



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
ST CHRISTOPHER'S SCHOOL**

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St Christopher's School

Full Name of School	St Christopher's School
DfE Number	936/6028
Registered Charity Number	312045
Address	St Christopher's School 6 Downs Road Epsom Surrey KT18 5HE
Telephone Number	01372 721807
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Email Address	a.gordon@st-christophers.surrey.sch.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Annie Thackray
Chair of Governors	Mrs Caroline Smart
Age Range	2³/₄ to 7
Total Number of Pupils	168
Gender of Pupils	Boys and Girls (87 boys; 81 girls)
Numbers by Age	2-5 (EYFS): 96 5-7: 72
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls
Inspection Dates	09 to 12 Feb 2016

PREFACE

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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations 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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI standard inspection was in March 2010.

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 children aged under two), 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 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 to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Karen Williams	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Kathryn Stokes	Team Inspector (Headteacher, ISA school)
Mrs Angela Russell	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Christopher's School is a co-educational pre-preparatory school for children aged between 3 and 7 years. Founded in 1938, the school occupies a large residential house in Epsom, which has been extensively modernised and extended. The school was established as a charitable trust in 1965 and is administered by a board of eight governors, many of whom are parents of former pupils.
- 1.2 The school admits pupils aged from 2¾ to 7 years. At the time of the inspection 168 pupils were on roll (87 boys and 81 girls). Of these, 96 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and 72 in Years 1 and 2. The school is made up of two sections, the Nursery and the Pre-Prep, which includes the Reception classes.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the school is above the national average. The school has identified four children as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive support. Thirty-one children have English as an additional language (EAL), none of whom receives support. No pupil has an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 The pupils come from the local area and move to local independent and maintained schools at the end of their time at St Christopher's. The large majority are of white British origin.
- 1.5 The school aims to create a happy and purposeful environment that provides every child with a broad and challenging education within a caring and secure family context. It seeks to promote mutual respect and understanding, co-operation and tolerance of others, and to place a strong emphasis on high standards of manners and good behaviour. By building a partnership with parents and guardians, the school aims to make the transition from home to school as easy as possible for all children, to ensure that positive attitudes develop as they begin their education.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school from Reception and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the Nursery and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Sparkling Stars	Nursery (2¾ to 3 years)
Stars	Nursery (3 to 3½ years)
Earth/Moon/Sky/Sun	Nursery (3½ to 4 years)

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in achieving its aim of providing its pupils with the best possible start to their education. Pupils attain high standards across the curriculum and enjoy considerable success in their extra-curricular endeavours. Pupils of all ages apply their skills, knowledge and understanding in literacy and numeracy with confidence in a wide range of contexts, and display mature attitudes to learning. They are reflective and determined learners who rise eagerly to a challenge. The wide-ranging curriculum offers a wealth of opportunities for pupils to learn and achieve. The previous inspection recommendation to increase challenge and high expectations has been met, and challenge opportunities permeate the school day. Opportunities for independent learning abound, although children in the EYFS do not yet initiate these in the outdoor environment. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is not currently embedded across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2. The teaching is excellent and is characterised by detailed planning and assessment which ensure that pupils' needs and achievements are taken into account, and pupils of all ages and abilities make excellent progress.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent through the school. They are extremely sociable and take on considerable levels of responsibility with confidence and pride. They are highly independent, although opportunities for all children in the EYFS to develop their independence at snack times are limited. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent and facilitate the swift resolution of any difficulties. The school has effective measures in place to prevent bullying and to promote good behaviour, and its thorough knowledge of its pupils ensures a highly personal level of support and guidance. Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are excellent.
- 2.3 Governance of the school is excellent. The governing body is highly effective in its oversight of the school and the achievement of its aims. Governors are well known to pupils, staff and parents, who value their involvement and support highly, and they monitor the policies, development planning and safeguarding procedures of the school with diligence and care. Leadership and management are excellent throughout the school. Knowledgeable and dedicated leaders provide clear educational direction and constantly seek to improve the school. They ensure that high quality staff are recruited and well supported in order to provide high quality teaching. A recommendation at the time of the previous inspection was to extend the monitoring of teaching and learning with a focus on challenge and high expectations, and this has been fully achieved throughout the school. Relationships with parents are excellent, although a few feel that the school does not provide them with enough information about their children's progress, for example through formal meetings. Inspection found that this is an area for the school to develop further.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that the use of ICT is embedded across Years 1 and 2.
2. Extend formal occasions for parents to discuss the pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2.
3. Develop opportunities for children in the EYFS to create their own problem-solving activities when outdoors.

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 excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims to give all children a thorough grounding in literacy and numeracy skills, enabling them to make the best possible progress and to become successful lifelong learners.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS apply themselves with energy and enthusiasm, and thoroughly enjoy their learning. Children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points, including those with SEND or EAL and the more able. By the end of Reception, the Early Learning Goals are achieved by most children and exceeded by many.
- 3.4 Children in the EYFS are active learners who concentrate well, have their own ideas, investigate and think very creatively. They are competent mathematicians, working out one or two more than, as well as one or two fewer than, a given number. They recognise two-dimensional shapes and describe the properties of both these and three-dimensional shapes. Through the many opportunities provided to read and write, they use high level knowledge of the sounds that letters make to read complex words and write in detail, using finger spaces and full stops. Younger children make marks to represent words, for example when pretending to check cars in at a garage.
- 3.5 Children use knives and forks with expertise, mastered their scissor-cutting skills when making a lantern and carefully brushed egg on a spring roll pastry wrapper. In music lessons they concentrated extremely well, using their understanding of high, middle and low notes to sort instruments by sound. Children understand simple ICT, using a tablet computer with skill to play a game and an interactive whiteboard to create their own drawings.
- 3.6 Older pupils display advanced levels of skill, knowledge and understanding in all subjects, achieving notable success in school and the wider educational world. Pupils display extremely well-developed skills of speaking and listening, and use their reading and writing skills effectively across the curriculum. They apply high level mathematical skills to a number of subjects, building on the confidence inspired by the teaching's 'can do' philosophy, and demonstrate the ability to work independently and creatively through the regular provision of challenge activities in their lessons.
- 3.7 Pupils achieve at a high level in creative subjects. They gain valuable experience at the school's music festival and take part in The Barbican's biannual Discover Concerts, at which their skills allow them to participate in workshops designed for much older pupils. Pupils sing in harmony with confidence and the school orchestra plays with maturity and musicality. The pupils' artwork displayed around the school is exceptional, and the school enjoyed recent success in a national art competition, winning first prize for group work in the textiles section and other individual awards. Excellent teaching and strong subject leadership have been crucial to these high levels of achievement. Pupils achieve well in sporting activities against other schools and in their lessons. In a fund-raising event for Sport Relief, even the youngest children ran a mile around the school grounds.

- 3.8 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative national statistics are available. Attainment is excellent. In recent years, results in national tests at the age of 7 have been well above the national average for maintained primary schools, and were exceptional in reading in 2014. Evidence gained through work scrutiny, lesson observations and examination of work displayed in school demonstrated particularly high standards of achievement in speaking, listening, writing and mathematics.
- 3.9 These results, together with inspection evidence, show that pupils of all ages make excellent progress. Progress in literacy is rapid, promoted by the school's structured programme. The development of skills, knowledge and understanding over time is evident in pupils' work and the school's detailed records of pupils' attainments. Pupils who have SEND or EAL make excellent progress through careful consideration of their specific needs in lessons and small group work. More able pupils make excellent progress in response to the challenge culture that permeates the classrooms and extension activities, and this is reflected in the high number of pupils gaining places at local selective schools.
- 3.10 Pupils are highly motivated and engaged learners. They move with remarkable speed and efficiency around the school, eager to get to the next lesson as quickly as possible. Pupils work collaboratively with their peers, and relish opportunities to engage in challenge and independent activities. They present their work well, are highly organised and use resources effectively in their lessons. Pupils demonstrate sophisticated reasoning skills, such as when deciding why a common means of measuring weight is necessary, and display perseverance when tackling problems in the classroom or clubs.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.12 At all ages, the school is successful in meeting its aim of providing a broad and challenging education. Children in the EYFS are provided with an excellent range of indoor and outdoor educational programmes. These include a wide variety of contexts in which they can develop new skills whilst working alone, in pairs or as a group. All children, including those with SEND or EAL and the more able, are provided with appropriate opportunities to do well, so that they reach at least expected levels of development and are ready for the next stage in their learning. As a response to the recommendation from the previous inspection, children in Reception now have many different opportunities to record their work.
- 3.13 Excellent provision enables children to become active learners, to investigate and to explore. Children benefit from weekly French lessons and specialist teaching is provided for music, art, ICT and physical education (PE). Children of all ages are introduced to the work of a famous artist each term and follow the same style when making their own creations.
- 3.14 The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 covers all the required areas of learning and is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. It does not undermine the key features of Britishness such as democracy and the rule of law. The introduction of lessons in which pupils throughout the school are taught with children of similar abilities in a programme that focuses on the sounds that letters make has increased the pupils' enjoyment and raised standards in literacy; a complementary impact has been made by the implementation of daily practical mathematics lessons. Pupils are provided

with many opportunities to reflect, and the school ensures that there is a balanced presentation of opposing views in all contexts.

- 3.15 The programme for subjects such as history and geography uses a broad cross-curricular approach and provides opportunities for pupils to engage in independent learning. The pupils' aesthetic development is fostered to a high level in music and art, whilst philosophy lessons support their personal development, which is of a high standard across the school. Pupils undertake a range of physical education activities that develop and enhance their sporting skills. French is taught as a discrete subject and develops the pupils' speaking, listening and comprehension skills. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop and apply their skills in ICT lessons although this is not consistently embedded across all subject areas.
- 3.16 The school delivers its comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme through weekly lessons, reflecting its aims and ethos. The programme encourages respect for other people.
- 3.17 The curriculum provides suitable levels of challenge for those of all abilities and requires pupils to use their initiative and independence. Pupils have opportunities to work as individuals and collaboratively, and to engage in extension activities. Problem-solving tasks ensure the application of skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers set homework activities that support the curriculum and which are valued by both pupils and their parents.
- 3.18 The provision of extra-curricular activities is excellent for pupils of all ages, and includes rugby, football, cooking, orchestra, messy play, 'tiny tennis', chess, sewing and challenge to succeed. Pupils demonstrate great enthusiasm for these activities, attendance is high and achievement is comparable with that attained in lessons.
- 3.19 The curriculum is enhanced throughout the school by a wide variety of educational visits to places such as a farm, a postal sorting office, local gardens and theatres, as well as to museums and historic sites further afield. In Year 2, pupils have the opportunity to attend a residential trip in the summer term. Pupils undertake visits in their local community, including to a church, a library and a nursing home, and to see the mayor, and speak enthusiastically about their trips. Visitors to the school strengthen the curriculum by providing excellent opportunities for pupils of every age to develop an understanding of the local community. Pupils are involved in many charitable events that enhance their awareness of the wider community.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.20 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.21 Enthusiastic and diligent staff in the EYFS maintain strong relationships with the children as they teach them and support their learning. High expectations enthuse the children and motivate them to learn. The children's speaking and listening skills are developed through regularly engaging with adults in meaningful conversation. As a response to the recommendation from the previous inspection, provision for different levels of ability is now clearly demonstrated in the teachers' weekly planning and in lessons.
- 3.22 Knowledgeable staff actively promote the learning and development of each child. Highly informative assessment and tracking provide clear information, enabling excellent plans to be made which take children's individual interests into account. Progress and achievement, as well as the next steps in learning, are recorded in detail in comprehensive learning folders and on tracking sheets.
- 3.23 Teachers in the EYFS make excellent use of high quality resources to extend writing in the role-play areas, encouraging children to write with meaning. Resources are used well to enable children to develop a range of skills, although they do not have enough opportunities to initiate problem-solving activities for themselves outdoors.
- 3.24 Teachers throughout the school are well supported by knowledgeable assistants who provide excellent support with activities and in lessons. Specialist teachers provide lessons that are appropriate to the age of the pupils, helping them to make excellent progress. High quality displays of pupils' work in the classroom and around the school contribute to the attractive and stimulating environment, and pupils are extremely happy and proud when their work is on show.
- 3.25 Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is highly effective in promoting progress and supports the aims of the school. Clear learning objectives, excellent subject knowledge and brisk pace ensure that pupils are focused in their lessons and maintain sustained concentration. The teachers' enthusiasm and strong rapport with their pupils create a highly productive learning environment in which pupils can flourish. The recommendation from the previous inspection to focus on challenge and high expectations has been met. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and set challenging activities and tasks on a daily basis.
- 3.26 Teaching is characterised by detailed and responsive planning, based on a thorough knowledge and understanding of the needs of individual pupils. Daily and weekly plans are annotated and adapted to guide future planning, ensuring that targets and the next steps in learning are closely linked to the needs of individual pupils. Pupils of all ability levels are provided with appropriately high challenges and, where appropriate, extension activities that encourage independent learning and critical thinking. Supportive and encouraging teaching gives pupils the confidence to persevere when they find new concepts challenging, and support staff facilitate progress in pupils of all ability levels, including those with SEND or EAL and the most able.
- 3.27 A broad range of teaching methods, including stimulating class discussions, supported by open-ended questioning, develops a mature approach to learning in pupils. They are encouraged to think independently and to question readily, identifying issues such as 'Is competition a good thing?' as worthy of debate and reflecting on the question with maturity. Collaborative tasks foster high levels of

enjoyment and give pupils opportunities to explore and experiment within their lessons, such as when asked to investigate the most effective way to insulate a penguin. Teaching promotes tolerance and respect, and is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues when they arise.

- 3.28 Behaviour management is of a very high standard and is based on the strong mutual respect between teachers and pupils. Pupils are confident to take risks with their learning because they feel secure in their learning environment. Engaging teaching ensures that pupils maintain sustained levels of concentration and are very attentive during lessons and whole-school events, including assemblies. Resources of high quality are used creatively and appropriately to promote learning.
- 3.29 Marking is carried out in line with the school's policy. It is detailed, accurate and constructive, confirming pupils' achievements in relation to expectations and identifying the next steps in their learning. Assessment is carried out during the course of lessons, when marking written work and through the use of formal tests. Pupils of all ability levels are set aspirational targets, and written and oral feedback enables constructive dialogue between teachers and pupils. Pupils undertake self- and peer assessment through regular opportunities to reflect upon their own learning and evaluate their work. Termly assessments in literacy, numeracy and science are recorded on the school's tracking system, and every pupil's progress is discussed in termly tracking 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 the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is highly successful in achieving its aim of encouraging mutual respect, co-operation and tolerance of others. It takes active steps to promote both the personal development of the pupils and their understanding of the shared values, such as individual freedom and personal responsibility, which characterise Britishness. Pupils develop an excellent standard of personal development by the time they move on to the next stage of their education, displaying unusually high levels of self-assurance and resilience.
- 4.3 The spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. In the EYFS, children are confident and independent, for example when changing for PE and in their personal hygiene and self-care. Older pupils are confident and emotionally mature, demonstrating the capacity to reflect. They enjoy celebrating their personal successes and share in those of their friends. They display remarkable resilience and a natural readiness to believe in their own abilities when tackling new challenges. Pupils are quick to appreciate non-material aspects of life, and the St Christopher's books, which chart their journey through the school, are highly valued as a reminder of all they have achieved both academically and personally.
- 4.4 Moral development is excellent. Pupils have a mature appreciation of right and wrong, as demonstrated in the classroom rules they devise themselves and their storytelling. Children in the EYFS have a clear opinion about what is fair or unfair and find ways to resolve conflicts in areas such as sharing toys. The overwhelming majority of parents stated in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire that the school achieves high standards of behaviour, and this was confirmed by observations during the inspection. Pupils have a great regard for good behaviour and are keen to ensure that their classroom rules are adhered to. They gain an awareness of the criminal and civil law of England through their PSHEE lessons, and take pride when rewarded for good behaviour.
- 4.5 The pupils' social awareness is excellent, and they are highly sociable and confident with adults and their peers. Older pupils enjoy an unusually wide range of responsibilities in school, including as house captains, heads of school, class monitors and school councillors, and carry out their duties with pride and diligence, making the most of such opportunities to use their initiative. Pupils gain a knowledge of public institutions and services in England through visitors to the school and regular contact with the town hall. They support a wide range of charities and are keen to hear from their representatives how their donations have been put to good use.
- 4.6 Pupils have an advanced awareness of the democratic process through the school council, opportunities to vote for those in positions of responsibility, and the mini election. Reception children help to make decisions when making plans for the role-play area, and when representing their class on the council; their opinions are valued. They vote for jobs in class and take their responsibilities seriously. When political issues arise, the school is assiduous in explaining that people may hold differing views.

- 4.7 Cultural development is excellent. Children in the EYFS learn about those who come from different backgrounds and cultures in many ways, develop a respect for other traditions, and appreciate their similarities and differences. Pupils of all ages benefit from numerous visits from parents and other visitors who inform them about other cultures and countries. The curriculum enables pupils to learn about Western cultural traditions and to understand and value cultures that differ from their own, including a study of life in an African village. The school's community includes pupils from many different countries, and pupils relish the opportunity to share their knowledge and learn from their peers about other cultures, engendering a genuine respect for others, regardless of background or personal characteristics.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school fulfils its aim of creating a caring and secure family environment, with a strong emphasis on manners and good behaviour. Pupils feel safe, both physically and emotionally. Relationships throughout the school community are universally positive, and the school provides a high level of personal support and guidance for its pupils. At all levels of the school, including the EYFS, staff know their pupils well. Each child in the EYFS has a key person who provides excellent support; Nursery children meet with their key person at the start of the day, strengthening the bond between adult and child.
- 4.10 Pupils of all ages are encouraged to keep themselves healthy and active. The younger children take part in a daily outdoor exercise routine. In the EYFS, children are provided with fruit and a choice of milk or water for snacks and healthy food at lunchtime. They know that fruit and vegetables are good for them and understand that they must wash their hands to stop the spreading of germs. For older pupils, healthy eating and exercise are promoted effectively through the PSHEE and physical education programmes. School meals are nutritious and varied. Pupils enjoy their lunchtimes, and are encouraged to make healthy choices by staff in both the kitchen and dining room. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.11 The school has measures in place to promote good behaviour, which are implemented consistently and effectively at all levels. Regular reviews ensure that strategies meet the needs of the pupils, and parents' questionnaire responses strongly confirmed the success of the school in promoting good behaviour. The school takes great care to guard pupils against bullying, including cyber-bullying. Pupils know that bullying is unacceptable and report instances of unkindness swiftly. Questionnaire responses showed that a few parents across the school feel that the school does not deal with bullying effectively. Inspectors examined the school's anti-bullying procedures and records, and found these to be thorough and diligently applied. Pupils told inspectors that bullying "never happens" and parents reported that any cases of unkindness are dealt with effectively.
- 4.12 The school is effective in securing the views of the pupils. It has an extremely well-developed school council whose members are proud of their achievements in ensuring that pupils' views are heard. Elected members aged from 4 to 7 years have communicated with the local authority about parking, interviewed the chair of governors and catering manager, produced a video about the school for the website and influenced the timing of the appointment of playground monitors.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 At all levels of the school, the arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils, visitors and staff are comprehensive and highly effective, and managed with great care and diligence, including in the EYFS. The arrangements take proper account of specific needs of the pupils. The school's safeguarding arrangements have regard to official guidance and are up to date. All staff are trained in safeguarding, health and safety when they start work, and at regular intervals thereafter. Those designated as having lead roles for safeguarding are trained at the appropriate level and intervals; suitable records of training are kept. As a result, adults are alert to possible risks that the pupils may face; staff have had training to recognise and protect children from extremist views. Appointment procedures follow safer recruitment guidance, and all checks are carried out meticulously and in a timely manner. The single central record of appointments is accurate.
- 4.15 The school takes appropriate steps to care for pupils who are injured or become unwell. Accidents, and medicines given, are carefully recorded and parents are informed. Most staff are trained in the delivery of first aid, including paediatric first aid, and the school provides an appropriate space for pupils who are injured or ill to be treated and to recover. Parents inform staff of any specific dietary or medical requirements necessary for their children. These are known by staff, and provision is made as necessary.
- 4.16 The school has rigorous measures in place to ensure safety from fire and other hazards. Signs are clear throughout the school and equipment is regularly serviced by an outside agency. Visitors to the school are informed as to evacuation procedures and fire drills are carried out on a termly basis. Risk assessments are carried out for the indoor and outdoor areas of the school site as well as for off-site trips and visits. Assessments are reviewed regularly and updated promptly if required. Where potential risks are identified, steps are taken swiftly to reduce them.
- 4.17 The admission and attendance registers meet requirements and are correctly maintained and stored. The pupils' attendance across the school is monitored very carefully, with parents being contacted quickly when absence is reported; procedures at the start and end of the day are in place to keep pupils safe.

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 governing body exercises highly effective oversight of the school, including the EYFS, playing a significant role in the achievements of its aims. Drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, the governors have many and varied areas of expertise that are used to the full in their support of the school. Focus groups of governors ensure high standards of financial planning, safeguarding, and health and safety, and careful management of resources has enabled the school to invest substantially in accommodation, equipment and high quality staff since the previous inspection.
- 5.3 Governors have an exceptional level of involvement in the life of the whole school. They make regular visits to the school, focusing on their individual areas of interest, the monitoring of policy implementation and the school's safeguarding procedures. They are well known to staff, parents and pupils, who feel able to communicate freely with them.
- 5.4 Governors play a key role in school improvement, reviewing the development plan termly with management, and providing an invaluable combination of support and challenge to leadership. New governors follow a comprehensive induction programme, and all governors undergo a wide range of training and updating in various aspects of school life, including safeguarding.
- 5.5 The governing body reviews school policies in turn, and ensures that the annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements is carried out. Regular updating and reviewing of procedures and implementation ensure that the school actively promotes the well-being of the pupils. Governors are conscientious in ensuring that the school meets the statutory requirements.

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 excellent.
- 5.7 Leaders and managers at all levels are highly successful in promoting the aims of the school. Leaders contribute a wealth of knowledge and experience to the school, ensuring thorough review and monitoring of all aspects of provision. A commitment to the provision of an excellent and broad education within a secure family environment is evident, and excellent relationships are maintained with parents. Respect for others and for British values such as democracy and the rule of law are embedded in the school's ethos and strongly promoted throughout the school. The leadership at all levels, including the EYFS, is effective in implementing the school's policies, and in promoting the safeguarding of the pupils.
- 5.8 Leaders provide clear educational direction. The school seeks to make learning irresistible to its pupils, and the introduction of a new system of curriculum planning and educational initiatives, such as a new programme to develop pupils' skills in literacy, has done much to ensure that this is the case. As a result, the academic outcomes for all pupils, including those with particular needs, are excellent. An

emphasis on the importance of literacy and numeracy in the curriculum is balanced by a commitment to provide a broad range of experiences and to enable pupils to achieve at the highest levels possible in all subjects. A strong focus on the building of pupils' self-esteem ensures excellent personal development and preparedness for the next stage of the pupils' education.

- 5.9 The school's leadership takes care to ensure that it has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Self-evaluation is a strength and a key contributor to the school's high outcomes. One of the recommendations at the time of the previous inspection was to extend the monitoring of teaching with a focus on challenge and high expectations. Changes to planning, lesson observation and work scrutiny programmes have ensured that this has been achieved. Challenge activities are an integral part of planning and teaching throughout the school, and pupils of all ages and abilities respond eagerly to the high expectations of their teachers. Subject co-ordinators, together with the senior management team, monitor their subjects effectively, tracking pupil progress and using academic data efficiently. As a result, lesson planning is regularly monitored and reviewed, ensuring continuity and progression. In the EYFS, staff meet together regularly to evaluate the provision, discuss their plans for the future and set clear targets, enabling continuous improvement.
- 5.10 The school's development plan is rooted in the findings of self-evaluation. It is ambitious and well managed, initiating continuous improvements in accommodation and resources, the curriculum, teaching and pupils' personal development. The involvement of staff and governors in the devising, implementation and monitoring of the plan ensures the commitment of the whole community. The implementation of plans is successful because new projects and ideas are considered in terms of their impact on the school and cost. Careful monitoring of implementation means that initiatives are completed on schedule and their impact is evaluated.
- 5.11 Management is successful in recruiting, supporting, developing and motivating high quality staff. Staff are appropriately checked for their suitability to work with children, and induction procedures are thorough and timely. Staff, including those in the EYFS, are encouraged to engage in continuous professional development, both in school and through externally provided courses. They share the knowledge they have gained with others in school, and many new initiatives across the school have come about following such individual training.
- 5.12 The school has an effective appraisal process in place, closely linked to professional development. The peer mentoring scheme introduced at the time of the previous inspection has developed well, in line with the relevant recommendation, and a new system of peer observations is in the early stages of implementation, but already highly valued by both leadership and teachers.
- 5.13 The school maintains highly effective links with parents, carers and guardians, in accordance with its aims. The positive and co-operative relationship between parents and school helps to create an extremely strong sense of school community and family, which parents value highly. In questionnaire responses the overwhelming majority of parents were very pleased with the progress their children make, and felt that there are high standards of behaviour and that their children feel happy and safe at school. This was confirmed in discussions with inspectors, where parents were extremely positive in their praise of the work of the whole school.

- 5.14 The school communicates openly with parents in many ways, ensuring that there is an extremely strong relationship between school and home. From the time their children join the school excellent links are established with parents, who feel fully involved in events and other aspects of school life and find that information and policies are readily available. The school has an appropriate complaints procedure that is available to parents. It handles concerns with care and all are dealt with swiftly. An annual questionnaire sent out by the leadership and a parent forum provide useful information about parents' views.
- 5.15 Parents throughout the school have excellent opportunities to be involved in the work of their children and are kept well informed about their progress and achievement. They receive valuable information through parents' evenings, and pupils share and celebrate their work with their parents at an annual open morning. Well-used home-school books facilitate daily contact. Staff are always available to meet with parents, enabling strong communication, and parents feel able to contact staff whenever there is a need. Parents receive clear and highly informative reports on their children's progress and achievement, including information about next steps in learning. Parents value the fact that staff know their children extremely well. Pupils with SEND or who are more able receive excellent support as a result of a strong and effective partnership between the school, parents, the local authority and outside agencies.
- 5.16 Questionnaire responses showed that a few parents do not feel that they are given sufficient information about their children's progress. Inspectors examined the school's current programme of reporting to parents and found that written reports are timely and provide detailed and constructive information about pupils' progress. However, following discussion with leadership and parents, inspectors found that whilst staff are readily available to communicate with parents, there are too few formal opportunities for parents to meet with teachers.
- 5.17 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all required information. The interactive school website gives parents instant access to information, forms and school policies, as well as the headteacher's blog and weekly menus. Information evenings are held for each year group, enabling parents to be fully informed about plans for the coming year. In addition to the comprehensive website, a helpful prospectus, open days and tours with the headteacher help the parents of prospective pupils to gain a greater understanding of the school and its community.

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