



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
ABERDOUR PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Aberdour Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Aberdour Preparatory School
DfE Number	936/6000
EYFS Number	EY337953
Registered Charity Number	312033
Address	Aberdour Preparatory School Brighton Road Burgh Heath Tadworth Surrey KT20 6AJ
Telephone Number	01737 354119
Fax Number	01737 363044
Email Address	enquiries@aberdourschool.co.uk
Head	Mr Simon Collins
Chair of Governors	Mr Richard Nicol
Age Range	2 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	358
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (197 boys; 161 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 16 5-11: 237 3-5 (EYFS): 73 11-13: 32
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 358
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Danielle Clare
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	20 Jan 2015 to 23 Jan 2015

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 April 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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with 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 Gorton

Mr Raymond Crayton

Mr Jeremy Gear

Mrs Gillian Venn

Ms Sue Rix

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head of Pre-prep, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Aberdour Preparatory School is an independent, co-educational day school for pupils from the ages of two to thirteen. A small minority of pupils leave the school at the age of eleven. It was founded in 1933 as a boys' school, and girls were first admitted in 1994. It is situated close to Burgh Heath in Surrey on a twelve-acre site. The school is managed by a charitable trust, which is administered by a board of governors. The school has senior and pre-prep departments. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is integral to the pre-prep department.
- 1.2 The school aims to maximise the skills and abilities of every pupil, enabling them to realise their potential through a broad-based academic curriculum enriched by a programme of art, drama, music and sport, and to achieve academic excellence by providing the highest quality teaching. It strives: to provide a caring environment in which each pupil will be given individual and sensitive guidance; to develop an enthusiasm for learning and encourage self-discipline, confidence, self-esteem, self-motivated enquiry and personal responsibility; and to encourage pupils' understanding of and respect for others, both within the school and in the outside world, making a positive contribution as they move through life.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced a personalised achievement and learning (PAL) programme. The school has also created a new 'Skills for Learning' department. All classrooms, the swimming pool, sports hall and the Nursery have been fully refurbished. A new gymnastics academy and wrap-around care clubs have also been introduced.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 358 pupils on roll, of whom 89 were in the EYFS. Parents are mainly from professional and business backgrounds of white British origin. Approximately a quarter of pupils are of minority ethnic origin. Almost all parents live within a five mile radius of the school.
- 1.5 The school has identified 62 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 44 receive specialist support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There are 12 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) but all are fluent in English and do not need additional support. Standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the school is above the national average. There is a fairly wide spread of abilities represented, although most pupils have ability that is at least above or similar to the national average.
- 1.6 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
Transition	Reception

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Aberdour Preparatory School is successful in meeting its aims. Pupils are well-educated and their levels of achievement are excellent, including in the EYFS. Their success in both academic and in extra-curricular activities is high. From an early age pupils are accomplished learners and approach their studies with positivity and enthusiasm. Their desire to give of their best is exemplary. The school provides an extensive range of learning opportunities. The curriculum successfully focuses on pupils' academic prowess and their personal development. A significant factor in pupil achievement is the strength of the teaching. However, in a few lessons teaching does not provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding. The restricted space in some classrooms limits certain teaching opportunities. The school has responded positively to recommendations from the previous inspection, reducing some of the inconsistencies in teaching, and improving the quality of marking.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. From an early age they form strong relationships with one another and with their teachers. This is a strength of the school. Staff know the pupils well. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They develop a strong moral code from an early age which is built upon as they move through the school. The school provides pupils with the necessary skills for the next stage of their education and for adult life. Excellent pastoral systems are in place to support pupils' personal development. At every age pupils feel well-cared for. They have a range of staff to whom they can turn should the need arise. In questionnaires, a few pupils felt that teachers were not consistent in applying the school's rewards and sanctions system. The inspection judgement supported this view. The school has excellent provision for welfare, health and safety.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are excellent, including in the EYFS. Governors are effective in their oversight in all areas of school life. They provide support and challenge which enables the growth and development of the school, and ensures that the needs of the pupils are met. The leadership and management of the school are enthusiastic and dynamic. Leaders are constantly seeking ways in which the school can improve. All leaders have clear job descriptions outlining their roles and responsibilities. This meets a recommendation from the previous inspection. The school's comprehensive five year plan provides an excellent vehicle for growth and development. The school maintains excellent links with its parental body. They are overwhelmingly supportive of the work of the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that pupils are given opportunities in all lessons to fully demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.
2. Ensure teaching staff are consistent in following procedures for rewards and sanctions.
3. In the EYFS, enable better provision for continuous activities between indoors and outdoors.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' learning and achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated throughout the school in accordance with the school's aims and achieve high standards. From Year 1 upwards pupils demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge, understanding and skills. This is developed as they move through the school. Younger pupils were able to talk knowledgeably about a variety of topics. They read with confidence and demonstrate a high level of achievement in phonics. All pupils show excellent listening skills. They discuss issues in class with sensitivity and an awareness of the needs of others. They write with clarity and express themselves well. The presentation of work is of high quality. By the time they leave the school, pupils demonstrate high levels of co-operative learning. They express themselves clearly and eloquently. Their writing is both mature and reflective. They write equally well in a number of genres. The achievement of pupils who are more able, have SEND or EAL is excellent.
- 3.3 In mathematics, younger pupils show an excellent knowledge of number bonds to ten. These basic skills provide a platform for further development and high order thinking skills. Pupils' strong scientific skills enable them to experiment and hypothesise successfully. Younger children make excellent progress in information and communication technology (ICT). Older pupils have been winners of a national animation and robotics competition showing how successfully their skills are developed as they mature. Pupils demonstrate strong creative skills that are reflected in their high levels of achievement in areas such as music, art and drama. From an early age the pupils' physical development is excellent. These skills are reflected in the pupils' success in sports such as badminton, trampolining and golf.
- 3.4 Pupils achieve well in both team and individual sports. Some represent their counties in sports such as cricket, swimming and football. Pupils are also highly successful in achieving national awards for music, dance and the dramatic arts.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performances in national tests, but the evidence available indicates that it is high in relation to national age-related expectations. The pupils' success in senior schools' entry examinations and a significant proportion of scholarship awards supports this. Work scrutiny, lesson observations and interviews with pupils all show that the pupils' attainment is excellent. Rapid progress is made by pupils of all abilities throughout the school. Pupils with EAL and SEND make excellent progress due to the high quality of teaching and the individual help they receive. More able pupils achieve at a high level when the opportunities for them to extend their learning are provided.
- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate an excellent work ethic at all times. They clearly enjoy their education and always give of their best. This is evidenced in many areas of school life. The pupils are active learners and they work well co-operatively. Their high level of participation and interest in all their activities is a significant strength of the school.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The curriculum enables the school to fulfil its aims. It is broad, child-centred in its approach and covers all the key areas of learning meeting the individual needs of pupils of all ages and abilities. In addition, it enables the pupils to develop an excellent skills base, and provides them with many exciting opportunities. Pupils benefit from the opportunity to learn languages such as French, Spanish and Mandarin.
- 3.9 The school's PAL system and its associated components allow pupils the opportunity to focus on aspects of an extended curriculum. These include excellent opportunities for challenge and individual learning. These broaden pupils' thinking skills and encourage them to question and reason. There are strong links between the PAL programme and the special educational needs department. This provides the opportunity for pupils with SEND to effectively access the curriculum. The use of setting and streaming further enhances pupils' opportunity to benefit from the curriculum at an appropriate level to match their abilities.
- 3.10 Curriculum planning is generally thorough. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in certain aspects of the curriculum such as in music, physical education (PE) and modern foreign languages. The use of specialist teachers increases as the pupils move through the school. The provision for information technology is not fully exploited in individual subjects. The programme for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) is relevant and schemes of work are currently being reviewed to fully reflect new regulations.
- 3.11 At the time of the inspection, a curriculum review was taking place. As a result, a greater emphasis has been placed on individual sports, including badminton and gymnastics. Verbal and non-verbal reasoning lessons have been introduced at appropriate stages. Pupils are well prepared for their progression through the school, and for transfer to the next stage of their education.
- 3.12 An extensive range of extra-curricular activities allows pupils to experience and develop their sporting, cerebral, creative and academic interests. Pupils participate in these activities with great enthusiasm. Their personal development is enhanced through the opportunity to represent the school in sporting competitions and to be involved in music and drama events.
- 3.13 The curriculum is enriched by frequent trips and visits, which encompass a wide variety of learning opportunities for pupils. Educational excursions include visits to museums, theatres, places of worship and residential trips both home and abroad. Pupils' learning experiences are further supported by strong community links. These include visits by speakers such as authors and representatives from different religions. Pupils benefit from musical events that are held locally, broadening their experiences and strengthening their community links.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teachers work hard to ensure pupils achieve in line with the school's aims to recognise their aspirations and actively manage their goals and progress. This, combined with the staff's excellent subject knowledge, enables pupils to realise their potential and achieve high academic standards.
- 3.1 Teaching is planned thoroughly. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, and the pupils' needs are well understood. This knowledge is used to plan lessons which usually capture the pupils' interest and imagination. Teachers are enthusiastic and pupils respond well and are usually eager to learn. However, their interest is diminished when merely note taking or sticking worksheets into books. At such times their learning is restricted. Question and answer sessions are effectively employed to assess pupils' understanding and attainment. This enables pupils to take initiatives, develop their own ideas and think critically. Enthusiastic and dedicated teachers, teaching assistants and resident students provide an outstanding educational experience for all pupils.
- 3.2 The school has an effective pupil tracking process. Marking across the school is thorough. This demonstrates that systems have been put in place to monitor its quality since the previous inspection. Staff have undertaken training in marking and regular book scrutiny ensures greater consistency. Pupils expressed their appreciation of the feedback given by teachers in books and in lessons which enables them to make progress.
- 3.3 Pupils are often inspired by their teachers' enthusiasm and interest in the subject. However, the limited space in many classrooms prevents the use of the widest variety of teaching styles. This sometimes restricts pupil's access to activities and experiences. The best lessons proceed at a brisk pace with varied activities and questioning which challenge the pupils' thinking. Since the previous inspection, a whole school lesson observation programme has been successfully introduced to improve teaching. Staff meet to share ideas to enhance the learning experience for pupils.
- 3.4 Staff are excellent role models and this has a positive impact on the pupils' exemplary behaviour. Expectations in lessons are clear. Pupils are confident in asking for help when they do not understand, and appreciate the support they receive. Teachers extend pupils' interests and abilities through the use of excellent creative and exciting resources. These engage and motivate pupils. In some lessons, tablet computers are used. However, their use is not yet fully exploited sufficiently to overcome the lack of space in some classrooms. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards and computers. However, these are used more by the teachers than the pupils. Teachers make good use of a well-stocked library which provides pupils with a wide range of interesting books.
- 3.5 In pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of pupils felt that homework does not help them to learn. However at interview they spoke enthusiastically about homework challenges and a scrutiny of school documents showed that homework is generally used to good effect to reinforce or extend learning.
- 3.6 The achievement of pupils, including those who are identified as being able, gifted or talented or have SEND or EAL, are generally promoted by well-informed, interesting and helpful teaching. It enables pupils of all abilities to acquire new knowledge,

make good progress, increase understanding and develop skills. Pupils who are able, gifted or talented are generally given appropriate challenges. Pupils who need additional help are provided with suitable resources so that they can achieve well.

- 3.7 Teaching takes many opportunities to actively promote fundamental British values. It places value on presenting a balanced viewpoint and in encouraging pupils to respect one another's differences. Teachers encourage pupils to voice their opinions through appropriate channels and they celebrate democracy and the rule of law. Teaching does not discriminate against pupils of protected characteristics, and individuality is not only encouraged but also celebrated.

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 pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school provides a happy, caring and safe community where boys and girls can benefit from learning, playing and growing together. Pupils show high levels of interpersonal skills. They show respect for their teachers and their peers. They are delighted to report that they get on very well at all times. They are proud of their school and thrive on the extensive range of opportunities it provides. The PAL system successfully assists in the identification of pupils' individual strengths. It directs them towards nurturing and developing these strengths.
- 4.3 The quality of pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are confident, enthusiastic and well-motivated. They show high levels of self-esteem and sensitivity. They express their feelings well and are able to empathise with others. Pupils' sense of self-worth is strong and their aspirations become increasingly clear to themselves and to others. They show an outstanding appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. This is demonstrated by their enthusiasm in art and in their enjoyment in a wide range of activities including drama and music. Pupils' self-esteem is fostered by the schools recognition that every child matters. Pupils' spiritual development is further enhanced in school assemblies and through visits from religious representatives.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent. They have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. Moral and ethical issues are regularly discussed in class. The pupils support each other very well. They are committed to helping others which is reflected in the various charitable events in which they take part, supporting local, national and international charities. They have been involved in supporting a local food bank and a children's orphanage in Peru. Pupils readily discuss the issues of healthy eating and living. The PSHEE syllabus includes subjects such as smoking, alcohol, eating disorders and drugs. Pupils have an excellent awareness of e-safety. Membership of the school council involves pupils in making important decisions, which deepens their understanding of moral issues.
- 4.5 Pupils show a strong sense of social awareness. They readily take on responsibilities as librarians, prefects, and 'playwatch' monitors. They take pride in carrying out these tasks. In questionnaires, a very small minority of pupils felt they did not get the opportunity to take on responsibility. Inspectors found pupils are keen to be on the school council and they have many other opportunities to become involved in the life of the school. From elections to the school council they develop a sound understanding of the system of democracy. Pupils' knowledge of public institutions and fundamental British values are discussed in PSHEE lessons and debates in English lessons. Pupils are polite, well-mannered, and extremely thoughtful. They demonstrate high levels of consideration. Pupils are proud to help new pupils integrate into the school.
- 4.6 The quality of pupils' cultural development is excellent. They show enthusiasm for learning about their own culture as well as other cultures and faiths. A wide range of wall displays and artefacts deepens the pupils' cultural understanding. An appreciation of Western cultural tradition is emphasised through PSHEE and religious studies lessons. The pupils' cultural awareness is further enhanced by talks from authors, explorers and religious representatives. Pupils' relationships with

those from different religious and cultural backgrounds are both natural and instinctive.

- 4.7 Pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school.

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

- 4.8 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Effective pastoral arrangements, policies and procedures are well established. These uphold the school's ethos to provide mutual support and a strong family feel. The school has excellent systems in place to monitor transition arrangements across the school. Pastoral concerns are shared via email and weekly staff meetings. This ensures that each pupil is known well and cared for.
- 4.10 Pre-inspection questionnaire responses suggested that a very small minority of pupils felt they did not have an adult to turn to if they had a personal difficulty. Inspectors found that pastoral records and the open atmosphere across the school demonstrated that pupils were comfortable in seeking help. In interviews pupils expressed their appreciation for the help and guidance available from teachers, tutors and the medical centre.
- 4.11 Pupils enjoy a healthy lifestyle. There are many opportunities for exercise in games or physical education (PE) lessons, clubs, activities and in their free time. Meals provided are healthy, nutritious and tasty, and special diets are catered for efficiently.
- 4.12 The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying are highly effective. This was supported by responses in pupil interviews and in pupils' behaviour observed around the school. A culture of positive praise pervades the school. In questionnaire responses, a few pupils stated that rewards are not given fairly, while a small minority felt that sanctions are not awarded fairly by teachers. This view was confirmed during interviews with the pupils. Records show that although rewards for both academic and non-academic contributions are awarded, teachers are not always consistent in how they do this.
- 4.13 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.14 The school employs effective methods to seek the views of pupils. Pupil responses to questionnaires showed a small minority felt that the school does not ask for or respond to their opinions. However, there is an active council which provides a useful conduit for pupils' views and a pupil suggestion box located centrally in the school. A comments book in the dining hall enables pupils to provide feedback about snacks and lunches. These all provide good opportunities for the pupil voice to be heard.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.16 The school places a high priority on the safeguarding of pupils and in ensuring their health and safety. This supports the aims of the school and has a positive impact on the pupils' personal development. The safeguarding arrangements are thorough and are effective across all aspects of school life. Staff receive appropriate up-to date training in child protection. Pupil safeguarding is taken seriously by every member of the school community. Excellent procedures are in place for the safe recruitment of staff.
- 4.17 The school has clear and effective procedures for the administration of medicines, and for looking after pupils who are sick or injured. The sick bay staffed by school nurses at all times ensures the needs of the pupils are well met. Members of staff are appropriately trained in first aid, including suitable paediatric first aid qualifications where appropriate. Thorough records are kept of any accidents or injuries.
- 4.18 Suitable arrangements are in place to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Regular checks on fire safety equipment are carried out. Fire evacuation drills are practised at different times of the school day. Potential risks in classrooms, around the school site and on visits out of school are identified and evaluated. Comprehensive risk assessments, supported by a risk assessment policy, are in place for every aspect of school life. The site is checked regularly and any potential hazards are dealt with quickly and efficiently. The school is well-maintained and excellent attention is given to food hygiene. The school maintains outstanding records on all matters relating to welfare, health and safety. This demonstrates the importance that the school places on such matters.
- 4.19 The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governors at Aberdour are effective in their oversight of all sections of the school in accordance with the school aims. They effectively discharge their responsibilities to ensure that high educational standards are met. Governors also ensure that the school provides an environment that promotes the well-being of every child. The high standard of governance ensures thoroughness in financial planning, and a good programme of investment. This ensures that staffing is given a high priority and that accommodation and resources are of an adequate quality. The governors' commitment to continually improving facilities and opportunities at the school is demonstrated in the planned addition of new buildings in September.
- 5.3 Governors have a strong insight into the working of the school. They make regular formal and informal visits to the school. They also deepen their understanding through initiatives such as the audit of subjects which enable them to evaluate the work of specific areas of school life. Governors are well known to staff and their involvement and support is appreciated by all members of the school community. The Aberdour Five Year Plan provides an excellent vehicle through which governors can provide support, challenge and actively promote the school's growth and development.
- 5.4 The governing board is effective in discharging its responsibilities for statutory requirements. They have a rolling programme for the review of school policies which ensures all regulations are fully met. The governors place a high priority on pupil safeguarding and carry out an in-depth audit of the school's arrangements and the efficiency with which they are undertaken on an annual basis. However, in the past, the brevity of the minutes recorded did not reflect the careful attention given to this area.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.6 At all levels the school is well led and managed, supporting the school's aims. A drive to succeed underpins the leadership and management of the school. All want to ensure that every pupil reaches their academic potential as well as displaying high levels of personal development. Proactive leadership is a key to the strength of the inter-personal relationships that exist throughout the school. The composition of the senior leadership team reflects all aspects of school life ensuring careful attention is paid to the needs of the pupils. Clear job descriptions are in place ensuring that senior leaders fulfil their roles and responsibilities. This meets a recommendation from the previous inspection. Leadership and management are effective in discharging their delegated responsibilities. This is particularly true in the area of pupil safeguarding, which is given a high profile. Safeguarding procedures are thorough. Staff and pupils know who they should go to if they have a worry or concern. The school's has excellent procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and

all appropriate checks on their suitability of staff, governors and volunteers are carried out and recorded efficiently.

- 5.7 School leaders and heads of departments are dynamic in their approach. They are constantly looking at how the school can improve and develop. The comprehensive five year action plan, is supported by subject and aspect plans which involve staff at every stage of the process. All aim to support the school's mission of finding brilliance in every child. Teamwork is actively and successfully encouraged through an inclusive leadership approach. Staff talk positively about the manner in which school leadership promotes strong team work and a positive working environment.
- 5.8 Leadership and management are effective in the process of self-evaluation and readily review their procedures. They ensure that they respond to the ever-changing needs of the pupils and the curriculum. New initiatives are successfully introduced and their effectiveness is regularly reviewed. The leadership of the school has identified the need to continually seek ways to strengthen the links between each part of the school, particularly between the pre-prep and the senior school.
- 5.9 The school is successful in securing and retaining high quality staff. Strong emphasis is placed on their professional development through courses from both within and outside the school. All staff are suitably recruited and trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils, particularly in the area of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The school has a developing system of staff appraisal, including that of all senior leaders. This, coupled with a successful peer observation programme, identifies areas for both personal and professional development. An excellent induction process for newly appointed staff covers all the necessary areas of policy and implementation.
- 5.10 All records and procedures for the welfare, health and safety of all members of the school community are thoroughly undertaken and recorded. The leadership and management at the school are supported by excellent administrative arrangements. In pre-inspection questionnaires parents felt strongly that the school was well-led and managed.
- 5.11 The school maintains excellent links with parents in accordance with its aims. Parents are extremely happy with the education and support provided for their children, both academically and socially. Communication between the school and parents is excellent. An extensive range of information is provided via the school website and email, handbooks, newsletters and the termly diaries. These cover many areas of school life, such as the curriculum, school policies, educational matters, events, sports fixtures and weekly lunch menus. Excellent information evenings are provided for parents on various aspects of education. Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all the required information about the school.
- 5.12 In responses to the parental questionnaire and in discussions, parents were overwhelmingly appreciative of the school and the way it handles any concerns. Any problems are dealt with quickly and sensitively, in full accordance with the school's published procedures.
- 5.13 Throughout the school parents are well-informed of their children's progress. This is achieved through parents' evenings, regular detailed reports, grade cards, daily contact books and exchange of information with staff at the beginning or end of the day. Parents are further involved with their child's progress through the school's programme to support individualised learning. Regular contact with the tutors is

maintained throughout the pupils' time at the school. Parents speak highly of the ease of contact with the school and the quick response to emails.

- 5.14 There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in school life. Through volunteering, supporting trips and attending assemblies and performances, parents can share in the life of Aberdour. A thriving parents' association organises social events, such as the Christmas Fair and Summer Ball. The coffee shop, in the heart of the school, provides a social hub for parents in the mornings and after school which is greatly appreciated. Funds raised by the parents are used to purchase resources for the benefit of the pupils. These social occasions all contribute to the openness and easy contact between the school and its parents which was observed daily during the inspection around the school. The strength of relationships that exist between the parents and the school makes a positive impact on the pupils.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

- 6.1 The setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the children who attend. The educational programmes are carefully and imaginatively planned around a weekly or half termly central theme. This ensures that all the required areas of the curriculum are covered. Adults provide a wide range of stimulating activities and resources responding to the children's current interests. This encourages the children's involvement and enthusiasm for their learning. In an older age group, children were captivated by the Paddington Bear story. It inspired them to create a railway station for Paddington to arrive from 'darkest Peru'. They researched information about Peru. One child exclaimed, 'It has big cities, jungles and mountains'. Children independently write and illustrate their own small story books.
- 6.2 The curriculum is enriched by specialist teaching in PE, swimming and French. A range of after school activities and regular visits and outings to places of interest extend the learning opportunities. In the younger age group, children develop their agility extremely well. In a PE session adults gave highly effective support and encouragement. There are many opportunities for outdoor play and activities in the EYFS. However, some classes do not yet have a dedicated outdoor area. This means that it is not easy to incorporate continuous activities between the indoors and outdoors. Regular assessments identify the next steps in the children's learning. Enthusiastic staff have high expectations at all times. Children with SEND and EAL are identified at an early stage. Staff enable these children to make excellent progress. This is achieved by skilfully adapting tasks according to need or through one-to-one support.
- 6.3 Staff work co-operatively with parents and establish close links with them. Home visits are made before a child enters the EYFS. Detailed information gained from the parents enables the children to settle well. Parents are kept fully involved in their child's progress. This is achieved through a wide range of contacts. These include regular parents meetings, curriculum information evenings, daily exchanges of information, newsletters and contact books. In the parental questionnaires and in discussions, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the setting. They stated how much their children enjoyed coming to school.

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

- 6.4 Outstanding contribution is made to the children's well-being. Dedicated staff ensure all children, including those in need of additional support, are happy and confident. Children make excellent bonds with the staff. High standards of courtesy are consistently and effectively promoted. Independence, responsibility and appropriate behaviour are encouraged throughout the setting. This was seen on an outing to have tea and biscuits in the school coffee shop. The younger class developed their social skills, sitting at adult tables, using real crockery and enjoying waitress service. They always remembered to say 'please' and 'thank you'. In an older class, the children learned how to behave appropriately in the library. They

talked quietly and treated books with respect. All EYFS children understand how to move quietly and safely around the school.

- 6.5 Bright and engaging displays and motivating assemblies celebrate achievement both in and outside school. These encourage personal development and an appreciation of different cultures. Children are given time to play, explore or become deeply involved in activities, both indoors and outdoors. As a result they are keen to investigate, rise to new challenges and can sustain concentration.
- 6.6 Adults support children to develop an understanding of the importance of healthy eating. Older children choose food independently at lunch and snack time. There are many opportunities to be physically active. Opportunities exist in adult led sessions and in outdoor play. Children are effectively encouraged to be independent in dressing themselves. From the youngest age group they organise their belongings and manage their personal hygiene. High quality provision is continued in after school care.
- 6.7 Procedures for transition to the next classes are excellent.

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

- 6.8 The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision is outstanding. The governors' involvement is highly effective. Governors visit the setting regularly to provide support and challenge. Some have particular expertise in the EYFS. They support the leadership and management of the EYFS in overseeing the educational programmes. They ensure the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS are fully met and implemented consistently. All staff have received the necessary checks before commencing employment. Careful adherence is given to health and safety requirements. This, coupled with regular risk assessments, ensures the children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment. Daily checks are carried out on equipment and facilities. Off-site visits are carefully planned and risk assessed. All EYFS staff are trained in paediatric first aid.
- 6.9 There is a thorough and challenging development plan for the setting to which all staff in the EYFS contribute. This is constantly evaluated and updated. Staff are well-trained and are highly motivated to improve their own practice and to share expertise. Staff new to the setting are mentored and are taken through a comprehensive programme of training. Appraisal is well-established and supervision meetings take place each half term. This enables continuous improvement in staff expertise. Outstanding staff teamwork is a feature that permeates the setting and ensures the best care for the children.
- 6.10 The setting has effective partnerships with parents. It also links well with external agencies, such as speech therapists. These links enable children with SEND and those with EAL to receive appropriate support. This ensures that their needs are well-met.

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

- 6.11 The overall quality and standards of the early year's provision is outstanding. As a result, all children, including those with SEND, EAL and the more able, make at least good and often excellent progress according to their starting points. They reach the expected levels of development by the end of the EYFS and often exceed age-related expectations. The older children express themselves confidently and have made an excellent start in reading and writing. Those under four use tablet computers confidently to play simple educational games. They can read and write simple words and phrases. Most can also recognise and write numbers up to ten. The youngest children happily make choices from a well-organised range of equipment and activities. They are confident and use early language effectively when interacting with each other.
- 6.12 Throughout the EYFS the children's personal and emotional development is excellent. They work constructively together, share and take turns, investigate confidently and play imaginatively. They behave extremely well and show that they enjoy coming to school. They feel safe secure and happy in the caring and welcoming environment. A recommendation of the previous inspection was that further opportunities should be provided to encourage children's learning, independence and social skills at snack and lunchtime. There are now many opportunities to promote the children's personal development during these times and they are used effectively.
- 6.13 All requirements for safeguarding and welfare have been met. Leadership and management are highly effective in evaluating practice and is fully committed to on-going improvement for the benefit of the EYFS children.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three.

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

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