



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MYLNHURST PREPARATORY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	Mylnhurst Preparatory School and Nursery
DfE Number	373/6017
Registered Charity Number	1056685
Address	Mylnhurst Preparatory School and Nursery Button Hill Ecclesall Sheffield South Yorkshire S11 9HJ
Telephone Number	01142 361411
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Email Address	enquiries@mylnhurst.co.uk
Head	Mr Christopher Paul Emmott
Chair of Governors	Mr John Hudson
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	187
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (102 boys; 85 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): N/A 5-11: 120 3-5 (EYFS): 67 11-18: N/A
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 187
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Jenny Pringle
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	01 May 2012 to 04 May 2012

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 2009.

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 through the following link: www.legislation.gov.uk. Search for Independent School Standards Regulations and enter date 2010, to find Schedule 1, Parts 1-7.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Equality Act 2010 (including race, gender, special educational needs and/or disabilities).
- (ii) The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, banning corporal punishment.

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 Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) 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.

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 chair of governors and other governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors reviewed 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

Lady Fiona Mynors

Mr Richard Walden

Miss Mary Regan

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Mylnhurst Preparatory School and Nursery educates boys and girls aged between three and eleven. It was founded in 1933 by the Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy. In 1996, under lay management, it became a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. The directors of the company work as a governing board. The school is based in a Victorian house, with modern additions, set in its own grounds in a residential area of Sheffield. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is an integral part of the school. Plans for purpose-built accommodation for the EYFS have been secured, with the recent approval of planning permission to allow the development to begin at the end of the summer term following the inspection.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the senior management team has been extended and the use of the school's sports facilities by the local community has increased. The school aims to maximise the potential of the individual child through partnership, providing educational excellence in a supportive, Christian environment which prepares children for life's opportunities. Children are encouraged to give of their best in whatever they undertake, and to show consideration and care for others in their community.
- 1.3 At time of the inspection 187 pupils were on roll, of whom 29 girls and 38 boys were in the EYFS. There were 25 girls and 22 boys in Years 1 and 2, and 31 girls and 42 boys in Years 3 to 6. The overall ability profile of the school is above the national average, with most pupils in line with or above the national average. The majority of pupils come from professional and business families of British origin who live within a ten-mile radius of the school. The school has identified 32 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and 15 receive additional support from the school. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Five pupils have English as an additional language (EAL). About half the pupils transfer to local maintained schools, and the rest gain places in competitive entry to senior independent schools.
- 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.

Preparatory School

School	NC name
Prep 1	Year 1
Prep 2	Year 2
Prep 3	Year 3
Prep 4	Year 4
Prep 5	Year 5
Prep 6	Year 6

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' achievement and learning, including in the EYFS, is excellent. Pupils are extremely well educated in line with the school's aims. Overall, pupils' results in national tests at age seven have been good in relation to the national average. At age eleven results have been excellent. Pupils make rapid progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND, EAL and those with statements of special educational need progress extremely well with the targeted support that they receive. At all stages, the pupils' attitudes to their work and learning are excellent. The rich curriculum is excellent, strengthened by enrichment activities, and the exceptional programme of extra-curricular opportunities. Concerns about a timetable imbalance at the previous inspection have been remedied. The overall quality of teaching is excellent. Teachers plan carefully to provide pupils with exciting learning experiences, and are skilled in their use of the comprehensive system of assessment. In the EYFS, teachers know the children extremely well, although additional tasks to challenge the most able children are not consistently provided. The balance between adult-led and child-initiated opportunities has been improved.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent. The strong Christian ethos is reflected across the whole community, and it ensures that pupils develop into mature and thoughtful individuals, ready for the next stage of their education. Pupils benefit from the excellent quality of pastoral care, underpinned by efficient systems for welfare, health and safety. Relationships across the school are based on mutual respect. In interviews, pupils felt that any concerns that they have would be dealt with appropriately and quickly.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent. Clear strategic planning and prudent financial management have ensured excellent investment in staff, accommodation and resources. Governors have an excellent understanding of the education the school provides. They exercise their monitoring role efficiently, giving support, yet appropriate challenge to the school's leadership. They are effective in discharging their legal responsibilities, including those for the safeguarding of pupils. The overall quality of leadership and management is excellent. Strong, visionary leadership provides a clear educational direction for the school, which is supported by all managers and staff. Although the senior leadership team has been strengthened since the previous inspection, there are inconsistencies in the number of responsibilities undertaken by individuals. Subject co-ordinators provide the school with a dynamic group which stimulates development for the whole school. Management of the EYFS is good. The setting is managed effectively on a day-to-day basis, but management does not provide sufficiently rigorous monitoring of all aspects of its work. The resources for indoor and outdoor activities have been greatly improved and are easily accessible to the children. Links with parents are excellent. Parents expressed their overwhelming satisfaction with the education and support provided by the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is available through the link described in the Preface)

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. To ensure that senior managers are able to carry out their principle roles as effectively as possible, review the balance of responsibilities across the management team.
 2. In the EYFS, strengthen the monitoring of all aspects of the setting's provision and work.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievement and learning, including in the EYFS, is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are extremely well educated in line with the school's aim to maximise the potential of each individual. By the end of the year, Nursery children can recognise numbers up to twenty and are developing an understanding of letters and sounds. The most able are beginning to read simple words. In Reception, children can add single digit numbers, and many are beginning to write independently, and read short sentences.
- 3.3 Pupils from Year 1 display excellent knowledge, understanding and skills across their subjects and activities. They read well and are extremely articulate and confident to express their opinions. They listen carefully to their peers and their teachers, showing consideration for the views of others. Pupils' writing, in a wide range of styles, is of a high standard, and they take a real pride in the presentation of their work, with excellent handwriting. They research efficiently using the attractive, well-resourced library, and their creative skills in music, art and dance are strong. They demonstrate that they can think independently in many of their lessons and activities. Pupils can apply their mathematical and investigative skills effectively, and their use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for their learning and research is excellent. Their achievements in physical activities are excellent.
- 3.4 Pupils have had many successes in team and individual activities. These include winning district and midland area titles in netball, football, athletics, swimming and cricket competitions. Individuals achieve extremely well in cross-country running, competing for the county. Numerous pupils are finalists in 'Sheffield Young Artists' competitions, and many gain high grades in music examinations. Pupils' performances in local music and drama festivals have been highly commended. Pupils consistently gain their first choice place in competitive entry to senior independent schools, and each year a few pupils gain academic or music scholarships.
- 3.5 Results in national tests, for the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available at age seven, have been good in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools. At age eleven results have been excellent. By the age of eleven, pupils make rapid progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. The most able pupils undertake additional challenges and make excellent progress in all subjects. In the EYFS, children from a wide range of starting points make very good progress, so that by the end of Reception the majority will have achieved the Early Learning Goals. Pupils with SEND, EAL and those with statements of special educational needs progress extremely well with the targeted support that they receive, to ensure that they understand all the work they undertake. The most able children in EYFS do not always achieve at the highest level.
- 3.6 The pupils' attitudes to their work and learning are excellent. EYFS children enjoy making their own decisions in choosing activities, and they become increasingly independent in all activities. They co-operate, work and play together constructively. From Year 1, pupils are always enthusiastic in lessons, eager to undertake any tasks they are given and confident to take the initiative when necessary. A particular

strength is the way in which pupils settle to work quickly and co-operate easily with different groups of pupils. They research and work independently in project work undertaken in many subjects. Pupils also use the school's online learning platform to take responsibility for their own learning and to reach individual challenging targets.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision to the pupils' education is excellent.
- 3.8 The curriculum provides pupils in Years 1 to 6 with a rich learning experience, and it is sufficiently broad to suit all the pupils, strongly supporting the school's aim to strive for excellence. The dynamic curriculum is regularly reviewed, and incorporates any good new ideas for improving the way pupils can learn. Concerns about a timetable imbalance at the previous inspection have been remedied. History and geography are well established as vibrant subjects in the curriculum. Specialist teaching, beginning in the Nursery, and the careful use of excellent resources, bring the curriculum to life. The pupils' linguistic experiences benefit from the opportunity to learn French and Spanish. The physical education (PE) curriculum gives pupils a wide variety of opportunities. Their personal development is supported through the personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme. The emphasis on cross-curricular learning, such as linking ICT or music to the class themes, makes pupils' learning exciting.
- 3.9 The EYFS provides a secure, nurturing environment in which children can achieve well in their learning and development. The curriculum is good and generally well suited to the needs of the children. It offers them many stimulating activities, with particular strengths in creative and physical development. Opportunities for children to use technology, particularly in literacy and numeracy, are limited. This area for development has been recognised, and plans are in place for staff training in ICT use. Tasks to challenge the most able children are not provided consistently across the setting. As recommended at the previous inspection, the EYFS profile is now used effectively to support curricular review and planning.
- 3.10 The pupils' experiences are strengthened by a wide range of curriculum enrichment activities. Visits to relevant places, and exciting, full-day 'specials', are linked to class topics. Whole-school initiatives, such as the plans to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, enhance the family atmosphere of the school as pupils and staff work together. Residential experiences help to foster pupils' independence. The school's virtual learning environment programme, FROG, offers a range of exciting extension activities for pupils to access at home to enhance their learning.
- 3.11 The programme of extra-curricular activities is exceptional. It has been extended since the previous inspection and is available to all pupils. In pupil interviews, they explained how much they appreciate the variety of opportunities that they have. Many pupils participate each term, and staff monitor the programme carefully, and the pupils' involvement, so that they are encouraged to try new things. Activities provide for all inclinations, giving pupils a wonderful tapestry of opportunities which range from sports to organic gardening, chess, musical groups, multi-media presentations and keeping chickens.
- 3.12 Pupils benefit from the school's links with the local community. They raise funds for local charities and frequently participate in sports competitions, many of which take

place in the school's excellent facilities. The Year 6 residential experience is shared with a maintained primary school.

- 3.13 The systems to identify and support pupils with SEND and EAL across the school work extremely well. Since the previous inspection, the role of a key person to support each child in Reception has been properly developed. Careful screening identifies any pupils who need additional help. Class teachers and teaching assistants have a detailed understanding of each pupil's needs, and they use highly effective strategies to help them. If necessary, pupils are withdrawn for individual lessons. Parents are closely involved, and annual reviews are undertaken for all pupils, including those with statements. Excellent links are maintained with external agencies which provide the school with specialist help when required.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The overall quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teaching makes an important contribution to the pupils' progress and the high level of their achievements. In the EYFS, teachers know the children extremely well. They plan carefully to provide them with exciting learning experiences in the classroom, and use the outdoor environment creatively to engage the children's interest. Since the previous inspection, the balance between adult-led and child-initiated opportunities has been improved. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects. They plan lessons, including the use of excellent resources, extremely carefully to choose tasks and activities to suit the varied needs, ages and abilities of every pupil. In planning, teachers identify how the excellent support also provided by teaching assistants can be used to the best advantage for the benefit of the pupils. Teachers employ a range of teaching strategies, including skilled use of ICT, to capture and sustain pupils' interest so that they are eager to learn. Lessons are usually conducted at a brisk pace. In a few lessons, the initial plenary session was too long, and pupils were unable to complete their tasks in the time available.
- 3.16 Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. Teachers give generous praise, and encourage pupils to risk offering the wrong answer confidently. Pupils know that they can ask and will receive help when they need it. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, and additional challenges to excite and engage the most able pupils are provided to support pupils in Years 1 to 6 in their learning. Pupils of all ages with SEND and EAL are extremely well supported so that they make excellent progress. Teachers ensure that the provision, as required in the statements for pupils with SEN, is sensitively organised for them.
- 3.17 Overall, the quality of marking is of a high standard. Comments are generally constructive and informative, explaining clearly to pupils how they can improve their work. Pupils value the individual verbal feedback that they receive. A little of the marking is more limited and gives pupils insufficient information to help them to improve their work.
- 3.18 In the EYFS, teachers' ongoing observation and regular assessment are generally used effectively in planning the most appropriate next steps in children's learning. In Years 1 to 6, a comprehensive system of assessment, using a range of subject-testing materials at different times of the year provides excellent information on all aspects of pupils' progress and attainment across the curriculum. Data from assessments is carefully collated into a rigorous tracking system which is

continuously updated. All staff access the system and analyse exactly how to plan most effectively for the next steps in pupils' individual learning, and for specific interventions to be included where necessary.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 It strongly supports the school's aim to develop the confidence of each pupil so that they leave as mature, thoughtful individuals, well prepared for the next stage of their education. The pupils' sense of spirituality is excellent. They enjoy moments of reflection in daily prayers in class, and when saying grace at meals. Prayer corners in each classroom contain boxes where pupils can place their own written prayers. In assemblies, pupils meet to share their spiritual experiences and to celebrate and value everyone's achievements to strengthen their self-esteem. Their understanding of the non-material world is strongly developed through many aspects of the curriculum, and the use of the attractive and varied school grounds.
- 4.3 The pupils have an excellent moral understanding. Their behaviour is exemplary. They are courteous, with a strong sense of right and wrong which permeates the daily life of the school. They show tolerance and respect for each other and their teachers. Younger pupils adhere to the well-established 'golden rules', and older ones respect the school's code of conduct. Older pupils act as excellent role models, supporting younger pupils on many occasions, and an atmosphere of mutual respect exists across the whole school community. In PSHCE lessons the pupils enjoy discussions on challenging issues relevant to their lives.
- 4.4 The pupils' social awareness is well developed. They value opportunities to take responsibility in class, and are conscientious when acting as prefects and trained playground friends. Pupils have an awareness of those who are less fortunate than themselves, regularly supporting charities such as the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development and Children in Need. Pupils of all ages develop an understanding of the impact of their actions on the world through participation in activities such as the Eco-club, which was explained through an excellent assembly on global warming. EYFS children show respect for their environment. Older pupils work together across the age range through the house system. They understand how democracy works for the community through their participation in the school council, and gain an awareness of public services and institutions. The idea for a Jubilee tea party emanated from the council.
- 4.5 The pupils have a strong understanding of their own and other cultures. Catholic Christian traditions underpin all that the pupils do and experience. They are a natural part of everyday school life. Pupils gain an awareness and respect for other faiths and cultures through the curriculum, including religious education lessons and the PSHCE programme. In interviews, pupils spoke enthusiastically about their visits to places of worship, including York Minster and a synagogue. Pupils sample food from around the world and enjoy gaining an exciting insight into countries' customs and traditions. Children in EYFS celebrate the Chinese New Year. Pupils' knowledge of British and European culture is strong. They take part in arts festivals, and consider local traditions such as May Day. They have plenty of opportunities to visit museums and places of cultural interest.
- 4.6 In the EYFS, children develop good skills for the future as they understand the importance of keeping safe when using tools and equipment outside. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy, eating well and keeping fit

through the numerous physical activities they enjoy in dance, sport, swimming and outdoor play.

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

- 4.7 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The staff provide excellent support for all pupils, fulfilling the school's aim to support and develop every child within a caring environment. Pupils are aware of the help and guidance available to them from their class teachers and designated teaching assistants, or from any member of the staff. Trusting relationships between staff and pupils, and among pupils themselves, underpin the strong sense of a community committed to ensure that each child is special. The needs of the children in the EYFS are well understood by their teachers, who ensure that they are helped to develop effectively. Thorough pastoral records are kept. They are used particularly effectively as part of the careful transition arrangements as pupils progress up the school. Year 6 have relevant preparation for transfer to senior school which includes an exciting, challenging residential adventure experience.
- 4.9 Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles through PSHCE, assemblies and a wealth of opportunities for activity in sport and extra-curricular activities. The provision of delicious, nutritious meals, with care taken to provide for anyone with a special diet, encourages pupils to eat well. Lunchtimes are civilised social occasions.
- 4.10 The school is extremely effective in promoting good behaviour. Clear anti-bullying systems are supported through activities in 'Anti-bullying Week', and the school regularly seeks the views of pupils about bullying. Pupils say that it is rare, they know what to do if it happens, and they are confident that it will be dealt with effectively. They understand and appreciate the school's behaviour codes, with appropriate sanctions and rewards. Pupils feel they are fair, and take account of any individual's particular difficulties. A programme of weekly 'value statements' is extremely effective in drawing attention to the high levels of behaviour expected by the school. Pupils live up to these expectations. In an assembly, when asked to illustrate how they might best co-operate with each other, the mature response volunteered was, 'by being patient' and 'forgiving others'.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND. The school council meetings and annual pupil questionnaires are useful channels for pupils to express their views and they know that they will be carefully considered.

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

- 4.12 The school's arrangements for the pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.13 They ensure that the pupils are well cared for in a sympathetic, family environment. Children feel very happy and secure in the EYFS setting. They enjoy excellent relationships with all the adults who care for them and promote their welfare effectively. The policies and procedures for safeguarding all pupils are appropriate and work well. Staff have received the necessary training and have a good understanding of their responsibilities for the care of the pupils. Useful links have been established with Sheffield agencies responsible for safeguarding. A designated governor maintains specific oversight for pupils' safeguarding.
- 4.14 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Fire prevention systems are efficient and reviewed. Regular fire practices take place and staff have appropriate training. Clear risk assessments for all aspects of school, including the EYFS, are in place and regularly reviewed. Any health and safety issues are raised weekly at staff meetings, and monthly at a governors' meeting, and necessary action is taken. School visits are planned carefully, and good care is provided for pupils who are sick or injured. Although there are sufficient numbers of staff with paediatric first aid training on site, on occasions the coverage is limited. The school has acted swiftly to arrange further training for more staff.
- 4.15 The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored appropriately for the previous three years. Thorough systems ensure that pupils' absences or lateness are followed up efficiently by the school office.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance has ensured that the school is successful in achieving its aims. The small, committed group of governors, known as directors, come from current or recent members of the parent body. They have a broad range of skills to support the school, and provide effective oversight of its activities. Governance systems are excellent, with a clear committee structure and regular meetings. Strong strategic planning and prudent financial management have ensured excellent investment in high-quality staff, accommodation and resources. A governor with an interest in the EYFS acts as an effective key link between the setting and the board. The new development for the setting, to be built in the summer following the inspection, demonstrates the governors' commitment to the EYFS.
- 5.3 Governors receive appropriate induction and have received training in specialist areas. Experienced leadership has ensured that governors have an excellent understanding of the education they wish the school to provide, and the ethos they are determined to maintain. They exercise their monitoring role extremely well, giving support, yet appropriate challenge to the school's leadership. Governors receive detailed reports from the leadership at their monthly meetings, and presentations from staff on their specialist areas of responsibility. The governors' frequent attendance at formal and informal events ensures that they are familiar figures in the school community.
- 5.4 Governors are effective in discharging their responsibilities for child protection, welfare, health and safety. They have reviewed the policy and procedures for safeguarding. The welfare of pupils is a strong focus for the governors and they have ensured that the maintenance of high standards is carefully managed.

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

- 5.5 The overall quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 It is highly effective in ensuring that the school fulfils its aims to provide an excellent education which enables pupils to achieve their potential in a caring, Christian environment. Policies and procedures reflect the school's ethos. In the EYFS, staff successfully implement policies which promote equality and eliminate discrimination. The welfare of pupils of all ages maintains a high priority for management and great care is taken to safeguard them appropriately.
- 5.7 Strong, visionary leadership provides a clear educational direction for the school which is supported by all managers and staff, who work together as a cohesive team for the benefit of the pupils. They regularly review all aspects of the school's provision, with the needs of the pupils as the focus of all that they do. Although the senior leadership team has been strengthened since the previous inspection, there are inconsistencies in the number of responsibilities undertaken by individuals. A few members have gradually accumulated too many activities. This means that although they are highly committed and work hard, they are not always able to sustain fully effective management in their specialist areas of responsibility.

Management of the EYFS is good. Although the setting is managed appropriately on a day-to-day basis, and the staff team work well together, management does not provide sufficient rigour in monitoring all aspects of its work.

- 5.8 The role of subject co-ordinator has been developed most effectively. Under strong, new leadership, co-ordinators provide the school with a dynamic group which stimulates development for the whole school. Subject development plans form a key part of the excellent school improvement plan. Comprehensive subject documentation has been created, and systems for monitoring teaching and learning, through lesson observation and the scrutiny of samples of pupils' work, are highly efficient. Co-ordinators are continuously seeking ways to develop their subjects to make them as exciting as possible for the pupils' learning experiences. They relish the challenge afforded by the use of external measures of accreditation. In the EYFS, there is a clear commitment to continuous and sustained improvement based on satisfactory identification of priorities for improvement. As recommended in the previous inspection, the resources for indoor and outdoor activities have been greatly improved and they are now easily accessible to the children.
- 5.9 Clear induction procedures are in place for new staff. Staff professional development is a high priority for management, and effective appraisal, matched to relevant training, ensures that individual and school needs are carefully linked. A particular feature of staff development is the way that senior managers identify and develop future young leaders from the staff body. All staff are suitably trained in their roles to ensure that the needs of the pupils are carefully met, that they are appropriately safeguarded, and that health and safety is a priority. Suitable arrangements are in place for checking the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers, and these are recorded properly.
- 5.10 Links with parents are excellent. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents of children of all ages expressed their overwhelming satisfaction with the education and support provided by the school, and the high quality of communication they receive. A few parents expressed concern about the opportunities they have to be involved in school activities, and the provision for pupils who have difficulties and/or disabilities. The inspection judgement is that the support provided for pupils who need additional help is excellent, and parents have frequent opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. The school maintains constructive, friendly relationships with parents, many of whom have had a long-standing connection with the school through family members. Class teachers are the initial point of contact, and the school sees parents as key partners in the education of their children, including in the EYFS. If parents have any concerns, they are encouraged to contact the school. During the inspection week, parents were observed making informal contact with staff before and after school. Direct contact with teachers via email is an additional useful means of communication. Any concerns that parents have are dealt with swiftly and sensitively in line with the school's policies. The complaints policy is clear and appropriate. The school office helps parents in a friendly way if they have queries about day-to-day practical matters. Parents are welcomed to many school occasions, including assemblies and masses, enhancing the family feel of the community. The Parents' Association gives parents the opportunity to meet socially and provides support to the school. The school provides excellent before- and after-school care for pupils, which gives support to working families.
- 5.11 Parents have many opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. Introductory evenings are held at the beginning of each year to

explain the curriculum for the class, and this is supported by detailed information on subjects on the school's website. Three parents' evenings are held each year which provide parents with information about their children's progress. Detailed tracking sheets give parents outstanding information about their children's attainment and progress in key curriculum areas. The recently developed dynamic FROG learning environment, gives parents information about what their children are studying, and opportunities to share in their learning directly.

- 5.12 Parents of current and prospective pupils have access to all the required information about the school. A wealth of information is available on the website, in newsletters, and the annual magazine *Reflections* which celebrates successes over the previous year. Parents receive annual reports about their children's work and progress which are comprehensive and informative.

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