



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

HEATHCOTE SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Heathcote School

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|------------------------|---|
| Full Name of School | Heathcote School |
| DfE Number | 881/6018 |
| EYFS Number | EY 415100 |
| Address | Heathcote School Eves Corner 1 Little Baddow Road Danbury Chelmsford Essex CM3 4QB |
| Telephone Number | 01245 223131 |
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| Email Address | enquiries@heathcoteschool.co.uk |
| Head | Miss Hannah Petersen |
| Chair of Governors | Mr David Cull |
| Age Range | 2 to 11 |
| Total Number of Pupils | 104 |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (48 boys; 56 girls) |
| Numbers by Age | 0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11 83 3-5 (EYFS): 21 |
| Number of Day Pupils | Total: 104 |
| EYFS Gender | Mixed |
| Inspection dates | 24 Sep 2013 to 27 Sep 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 June 2008.

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.

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 proprietors' representative, 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 Adrian Palmer

Mr Nicholas Rees

Mr Richard Balding

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Heathcote School is an independent day school for boys and girls in the village of Danbury, Essex, for pupils aged from two to eleven years. The school was founded in 1935 by the Heath family. There have been major changes in the nature of the school since the previous inspection and during this period the school has experienced a complex recent history. In 2009 the school was sold to the Prowting Trust, which has three directors, and the current head teacher was appointed in April 2012. Since the previous inspection the management structure within the school has also changed.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, there were 104 pupils on the roll, of whom 48 were boys and 56 girls. There were 21 children in the EYFS, and of these, nine were under the age of three. There were 40 pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2, and 43 pupils were in Years 3 to 6. Boys and girls are of equivalent numbers. There were 9 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), none of whom has a statement of special educational needs. No pupils use English as an additional language (EAL). Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and most of them live within a 15-mile radius of the school. The ability profile of the pupils is above the average ability for pupils in the maintained sector.
- 1.3 The school aims to provide all of its pupils with an environment where they will feel secure and well cared for, to enable them to become confident and compassionate citizens, prepared to make positive independent choices. It seeks to embed the ethos of the school. It strives to develop a love of learning in all pupils, so that they learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. The pupils are encouraged to grow into positive, responsible young people who develop knowledge and skills in order to achieve their full potential.
- 1.4 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| School | NC name |
| Nursery | Nursery |
| Pre-School | Nursery |
| Reception | Reception |

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Heathcote School fulfils its aims well. Pupils' achievements, including those in EYFS, are excellent and their attitudes to learning are good. Pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding strongly in many subject areas as well as in the extra-curricular programme. Pupils are articulate and talk enthusiastically on a number of topics often using complex vocabulary. However, the provision for those pupils with SEND and those on the highly able spectrum is not yet fully developed. Teaching is excellent overall, with teachers demonstrating strong subject knowledge. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They apply themselves well in lessons and the excellent behaviour and very good relationships with each other and their teachers enable positive learning to take place and good progress to be made. The broad curriculum, supplemented by a range of extra-curricular activities, is effective in its coverage of all areas of learning and enables pupils to be well prepared for life beyond Heathcote.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development and arrangements for pastoral care, welfare, health and safety are excellent. Pupils are self-confident and self-aware, showing well-developed emotional maturity. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and their behaviour is of a very high quality. Pupils show respect for one another and are always courteous and considerate in their dealings with other pupils and with adults. The excellent care shown by the staff supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness extremely well. The quality of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is also excellent and supports the pupils very effectively. The safeguarding of pupils is a high priority for the school.
- 2.3 Governance and leadership are good and EYFS leadership is outstanding. The directors are supportive of the head teacher and are well known to the staff. They provide strong financial support to the school and carry out their legal and regulatory obligations well. The directors are diligent in ensuring that those working with pupils are suitably checked through robust recruitment procedures. The quality of leadership from the head teacher is excellent and she is well supported by a small but effective senior management team. However, the role of the subject coordinators is currently not clearly or formally defined and as a result monitoring of standards across the school is not consistent. Links with parents are excellent and the very supportive and appreciative comments in many of the pre-inspection questionnaire responses illustrate that they are very happy with the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Formalise the role of curriculum managers to ensure that they are accountable for monitoring of standards in their subject areas.
 2. Develop effective strategies to ensure that the needs of those pupils with SEND and those who are highly able are being fully met.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims of enabling them to become confident and compassionate citizens, prepared to make positive independent choices.
- 3.3 Pupils are articulate and talk enthusiastically on a range of topics. They listen to their teachers carefully and work very well both on individual tasks and when working in pairs and small groups. They happily share ideas and listen to each other's point of view. Their literacy skills are very well developed and they use an appropriate range of vocabulary when discussing issues, giving reasons for their views. They show highly developed reasoning skills and are becoming more independent in their learning.
- 3.4 By the age of 11, pupils' achievement overall is good in relation to their ability and all of the pupils transfer to appropriate local secondary schools, assisted by the advice, guidance and preparation given by the school. The pupils have opportunities to compete against other schools in a variety of sports and take part in regional competitions, in which they acquit themselves well. Pupils have had a number of successes in national art competitions.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national norm, but on the evidence available during the inspection, it is in line with expectations based on the ability of the pupils. Pupils study a broad, balanced curriculum which allows them to develop their independent thinking, analytical and problem-solving skills.
- 3.6 Pupils make good progress relative to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND generally achieve at a level that is commensurate with their abilities, however, this is not fully consistent. Those pupils who are recognised as being highly able are rarely challenged beyond the content in the lesson. The school has effective tracking systems in place to assess the progress that the pupils are making and make use of the optional National Curriculum tests and this year are re-introducing the national tests for those pupils at the end of Year 6.
- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Their exemplary behaviour in lessons and positive relationships with each other and their teachers enable good learning to take place. They apply themselves extremely well to their learning and persevere in their tasks as was clearly demonstrated in a mathematics lesson where the pupils were investigating the relationship between the surface areas of cubes of a variety of sizes. Pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding well and thoroughly enjoy doing so, as was seen during the inspection when exploring insulation in a science lesson.

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

- 3.8 The quality of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The school offers a broad curriculum which is effective in its coverage of all areas of learning. The school prides itself on catering for the whole child both academically and socially so that the pupils are well prepared for entry into secondary education

and once they have the skills, knowledge and understanding to make appropriate progress.

- 3.10 Pupils from Reception to Year 3 are largely taught by one teacher, with specialists for music, physical education (PE) and games. Subject leaders enhance provision in the teaching of all subjects from Year 4 to Year 6. Creative, expressive and practical subjects are central to the curriculum and the pupils consider the lessons to be fun and report that they make rapid progress, which the findings of the inspection support.
- 3.11 The curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs and is generally successful in supporting the school's aims to provide access and opportunity for all those who attend the school. Schemes of work combine commercially produced ones with aspects of the national schemes, although plans do not always indicate how the work is differentiated in any real detail to support those with SEND or those identified as being highly able. Small class sizes ensure a personalised learning experience.
- 3.12 The delivery of the curriculum is enhanced by resources such as the science, music and information and communication technology rooms; facilities for PE and games are located close to the school and the newly refurbished art and design and technology room is well used. The newly refurbished library is well stocked with both fiction and non-fiction books. These specialist facilities improve access to the curriculum contributing in a positive way to its implementation.
- 3.13 The extra-curricular programme enables the school to meet its aims to broaden and develop aspects of social, spiritual and cultural experiences for pupils beyond the classroom. Some pupils reported in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses that there were too few activities but this is not reflected in parental comments or in the view of the inspection team. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. Clubs and activities include a variety of sports including triathlon and Tae Kwon Do and creative activities such as speech and drama, Dragon's Den, experimenters and choir. Individual sessions of piano and brass tuition are offered for an additional charge. Visitors to the school enhance curricular experience and pupils make visits to local museums, places of worship and participate in many local events, for example trips to an estate agent and the parish council offices. Cross-curricular links occur during events such as World Book Day.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 The high quality of teaching makes an effective contribution to the pupils' achievement and learning enabling them to make good progress. The key feature of the most successful lessons is the detailed planning which caters for the needs of all pupils and which enables all pupils in very small classes to make good progress, to think independently and apply themselves effectively to the task in hand. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching and adopt a variety of methods of teaching which keep the pupils interested and eager to learn in the lessons. In a small number of less successful lessons seen a lack of detailed planning, in particular in addressing the needs of those pupils with SEND and those who are highly able, led to the pupils losing focus and thereby not making the expected level of progress. Since the previous inspection and due to very small class sizes at the top of school the needs of those with SEND and those who are

highly able are addressed by the use of classroom assistants and no pupils are withdrawn for support lessons. The recommendation of the previous inspection report to increase opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning has been acted upon and this was confirmed in both the formal interviews and general discussions with many of the pupils during the inspection.

- 3.16 Classrooms contain resources of sound and, in some cases, good quality which teachers use appropriately to motivate pupils. Opportunities are sometimes missed to use the whiteboards and digital projectors to their full potential. The small, recently revamped science laboratory and music room along with the spacious and airy library have had a positive effect on the quality of teaching in those rooms.
- 3.17 The marking of pupils' work is generally undertaken in line with the recently introduced policy. Some marking is helpful in providing the pupils with suggestions as to how they can improve their work, although this is not yet fully integrated across all areas of the school. Pupils confirm in interviews that a significant amount of feedback is verbal and that they are expected to respond in writing to formal marking written in exercise books.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils are extremely self-aware and their high levels of confidence are developed through the many opportunities they have to lead house assemblies, take part in concerts and dramatic productions and in sporting and other local events and competitions. Weekly celebration assemblies observed by the inspection team focused on the celebration of achievements in art, good conduct, kindness and sharing and for schoolwork, including handwriting, which is a school focus at the present time. Pupils appreciate and are sensitive to the non-material aspects of life through discussions in class and through talks from a range of visiting speakers. The pupils were enthralled as they observed insulation materials through a digital microscope and they sing with passion. Many of the pupils are emotionally mature for their age, able to discuss issues beyond the average for their age group. They have a clear awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses.
- 4.3 Pupils show a high level of social development, which is clear in even the youngest pupils. Their behaviour is excellent throughout the school and they have a mature sense of right and wrong. They are kind and cooperative in the way they communicate with each other and with their teachers. They have strong opinions which lead to discussions for the promotion of fair play and equality. The pupils have a good understanding of global issues surrounding sustainability, through their own systems of recycling. The school is visited by the local police who assist the pupils' in developing their understanding of society. The pupils understand local and national services well.
- 4.4 Pupils willingly accept responsibility as class monitors and the head boy and girl are well respected and they are proud to contribute to the society of the school. Pupils are voted onto the school council and, following discussion with the staff, minutes of the meetings and of the decisions to requests are displayed in the school lobby. The school supports a number of charities both locally and overseas and helping the less fortunate is given priority such as the homeless and those affected by the disaster in Chernobyl.
- 4.5 Pupils have a good understanding of and respect for other faiths and cultures. Pupils study celebrations such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year and have opportunities to compare these cultures with those of the Western world, focusing on the many different aspects of their lives from food, clothing and health to education and working opportunities. Pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school with a wide range of skills to develop and apply to their knowledge and understanding of their own lives.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of the school's arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.7 Class teachers are primarily responsible for the pastoral well-being of the pupils and know their pupils extremely well. Pertinent information regarding a pupil is efficiently disseminated to all teaching staff via texts, email and notices in the staffroom. As the school is small, staff know all of the pupils very well and encourage the pupils to take advantage of the wide range of opportunities available. Relationships between

staff and pupils are therefore excellent and all staff are totally involved in supporting pupils with their work or in their relationships with others.

- 4.8 Healthy eating is encouraged through the choice of tuck and with the recently re-introduced hot lunches. Drinking water is available throughout the school. Pupils understand the benefits of regular exercise and the school's PE programme ensures that they have excellent opportunities to be healthy.
- 4.9 Staff are guided by comprehensive anti-bullying, discipline and behaviour policies. Pupils' excellent behaviour is rewarded with stars which accumulate towards house points. Pupils overwhelmingly reported in interview that bullying is not an issue and felt strongly that any unkind behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively. One pupil in Year 6 said 'I love it at this school because everyone is so nice!' In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire some pupils claim that teachers do not show concern regarding issues of bullying but this view was not supported in their interviews. Sanctions are used rarely but appropriate procedures are in place should the need arise.
- 4.10 There are opportunities in lessons for pupils to discuss issues and to share opinions. In their questionnaire responses a small number of pupils felt that the school does not always ask for their opinions on matters nor respond to them. The inspection team saw no evidence of this. Pupils articulate their views through the recently formed school council with minutes displayed on the school council board. Pupils care for each other, offering support during lessons and at play.

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

- 4.11 Arrangements to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.12 The school's arrangements for safeguarding take meticulous regard of relevant regulations and national guidance. They fully support the school's aim to provide an environment where the pupils feel safe and well cared for. All staff take part in a comprehensive programme of appropriate and regular training on the safeguarding of children. Recruitment procedures are carried out rigorously and all appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed.
- 4.13 Robust measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards, with thorough risk assessments covering all areas of school life, including outings. Regular fire drills are held and records kept. Health and safety procedures are reviewed and checked regularly. Electrical testing is regular and recorded.
- 4.14 Medical procedures for children are first class. Detailed records are kept of accidents and the dispensing of medicines. The first-aid policy is extremely detailed and the school has a large number of staff qualified in first aid, including many with paediatric certificates.
- 4.15 The admission and attendance records are completed and stored appropriately.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of the governance of the school is good.
- 5.2 Since the previous inspection there has been a change in ownership of the school and the board of directors is supportive of the school and its aim of providing all of its pupils with an environment where they feel secure and well cared for. They provide strong financial management and support in improving the fabric of the school. The board has formal, termly meetings with the head teacher and the bursar. The head teacher reports to the board and this ensures that they are well briefed on the day-to-day workings of the school. The head teacher is supported in the educational direction and standards of the school through an annual meeting with one of the directors at which agreed targets for development are discussed. Effective financial planning comes from the board and directors provide generous support for resources and accommodation. Since the previous inspection the school has significantly upgraded the science, art and music classrooms and has a spacious, light and well-stocked new library. The outdoor learning environment has also been improved for the children in EYFS, creating an all-weather, undercover area to facilitate outdoor learning and development. This also allows the children to safely free flow through all the designated Early Years rooms.
- 5.3 The board and school work effectively together to ensure that their legal responsibilities for child protection and health and safety are fully met. There is a standing agenda item on child protection and the record of the agendas and minutes of meetings clearly indicate that the directors take a corporate responsibility for reviewing the safeguarding arrangements in the school annually. The directors effectively fulfil their responsibilities for health and safety in the school. Although a number of the directors do visit the school to attend social events and are well known by both staff and pupils, the school and board are aware that directors need to become more involved in the daily life and work of the school in order to formalise their role of monitoring standards more rigorously. There is limited formal training for the directors.

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

- 5.4 The quality of the leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.5 Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant change which has seen a change in head teacher. The school is extremely well led and the head teacher is very highly regarded by both the staff and the parents. The school has a clear vision for the future direction of the school and the staff are all extremely supportive of this. Parents have commented positively on the work the head teacher and the re-structuring of senior management has enabled the leadership of the school to be effective in ensuring that the school meets its aims. These include providing all of its pupils with an environment where they feel secure and well cared for, to enable them to become confident and compassionate citizens.
- 5.6 In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection report the school has begun to develop the role of middle managers, who now have more ownership of

their subject areas. As yet, their role in monitoring and evaluating standards across the school is not fully developed and, although scrutiny of work takes place currently, this is not yet sufficiently systematic and robust to ensure more effective outcomes.

- 5.7 The deployment of staff is appropriate and leads to a positive teacher/pupil ratio in many classes. A clear and effective four-year development plan has helped the school to prioritise advances both of the site and in the quality and style of education provided. The plan is effectively reviewed on an annual basis. An informal appraisal system for all teaching staff is in place, although the lack of any self-review or linking of targets to future professional development limits the impact of this. The happiness, safeguarding and welfare, health and safety of the pupils are very high priorities in all the school does, with all staff trained appropriately. The welfare of pupils is discussed at every staff meeting and the whole staff are therefore very aware of on-going issues within the pupil body. The school has effective systems for checking the suitability of staff and governors. The accommodation is used imaginatively, with very creative and colourful displays around the school, celebrating pupils' work and also sharing pupils' targets. The school makes good use of the local swimming pool and the spacious playing fields across the road, which are used for games sessions and events such as the annual sports day.
- 5.8 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. The school has strengthened and changed the nature of them since the previous inspection so that now parents feel they play a more active part in the education of their children. The very strong links that begin and exist in the EYFS enable the good, stable relationships that develop between parents, the school and other parents to be maintained as their child progresses through the school. A majority of the parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, which shows that they are highly supportive and they are particularly happy with the way that their children are well cared for, that they feel safe and happy in school and that there is a broad range of subjects and extra-curricular areas of experience offered to all pupils. There were no significant concerns. All parents met during the inspection were highly supportive of the school.
- 5.9 Communication with parents is very strong and they are welcomed to a wide variety of school events. A comprehensive website and school prospectus provide all current and prospective parents with detailed information about the school and this is supplemented by the excellent leaflet '*Heathcote News*' that is published at regular intervals each term. EYFS parents have daily contact with the staff at drop-off and collection times and there is the opportunity throughout the school of two-way written communication through the home/school diary. Detailed written reports at the end of the year provide details of progress and advice on the way ahead and are valued highly by parents. The parent handbook provides details of what is required and the role parents are expected to play in the development of the child. The updated website, email and text messages that advise parents of immediate situations, particularly during snowy weather, are especially valued by parents. Parents are welcome at the school to attend a wide variety of events or help with trips.
- 5.10 The very active and successful Parent Teachers Association organises many different fund-raising and social events, with a visit to Father Christmas in his grotto in the school being one of the highlights. The success of these events has enabled many valuable resources to be purchased for the school.

- 5.11 Concerns of parents are handled carefully and sensitively and the close links with parents ensure that most difficulties are resolved informally and quickly. An appropriate complaints policy is available if required.

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 In meeting the needs of the range of children who attend, the provision is outstanding. Staff know the needs of each child extremely well and thus enable them to become increasingly more articulate and independent as they develop.
- 6.2 For children under three, the curriculum is based on developing their personal, physical and communication skills. They are able to show good motor skills as they use the climbing frame, hop, skip and use scissors to cut shapes. They have learned to make choices independently as they select activities at registration time, take turns, listen to and act upon instructions. For the over threes, the curriculum embraces all seven areas of learning and by the end of Reception, the majority will have progressed to exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. An easily accessible, superbly equipped outdoor area enables all children in Nursery and Reception to engage in imaginative role play as well as supporting all areas of learning and physical development. All EYFS children also benefit from welcoming rooms that are well resourced and enhance the children's development and learning. Throughout the EYFS, a balance exists between child-initiated and adult-led activities, often with children's input changing a planned activity such as an investigation into colours and numbers of balloons, as seen in a Nursery activity which was enjoyed hugely by all children.
- 6.3 Children respond to the high expectations of the staff as they enthusiastically take part in all class activities. Careful observations enable individual profiles to be produced informing staff and parents about each child's progress. These identify those with SEND or EAL so that appropriate extra help can be arranged.
- 6.4 Regular and strong contact with parents is a strength of this setting and they feel part of a partnership to help in their child's settling in and subsequent development.

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

- 6.5 Provision for the children's well-being is outstanding. Each child in Nursery and Reception has a key person who establishes strong relationships with both child and parents to promote extremely high standards of courtesy and behaviour. This enables children to develop their independence as they learn to explore their surroundings, using their imagination. They interact very well with each other and adults, listening and responding to what is said.
- 6.6 Children learn about healthy eating, personal hygiene and keeping themselves safe. This adds to the personal skills that they are developing to smooth the transition to the next stage.

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

- 6.7 Leadership and management are outstanding. The plentiful resources are evidence of support by the board of directors.
- 6.8 All staff have suitable safeguarding checks and receive regular training in child protection and first-aid procedures. Risk assessments and fire practices are carried out regularly.
- 6.9 Staff meet regularly using information gathered from observation and recording of each child's achievements, to evaluate the progress of individual children and to plan the next steps in learning. Regular evaluation of the setting enables the clear vision to be shared by all staff who take every opportunity to attend training as part of their professional development. The close links with the local authority and external agencies ensure that appropriate interventions are secured for children to receive the support they need.
- 6.10 The pre-inspection questionnaire responses show parents to be highly supportive of the setting and they appreciate the informal talks with staff at drop-off and collection times and the 'open door' policy that allows dialogue at any time.

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

- 6.11 The overall quality and standards are outstanding. All children, including those with SEND, are happy in the setting and enjoy their learning, making substantial progress.
- 6.12 Children in Nursery begin to become independent as they are able to do more for themselves. They behave well, learn to take turns, listen to and follow instructions and increase their social skills as they play together. By the end of Nursery, children under three can recognise and order numbers up to ten begin to recognise two dimensional shapes and increase creative and manual skills as they paint pictures and learn to use scissors. At the end of Reception, profile scores show that the majority will have exceeded the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Children deal confidently with numbers up to twenty, adding or subtracting single digit numbers. They can describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes. Most children are able to read at a level above their chronological age and write stories independently containing simple sentences. At all stages, those with special needs are identified and extra support is given using external agencies if appropriate.
- 6.13 The children's personal and emotional development is outstanding and children make friends readily, relating extremely well to their peers and to adults as they willingly share, take turns and show genuine care and respect for each other. Visitors who are allowed to be in the setting are made most welcome demonstrating that the children feel secure and are very happy knowing that their welfare is safeguarded effectively and they trust in the support of the trained and caring staff.
- 6.14 Regular evaluation and discussions of future plans show evidence of a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.