



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**BRAESIDE SCHOOL**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Braeside School

Full Name of School	<b>Braeside School</b>
DfE Number	<b>881/6000</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>N/A</b>
Address	<b>Braeside School 130 High Road Buckhurst Hill Essex IG9 5SD</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 8504 1133</b>
Fax Number	<b>020 8505 6675</b>
Email Address	<b>enquiries@braesideschool.co.uk</b>
Head Teacher	<b>Mrs Gillian Haddon</b>
Directors	<b>Mr Alan Smith and Mrs Clare Naismith</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 16</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>175</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS): 26    5-11: 71 11-16: 78</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Anne Silk</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Girls</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>23 Sep 2014 to 26 Sep 2014</b>

## 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 November 2011.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://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 the directors, 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 Colette Culligan	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Annabelle Hancock	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mrs Rachel Eaton-Jones	Team Inspector (Head of Prep Department, ISA school)
Mrs Susan O'Riordan	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Dr David Pacini	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mrs Deborah Buckenham	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(a) Main findings</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(b) Action points</b>	<b>3</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	4
(ii) Recommendation(s) for further improvement	4
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>5</b>
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	5
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	6
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>9</b>
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	11
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>12</b>
(a) The quality of governance	12
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	13

## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Braeside School, located in Buckhurst Hill, Essex, was founded in 1944 as a non-denominational day school for girls aged three to sixteen. It continues to occupy its original extended Victorian buildings on two sites a few minutes' walk apart. The Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) and the junior school, catering for Years 1 to 5, occupy one building and the senior school, for Years 6 to 11, the other. The school is a limited company, operating on a not-for-profit basis. The proprietors are the sole directors of the company. They are responsible for governance and oversight of the school, and are supported in this by a body of local governors who act as 'critical friends' to the school.
- 1.2 The school aims to educate and empower girls of every age to make the most of their abilities, taking their individual capabilities and needs into account, and to provide them with a sound moral and intellectual foundation for life. It intends to create a happy and secure environment within which pupils develop self-confidence, a sense of responsibility and consideration of others.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection the school has introduced Spanish as a second modern foreign language and a GCSE option for three separate sciences in the senior school. A designated art room has been created for the junior school, and there has been investment in information and communication technology (ICT) facilities throughout the school, including in the EYFS.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 175 pupils enrolled at the school. Of these, 26 were in the EYFS, 71 in Years 1 to 6 and 78 in Years 7 to 11. The majority of pupils come from white British or Asian British families and live within five miles' radius of the school, and a few live further afield.
- 1.5 The school's data suggests that junior school pupils are of at least above average ability. The ability profile of the senior school is above the national average. A fairly wide range of abilities is represented but the majority of pupils are of at least above average ability. The school identifies 17 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to whom it provides specialist support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The school identifies three pupils as having English as an additional language, all of whom are fluent in English and do not need additional support.

- 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 tables.

***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Lower Kindergarten	Nursery
Kindergarten	Reception

***Junior School***

School	NC name
Infant 1	Year 1
Infant 2	Year 2
Junior 3	Year 3
Junior 4	Year 4
Junior 5	Year 5

***Senior School***

School	NC name
Junior 6	Year 6
Senior 7	Year 7
Senior 8	Year 8
Senior 9	Year 9
Senior 10	Year 10
Senior 11	Year 11

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The school successfully provides a good education for all its pupils, taking their individual capabilities and needs into account, in line with its aims. The achievements and learning of the pupils are good. The good curriculum ensures that pupils are well educated in all required areas. A strong emphasis on literacy skills begun in the EYFS and sustained throughout ensures that pupils read, write and speak fluently, with a firm grasp of the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling. They use ICT confidently, understand and apply mathematical and scientific concepts, and demonstrate imagination and creativity in music and art. They enjoy the opportunities for physical exercise provided in the curriculum and by the pleasant grounds. Almost all children in the EYFS reach or exceed the expected levels of development for their age. Attainment in the junior and senior schools is above the national average for maintained schools, and almost all pupils, including those with SEND, make good progress in relation to their starting points. There were few pre-inspection questionnaire responses from pupils. In these, a minority of pupils expressed dissatisfaction with sport and the extra-curricular programme; inspectors judged this provision to be good for the size of the school. Parents, more of whom responded to their questionnaire, expressed stronger dissatisfaction in this regard, but in other matters expressed strong satisfaction. Highly engaging teaching ensures that pupils are generally interested, enthusiastic learners. Good care is taken to support pupils identified with SEND. More able pupils are not always challenged to make the most of their potential; few opportunities are provided to extend them academically. In questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils said that they do not find their work interesting, though all agreed that they are making good progress, and their parents strongly support this view.
- 2.2 The personal development of the pupils is excellent. From the youngest age, pupils exhibit confidence and friendliness towards their peers and visitors. Over time, the pupils develop into responsible young individuals who are self-aware and thoughtful. They reflect carefully on ethical issues and show a ready willingness to become involved in projects that benefit the school and the local community. Pupils' personal development is strongly supported by their very good relationships with staff, whose commitment they value highly. In responses to questionnaires, pupils were almost unanimous in agreeing that staff care about them as individuals. Staff provide wise guidance to their charges, whom they know very well. Pupils' behaviour is almost invariably very good. In recent years the school has not followed its anti-bullying policy fully. Although in questionnaire responses a minority of pupils said that the school does not deal with bullying, in discussion pupils said that bullying is uncommon and expressed no concerns about the school's management of issues. Measures for ensuring that premises and accommodation are safe from any potential hazards are good. The school's safeguarding policy had not reflected the latest guidance correctly prior to the inspection. In a few instances the school had not followed requirements when alerted to concerns. The policy has now been corrected.
- 2.3 Governance is unsatisfactory. Leadership and management are sound. Governance has provided support and wise financial planning, however it has not been sufficiently rigorous in monitoring overall standards, nor in ensuring that all legal requirements have been met. Governance has not provided sufficient challenge to the school's leadership regarding overall development planning.



Directors and senior leaders alike are committed to and successful in sustaining the school's ethos of care and of traditional approaches to education. The school has ensured that it recruits qualified and committed staff, although not all employees have received safeguarding training as required, and outlined in the safeguarding policy. Leadership has been successful in creating a happy and secure environment in which pupils make good progress, as a result of well-planned teaching. There is, however, heavy reliance on informal discussions rather than on rigorous or formal monitoring of academic and pastoral matters. This is detrimental to the school's ability to develop or to implement all its policies appropriately. Very little progress has been made across the school in meeting the recommendations for improvement made at the previous inspection. Strong and successful links with parents have been established.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:

- ensure that the safeguarding policy reflects the most recent guidance, and fully implement its requirements whenever comments made by pupils raise concerns that they may be at risk of significant harm, seeking advice from the appropriate agencies without delay [Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety];
- ensure that it implements the procedures laid out in its anti-bullying policy and keeps records that enable evaluation of the effectiveness of its approach and the identification of any emerging patterns [Part 3, paragraph 10., 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 directors are meticulous in discharging to the full their responsibility for the rigorous oversight of policy implementation, especially with regard to safeguarding and all behavioural policies.
2. Strengthen measures to monitor standards of teaching and learning throughout the school.
3. Ensure that staff use standardised data in their planning to help them in providing appropriate challenge for all, including the most able.
4. Create a development plan that takes account of inspection recommendations, stems from rigorous self-evaluation and requires regular reviews of progress towards achieving targets.
5. Develop lesson planning in the EYFS, especially in the short term, to include the use of the outside areas and to ensure challenge for the most able.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 The school is successful in meeting its aim to educate girls of every age to achieve their potential, taking their individual capabilities and needs into account. Pupils of all ages and abilities demonstrate confident knowledge, understanding and skills. They are articulate, with very good listening, reading and writing skills. Children in the Reception class have developed excellent reading and listening abilities, and they enjoy reading. Junior school pupils read aloud fluently and write at length; for example, pupils in Year 2 wrote highly accomplished stories based on a Roald Dahl story. Older pupils have a good vocabulary that they use in their writing and in conversation or debates. Good mathematical skills are evident throughout the school. Some EYFS children were heard counting up to twenty and beyond, and demonstrated understanding of two more or less than a given number. Older pupils apply mathematics well, as observed in science lessons. At all ages, pupils apply their thinking logically; for example, a Year 8 class enjoyed the opportunity to carry out investigations in science. Skills in ICT are of a good quality, with both junior and senior pupils using a variety of software with proficiency across a range of curriculum areas. The stimulating displays around the whole school demonstrate the good quality of the pupils' creativity. The imagination of children in the EYFS was clear in their eager wish to share with inspectors the patterns they had made from items collected outdoors. The pupils work hard in their physical education (PE) lessons, improving their skills as a result.
- 3.3 The pupils achieve good success in a variety of activities. Some pupils have performed successfully in the UK Maths Challenge at various levels. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 succeeded in a speech and drama examination, as did a significant number of senior pupils, many awarded merit and distinctions. Junior and senior choirs reach good standards. The vocal ensemble performed with credit at a local festival, and pupils have participated well in the local authority Youth Council. Pupils from across the school have been selected to represent the Independent Schools Association in regional cross country contests.
- 3.4 Almost all children in the EYFS, including those with SEND, reach the expected levels of development by the end of their time in the setting. Some of the more able exceed expectations, making excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points, although planning does not consistently ensure that they are presented with sufficient challenge to maximise their potential.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data from 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at the age of 11 have been good in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools. In 2014, 92% of pupils reached the expected Level 4 and above at reading and grammar and all did so in mathematics. Results at GCSE have been good in relation to the national average for girls in maintained schools. In 2014, 88% of pupils achieved at least 5 GCSE passes at grades A\* to C, including mathematics and English; 31% of grades were A\* or A. These levels of attainment and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that pupils make good progress relative to the average of pupils of similar ability, as shown by standardised measures of progress. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very large majority of parents expressed satisfaction with their children's progress.

Pupils leaving at the age of 16 are successful in gaining places at their chosen schools or colleges.

- 3.6 In work seen during the inspection, the pupils' rate of learning was largely good, although this was not consistent across all abilities. More able pupils in the senior school are not always appropriately challenged by the work and so do not always make progress consistent with their ability. Pupils identified with SEND make good progress overall, reflecting the support they receive, but this is not always the case for the more able. On occasion, when focus is lost or the work is insufficiently demanding, some pupils, especially the more able, become disengaged and progress is slowed.
- 3.7 Positive attitudes to work and pleasure in learning are evident throughout, and are a strong feature of the school. The pupils, including those in the EYFS, are able to maintain enthusiasm and concentration for sustained periods, whether working alone or with others. Their pride in what they do is evident in their work, which is neatly presented and well organised. Pupils' consistent application ensures that they achieve well across the school.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The curriculum provides effective coverage of the requisite areas of learning and is suitable for the ages and needs of all the pupils throughout the school. It successfully supports the school's aim to provide a sound intellectual foundation for life and to empower its pupils to make the most of their abilities.
- 3.10 In the EYFS, the programmes of study are used to good effect, the children receiving an excellent foundation to learning. The junior school has begun a review of the curriculum. While the school is retaining its traditional emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills, the pupils are benefiting from a more cohesive curriculum across Years 1 to 5. The curriculum in the senior school offers a suitable choice for pupils in relation to the size of the school. It has been enhanced since the previous inspection by the introduction of Spanish in Year 7 as a second modern foreign language.
- 3.11 All pupils study ICT until the end of Year 9. Physical education appears in the timetable throughout, although as two periods per week are allocated for Years 10 and 11, opportunities to explore different forms of exercise in curriculum time are limited. In questionnaire responses, parents and pupils both commented on the narrow provision for physical exercise in both the curriculum and the extra-curricular programme. Pupils in Years 5 to 7 and Year 10 expressed particular dissatisfaction with the opportunities available to them. Inspection evidence supports the view that such provision is limited. However, the school makes good use of local facilities to provide additional opportunities for physical exercise.
- 3.12 At GCSE the pupils follow a common core of English, science and mathematics. Pupils can choose further GCSEs from an options list. This range is limited but appropriate to the size of the school, and the school endeavours to ensure through timetabling that a pupil can follow her own interests. Careers guidance, including advice on post-16 opportunities, is included in the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme for pupils in Years 10 and 11. They also benefit from the opportunity of attending a careers convention.

- 3.13 Pupils are screened for their reading age on entering the school and sensitive support for pupils identified with SEND is a strength, reflected in the good progress that these pupils make. Formal support for these pupils is stronger in the senior school than for those in the junior school, where this is still in its infancy. Provision in the curriculum for the more able pupils remains limited, as at the time of the previous inspection. However, they are encouraged to take separate sciences at GCSE and to participate in activities such as the UK Maths Challenge or chess club.
- 3.14 The curriculum is supported and enhanced by a variety of visits to art galleries, theatre and museums. For children in the EYFS, this includes visits to the local library and The Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green. Senior pupils have residential opportunities to visit France or Iceland on a rolling programme.
- 3.15 In questionnaire responses, a very small minority of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the school's provision for extra-curricular activities. Inspectors judged that, while limited in range, the quality of the extra-curricular programme is good and the school makes efforts to respond to pupils' requests. Clubs in the senior school include yoga and debating. A guitar group played in a senior school assembly, and the junior and senior choirs are supported with great enjoyment. Drama clubs in both sections of the school are also well supported, with many of the pupils enjoying preparations for the inter-house drama competition. The annual community tea for the local area is a popular senior school event.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.17 Teaching effectively supports the school's aim to educate pupils whilst taking their individual capabilities and needs into account. The overwhelming majority of teaching ensures that the pupils make swift progress and achieve well. Teaching throughout the school is almost always well planned, demonstrating a good awareness of the pupils' prior learning and sensitivity to the needs of pupils with SEND.
- 3.18 In many lessons, teaching is stimulating and inspirational. Most teaching ensures that learning moves at a rapid pace. In the EYFS, expectations of children in terms of behaviour and learning are high. Teachers across the school display good subject knowledge, using a wide variety of resources effectively to stimulate pupils' learning. This was seen, for example, in a junior history lesson, with a comic video as a starter activity in an exploration of the Saxon invasion of England, and in a senior ICT lesson when a short news video clip inspired pupils to make technological and branding comparisons between various mobile devices. Throughout the school, the variety of tasks included in planning helps to maintain pupils' interest, providing opportunities for both independent and collaborative learning. This was observed, for example, in a science lesson exploring the mechanisms of breathing and in a religious studies class in which the pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of the concept of community. Teaching is usually energetic, encouraging pupils' eager responses and overseeing discussions with a light, humorous touch. When teaching is dominated by teacher exposition, with little variety of tasks, low expectations and few opportunities for pupils to participate, pupils lose interest and progress is significantly slowed.
- 3.19 In the EYFS, appropriate planning, assessment, recording and tracking procedures have been established. At present, tracking of children's progress does not

consistently ensure that all are presented with a suitable level of challenge. There has been little progress in meeting recommendations of the previous inspection to improve planning for outside learning. Short-term plans are not clearly defined and do not include outdoor provision.

- 3.20 The school has extended the use of standardised testing to provide baseline assessments of junior and senior pupils' abilities. It is starting to use this information to set targets and to monitor progress. However, there is little evidence of the effective use of this in lesson planning, especially for the more able pupils. There is a suitable marking policy in both the junior and senior schools but it is not consistently followed. As at the time of the previous inspection, there is some unevenness in the quality of marking. At its best, marking is regular and thorough, with clear feedback to pupils as to how the work could be improved or developed, and realistic yet challenging targets. In interviews, pupils expressed that they highly value such comments, which motivate them and help them to improve.
- 3.21 Comprehensive testing and screening arrangements are in place to identify pupils in need of support. Individual learning plans containing classroom strategies and targets are prepared for them. This was seen being used very effectively in lessons, for example in a junior English class and a senior mathematics lesson. However, as at the time of the previous inspection, teaching across all subject areas does not always provide appropriately for the more able pupils. The same work is often set for all the class, regardless of ability, and in lessons observed there were few occasions of alternative or extension tasks being offered.

## **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 successfully fulfils its aim to provide a sound moral foundation for its pupils and develop in them self-confidence, a sense of responsibility and consideration of others. As they mature, pupils become assured and self-aware. Pupils are confident in sharing their individual views. They appreciate non-material aspects of life and demonstrate an understanding of the power of religious belief. For example, pupils in a Year 8 lesson spoke maturely about the influence of the church in the 16th century and the power of language to transmit emotion. In discussions with inspectors, pupils' emotional maturity was evident.
- 4.3 Pupils have a well-defined sense of right and wrong, as shown by their generally excellent behaviour. A sense of fairness and moral awareness is evident in pupils of all ages. Children in the EYFS behave very well, showing consideration for each other and happily sharing toys and activities. In discussions, the pupils' awareness of complex ethical and moral issues was clear. For example, pupils in the junior school showed great understanding of what constitutes bullying, and how they should behave towards each other, while older pupils discussed the ethics of stem cell research intelligently and empathetically.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate well-developed social responsibility throughout the school. Children in the EYFS are eager to help in tidying books and in being class leader for the day. Older pupils are also happy to take on additional responsibilities through participation in the prefect system, school council and the local Youth Council. Older pupils enjoy their responsibilities as house officials, collaborating well in organising events such as the inter-house drama competition, and junior school pupils are keen to help EYFS children when possible. The school council meets regularly. The council representatives take their responsibility to help develop the school with suggestions and requests seriously. The pupils are very generous with their time and money in charity fund raising, supporting a wide range of national and international causes each year. Pupils throughout the senior school, led by Year 10, enjoy the organisation and teamwork involved in the annual community tea. Pupils are environmentally aware and keen to help to protect their school and local environment, for example through involvement in tree planting. They show growing economic and political awareness as they mature. Pupils at all stages show understanding and respect for fundamental British values of democracy and of public institutions and services in England. They are tolerant of others' differences and respectful of their rights to hold different opinions.
- 4.5 The pupils' understanding of and respect for the range of cultures and faiths represented in the school, including the Western cultural tradition, is a strength. At all ages, they are enthusiastic and supportive of each other's traditions and beliefs, and enjoy exploring these throughout the curriculum. Pupils are happy to discuss the different faith communities to which they belong. Junior school pupils were enthusiastic and supportive of peers who were preparing for First Communion and for the Jewish New Year. Pupils enjoy the musical traditions of different cultures. In a choir rehearsal, those in the junior choir staged an excellent performance that moved both them and their audience.

- 4.6 By the time they leave the school at the age of 16, the pupils show an excellent level of personal development and are well prepared for the next stage of their education or entry into the world of work.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.8 Staff throughout the school know the pupils well and are able to offer appropriate support and guidance to their charges, creating the happy and secure environment of the school's aims. In the EYFS, each child is allocated a key person who is the point of welcome and contact, supporting the child within a warm and welcoming school environment. Procedures for sharing concerns about pupils are effective in that the pupils feel well cared for. However, these are informal and recall of issues relies on discussion and memory, lacking formal monitoring and written records.
- 4.9 Positive relationships are evident throughout the school. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the great majority of pupils indicated the view that staff care for them as individuals. A small minority, however, indicated there is no teacher to whom they would turn for help with a personal concern. Discussions clarified this; some pupils said that they feel that teachers depend on them actively seeking help and that they are slow to notice if someone is upset. Observation of how contact time is used confirmed the pupils' view that at times staff are focused on practicalities and not alert to concerns. A minority of pupils commented in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire that they do not feel that rewards and sanctions are applied fairly. Inspection evidence did not support these views.
- 4.10 Healthy eating habits are actively encouraged. Pupils bring their own healthy lunches and snacks, and the school provides a healthy mid-morning snack. Pupils take advantage of the opportunities for exercise afforded by the grounds as well as in timetabled lessons.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable anti-bullying policy. However, this has not been fully implemented. There are no means of monitoring any emerging patterns or the way in which incidents have been managed. In questionnaire responses, a minority of pupils said that the school does not deal effectively with bullying. In conversations, senior pupils explained that although bullying is uncommon, the school is slow to take action. The lack of careful monitoring and absence of records of actions taken indicate that these concerns are justified. There is an appropriate plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 The elected school council puts forward pupils' suggestions. During interviews inspectors found that whilst junior pupils all said they feel listened to, senior pupils did not feel this was always the case when they raised concerns. The school has sometimes responded to pupils' requests, for example in changing the PE kit, but other reasonable concerns, such as the length of time available for some girls to eat lunch, have not always resulted in action.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is unsatisfactory.
- 4.14 The school had made efforts to ensure that the safeguarding policy is in line with the most recent requirements, but its understanding of these requirements, including the need for clear lines of responsibility when dealing with a concern, was uncertain. A satisfactory policy was put in place and published on the school's website by the end of the inspection. The implementation of safeguarding procedures has not always shown sufficient regard to changing statutory guidance. Some related concerns have neither been managed according to legal requirements nor monitored with appropriate rigour, and the school has lacked a full or consistent approach to record keeping. A few members of staff have not attended training, as required, although all EYFS staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. These shortcomings mean that the school has not met legal requirements in the area of safeguarding.
- 4.15 In other matters concerning health and safety, the school's arrangements are good. Routine maintenance is good and any remedial actions identified are appropriately carried out. Fire checks and fire drills are carefully carried out at regular intervals. Adequate provision is now in place throughout the school for pupils who are ill or injured. Medical policies are followed correctly and a significant number of staff are trained in first aid. Risk assessments for activities on site and all off-site visits are thoroughly completed. This practice is particularly well established in the junior school. Although risks associated with senior pupils' overseas trips had been considered so that the safety of pupils was assured, the assessments were not well constructed as information had been entered in different documents. The admission and attendance registers are maintained correctly and retained as required.



## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is unsatisfactory.
- 5.2 While all legal responsibilities of governance lie with the directors, they are supported by a group of local governors, most of whom are either parents of former pupils or former members of staff. The directors provide support for the staff and senior leaders but are not sufficiently rigorous in providing stimulus for growth and improvement. They have not challenged the school leadership on plans to implement the recommendations of the previous inspection or to review the school's success in this respect, and little progress has been made in this area. In discharging their responsibility for monitoring academic standards, directors and governors have relied on conversations with senior staff and on examination results. They have not challenged the school to establish a rigorous system for monitoring pupils' progress over time or for identifying individual teachers' strengths or developmental needs.
- 5.3 At the beginning of the inspection, directors' oversight of safe recruitment procedures and related documentation, and of the safeguarding policy and its implementation, had not adequately ensured that legal requirements were met. Directors had reviewed the safeguarding policy annually but had not identified its lack of clarity or the school's failures to implement the policy correctly on a few occasions. The policies and procedures are now satisfactory.
- 5.4 The directors and governors share a good range of skills on which to draw when considering the progress of the school in line with its aims. The directors work in school on a part-time basis, ensuring a close understanding of the school's daily life and familiarity with staff. The governors are less familiar figures, although some are regular visitors. One governor has specific designated responsibility for liaison with the EYFS, although the effectiveness of this planned oversight has been limited, as the needs and context of the setting are yet to be reflected sufficiently clearly in policies and planning.
- 5.5 Directors operate appropriate oversight of financial matters and provide new resources as funding becomes available. For example, additional computer equipment has been provided and outdoor surfaces in the EYFS have been replaced. In discussion with senior leadership staff, directors contribute to a school development plan, demonstrating their support for the further development of the school.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is sound.
- 5.7 Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate that the vast majority of parents are very satisfied with what the school offers, including the standards of their children's achievements, the curriculum and the school's behavioural expectations. Pupils say that their teachers help them to learn and are concerned for them, and they are unanimous in the view that they are making good progress in their work. In this respect, leadership successfully provides clear educational direction and ensures that the school is meeting its aims by providing pupils with a sound moral and intellectual foundation for life, within a happy and secure environment. Pupils generally achieve in line with their potential. Strengths in leadership emerge in the supportive, family atmosphere, of which many pupils and parents speak warmly. These strengths enable the school to be highly successful in encouraging excellent standards in the pupils' behaviour and their personal development.
- 5.8 There are, however, significant deficiencies in management. The senior management team was restructured and extended at the beginning of the academic year, with the intention of putting in place effective systems for monitoring curriculum development, assessment and pupil progress, setting priorities and ensuring that they are achieved. At present, such procedures at all levels of management are informal or lacking. Consequently, very little progress has been made across the school in response to the recommendations of the previous inspection. Required policies have not always been implemented correctly. This has had a significant and negative impact on the manner in which the school has discharged its legal responsibilities, including the safeguarding of pupils. Monitoring and updating of EYFS policies, and ensuring that the specific needs of the setting are included in all relevant whole-school policies, are not sufficiently rigorous.
- 5.9 Management at all levels has not been diligent in establishing priorities and assessing success in progress towards meeting them. The school development plan identifies actions but does not prioritise these or allocate funds to them. There had been no progress in establishing a more focused and detailed development plan for the EYFS, as recommended at the previous inspection. The updated version of the whole-school plan provided towards the end of the inspection made only limited reference to the EYFS, and did not indicate a vision for the continuous improvement of the setting. The plan overall does not indicate when targets have been achieved or how the success of actions has been evaluated. The small size of the school enables frequent informal discussions amongst staff, whether at senior, class or subject responsibility level, but there is little evidence that the outcomes of these deliberations are formally recorded or the results of any consequent actions monitored. Senior management team meetings have not been minuted. The previous recommendation that planning in the EYFS should enhance opportunities in the outdoors area for investigation and problem solving across all areas of learning has not been met.
- 5.10 Staff are well qualified and highly committed. Some inaccuracies identified at the previous inspection in the procedure for ensuring that all staff are subject to the legally required checks had not been rectified. Current practice meets requirements in the carrying out and recording of recruitment checks. Senior management has ensured that most, but not all, staff have attended recent sessions on safeguarding

procedures, as required. All staff involved with the EYFS have been appropriately trained. Not all teaching staff have relevant job descriptions. There are no formal means for the appraisal of teachers or to monitor standards of teaching and learning across the school, although there is an informal system of peer observation of lessons in the senior school.

- 5.11 The school is very successful in creating and sustaining a constructive relationship with parents. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires indicate extremely high levels of parental satisfaction with all aspects of the school's provision and with the quality of the school's communication with them. A weekly bulletin and termly newsletters keep parents informed about the school's current events and achievements of the pupils. In addition to this, parents of children in the EYFS receive an annual newsletter.
- 5.12 The school has an 'open-door' policy and parents or carers may come in to talk informally should they have a concern. The vast majority of parents are happy that any concerns are dealt with promptly. The school has an appropriate formal complaints procedure, which it has not had to implement recently.
- 5.13 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life and work of the school, for example participating in EYFS sessions on 'people who help us' or accompanying classes on school trips. Parents are also invited to school events such as a speech day, the Nativity play, concerts and the dress rehearsals of senior school house plays. An open working morning takes place in March, when the parents of current and prospective pupils may see the school in action. All parents are automatically enrolled in the parents' association, known as the Friends of Braeside School. The committee is involved in fund-raising events such as the Christmas fair, a summer fete and a quiz night. Funds have been used for purchases such as laptops in both sections of the school, contribution towards the language laboratory, two interactive whiteboards for the EYFS classrooms and playground equipment for the junior school.
- 5.14 The updated safeguarding policy and a list of other policies available for the parents of current or prospective pupils on request from the school now appear on the school's website, meeting legal requirements. Parents of pupils new to the school are also provided with information through a prospectus and comprehensive handbooks.
- 5.15 Parents' evenings are held twice a year for parents of pupils in the junior school and in Years 10 and 11, and once a year for the parents of pupils in Years 6 to 9 and for children in the EYFS. Many informal opportunities are used to ensure that parents of the youngest children are well informed, including 'learning journey' journals, which are sent home regularly for parents to add comments. For older pupils, short reports are sent out in December and March with effort and achievement grades, followed by a detailed and full report in the summer term. In the senior school, this identifies target areas for improvement and provides constructive comments. In the junior school, positive comments are provided but no targets are included to help parents support their children's learning.

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