



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

AUSTIN FRIARS SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Austin Friars School

Full Name of School	Austin Friars School
DfE Number	909/6032
Registered Charity Number	516289
Address	Austin Friars School Etterby Scour Carlisle Cumbria CA3 9PB England
Telephone Number	01228 528042
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Email Address	headmaster@austinfriars.cumbria.sch.uk
Head	Mr Matthew Harris
Chair of Governors	Revd Dr Peter Tiplady
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	448
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (219 boys; 229 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 125 3-5 (EYFS): 36 11-18: 287
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 448
Head of EYFS Setting	Mr John Slingsby
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	1st to 4th December 2015

PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

The previous ISI Standard inspection was in February 2010 and the previous ISI EYFS inspection was in January 2010.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 trustees, 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

Mrs Roberta Georghiou	Reporting Inspector
Mr Nicholas Beesley	Team Inspector (Former Headmaster, Society of Heads school)
Mr Ian McDonough	Team Inspector (Head of Pastoral Care, Society of Heads school)
Mr David Tickner	Team Inspector (Headmaster, Society of Heads school)
Mr David Woodward	Team Inspector (Deputy Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Ros Ford	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Austin Friars School was established in 1951 by the Friars of the Order of St Augustine, initially as a boarding school for Catholic boys in Cumbria and the city of Carlisle. Girls were first admitted in 1986. Boarding came to an end in 1998. The school formally amalgamated in 2003 with St Monica's, a primary school for girls and boys which had opened on the same site in 1986, and it became Austin Friars St Monica's. The school changed its name back to Austin Friars in 2015. The current headmaster was appointed in 2012.
- 1.2 Austin Friars is now an educational charity overseen by a board of trustees admitting children from age 3 to 18. It is independent of the Augustinian Order but its religious foundation remains a high priority in defining its aims, traditions and ethos. The School aims to foster pupils' intellectual, social, physical, aesthetic, cultural, moral and spiritual development, nurturing a love of learning, a spirit of enquiry and the pursuit of excellence. It aims to bring out the best in each child in a disciplined and stimulating environment with an emphasis upon a united community whose members show mutual respect for one another.
- 1.3 At the time of inspection there were 448 pupils on roll. Of these, 36 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The Pre-school for children aged 3 years has its own building and grounds on the site; the Kindergarten for children aged 4 years is housed within the Junior School, which has 125 pupils aged between 5 and 11 years. The Senior School has 287 pupils of whom 83 are in the sixth form.
- 1.4 The school does not select pupils according to ability and welcomes children of all faiths and backgrounds and those with special educational needs. The ability profile of the school is broad and above the national average. Most of the pupils are of white British origin and live in Carlisle and its surrounding areas; a number travel from Scotland and a few from the west coast of Cumbria. Eight pupils from overseas have recently joined the sixth form. They have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and all receive additional support in language from the school. Of the 87 pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), 45 are receiving support and four have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- 1.5 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 NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage

School	NC name
Pre school	Nursery
Kindergarten	Reception

Junior School

School	NC name
Transition	Year 1
Preparatory	Year 2
Junior 1	Year 3
Junior 2	Year 4
Junior 3	Year 5
Junior 4	Year 6

Senior School

School	NC name
First Form	Year 7
Second Form	Year 8
Third Form	Year 9
Fourth Form	Year 10
Fifth Form	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils achieve well and make good progress, broadly fulfilling the school's aims. They have positive attitudes to their learning and activities. They benefit from good teaching and from the positive relationships which exist between them and their teachers. Achievement of pupils with SEND is good because they receive excellent support from individual teachers and from the learning support department. Pupils with EAL make suitable progress and also receive appropriate support. The school has made some progress in meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection to encourage independent thinking and provide greater challenge for pupils. However, more able pupils do not always make the progress they should; teaching does not provide consistent challenge. The broad curriculum and excellent provision of extra-curricular activities allow pupils to acquire a wide range of knowledge and skills. Close links have been developed between the junior and senior schools, particularly in the co-ordination of curriculum and teaching thus meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent and fully meets the school's aims. They take pride in belonging to the school community and are confident, caring and courteous. Their behaviour is excellent. They reflect perceptively upon their learning and articulate their thoughts in a mature manner. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and accept responsibility for their actions. They display excellent social awareness through their charitable fund-raising and concern for others. The arrangements for welfare, health and safety and safeguarding are good overall. Procedures for the morning registration of junior pupils and a small number in the EYFS and junior school are insufficiently rigorous. Arrangements to ensure safe use of the facilities are detailed and broadly effective. In the past, some staff were being appointed without all of the required checks were carried out. The school identified and corrected the problem well before the inspection was announced.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is sound. Trustees are mainly effective in providing oversight of the school and have good insight into its day-to-day working. They provide support, challenge and stimulus for the senior management of the school. They are aware of their responsibilities for welfare, health and safety including safeguarding but they have not monitored policies and procedures with sufficient care; for example, shortcomings in appointment procedures were not identified as a result of systematic reviews of safeguarding arrangements. Leadership and management are good. They provide clear educational direction. A formal performance management system is in place for teachers but it is not consistently applied and monitored with the result that its impact on teaching quality has not yet been fully effective. The school has excellent relationships with parents. Information is made readily available and any concerns are appropriately handled. Parents are kept informed about their children's progress and have opportunities to be actively involved in their education. They are overwhelmingly satisfied with the quality of education their children are receiving.

2. (b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and therefore it is required to take the following action.

- Ensure that the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age is completed at the start of each morning session. [Part 3, paragraph 15, under Welfare, health and safety]

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that trustees and leaders recognise and implement changes to statutory requirements and guidance in a timely manner, and that regular reviews show procedures and policies to be operating as intended.
2. Ensure that the most able pupils are offered consistent academic challenge.
3. Ensure that the features of the most effective teaching are evident in all lessons.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The overall quality of pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims to foster pupils' intellectual, social, physical, aesthetic, cultural, moral and spiritual development.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS are well motivated and enthusiastic learners who respond well to the staff's high expectations of them. For example, children are expected to put all their belongings away independently and to react promptly to instructions. They apply themselves diligently to all tasks and they make good progress relative to their starting points and needs. By the end of Reception, the majority of children reach the expected levels of development, whilst the more able exceed expectations in some areas of development. Children communicate effectively with one another and with their teachers. They talk about stories and answer questions using appropriate vocabulary. Children in Reception are able to blend sounds together to make words and some have started to write simple sentences independently. Younger children in the nursery enjoy making up their own games in the role play area and thinking about how to design a robot using junk materials. They can order and name numbers up to 10 and manipulate a mouse to draw simple pictures.
- 3.4 Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, display good knowledge, understanding and skill in curricular and extra-curricular activities. They are articulate and can express their views clearly; for example Year 8 pupils made thoughtful, evaluative judgments on one another's work in art. They listen carefully and show high levels of concentration in lessons. Most read and write confidently. When given the opportunity, they enjoy thinking for themselves. Sixth form pupils have good independent research skills but these are less developed in younger pupils. Many pupils throughout the school demonstrate high levels of creative skill, for example in art and design technology. They are confident users of information and communication technology (ICT), but they do not always apply their skills in all subjects. Most pupils have well developed numeracy. Pupils of all ages enjoy physical activity and in sports lessons both girls and boys demonstrate confident skills.
- 3.5 The excellent range of extra-curricular activities allows pupils to develop their skills to high standards. Many Year 6 pupils achieve distinction in speech and drama examinations. Elsewhere, many pupils play a musical instrument and achieve success in external examinations. Pupils in Years 9 and above participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and six have gained the gold award in the past two years. Pupils succeed in competitive sport and individuals have achieved success at national and international levels. In 2015 almost two-thirds of pupils in Year 13 gained their first-choice place at university. Pupils with SEND are encouraged to develop their talents in music, art and drama
- 3.6 In the junior school, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence available including lesson observation, it is judged to be good. The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE are above the national average for maintained schools. Results have shown improvement from 2012 to 2014, with results in 2014 being similar to the national average for

maintained selective schools. The school's IGCSE results in sciences, English and ICT are higher than worldwide averages. Results in mathematics are similar to the worldwide average. The A-level results are similar to the national average for maintained schools, and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Results in 2013 were higher than in 2012 and 2014, being above the national average for maintained schools.

- 3.7 On the basis of these attainments, and on the evidence from lesson observation, work scrutiny and discussions, progress in the junior school is judged to be good overall. The level of attainment at GCSE, together with inspection evidence, show that progress is good.
- 3.8 The progress of pupils with SEND is good. This is shown by their performance in school assessments as measured against their individual starting points. Pupils with EAL respond well to the support for their English skills both from their teachers and through a Saturday programme of language study and make suitable progress as a result. In the senior school, the more able pupils do not always make the progress they should because teachers do not consistently expect enough of them.
- 3.9 Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and their involvement in activities. During the inspection a musical performance by pupils from Years 1 to 6 demonstrated how effectively they work together and their high level of commitment to learning musical instruments. They take pride in their work. It is well presented. Pupils make good progress because they listen carefully, work well together and are keen to ask and answer questions.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.11 The curriculum is effective in its coverage of the required areas of learning. It is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs and it supports the aims of the school to nurture a love of learning by giving pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- 3.12 The education programmes in the EYFS are excellent. They provide stimulating, enriching and challenging experiences. These are highly effective in promoting the children's language, communication, and personal, social and emotional development appropriate to their age. An appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities now allows enough time for all children to explore in-depth and think critically, both inside and outside. This has met a recommendation of the previous inspection. Detailed planning, backed up by very careful assessment, ensures that the particular needs of each child are very well met. The curriculum is further enhanced by the inclusion of music, French and physical education (PE), which are taught by specialist staff. Children with SEND are well supported as staff know when to intervene and provide extra help and resources where needed so that these pupils can reach expected levels.
- 3.13 The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 broadly follows the English National Curriculum. In addition pupils experience French from Year 1 and Latin and classics are introduced in Year 5. The previous inspection recommended that the school continue to develop close links between the junior and senior schools, particularly in the co-ordination of curriculum and teaching. Such links have been established and pupils in the junior school benefit from lessons in a number of subjects taught by senior

school specialists, such as French, music, art and sport. The curriculum in Years 7, 8 and 9 prepares pupils effectively for later study. In Years 10 and 11 the majority of pupils pursue eleven GCSE or IGCSE courses complemented by an effective enrichment programme that covers personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) and promotes values such as tolerance alongside those of the school's Augustinian tradition. The curriculum presents a balanced coverage of opposing political views when needed. Sixth-form pupils have a wide choice of academic subjects and courses to match their capabilities and interests. Most sixth formers study four subjects in Year 12 and three A levels in Year 13 although some complete four A levels. Guidance over subject choices is well appreciated by the pupils. Sixth-form pupils also benefit from a thorough mentoring programme which includes preparation for university and employment. They have an enrichment programme with a focus on personal development, study and practical skills that helps them prepare for life beyond school. For sixth form pupils for whom a full academic course would not be appropriate, the school has devised its own internship programme where students gain experience in the work place and complete the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). All pupils with SEND receive appropriate support within the curriculum through the learning support department. Able, gifted and talented pupils may choose some more demanding courses such as Latin and have some opportunities outside lessons to challenge their thinking.

- 3.14 The curriculum is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and links with the community. There is a high level of participation, particularly in sport, where all pupils have the opportunity to represent their school and most do. Coaching is provided for boys and girls across a range of team and individual sports. Senior boys and girls have recently undertaken a successful joint sports tour to Portugal. Excellent opportunities exist for pupils to participate in music and drama in both senior and junior schools with regular concerts and performances. A suitable range of cultural and other extra-curricular opportunities exists, including a new pupil-run school magazine and an enterprise scheme in the senior school. The junior school offers similar breadth with activities ranging from creative art with younger pupils through to Big Band for the older.
- 3.15 The curriculum benefits from strong links both with the local community and abroad including those formed through its Augustinian tradition. Pupils of all ages support a significant number of local and international charities and causes across the school. The curriculum is further enhanced by a number of school visits such as the recent trip to Iceland for GCSE pupils studying geography and exchanges supporting modern foreign languages.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The quality of teaching throughout the school is good.
- 3.17 Teaching is effective in promoting the pupils' progress and supports the aims of the school. Most teaching is well planned and in most cases is based on a firm understanding of the pupils' needs. Such planning leads to lessons that are engaging for pupils and set out clearly what is expected of them. In a few lessons where teaching is less successful, planning does not always take account of all pupils' needs and abilities and, as a result, some pupils have only limited understanding while others, particularly the more able, are insufficiently challenged.
- 3.18 Teaching in the EYFS has a clear understanding of the requirements of the EYFS and how young children learn. The staff, teachers and others alike, guide the

children well in exploring and trying out new activities appropriate to their stage of development. The previous inspection recommended that the school should continue to develop observational assessment in EYFS so that next steps in development and learning can be planned to match individual needs and abilities. This has been met because careful planning based on the observation of individual children and the consideration of their needs is taking place. This in turn allows the next steps in their learning to be incorporated into the activities which leads to good progress. The best teaching provides challenge for the more able. Staff know when to intervene to move a child's learning forward and encourage children to persist and try again. Resources are easily accessible to all children and used well to help them explore and learn. The recently refurbished outside areas have provided more opportunities to extend learning.

- 3.19 In the junior and senior schools, teachers employ methods that demonstrate good subject knowledge, effective management of time and appropriate use of resources. The teachers' knowledge contributes to pupils' interest and motivation, particularly in sixth-form lessons. Their skilful use of questions in lessons allows most pupils' differing needs to be met. Carefully prepared resources stimulate pupils' progress, for example, in the use of coding software in a Year 5 ICT lesson which led to a discussion of the work of Alan Turing.
- 3.20 In the pupil questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said that their homework did not help them to learn. Inspectors found that homework tasks are suitable and support pupils' learning effectively. The majority of marking and assessment supports pupils' learning well as it checks understanding and offers advice for improvement. Senior pupils welcome teachers' feedback and, in the sixth form in particular, improve their work through acting on advice given. Where marking was less effective it lacked specific guidance towards pupils' future progress.
- 3.21 Most teaching fosters pupils' interest and some independence. Pupils are able to work independently and make choices in relation to their learning when given the opportunity as they were, for example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where pupils used initiative to solve problems involving shape and area and in a Year 13 photography lesson where suitable choices were made in the use of equipment and technology.
- 3.22 In the previous inspection, the school was recommended to share the best practice in teaching to encourage more independent thinking and more diverse learning, challenging especially the most able pupils. It has responded with the teachers' peer review programme. Good progress has begun to encourage more independent thinking, more diverse learning and challenge, especially for the most able pupils. However, maintaining high expectations for the most able pupils in lessons is not yet fully consistent and, in a few lessons they are still not fully stretched, and their progress slows.
- 3.23 Teaching is effective in supporting pupils with SEND, including those with EHC plans or statements. This is because the teachers' planning considers pupils' individual needs to which resources and teaching are tailored. Pupils with EAL receive good support for their language for example in the introduction of specialist vocabulary.
- 3.24 Teaching promotes tolerance and respect and presents balanced views of controversial issues. Teachers listen to pupils, encourage openness and balanced views. The very good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils contribute to the effectiveness of the teaching.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is active in promoting its aims to create a united community whose members show mutual respect for one another. It is also active in promoting the shared values of Britishness. Pupils are confident, caring and courteous. They show high levels of consideration for one another, respond to instructions from adults carefully, and show respect for all through exemplary manners and behaviour. Pupils have concern for each other's welfare and show respect for each other's differences. The pupils have an excellent level of personal development by the time they leave school. They are ready to take their place in wider society as good citizens.
- 4.3 The personal development of the children in the EYFS is excellent. Children are encouraged to learn together and from each other, through gentle reminders during circle time about sharing and helping one another. They are able to select their own activities and take turns. Their behaviour is exemplary. They demonstrate their developing independence for example by choosing their own drinks and putting on their own coats. Each child learns to take responsibility through taking turns to carry out simple tasks such as being a line leader. The children respond well to encouragement to understand the needs of others by being involved in charity fundraising, most recently for the local air ambulance. They respect each other's differences and parents of different faiths and cultures are invited to talk to them. Children develop respect, tolerance and kindness through class rules and the school's ethos. They learn about British institutions through the visits to the setting by the fire brigade, police and local health workers. Nursery children spend time with those in Reception throughout the year and the excellent communication between staff in Reception and Year 1 facilitates a smooth transition to the next stage of their education.
- 4.4 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils take great pride in belonging to their school community and many attractive displays in classrooms and corridors detail and celebrate their many achievements. Their self-awareness and confidence are developed strongly through the celebration of school mass, house and school assemblies, PSHEE, religious education, and other lessons. Pupils have a strong understanding of the practices and principles of Christian worship and discover the main themes of diverse world religions, notably in a recent 'Hinduism Week'. They reflect perceptively on their learning and behaviour and articulate their thoughts and feelings in a mature manner.
- 4.5 Moral development throughout the school is excellent. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, showing readiness to follow the rules and values which guide their behaviour, including the law of the land. They accept responsibility for their own actions and show an appreciation of how these can affect others. Pupils develop respect for democracy, for the rule of law and an understanding of public institutions and services in England as a result of visits from the police, and their discussions on rights and responsibilities as part of PSHEE. In these ways, they demonstrate their growing moral awareness. Pupils recognise their responsibility for the environment through successful junior eco-council initiatives. They respond positively to the needs of others through significant fund-raising initiatives for local, national and international charities.

- 4.6 Excellent social awareness is evident in the ease with which pupils talk and interact with adults and each other. Pupils speak confidently and eloquently in assemblies and performances, and listen carefully to each other's opinions in lessons. They readily celebrate one another's successes. In the questionnaire a small minority of pupils said that they were not given sufficient responsibility. Pupils questioned during inspection did not agree and inspectors found that positions of responsibility exist throughout the school. Senior pupils act as reading 'buddies' for those younger, and prefects take great pride in supporting the well-being of younger pupils.
- 4.7 The cultural development of the pupils is excellent and they benefit greatly from opportunities to experience and appreciate other faiths and cultures. In the junior school pupils celebrate enthusiastically events such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Pupils respect the common values across different cultures and faiths, and show mutual respect and tolerance of those with different beliefs. Their work in history and involvement in the recent Remembrance commemoration gives pupils a clear understanding of the development of British culture. Theatre trips and involvement in concerts and productions enable pupils to experience and appreciate cultural performances at first hand. Senior school visits to Nepal and France enable pupils to experience international culture.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Children in the EYFS are eager to come to school and settle quickly on arrival. Staff are excellent role models and support the children effectively so that they feel safe and secure and develop positive relationships. Adults give very clear guidelines about the expected high standards of behaviour which results in a happy and busy atmosphere, where children benefit fully from all the opportunities provided. A healthy life style is promoted by the provision of freshly prepared lunches and snacks and by opportunities to use outside areas for exercise.
- 4.10 In the rest of the school, pastoral care is of very high quality and strongly supports the school's aims. Staff provide very effective support and guidance. The pastoral provision is underpinned by the work of dedicated section heads, house staff and tutors. Key staff meet regularly to review pastoral matters. An effective tracking and monitoring system is in place to aid communication and care. In response to the questionnaire a very large majority of pupils said that teachers showed concern for them and there was a member of staff to whom they could turn if they had a personal difficulty. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire said that their child felt safe at school.
- 4.11 Relationships amongst the pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent. Pupils new to the school, including those whose school had recently closed, are complimentary about the welcome they have received and the measures put into place to integrate them into the community and ensure their continuity of education. Prefects undergo appropriate training to provide additional pastoral support to younger pupils throughout the school. Pupils are happy, open-minded and relaxed and clearly proud of their school. They feel safe and well looked after and during the inspection many expressed the view that the school was like a family.
- 4.12 A wide choice of carefully prepared and nutritious food ensures that pupils eat healthily. Pupils comment very positively on the high quality of meals and pupil suggestions for menus are considered. All pupils take regular exercise, making the

most of the school's extensive sports provision. An appropriate plan improves educational access for pupils with disabilities.

- 4.13 Clear policies promote good behaviour and are well implemented. In responding to the questionnaire a small minority of pupils said that teachers were not fair in the manner in which they applied sanctions. Inspectors examined school records and interviewed staff and pupils, and found that staff were even-handed when giving rewards or sanctions. Serious sanctions against pupils are recorded and suitably monitored by senior staff. Clear anti-bullying procedures are published and are well implemented. They include activities to promote awareness and expectations in PSHE lessons. Cyberbullying is covered as a core part of the digital literacy and ICT programmes. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that any bullying or harassment was tackled effectively. The pastoral tracking and monitoring system has been developed and records kept to enable patterns to be identified in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach to bullying. This evidence does not support the contrary views of a few parents and a small minority of pupils in the questionnaires.
- 4.14 In the pupil questionnaires, a minority of pupils said that the school did not seek their views or opinions but pupils spoken to during the inspection did not agree. They said that they were able to express their opinions and views through structured systems such as house meetings, the school council or through informal discussion with staff. Their suggestions are either referred for further action or explanations are given why they could not be taken forward.

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

- 4.15 Arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good.
- 4.16 Children's welfare is promoted effectively in the EYFS and safeguarding of children is adequately ensured. Staff update their child protection training regularly and know what to do in the event of an allegation, disclosure or concern and are trained in paediatric first aid. Risk assessments are comprehensive and daily checks ensure that any hazards or faulty equipment are repaired or removed without delay. Systems for registration are in place to ensure regular attendance but, for the small number of children of compulsory school age in the setting, this was not carried out promptly at the start of the day. Children look after their own personal hygiene with great confidence and are suitably supported by adults, when additional help is needed. Generous staff-to-child ratios ensure that children are very well supervised and remain safe while at school.
- 4.17 The measures in place support the school's aims to provide a broad and varied education within a safe environment. Policies relating to welfare, health and safety are kept under review by senior staff but at the beginning of inspection some policies did not fully reflect current requirements. This was swiftly remedied by the school before the end of the inspection, and the revised versions made available to staff and parents. The school has a suitable safeguarding policy which has regard to official guidance. On occasions in the past, staff had been allowed to start work in both the EYFS and the main school before references had been received or the required barred list checks had been undertaken. Where staff started work before checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) were received, proper supervision arrangements were not put in place. Routine clerical checks revealed these errors, the required checks were quickly carried out and the results recorded appropriately. All this took place prior to the notification of the inspection. More

recent appointments have been handled correctly. The designated safeguarding lead is supported by similarly trained and experienced colleagues and liaises with the appropriate local agencies. Effective measures are in place to promote e-safety including advice given to parents through presentations delivered at parents evenings. All staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and have full regard to their responsibilities including the duty to prevent radicalisation.

- 4.18 Rigorous precautions are taken to minimise risks from fire and other hazards, and procedures and equipment are regularly checked by the estates manager. Fire drills are practised and comprehensive records compiled and stored centrally. Health and safety matters are monitored by a formal committee. Arrangements to ensure safe use of the facilities, are detailed and broadly effective. Safety protocols in laboratories and workshops are stringently applied. Thorough risk assessments are carried out across the school site and for extra-curricular and off-site activities.
- 4.19 The health and well-being co-ordinator ensures that all first-aid stations are appropriately stocked and medication, illness and injury records are thorough and accurate. The appropriate number of staff are qualified in first aid. At the beginning of the inspection, a deficiency in the facilities in the medical room was brought to the attention of the school and rectified immediately.
- 4.20 Admission and attendance registers are correctly stored but registration in the junior school does not always take place promptly at the start of each school day. In the senior school registers are properly maintained and pupils' absence is promptly followed up.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 Governance is broadly effective in providing oversight of all sections of the school in line with its aims. They offer a range of experience including within public health, organisation development, health and safety and education. They discharge their responsibilities for financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources effectively. They hold regular meetings both of the full board and of a finance and general purposes committee and through these provide clear strategic oversight. They hold an annual strategy day with the senior management of the school, the central aim of which is to develop and strengthen further the close ties between the leadership of the school and its governance. The recent institution of an academic committee reflects their commitment to maintaining high educational standards.
- 5.3 The trustees have a good insight into the working of the school. They receive detailed reports from the headmaster and bursar and regularly review the school's development plan. They provide support, challenge and stimulus for the senior management of the school. They take pride in the achievements of the pupils and attend school events. One trustee has strategic oversight of the EYFS, gaining excellent knowledge of its provision, and offering support for its staff through regular visits and reports back to the full board.
- 5.4 The trustees are aware of their responsibilities for welfare, health and safety and endeavour to keep abreast of the statutory requirements. However, health and safety concerns were brought to the attention of the school during the inspection. Trustees have undertaken child protection training including that relating to the strategy to prevent the radicalisation of children. A trustee has been nominated to have oversight for safeguarding and he is kept fully informed by the school of any concerns relating to pupils. The trustees have ensured that an annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements throughout the school has been carried out and receive an oral report from the safeguarding leader, but this review has not been rigorous enough to identify important omissions in the recruitment process and its findings were not well recorded in the board's minutes. The trustees have not monitored policies and procedures, together with their implementation, with sufficient care.

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 good.
- 5.6 At all levels of responsibility, the leadership and management of the school are successful in meeting its aims of fostering pupils' intellectual, social, physical, aesthetic, cultural, moral and spiritual development and nurturing a love of learning, a spirit of enquiry and the pursuit of excellence within a disciplined and stimulating environment. They are largely successful in most respects for the discharge of their delegated responsibilities. In the past, there has been insufficient rigour in ensuring that all required checks are completed before the staff start work, but when the

problem was discovered through a routine check, matters were put right well before the notification of the inspection. Subsequent appointments have been handled correctly. Policies have not always been brought up to date in a timely manner, although by the end of the inspection all met requirements.

- 5.7 Leadership and management provide clear educational direction. The school's academic development plan guides planning in individual departments and an effective system is in place to ensure the regular monitoring and evaluation of its implementation. This is reflected in the quality of the pupils' education and the high standard of their personal development. The senior management team conducts a formal self-evaluation process annually and continuous consideration is given to the priorities it has highlighted and to ensuring that they are achieved. Heads of department analyse examination results and discuss these with their staff to ensure continuous improvement, a process which is further monitored and evaluated by senior management.
- 5.8 Regular individual and group training courses effectively contribute to the professional development of all staff. Training for safeguarding is carried out appropriately and in accordance with the local requirements. Induction training for staff including that for newly qualified teachers ensures that appropriate safeguarding procedures are fully understood. A comprehensive staff handbook ensures that all staff are fully aware of the policies governing arrangements for welfare, health and safety. An appropriate formal performance management system for teaching staff on a two-year cycle identifies areas for further individual training but it is not consistently monitored or carried out. A programme of lesson observation for all teachers is now conducted annually by senior managers. This helps to evaluate the quality of teaching but it is not yet fully incorporated into the performance management system so that opportunities for further improvement are readily identified. An informal system of peer review has proved helpful in strengthening links between junior and senior schools and in improving the quality of some teaching.
- 5.9 The EYFS is very well led and managers have a clear vision for the future development of the setting and employ strong self-evaluation. Areas for improvement are quickly identified and actions taken to improve. The educational programmes are monitored regularly and there is a very supportive system in place for supervision. Staff work well together as a team. They are well qualified and all take part in continuous professional development, which contributes constructively to their knowledge and understanding of how children develop and learn. All staff in the EYFS actively promote the values of equality, diversity and respect.
- 5.10 The school has forged excellent relationships with parents. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents overwhelmingly expressed satisfaction with the quality of education their children are receiving and with the standard of communications from the school.
- 5.11 The school's complaints policy is made available to all parents and meets requirements. Most concerns are readily resolved at the informal stage through personal contact with the appropriate staff. When formal written complaints are received, they are appropriately recorded and handled in a timely and careful manner.
- 5.12 Parents often take advantage of good opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children, for example, joining them on trips abroad, sports

tours, or taking part in Hindu Week in the junior school. An active and effective Parent Teacher Association (PTA) organises a number of fund-raising events each year and contributes valuable funds to support the work of the school, for example, in contributing to annual prefect training, the garden club, the show jumping team and in the purchase of a 3-D printer.

- 5.13 The school's website provides useful information for parents. They are also given a termly calendar showing all of the forthcoming events and sports fixtures. A well-used recent development in the past year has been an electronic application for smart phones and tablets, which is regularly updated to provide parents with the latest news and any alterations to published events.
- 5.14 Parents in each year group have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with their teachers at a parents' evening at least once each year. In addition, the school provides regular reports to parents on the progress of pupils. Each year group receives at least two short and one full written report each year. The reports are written with care by the teachers to ensure that each pupil's personal progress and development are accurately reflected and that helpful advice for further improvement is given.
- 5.15 The EYFS has excellent links with parents. In their pre-inspection questionnaires and in conversation with inspectors, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the setting and the progress their children make. They feel welcomed into the school community prior to their children starting through taster visits to the setting. They value the daily contact they have with very approachable staff, who know their children well. They appreciate the opportunities to be involved in their children's learning including contributing to the assessment system through the 'all about me books' and being able to volunteer to help on outings and through the school PTA. Effective partnerships with parents and external agencies when appropriate ensure that children's needs are met. The children benefit from this collaborative approach to their learning and development. The academic reports, received at the end of the autumn and summer terms, together with the detailed learning journals, and regular parents' evenings keep parents very well informed about the progress their children make against the early learning goals.

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