
- 3.13 Pupils throughout the school enjoy a good variety of visits which expand their educational experience, including visits to the local Catholic church, theatres and a trip to a science and technology day. Visitors to the school include the emergency services, medical and dental practitioners and a storyteller for World Book Day. This meets a recommendation of the previous inspection report.
- 3.14 Good links with the local community add significantly to the pupils' personal development. Pupils are encouraged to develop their social skills and community involvement through activities such as carol singing in a local town and for a care group, and involvement in carnival and Christmas events. Pupils raise funds for CAFOD, an orphanage in Myanmar, and a wide range of national charities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.16 This meets the aim of pursuing academic excellence for pupils. The expertise and enthusiasm of the staff is evident across the school. They strive to create a caring environment that fosters excellent attitudes to learning. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are strong. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect and add to the pupils' enjoyment and interest in the classroom. Teaching ensures that behaviour is always of a high standard, using a range of effective strategies.
- 3.17 Across all age ranges the quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to the pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and this enables pupils to extend their own understanding and expertise successfully. The most successful teaching includes clear learning objectives and explanations, and is often characterised by a brisk pace and challenge. Good use is made of the available resources to produce interesting and stimulating lessons. Interactive white boards are mostly used effectively during lessons and pupils are developing their ICT skills across the curriculum but this is not consistent in all teaching. The time available in lessons is used effectively. The pupils' previous learning is often consolidated through focused questioning at the start of lessons, and concluding sessions enable pupils to share their achievements and understanding. In some teaching, the pupils' learning is over-directed by teachers and closed questions are used, which hinders the pupils' development of knowledge and understanding.
- 3.18 Opportunities for pupils to investigate, explore and to undertake independent learning occur in some teaching. For example, during an outdoor lesson pupils were encouraged to work independently, explore their surroundings and engage in problem-solving activities. This enabled them to gain additional depth and understanding. Teaching shows awareness of the pupils' differing abilities and this helps to ensure tightly focused lessons that are tailored to meet the needs of all, including those with SEND and EAL. In the most successful teaching, provision for the most able and gifted is woven into lesson planning. During a literacy lesson, more able pupils were encouraged to undertake extended writing tasks to good effect.
- 3.19 The school marking policy is clear, and is generally applied effectively and accurately. In the best marking, positive and constructive feedback is related to the objectives of the task. Pupils assess their own class work and set targets for themselves. Additional targets in literacy and numeracy are set by the class teachers and reviewed regularly. Samples of pupils' work show that marking does not ensure that all work is completed satisfactorily. Good oral feedback is given. Pupils welcome both praise and encouragement alongside advice on how to improve their work.
- 3.20 The pupils' progress is monitored and assessed using nationally recognised measures of attainment. Assessments are moderated internally by the school and reviewed through professional dialogue between staff. Current procedures are not yet fully established to enable them to inform planning. The school has identified this as an area for further development.

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 the pupils is good.
- 4.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is good and is in accordance with the school's aims. An ethos of care and respect for one another is evident amongst the pupils within and outside lessons. Pupils respond enthusiastically and confidently to the many and varied educational experiences offered.
- 4.3 The spiritual development of pupils is good. Daily prayers provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their own faith and spiritual awareness. The limited opportunities for pupils to attend school assemblies, and reflect as a whole school, inhibit this aspect of their development. Pupils are supported in developing their knowledge and understanding of the major world faiths through the RE curriculum which is an integral part of their development. Pupils demonstrate their appreciation of the non-material aspects of life by making good use of the spacious outside areas. In the woodland learning environment they demonstrate a sense of awe and wonder. In addition they enjoy beauty within art and music. Evidence from displays in classrooms and corridors show how the school community celebrates these aspects of life.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral development is excellent and throughout the school pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils demonstrate a strong moral compass by clearly understanding the need for mutual respect, empathy and positive communication. Pupils show this awareness in conversation, for example commenting on their intention to become more assertive. Pupils are generally confident and self-assured and have a strong sense of self-worth.
- 4.5 The pupils enjoy a range of positions of responsibility including classroom monitors, table monitors and snack monitors. Younger children benefit from the encouragement and support older children give them, for example during reading activities and at playtimes. In addition, pupils of all ages gain a sense of identity and belonging through membership of houses. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of those less fortunate than themselves by involvement in charitable events at a local, national and international level.
- 4.6 The social development of pupils is strong. They develop an awareness of their local community and 'those that help us'. This is evident in the colourful display in the main corridor. Older pupils broaden their knowledge and understanding of British institutions by visits and meeting representatives, for example their local MP. Pupils understand the need to respect and protect the world around them; for example commenting that bluebells need to be cared for as there are not many of them left. They understand the importance of considering the feelings of others and the need for sharing and helping one another. Pupils are confident when talking to adults. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education and transitions within the school and by the time they leave the school show good personal development.
- 4.7 The pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils demonstrate an appropriate understanding of cultures other than their own. This is supported through curriculum subjects, including RE and the PHSE programme, and a broad range of visitors to the school. Pupils benefit from harmonious relationships with one another. This is

particularly noted between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds where the pupils are eager to learn about one another's beliefs and practices. The school has addressed the recommendation of the previous inspection to enhance the pupils' knowledge of other faiths and cultures.

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

- 4.8 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 This fully supports the aim of the school to develop the character and potential of each individual child in a caring environment. Parents say that the staff show an obvious interest in the well-being of their children. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are excellent and pupils around the school are happy and respectful. There are generous levels of staff supervision to ensure the high levels of pastoral care are delivered effectively. Class teachers play a leading role in ensuring the pastoral needs of their pupils are fully met.
- 4.10 Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles. Healthy eating habits are reinforced by the choice of food offered for lunches, which comprises a variety of interesting and nutritious dishes. The pupils' choice of food is very carefully supervised. All pupils are encouraged to undertake regular exercise in the weekly PE, football and swimming sessions and during after-school activities as part of a healthy lifestyle.
- 4.11 The school has an effective anti-bullying policy and pupils confirmed that they feel safe in school. They said that pupils get on very well with each other and that the school is a family and that pupils are like brothers and sisters to each other. Pupils were clear who they can go to for help if needed. The school has an appropriate plan to enable accessibility for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 Pupils are encouraged to express their views by developing their own ideas of what constitutes good behaviour and devising their own sets of class rules. These are displayed prominently in all classrooms and pupils are clear on the need for adherence to them for the benefit of all members of the class. An effective reward system, clearly understood by pupils, promotes high standards of behaviour.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils is sound.
- 4.14 Staff recruitment checks are carried out efficiently and the central register of staff appointments is well maintained. Those involved in appointing new staff receive relevant training and all appropriate checks are made.
- 4.15 The safeguarding policy did not meet current guidance until very recently, but this was rectified and a new policy implemented by the school prior to the inspection. All staff receive child protection training at suitable intervals. Three staff are trained as designated child protection officers, and there is a nominated trustee who reports to the main board. The school has good links to local child protection agencies.
- 4.16 Health and safety procedures are sound overall because they lack consistency of provision and implementation. Detailed policies and accurate risk assessments cover the full range of activities that take place both on and away from the school site. There is no health and safety forum to ensure that procedures operate consistently and to share good practice, and therefore monitoring lacks rigour; potential hazards are not always identified. Once identified, remedial action is taken quickly. Procedures to ensure a major building project on site is carried out safely are thorough. The necessary steps to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are implemented well. Care is taken to ensure the security of school buildings. Fire practices and alarm tests are held regularly. The grounds, buildings and facilities are adequately maintained. Standards of cleanliness in the school are variable.
- 4.17 There are 31 staff qualified in paediatric first aid, with two at a higher level. When pupils become ill at school they are cared for in an adequate medical room, until they can be collected. The staff are well informed about the medical needs of their pupils. Accidents are carefully recorded and parents are informed as soon as practical. Admissions and attendance registers are correctly maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The board of trustees support the aims and ethos of the school through the careful management of staff and resources. They build strong relationships with all elements of the school community, and the inclusion of local religious figures ensures the school maintains its spiritual foundation. Recruitment of trustees includes long-standing members of the community and those who bring specific experience to their role. The board recognises the need to recruit further trustees in order to enhance their specialist knowledge of all aspects of school provision, particularly the EYFS and the monitoring in some areas of policy and procedure.
- 5.3 The trustees and senior management share a vision for the future of the school, which is reflected in detailed development planning. The trustees visit the school frequently and have excellent communication with the senior staff. The school's leadership provides detailed reports for trustees, and senior leaders attend meetings of the board, where they are challenged as to the progress made. The appraisal of the head is informal, and primarily linked to the school development targets. Firm financial control ensures that the school has a realistic plan for growth, reflected in the current extensions to the school facilities. Good human and learning resources, and suitable accommodation are provided.
- 5.4 The board of trustees is generally effective in discharging its responsibilities for the statutory requirements. Individual trustees have specific responsibilities, such as child protection. Health and safety and safeguarding procedures are not always rigorously monitored. Trustees review the school's policies, associated risk assessments and safeguarding procedures annually.

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 good.
- 5.6 Caring and committed leadership and management enable the school to provide a supportive, friendly community which responds well to the needs of pupils. Senior leaders are well established in their roles and provide a compassionate and stimulating environment for staff as well as pupils. Their innovative approach towards the structure of the school year, enabling care outside normal term times, is appreciated by many parents. The inspection team noted that all staff are highly involved in sustaining the caring ethos of the school.
- 5.7 A number of systems and procedures concerning the daily running of the school are informal, and are not robust enough for its needs. Arrangements for senior management meetings are not formalised. Responses to the parent questionnaire indicated that they found the leaders to be very visible and approachable. A few comments expressed a lack of satisfaction with the efficiency of the daily operation of the school. Inspection evidence supports this view. The absence of administrative support staff impacts adversely on the leadership team's workload

and hampers their ability to carry out their multiple roles effectively. The school recognises this.

- 5.8 Leadership and management are effective in self-evaluation and setting priorities; the school development plan is a detailed document, reflecting the school's clear vision for the future. This includes appropriate actions, timescales for completion and the allocation of responsibilities and finance.
- 5.9 A number of specific priorities have been set as a result of this effective planning; these include an enhanced pupil profiling system and the creation of new co-ordinator roles for specific subjects. Assessment data has begun to be collated in preparation for formal tracking of the pupils' attainment to enable their progress to be monitored, and to inform teachers' planning, but this system is not yet embedded. The recent introduction of subject co-ordinators is intended to involve the teaching staff in the on-going monitoring and development of teaching and learning in the school. These initiatives have yet to impact on the educational provision of the school. The sharing of good practice is encouraged by close liaison between teaching staff. Careful planning and allocation of resources has underpinned the current major building programme.
- 5.10 The recommendations of the previous inspection to provide more opportunities for enrichment in the curriculum and to ensure that all children develop an increased understanding of different faiths and cultures have been appropriately met. The regulatory deficiencies that were identified have also been rectified.
- 5.11 The school has not always ensured that it keeps up to date with the statutory guidance for safeguarding, and the monitoring of safety risks on site is inconsistent. By the end of the inspection, the school had attended appropriately to these matters.
- 5.12 Duties, including all aspects relating to the supervision of pupils, are discharged efficiently. Teaching and non-teaching staff are deployed very effectively and make a significant contribution to the pupils' welfare and learning in all areas of the school. A formal system of appraisal fosters staff professional development and staff are given appropriate opportunities to attend external courses.
- 5.13 The school employs well-qualified and experienced staff who are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all children, including safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Staff new to the school receive appropriate induction which helps them to adapt quickly to school routines, with the support of colleagues, enabling them to carry out their roles effectively from a very early stage. Highly committed catering and maintenance staff give strong support to the work of the school.
- 5.14 Links between the school and parents are good and support the education of the pupils. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire the vast majority of parents were very satisfied with the educational provision for their children. They feel that they can easily communicate with the school staff. The school maintains an open door policy for parents, allowing minor problems or queries to be addressed as they arise. The catering staff are available to discuss the dietary requirements of individual pupils and to suggest possible recipes to meet these. Parents are pleased with the progress that their children make, and feel that the pupils are valued and nurtured.
- 5.15 Parents can be actively involved in the work and progress of their children with charting the progress of the reading of pupils and helping with homework. A parent

association exists to promote and run a range of activities for entertainment and to raise funds for the school.

- 5.16 Parents and prospective parents are provided with the required information through regular newsletters, the school website, prospectus and an information evening for parents at the beginning of each school year. A full written report is issued in the summer term and two additional grade cards are produced for Year 3 pupils and upwards during the year. Parent evenings to review pupil progress are held in the first and last terms. A few parents commented that information on the progress of their children is not as forthcoming as it might be. The inspection found the means of reporting to parents and arrangements for parental consultation to be adequate, but the information regarding pupil progress is not always of sufficient detail to ensure that parents are fully informed of their child's progress.
- 5.17 The school handles the concerns of parents with care. Parents are encouraged to report concerns initially to the class teacher or member of the leadership team. An appropriate complaints policy is published and implemented effectively.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 6.1 The early years provision is good in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. The broad and exciting educational programmes across the seven areas of learning help all children, including those with EAL, reach the level of development typical for their age and ability. All children in the EYFS, from the youngest, benefit from good specialist teaching in French, Mandarin, Spanish, drama and music. In addition, cooking is introduced to children from age two. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes also enjoy specialist teaching in football, swimming and make weekly visits to an off-site woodland learning environment with a specialist teacher.
- 6.2 Teachers and support staff know the children very well. They help children to develop important skills which enable them to learn effectively and ensure they are ready for the next stage of their learning. Teachers have high expectations of the children and engage them in many well-planned activities, often taking account of the children's personal interests. This encourages them to initiate their own learning, for example when a group of children showed an interest in the human skeleton and wanted to know why humans needed bones; using a model of a skeleton the children were shown the importance of bones in the body.
- 6.3 All children, including the youngest, demonstrate a high level of self-confidence. The setting has developed strong links with parents who, in the parent questionnaire, overwhelmingly acknowledged that children were happy and felt safe at school. Parents also indicated that they would recommend the school to another parent.
- 6.4 Parents of two-year-olds receive a summary report based on the age two check, while children in the Nursery and Reception classes receive an annual written report in the summer term. The end-of-year report for children in the Reception class explains each child's level of development assessed against the Early Learning Goals. A small minority of parents commented in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they felt that they did not receive enough information about their child's progress and development. Inspection evidence supports this view as inconsistencies were found in the detail and quality of some written reports across the setting.
- 6.5 The setting operates an open door policy and parents have daily contact with teachers. Parents are encouraged to discuss and share news of their child's experiences and achievements observed at home which can contribute to their child's learning journey.

6.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 6.6 Provision for children's well-being is outstanding and a strength of the setting. Teachers and support staff ensure that all children, including the youngest, enjoy very positive relationships with adults and form secure emotional attachments. As they grow older, this support is maintained, and the range of activities expands appropriately. Children are very happy at school and settle quickly to their daily routines. They trust all the adults in school and enjoy being with them. In

accordance with the aims of the school, children are nurtured and encouraged to learn and develop both academically and socially. High standards of behaviour are expected and adults help children to understand why it is important to listen to others, to show respect, to share and take turns.

- 6.7 Children understand the importance of physical activity and enjoy playing outside, going down the slide, developing their football skills and swimming. Nutritious morning snacks and afternoon tea are prepared by catering staff, water is available throughout the day and children enjoy healthy lunches. Hand-washing routines have improved since the previous inspection and children clearly understand why they need to wash their hands before cooking and eating. Children are encouraged to become independent at appropriate stages of their development and most can confidently manage their own personal hygiene by the age of three.
- 6.8 Arrangements for transition are excellent. There are regular opportunities for the youngest children to have tea with older children. Joint activities such as snack, lunch and shared play times provide good opportunities for children in the other age groups and their teachers to spend time together. Children are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

6.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 6.9 Governance, leadership and management are good. The board of trustees take an interest in the early years setting and are kept informed of developments but there is an identified need to add specific experience in this area.
- 6.10 Leadership and management ensure that the setting is welcoming, safe and stimulating. Educational programmes are overseen effectively. During the inspection the school responded quickly to remedy shortcomings identified in some welfare policies. Supervision is carefully provided. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are adequately met. All staff have received full child protection training and understand health and safety procedures. Teachers trained in paediatric first aid ensure children's medical needs are dealt with effectively.
- 6.11 Policies are reviewed and updated and staff meet formally once each term and informally more frequently. A detailed development plan highlights agreed priorities and key features and includes success criteria. Systems to monitor planning and assessment, the development of which was a recommendation at the previous inspection, are not yet consistently applied to ensure that best practice within the school is shared and fully embedded in all areas. A very effective pupil monitoring and reporting system in Reception allows parents immediate access to their children's progress in school. The school is looking at ways to extend this to other areas of the EYFS.
- 6.12 An annual system of staff appraisal encourages teachers to set themselves targets and to engage in continuous professional development. The recommendation from the previous inspection to increase opportunities for staff to develop and improve their knowledge, particularly of outdoor provision and learning, has been addressed successfully. A positive and effective partnership has been established with parents, the local authority and other external agencies to ensure children receive the support that they need.

6.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 6.13 The quality and standards of the early years provision are good. Since the previous inspection staff have improved planning and have developed their knowledge of learning outside to make better use of outdoor facilities. A member of staff has designated responsibility for continuing the development of outdoor learning.
- 6.14 Children, including those with special needs, make good progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage of their education, extremely so in their emotional development. Children are highly confident and relate very well to adults. They are articulate, and they listen attentively to their teachers and each other. The youngest children can push wheeled toys confidently, shake, roll and manipulate small toys. One-year-olds can sit together and listen carefully to adults, they can choose solid shapes and place them on top of each other to build a tower. Two-year-olds show an interest in the way musical instruments make sound and enjoy experimenting with colours and marks. The Nursery children can order numbers 1 to 10 and can say one more than a given number, they can anticipate key events in stories and respond with comments and questions.
- 6.15 Children in Reception can order and use numbers to 20 while others can count in tens to 100. Most can blend sounds to read words and the most able can read high frequency words by sight. Many children are increasingly confident writing their first name, while the most able are beginning to write sentences independently and understand how to use a capital and a full stop. By the end of the Reception year most children reach expected levels of achievement while the more able exceed expectation in some areas.
- 6.16 Children are self-assured and confident, they trust adults at school and feel secure and happy. The requirements needed for the safeguarding and welfare of children have been met and there is a shared understanding and responsibility of how to protect children. Leadership and management of the setting have conducted some valuable evaluation of the practice to secure continuous improvement.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.17 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Section 2 includes any identified action the Early Years Foundation Stage is recommended to take in order to improve its provision.