



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BELMONT GROSVENOR SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Belmont Grosvenor School

Full Name of School	Belmont Grosvenor School
DfE Number	815/6017
EYFS Number	EY340593
Registered Charity Number	529584
Address	Swarcliffe Hall Birstwith Harrogate North Yorkshire HG3 2JG
Telephone Number	01423 771029
Fax Number	01423 772600
Email Address	admin@belmontgrosvenor.co.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Merriman
Chair of Governors	Mrs Fran Trowell
Age Range	3 months to 11 years
Total Number of Pupils	191
Gender of Pupils	Mixed
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 19 5-11: 110 3-5 (EYFS): 62
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	15 to 18 November 2011

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 and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Graham Nunn

Mrs Penny Forsyth

Mr Jonathan Meadmore

Mrs Felicity Lawson

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector, former head teacher, IAPS school

Team Inspector, former head teacher, IAPS school

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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 October 2007.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government 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: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/independent/b009053/registration-of-independent-schools>.

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 disability).
- (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 31st 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.

THE EVALUATION SCALE

The report grades the school's provision and the pupils' performance according to the following scales.

<p>Main school (and EYFS settings not needing registration)</p> <p>In practice, the text of reports often uses more flexible epithets, except for the headline judgements</p>	<p>Registered Early Years Foundation Stage</p> <p>(These epithets <u>must</u> be used for all headline judgements)</p>
<p>Exceptional* -----</p> <p>Excellent/high</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>
<p>Good</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Sound</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>
<p>Unsatisfactory</p>	<p>Inadequate</p>

***The epithet 'exceptional' is not used in a headline judgement except to describe 'Achievement' in the main school, particularly where some kind of external comparator is available. It can never be used for a boarding or EYFS headline judgement.**

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Belmont Grosvenor School is a co-educational preparatory day school for pupils aged between 3 months and 11 years. It opened as a result of the amalgamation of two preparatory schools and moved to its present site in a village setting just outside Harrogate in North Yorkshire. It is a charitable trust limited by guarantee which has been registered as a company, with a board of governors. The school opened a Nursery in 2007 for children aged three months to three years. Pupils transfer to an older Nursery group, known as Pre-Reception, at the age of three and to Reception at the age of four. Since the previous inspection a new deputy headteacher, Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) co-ordinator and Nursery manager have been appointed and several areas of the school have been refurbished.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a rich, diverse, happy and supportive learning environment, fostering pupils' intellectual, creative, sporting and personal development. In addition, it seeks to offer its pupils a range of educational opportunities to fulfil their aspirations and potential. Furthermore, it wishes them to: enjoy and respect learning; develop as effective communicators and as independent critical thinkers and decision makers; accept challenges; appreciate and respect differences and live as informed, concerned and responsible members of society.
- 1.3 The school caters for 191 pupils. In total, 39 of these, of whom 17 are boys and 22 are girls, attend part-time in the youngest Nursery class. A further 42 children attend classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Of these, 24 are boys and 18 are girls, and 18 children attend part-time. There are 25 boys and 17 girls in the pre-preparatory department, for Years 1 and 2, and 35 boys and 33 girls in the preparatory department, for Years 3 to 6.
- 1.4 The majority of pupils are from homes in the local Harrogate area and within a ten-mile radius of the school. The school's catchment area is wide and most pupils come to school by car. The majority of pupils' parents work in professional or business occupations. Pupils are predominantly of white British heritage.
- 1.5 Three pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and all are fluent in English. Eighteen pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All receive additional support from the school. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The ability profile of the school is above the national average.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school fulfils its aims most successfully throughout, including the EYFS. Pupils' achievements are high and the quality of their learning is excellent. All pupils make at least good progress, with many making rapid progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding across the areas of the curriculum. They are very articulate and use their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills very well in many different subjects. Their creativity is of a high standard and they reason and investigate for themselves with enthusiasm. The pupils' behaviour is excellent, as are their attitudes to learning. The excellent, broad and well-balanced curriculum, together with an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits, supports pupils' learning extremely well. The rapid progress is largely the result of excellent teaching overall, although on very few occasions the pace of lessons is slow and pupils are given work that is not sufficiently well matched to their abilities. Pupils with SEND also make significant progress as a result of being given, in many cases, individual work, both in the classroom or in small group situations. Such excellent planning for these pupils is also evident in the planning of work for all groups of pupils.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent and is supported particularly well by the equally strong arrangements for their pastoral care, welfare, health and safety. Pupils respect each other and work very well together in many areas of school life. They reflect very well on the non-material aspects of their lives and show great compassion for those in the global community who are less fortunate than themselves by regularly fund raising for local, national and international charities. Constant checks are carried out for any health and safety issues, risk assessments are detailed and the safeguarding of pupils is robust.
- 2.3 Governance is good; governors keep themselves well informed and work very well with the headteacher to plan the development of the school. Strategic planning and school improvement planning are rather focused on the short term and the school recognises a need for more detailed planning over a longer period of time. The leadership of the school is excellent and the overall management is also of a high quality. Good strategies to monitor the work of the school are in place but lack a sufficiently well-structured and systematic approach. Policies are reviewed regularly and are well implemented by staff. Since the previous inspection good progress has been made in addressing all the areas for improvement identified at that time. Links with parents are excellent, and parents and pupils are very happy with their involvement with 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. Extend the scope of strategic and school improvement planning to cover a longer period.
 2. Put in place a more rigorous system for regular monitoring of the curriculum and other aspects of school life.
 3. In the EYFS, record individual children's targets and next steps in short-term planning.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The overall achievement of the pupils is excellent. They are very well educated in accordance with the school's aims of offering them a range of educational opportunities to fulfil their aspirations and potential. Pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding particularly well in all subject areas and in their many extra-curricular activities.
- 3.2 Pupils are highly articulate and speak well on a variety of topics in which they are interested. They listen to their teachers and one another carefully, read fluently and are skilled in writing expressively. Their numeracy skills are very good and they are well able to apply them to other curriculum areas, notably geography and science. Many good opportunities exist for them to express their creativity, which is evident around the school and in subjects such as design and technology, music and art. In ICT, skills are strong and are well used across the curriculum. Reasoning skills are also very good, particularly when pupils are discussing a particular topic or asking their teachers relevant questions. The excellent level of participation in sport considerably increases pupils' physical skills. Levels of achievement are supported extremely well by the good, and on many occasions, excellent teaching and pupils' equally strong attitudes to learning.
- 3.3 At the age of 11, the considerable majority of pupils transfer to their first choice of senior school. About half move on to independent senior schools, including places gained through a number of scholarships or awards, and a similar proportion go to maintained schools. They also achieve well in individual and team games, notably in netball, pop lacrosse, hockey, football, rugby and swimming. High standards are reached in various music examinations, as well as in speech and drama, and writing competitions. These successes make a highly significant contribution to excellent personal development, giving pupils a greater understanding of teamwork as well as a respect for differing abilities. A number of pupils also obtain the highly prized Belmont Grosvenor School Award for overall achievement.
- 3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national norms, but on the evidence available is judged to be high in relation to age-related expectations. The pupils study a high quality and demanding curriculum which is well applied in order to enable them to achieve their potential. Inspection evidence includes consideration of the levels at which pupils are working in relation to national targets. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make high rates of progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities. Such significant progress is directly related to the good, and on many occasions, excellent quality teaching they receive. Pupils with SEND or EAL, as well as more able pupils, also achieve very well because staff ensure that they are given tasks in their lessons that challenge them at their own levels of ability. They are also well supported in class by teachers and teaching assistants when necessary. Individual help in extra lessons provided by learning support specialists enables these pupils to make at least good progress.
- 3.5 The pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They approach tasks with enthusiasm and concentrate extremely well. They know how to apply themselves in lessons and persevere when the task is challenging. Pupils work very well together and have the same level of interest and determination when working individually. They clearly enjoy learning; the presentation of their work is of a consistently high quality and their behaviour is also excellent. The high quality of the relationships that they have

with each other and with their teachers has a very positive impact on their achievement.

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

- 3.6 The quality of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities is excellent and makes a strong contribution to achievements, fulfilling the aims of the school in this respect. The curriculum covers all the requisite areas of learning, with added breadth and depth provided by specialist teachers who extend learning through planning a variety of activities and approaches. In addition, it includes French, drama, religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Curriculum planning is particularly good and very detailed at all levels, a strong feature being the consistent use made of cross-curricular links. The range of languages on offer is wide. French is taught throughout the school. In addition, older pupils take advantage of Spanish and Mandarin clubs, and in Year 6 a termly programme covering Spanish, German and Italian is taught to assist pupils going on the annual ski trip. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future schools, both socially and for the entrance examinations.
- 3.7 Provision for pupils with SEND is particularly good and they are very well supported in their learning. The extra help offered within the classroom is of high quality, as teaching staff and assistants are well aware of the needs of these pupils. Those pupils who are identified as being gifted and talented are given further opportunities in line with their abilities, for example by invitation to join the Mandarin club. Individual education plans (IEPs) are written for those who have individual or group lessons with a specialist teacher. These additional support lessons are very well targeted to pupils' needs and enable them to make significant progress. Parents are involved in regular reviews and the IEPs are discussed.
- 3.8 The extra-curricular provision is excellent, being extremely broad and varied. The programme includes activities such as engineering, ballet and pop lacrosse. Peripatetic music teachers provide a large number of individual music lessons on a variety of instruments to the majority of pupils. Groups include a junior choir, senior choir, junior string group, wind band and guitar group. Many pupils are prepared for external music, and speech and drama examinations, and a very large proportion of pupils take part in the Harrogate Competitive Festival for Music, Speech and Drama. Fixtures for football, rugby, cricket, hockey and netball are extensive.
- 3.9 The curriculum is further enriched by visits that supplement the work undertaken in the classroom. Years 5 and 6 take part in residential trips for outdoor pursuits. A number of visitors to the school make presentations that support learning in different subjects. For example, parents who are doctors or dentists speak to the pupils on topics such as healthy living. Visits from the fire brigade, police and charitable bodies all enrich learning and broaden pupils' experiences.
- 3.10 The school has very good links with the local community that are of benefit to the pupils. The school's sports facilities, including the swimming pool, are made available for use by the local community at certain times of the week. The senior choir is currently training for a concert to take place before Christmas in conjunction with pupils from a local primary school. The school takes full advantage of its situation in the centre of a farming community, from which an appreciation of rural living is developed.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.11 The overall quality of teaching is excellent. Teaching is very effective in promoting the pupils' rapid progress. In addition, this high quality helps pupils to achieve their academic potential, which is in line with the aims of the school. Since the previous inspection, the good standards of teaching found at that time have been considerably built upon.
- 3.12 Good opportunities are offered to pupils to enable them to discuss their work in subjects such as art and English. This has a considerable impact on developing their self-confidence and oral communication. Basic skills are particularly strongly emphasised in English and mathematics, and this means that pupils are able to attain high standards by the time they leave the school. Creative skills, which are strong in subjects such as music, drama and art, are similarly well promoted by excellent teaching. Specialist subject teaching is progressively introduced as pupils move through the school.
- 3.13 The teachers' subject knowledge and lesson planning are very good and, in the best practice, lessons are clearly planned, taking into account an assessment and understanding of pupils' needs. The best lessons are also characterised by lively and enthusiastic teaching, appropriately set tasks and the use of questioning techniques that challenge pupils' thinking. In such lessons tasks are varied and well matched to pupils' abilities. Praise and encouragement are well used and this adds to the pupils' learning and progress. On those very few occasions where such high quality teaching is not achieved, the pace of the lesson is slower and the work is not so closely matched to different pupils' abilities. Consequently, pupils have limited opportunities to think for themselves or take some responsibility for their learning.
- 3.14 The high quality provision and programme of work for pupils with SEND enable teachers to plan individual help for such pupils in their lessons. Good quality IEPs mean that teachers have sufficiently detailed information about each individual pupil's needs to be able to adapt their teaching accordingly.
- 3.15 Classrooms contain resources of good quality that teachers use particularly well to motivate their pupils. Interactive whiteboards are to be found in most classrooms and these, along with other ICT resources, help to produce stimulating lessons, thus enthusing pupils and maintaining their interest.
- 3.16 The marking of pupils' work is of very good quality. In most instances it contains encouraging words, practical suggestions for improvement and appropriately set targets for pupils to achieve. Pupils also say that they are, on many occasions, given verbal feedback, so that they know what they have to do to continue to improve. In addition, assessment data is compiled effectively to monitor pupils' progress in many subjects. This is then well used to enable teachers to plan more closely further work for pupils.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 Pupils' personal development is excellent by the time they leave the school. The development of their self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and personal belief is central to their experience, and fulfils the school's aim that each should have a sense of themselves physically, emotionally and intellectually. Pupils are mature, courteous and caring. They display high levels of consideration for one another and show respect for their teachers through exemplary manners and excellent behaviour. Pupils are considerate and confident, without being arrogant. They have a genuine concern for each other's welfare and demonstrate the same sense of compassion and support for their peers as that modelled by caring and supportive staff.
- 4.2 Spiritual development is excellent. Although the school is broadly Christian, the ethos is one of tolerance and respect for those of other faiths or of no faith. Pupils exhibit a very strong appreciation of relationships and care for the wider world through mature discussions and reflection on issues such as differences between people and the uniqueness of each individual. Pupils are also offered and enjoy many spiritual experiences; for example, they identify and reflect upon the beauty of the Nidd Valley in which the school lies.
- 4.3 Pupils show outstanding moral development based upon shared values and mutual respect. They know, accept and adhere to the boundaries established by the school community, and thus the discipline policy, which reflects the school's aims and ethos very well, rarely needs to be implemented. The school has an anti-bullying week, and the theme of 'kind words' has been presented in assembly and followed up during the week in PSHE lessons. This is taken very seriously by the pupils, whose concerned and caring behaviour is clearly evident. Pupils develop a deep understanding of and concern for the environment through the excellent work of the 'ECO' club and they accept a moral responsibility for sustainable living, through the influence of this environmental group. Pupils demonstrate a strong moral conscientiousness by means of their fund raising for local, national and international charities.
- 4.4 The social development of the pupils is exceptionally good. Senior pupils take on responsibilities within the school community with enthusiasm. They share their new ideas for whole-school development through the school council, to which representatives from each class are elected. Year 6 pupils are given responsibility for helping younger pupils. They also take on responsibilities as house captains, sports captains and in other supporting roles, which they carry out with diligence. Pupils demonstrate a broad knowledge of particular public institutions, the UK Parliament and local council for example, which those in Year 6 have visited.
- 4.5 Cultural development is excellent and the school takes every opportunity for pupils to experience and appreciate other cultures. Many of these are presented in assemblies. Pupils understand and respect other cultures and faiths, appreciating their achievements as well as those of British cultures. Recently, pupils' work has included an emphasis on Thai culture. An Indonesian music experience involved pupils from Year 6 helping to teach those from Year 5 the skills required to play instruments from that country. In addition, pupils gained a great deal from an inspiring talk on the work of Gustav Klimt. Pupils develop a strong awareness of

their own culture when they visit museums and theatres, and their understanding of the diversity of people living in the United Kingdom is very good.

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

- 4.6 The arrangements for the pastoral care of pupils are excellent and make an outstanding contribution to their very strong personal development. An emphasis is placed on developing confidence, making the most of pupils' abilities, developing a healthy lifestyle and respecting diversity. Throughout the entire school community, the staff, who are strongly led by the senior management team, provide extremely effective support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the aim of ensuring their happiness.
- 4.7 Relationships are extremely positive between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves. Pupils are confident that they could turn to any member of the staff, both teaching and non-teaching, if they had a concern. The responsibility taken by senior pupils for the welfare of junior ones makes an important contribution to the happiness of younger pupils, and is highly valued by all concerned.
- 4.8 The school strongly encourages a healthy lifestyle. Meals are appetising and well balanced, with choices including vegetarian and salad alternatives. Within the school day and in extra-curricular activities, pupils acquire the habit of taking regular exercise; the extensive grounds, the swimming pool and the wooded areas offer many opportunities for fun.
- 4.9 Strong, effective procedures promote pupils' excellent behaviour and guard against harassment and bullying. Pupils report that there is no serious bullying and that staff deal rapidly and effectively with any minor disagreements. Pupils are encouraged to manage their emotions so that they consider and respond to a situation, rather than react to it. Excellent communication systems are in place regarding pastoral issues; concerns are carefully recorded, along with the measures taken to deal with them. The few incidents of unacceptable behaviour are handled constructively and due account is taken of any related special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.10 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.11 Pupils are able to express their views on the running of the school effectively through their representatives on the school council and more directly through the suggestion box.

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

- 4.12 The provision the school makes for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils is excellent. Health and safety are prime concerns of all the staff, who are diligent in their observation and their awareness of any potential hazards.
- 4.13 Safe recruitment procedures are robustly followed. All staff receive good quality child protection training, which is updated appropriately. The safeguarding policy and procedures are well understood within the school and are reviewed and evaluated annually by senior managers and governors. Risk assessments are efficiently carried out, both within the school and on external trips. They are very thorough, and all necessary contingencies are covered in detail. If necessary, staff visit the site proposed for a visit so that accurate assessments can be made.

- 4.14 Fire safety is guided by the school's fire policy, with safe and efficient arrangements in place. Evacuation practices and precautions are regularly and suitably tested, as are alarms and extinguishers. In addition, full and detailed records are kept and any adverse findings efficiently and effectively dealt with. Regular fire practices are held to ensure that all are well aware of evacuation procedures.
- 4.15 Pupils who become ill or require first aid receive immediate attention. A good number of staff are appropriately qualified in first aid, including sufficient numbers of staff trained in paediatric first aid. The school's medical room is appropriately and centrally located. This has addressed the situation at the time of the previous inspection, when medical room provision was judged to be inadequate.
- 4.16 Measures to provide for pupils with SEND are excellent, as shown by the high level of staff's care and awareness of their needs, enabling them to access all areas of the curriculum very successfully. The school's admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and correctly stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governance is good. This is a significant improvement on the quality at the time of the previous inspection, which was judged to be satisfactory. The governing body administers the school successfully, fulfilling its aim of providing a rich, diverse, happy and supportive learning environment and fostering pupils' intellectual, creative, sporting and personal development. Its committee structure and the background expertise of individual governors strongly support the educational direction of the school. The chair of governors is in weekly contact with the headteacher and is both supportive and challenging in that role. The headteacher prepares full reports for the board. These give particularly good information about the school's successes and challenges for the future. Consequently, governors are generally well informed about all aspects of the work of the school although they recognise that their knowledge of curriculum developments is not quite as strong as that of other areas. Governors attend the school for special events such as concerts and performances. As several of the governors live locally, they make every effort to visit the school during the working day to oversee its work and set challenging targets.
- 5.2 Strategic and financial planning is very good and governors make generous provision of human and material resources. The minutes of board meetings indicate that governors debate all aspects of school life carefully. In addition, they participate in sessions with senior managers to decide on the strategic developments of the school. Thus, the board gives good support to and provides challenge for the school's future development. Governors fulfil their responsibilities for welfare, health and safety, as well as safeguarding, extremely well, with one governor taking the lead in these respects. An annual review of safeguarding is carried out. Governors also participate in appropriate training, covering a range of relevant topics. They also monitor regulatory compliance carefully, as well as their own effectiveness.

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

- 5.3 The leadership of the school is excellent and its management is of a significantly high quality. The quality of the school's links with parents, carers and guardians is also excellent. Staff in senior positions are very efficient and approachable, and are highly effective in furthering the school's aim of offering pupils a range of educational opportunities to fulfil their aspirations and potential. Since the previous inspection, considerable progress has been made in improving the management structure of the school, and in particular, improving the overall effectiveness of the senior management team.
- 5.4 The excellent leadership of the headteacher and the strong and dedicated group of staff is clearly evident in the high standards of pupils' achievements, as well as in the excellence of their personal development. Whole-school improvement and strategic planning is good, with an appropriate number of objectives clearly identified. Good subject development plans are also in place. However, all such planning is based in the short term of approximately one year. Whilst there are several good strategies in place to monitor the work of the school, a sufficiently well-structured programme to do so is lacking.

- 5.5 The school takes significant care to select high quality staff. The induction of new staff is well thought through and highly effective. The process recognises that all new staff need to understand the operation of the school and the role they play in it. Professional development is good and is organised within the school and through external expertise. In addition, external training is also available, and staff are effectively trained in their roles in relation to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. All training is prioritised against the criteria of whole-school needs and the outcomes of the very good performance management system.
- 5.6 Policies and procedures for all aspects of school life have been produced and these are of particularly good quality. They are well implemented by staff. Teachers, classroom support assistants and non-teaching staff are deployed effectively and make a highly significant contribution to pupils' welfare and learning, particularly pupils with SEND. Staffing levels are good, so that strong support is given to all pupils.
- 5.7 Senior managers are diligent in ensuring that those working with pupils are suitably checked using robust recruitment procedures that are followed closely. The central register of appointments is completed accurately, and all staff are well trained in safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- 5.8 An excellent relationship with parents is maintained, in accordance with the aim to develop a strong partnership between home and school. Links are founded on an 'open-door' policy operated by the school, and are supported by numerous high quality publications.
- 5.9 Parents' views as expressed in the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the school and the progress their children make. Parents are very content with the ease of communication with the school and the detailed information that is readily available. They are particularly supportive of the management of the school, the pastoral support and guidance shown to their children, the curriculum, the high standards of behaviour and the school's promotion of worthwhile attitudes and values. Inspectors agree with these positive views.
- 5.10 All parents are pleased with the opportunities they are given to become involved in the life of the school and the ease with which they can approach the headteacher and staff. They regularly accompany school trips and visits, and a parent representative is a member of the school's ECO club. The energetic parents' association organises events to raise funds for charitable causes, for the school's bursary fund and for the benefit of the pupils: recently funded projects include the refurbishment of the libraries and the purchase of the 'trim-trail' equipment. Social events such as the family camping weekend and the film nights present opportunities for the whole family to become involved in the life of the school. Information about key events and pupils' achievements in and out of school is published in weekly newsletters. Parents are very supportive of the school and regularly attend sport fixtures, concerts and assemblies.
- 5.11 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with a good deal of relevant information about the school and parents much appreciate the excellent website. Regular email contacts are also a valuable means of effective and rapid communication. Information about pupils' academic achievement and progress as well as their personal development is clearly set out in well-produced and detailed reports. Clear targets are outlined which enable parents and pupils to identify the next stage in learning. Written reports are supplemented by parents' evenings.

Curriculum evenings at the start of each academic year allow parents to have an excellent understanding of the work to be covered. The school handles the concerns of parents with care and sensitivity, and follows its published procedures.

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) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.1 This is an outstanding setting. Children's individual needs are met very well and all are individually valued, ensuring that they make excellent progress in their learning and development. Effective teaching encourages independent thinking and promotes in children confidence and an eagerness to learn. Children are safeguarded and cared for exceptionally well. Their personal development is excellent. Staff are constantly looking for ways to improve the very high quality of provision.

6.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.2 Leadership and management are outstanding. All records, policies and procedures necessary for the safe and efficient management of the setting are in place, and related measures are implemented rigorously. Staff promote equality diligently so that all children achieve well. Risk assessments are comprehensive. Very good use is made of a wide range of high quality and imaginative resources, providing a varied learning environment both indoors and outside. Strong links with other agencies, including the local authority, and an excellent partnership with parents contribute significantly to children's learning and development. Parents are very supportive of the setting and value the way they are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning. Staff hold appropriate qualifications and have excellent access to continuing professional development. Effective policies are implemented successfully to safeguard children and eliminate discrimination. The development plan is based upon effective evaluation of the existing provision, and provides clear aims for the future and specific areas for improvement.

6.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding for children under the age of three, as well as for older children. The indoor and outdoor environments are used to their full potential, and children develop their imagination and acquire problem-solving skills through an excellent range of activities and resources. Each class of children in the EYFS is taught by either a qualified teacher or by suitably qualified teaching assistants. Staff are highly skilled at taking every opportunity to promote learning by planning interesting and appropriate activities, based on the interests of the children, both indoors and outside. Informative learning portfolios document the children's achievements, giving a real sense of the individual child. Careful observations by all supporting adults identify the children's achievements, developmental needs and next steps in learning, but these are not always included in written planning. Relationships throughout the setting are excellent and children are well supported by their key person. Babies and toddlers develop a strong sense of security through close and caring contact with key adults, who spend time with them and their families and get to know them very well. Detailed risk assessments for all aspects of the setting, together with regular checks of equipment, create a safe environment.

6.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 6.4 Outcomes for children of all ages are outstanding. From different starting points, children make substantial progress towards achievement of the Early Learning Goals. By the end of the EYFS, most children achieve high standards in all six areas of learning. Babies and other children under the age of three are provided with an excellent start in the Nursery, where their all-round development is successfully promoted by activities specially planned and adapted to their needs. This, together with the high quality older Nursery and Reception provision, ensures that all children make rapid progress from the time they enter the setting. In the Nursery, observations of children demonstrate their strong social skills, clear co-operation and high level of linguistic competence. Older children converse confidently, and talk about the high expectations of the staff, who guide them to behave with consideration and courtesy. They get on well with each other and interact confidently with adults. Children understand that physical exercise and healthy eating, together with personal hygiene, are essential for a healthy lifestyle. They are happy in the setting, deriving great pleasure from their learning.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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

Complaints since the last inspection

- 6.6 Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required any action to meet national requirements.

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