



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CRANSLEY SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Cransley School

Full Name of School	Cransley School
DfE Number	896/6017
Registered Charity Number	506907
Address	Cransley School Belmont Hall Warrington Road Great Budworth Northwich Cheshire CW9 6HN
Telephone Number	01606 891747
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Email Address	admin@cransleyschool.org.uk
Headmaster	Mr Simon Leyshon
Chair of Governors	Mr Stephen Hine
Age Range	3 to 16
Total Number of Pupils	141
Gender of Pupils	Mixed 3 to 11; Girls 11 to 16
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 10 5-11: 51 11-16: 80
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Julie Hollinshead
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	01 Oct 2013 to 04 Oct 2013

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 2010.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, 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 Julia Burns	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Susan Court	Team Inspector (Former Head of Professional Development, ISA school)
Mrs Lynn Maggs-Wellings	Team Inspector (Headmistress, ISA school)
Mr James Wilding	Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)
Mrs Ann Richards	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Cransley School is a day school, founded in 1934 as a girls' preparatory school in Bowden, Cheshire. In 1977, it moved to its present site at Belmont Hall, Great Budworth in rural Cheshire in order to provide additionally for girls up to the age of 16. Both boys and girls are now admitted up to the age of 11. The junior school includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children aged from three to five, and Years 1 to 6, and the senior school comprises Years 7 to 11. The senior school is located in a Grade I listed mansion, and the junior school and some specialist facilities are in other buildings within the grounds. The school is a charitable trust, overseen by a board of governors. The current headmaster was appointed in September 2013. Since the previous inspection the junior school, including its library, the science laboratories, the drama classroom and the play area outside the EYFS department have all been refurbished. The provision of information and communication technology (ICT) has been increased throughout the school.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, there were 141 pupils in the school (121 girls and 20 boys). There were 10 children in the EYFS; 51 pupils in the junior school and 80 pupils in the senior school. Pupils are drawn from professional and farming families in north Cheshire and south Manchester, often travelling some distance to school. The great majority are from white British backgrounds.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the school is slightly above the national average. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational needs and a further thirty-four receive support from the school for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- 1.4 Cransley aims to: create a happy, caring school with equal opportunities for all; help all pupils reach their highest level of academic achievement; identify and foster individual talent and develop self-confidence; develop consideration, compassion, courtesy and courage.

- 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 National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery 2	Nursery
Reception	Reception

Junior School

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

Senior School

School	NC name
Senior 1	Year 7
Senior 2	Year 8
Senior 3	Year 9
Senior 4	Year 10
Senior 5	Year 11

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Cransley is successful in achieving its aim to create a happy, caring school with opportunities for all. Throughout the school, including the EYFS, the achievement of all pupils is good, both in their academic work and in their activities. All pupils, including those with SEND, when suitable work is provided, make good progress in relation to their abilities. Those identified as able, gifted and talented (A, G and T) achieve well when teaching shows high expectations and provides appropriate challenge, though this is not consistent throughout the school. Pupils have good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects, including ICT, but there are very limited opportunities for them to use and develop their ICT skills in other areas of the curriculum. At all ages pupils benefit from good teaching that is characterised by strong subject knowledge and a lively pace. Pupils listen attentively, are articulate and enjoy positive relationships with each other and with the staff. A broad and balanced curriculum, supported by high quality extra-curricular activities and trips, and a strong careers and personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, also enhances the pupils' learning. Since the previous inspection, some use of assessment data has provided a clearer view of the pupils' potential and progress but this is not yet developed fully.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, the pupils' personal development is excellent. They demonstrate qualities of courtesy, tolerance and respect in all their relationships. They reflect carefully on issues of faith and have strong moral values. At all stages, pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Their cultural awareness is also well developed. They make a willing contribution to the school and the wider community. The excellent care given by all staff, teaching and non-teaching, throughout the school supports the pupils' development. Measures to promote the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good, with all appropriate policies now in place, but arrangements for checking new staff have not operated consistently in the past, although those for governors are appropriate.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is good. Governors are highly committed, actively involved and dedicated to supporting the ethos of the school. Steps have now been taken to ensure that they have a formal system for monitoring and evaluating the school's compliance with regulatory requirements, including rigorous oversight of safer recruitment processes. In response to the findings of the previous inspection, the outside learning environment of the EYFS has been improved, together with arrangements for pupils who are unwell and teaching accommodation. Leadership and management are good, ensuring that the school's aims are fulfilled. Senior leadership, supported by a strong staff team, is highly committed to the pupils' achievement and personal development. Recently appointed senior staff are formulating a vision for the future into a new strategic plan. The school has taken steps to introduce a more structured system of appraisal to improve monitoring of teaching and learning and to identify training needs for all staff, including those in the EYFS. Provision of adult-led activities in the EYFS is currently under developed. The school promotes excellent links with parents.

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 all recruitment checks are carried out in a timely manner, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, checks against the barred list and checks for medical fitness [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(a), (b) and (c), and 19.(3), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and for the same reason Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

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

1. Provide greater opportunities for pupils to use and develop their ICT skills at all ages and in all subject areas.
2. Use existing assessment data to track the pupils' progress and ensure that teaching makes provision for A, G and T pupils and those with SEND.
3. Ensure that a structured system of appraisal operates to monitor teaching and learning and to identify training needs, including in the EYFS.
4. Provide more opportunities for adult-led activities in the EYFS.

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 enjoys some success in fulfilling its aim to help all pupils to reach their highest level of academic achievement.
- 3.3 Throughout the school pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and skills well in their academic work. In the EYFS the children are beginning to count and recognise numbers; they communicate well and are active and creative learners, able to work independently.
- 3.4 At all ages pupils are articulate; they express themselves well orally and in their written work. Pupils display a good standard of logical and independent thought. Their numeracy skills are developed well, including in subjects such as science in the senior school, though in the junior school the application of mathematical skills in Years 5 and 6 is under developed. Pupils achieve strongly in the creative and performing arts, particularly in art, music and drama, and in physical education (PE). Their skills in ICT are good, but the very limited opportunities for them to use these within the curriculum hinder further development.
- 3.5 Pupils succeed well in a range of extra-curricular activities. Individual pupils have enjoyed success internationally in equestrian events, nationally in athletics, regionally in swimming and rowing, and locally in netball, tennis and squash. Others perform well in music, and speech and drama examinations, art competitions, the junior UK Mathematics Challenge, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) at bronze level and public speaking competitions. Many pupils are involved in the annual school musical, and sports teams play regular fixtures against local schools.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. In the junior school, results in national tests at the age of 11 have been similar overall to the national average for maintained primary schools. Performance between cohorts varies and the school ceased to enter pupils for these tests in 2012. Results in English were above the national average and in mathematics they were below. On the inspection evidence available from lesson observations and work scrutiny, the pupils' attainment is judged to be good overall in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment shows that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. At the age of 11 most of the girls continue into the senior school for their secondary education while the boys leave to attend a range of local maintained and independent schools.
- 3.7 Results at GCSE have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and have shown year-on-year improvement. Of the grades awarded just over 90 per cent were A* to C, and this standard was maintained in 2013. This level of attainment and the results of nationally standardised tests, together with evidence from lesson observations, the pupils' written work and curriculum interviews, indicate that pupils make progress that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability. When pupils leave at the end of Year 11 all go on to further study; most transfer to a sixth-form college of their choice.

- 3.8 Pupils of all ages with SEND achieve well in examinations and often make good progress in lessons, enabled by the effective individual support sessions they are given, and when the tasks set suit their ability. The achievement of A, G and T pupils is good when teaching shows high expectations and provides appropriate challenge, but this is not consistent throughout the school.
- 3.9 The good quality of teaching, pupils' positive attitudes and excellent behaviour, and the relationships pupils enjoy amongst themselves and with the staff all make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. They co-operate extremely well with each other and also work effectively on their own. Pupils approach their lessons creatively and with enthusiasm. The presentation and organisation of their work are very good.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.11 Throughout the age range and within the constraints of the school's size, the curriculum is good in its coverage of the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative areas of learning. It is consistent with the school's aim to provide a broad, balanced curriculum, where, as far as possible, every need is catered for.
- 3.12 In the EYFS the educational programme follows the seven areas of learning and gives the children good opportunities to acquire communication and language skills. It supports their physical, personal, social and emotional development well. The junior school curriculum includes the National Curriculum subjects, with the addition of French. Specialist teaching by senior school teachers in PE and music makes a good contribution. A good range of subjects, including a second modern foreign language, is studied in Years 8 and 9. At GCSE, most pupils study nine subjects. Those pupils who are A, G and T have the opportunity to study separate sciences and able mathematicians are offered either GCSE statistics or additional mathematics. The provision of ICT, as a discrete subject and as part of business and communication studies is good, but opportunities to use it in other subjects are limited. Curriculum planning and schemes of work are suitable throughout the school.
- 3.13 There is a well-designed scheme of work for PSHE for the senior school, covering a range of issues which includes bullying in Year 7, nutrition in Year 9 and financial awareness in Year 11. In the junior school, Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. There is no discrete scheme of work for PSHE in the junior school, except in Year 6, though the school's values, such as consideration and respect for others, are intrinsic in all aspects of the junior school curriculum.
- 3.14 The school provides an excellent programme of careers education. Staff liaise with an external agency that administers aptitude tests, provides feedback and participates in parents' evenings, particularly GCSE and A-level options events. Timetabled lessons for pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 cover the writing of CVs, college applications and practice interviews, all of which prepare them effectively for sixth-form education.
- 3.15 The needs of pupils with SEND throughout the school, including those with a statement of special educational needs, are well recognised by class and subject teachers and learning support assistants. Specialists co-ordinate support, and learning support is well focused and effective.

- 3.16 Extra-curricular activities are of a high quality and support the school's aim to foster individual talent. A wide range of clubs and activities for all ages is provided. In the junior school; the choir, science and cookery clubs, netball, tag rugby and judo all support the academic curriculum. In the senior school, the new digital photography club, led by a visiting expert, provides excellent opportunities for the pupils to develop confidence with digital cameras. Educational visits to a local museum and to a mill, annual overseas tours, for example the netball development trip to Marbella, all enrich the pupils' experience and enable them to develop their personal strengths and interests.
- 3.17 Links with the community include sporting fixtures against local schools, public speaking competitions and service through the DofE. The junior school sings to the public at an historic estate, 'Christmas at Cransley' provides seasonal entertainment for local people and, further afield, Year 9 girls support a charity project to collect toys for children in Africa.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.19 Throughout the school, teaching has a positive effect on the pupils' progress and achievement. It supports the school's aim to develop lively, enquiring minds, enjoying the widest variety of life-long learning experiences.
- 3.20 Teaching provides a highly effective learning environment for the pupils; they are positively encouraged to work both co-operatively and as confident, independent learners. Lessons are well conceived and paced, are often lively and include a variety of teaching styles. Well-directed questioning encourages participation by all pupils. Throughout the school the individual support for pupils with SEND, including those in the EYFS, is of a high quality, both within and outside the classroom, and the needs of pupils with a statement of special educational needs are extremely well met. In the EYFS children are enabled to become keen and interested learners. They are encouraged to choose activities from a good range of resources, covering all aspects of the curriculum. Targeted, adult-led activities are more limited, which hinders opportunities for children to further develop their learning skills. In the junior school teaching does not always plan for those of different abilities within lessons, including pupils with SEND or those who are A, G and T, and senior school pupils are not always given opportunities to develop higher order thinking skills. This limits progress.
- 3.21 Teachers' subject knowledge is consistently strong in all areas, as is their management of time. Available resources of a sound quality are used creatively to support learning. Classrooms are well presented with displays that provide the stimulus for pupils to expand their interest and knowledge. Positive praise is used to good effect to encourage pupils. Class discussion is used skilfully to engage their interest and they are encouraged to ask questions in order to consolidate their learning.
- 3.22 In the EYFS, staff complete regular assessments of the children's progress and use these well to plan the next steps in learning. In the junior school, short-term planning varies in quality and is not always directly linked to the results of assessment of the pupils' progress. Throughout the school, however, teaching has begun to include more rigorous assessment procedures, including the use of a range of standardised tests to measure the pupils' ability and potential at different

ages, and to plan targets. This goes some way to meeting the recommendation from the previous inspection.

- 3.23 In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a small minority of senior pupils raised concerns about the value of homework in helping them to learn. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Comments in marked homework are positive and encouraging, and also give clear guidelines for improvement. Teaching helps pupils to set clear targets regularly for future learning. In some senior school subject areas, pupils are encouraged to assess their own work, and that of their peers, as an analytical tool to aid further academic achievement. The quality of marking is consistently good across the school.

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 This supports many of the school's aims and is central to that to create a happy, caring school for all. At all ages pupils are well prepared, through their personal development, for the next stage of their education.
- 4.3 In the EYFS the children are polite, play co-operatively with each other and are respectful of each other's differences. They are friendly, welcoming and growing in confidence in social situations.
- 4.4 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils have strong self-knowledge, a sensitive awareness of themselves and others, and secure self-confidence. As seen in lessons, assemblies and activities, they appreciate the beauty of the school and its surroundings. At all levels pupils feel valued: those in Year 11 show a strong appreciation of their strengths and limitations, and use this self-knowledge to inform their choices for future education. Pupils effectively explore different values and beliefs. They reflect well during each day at relevant moments as their spiritual awareness is further promoted by music and the creative arts.
- 4.5 The pupils' exemplary behaviour reflects their excellent moral development, also evident in their attitudes to right and wrong, and in their respect for the civil and criminal law. The pupils enjoy the opportunities provided for independent research which assist in raising their awareness of moral issues in areas such as racism and sexism. Pupils of all ages take responsibility well; they provide strong support for charity work and commemorative activities such as Red Nose Day and the Race for Life. Pupils show excellent awareness of others and of their environment, exemplified by their responses to environmental issues in science, wall displays to promote energy saving and a high quality whole-school collage on the prevention of bullying.
- 4.6 The pupils' social development is excellent. They engage extremely well with the school's new focus on the four 'Cs': compassion, courtesy, consideration and courage. Their social awareness is strong. They consider the needs of others, and are courteous in their conduct and demeanour. Pupils make a willing and successful contribution to activities in the wider school community, for example through the development of questionnaires to sample opinion and inform the school council, and through the creation and publication of induction leaflets for pupils new to the school. Year 11 pupils willingly accept the opportunities to serve as school prefects, librarians, mentors for younger pupils, captains and ambassadors for arts and sport. They are significant role models, admired and respected by younger pupils.
- 4.7 The pupils' cultural awareness is very well developed. At all ages they show consideration for others. They demonstrate respect for their own beliefs and values and for those of others' faiths and traditions. Pupils develop their understanding well through the curriculum, which includes links to local industries, museums and galleries. They enhance their well-developed understanding through trips to theatres and participation in artistic competitions. Through discussions in academic lessons, they learn to appreciate and develop a balanced view of a range of ideas. Above all, pupils take responsibility for their actions and make the most of the varied

opportunities to contribute to the school community, and its concerts, festivals, artistic and dramatic events.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Throughout, staff provide highly effective support and guidance for all pupils, including those in the EYFS, in accordance with the school's aims.
- 4.10 In the EYFS, the development of the children's social and emotional well-being is given a high priority, providing excellent support. Each child has a key person who plays a significant role in the child's personal, social and emotional development, alongside the class teacher. Children's behaviour shows that they feel safe in the setting.
- 4.11 All staff play a significant role in the pastoral care of pupils. They help and advise pupils, support their personal development and contribute to their overall achievement. The staff know the pupils extremely well and provide excellent support. Pupils feel secure and say they can always turn to a member of staff or a senior pupil if they need help. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive and characterised by mutual respect, as are those amongst the pupils themselves.
- 4.12 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour. Rare cases of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with using clearly defined procedures. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires a few parents felt that the school does not deal well with cases of bullying. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The school has a clear anti-bullying policy. Productive use of form time, the PSHE programme and the provision of relevant staff training ensure that pupils are aware of the consequences of all aspects of bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- 4.13 In the EYFS, the children develop a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to take regular exercise and eat healthily; there are opportunities for them to comment upon food issues through the food committee.
- 4.14 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of pupils felt that the school does not seek or respond to their opinions. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The pupils' views are sought effectively through PSHE lessons in the senior school and prefects' meetings. The school council meets twice a term; decisions are reported back through form representatives from Years 5 and 6 in the junior school and from all year groups in the senior school.
- 4.15 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.17 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, effective procedures for promoting the welfare of the pupils, including child protection, contribute to the pupils' personal development and the fulfilment of the school's aims.
- 4.18 The EYFS setting provides a strong base for children's developing independence and exploration. They begin to understand how to manage risk by using the climbing frame safely and helping to move chairs in the classroom.
- 4.19 All staff receive regular training in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, and the designated child protection officers are additionally trained in interagency working. New staff have an appropriate induction in relevant procedures. Recruitment checks on new staff have not always been undertaken consistently, although evidence shows no significant risk to the pupils.
- 4.20 The school has produced comprehensive policies that cover all aspects of health and safety, including measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills are held and members of staff receive appropriate fire awareness training. Thorough risk assessments are carried out for buildings, curriculum activities and school trips, and there are effective procedures to report accidents. A few minor health and safety matters which were identified during the inspection were speedily attended to.
- 4.21 A significant number of staff are trained in first aid, including all in the EYFS, who have paediatric first-aid qualifications. First-aid kits are suitably placed in all areas of the school. In response to the requirement identified at the previous inspection, a suitable medical room has been set up to provide facilities for pupils who are injured or fall ill during the school day. Medicines are stored and administered safely. Pupils who have specific medical needs are well cared for.
- 4.22 Registers accurately record the pupils' admission to and attendance at the school, and these are suitably maintained and stored as required for three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governing body largely provides effective oversight of all sections of the school, which supports the aim to create a happy, caring school with equal opportunities for all. The governors have a wide variety of expertise that enables them to bring an energetic and creative approach to strategic planning. The chair of governors meets with the leadership on a fortnightly basis to discuss immediate priorities, as well as the longer-term direction of the school. Governors have a clear vision for the future. They support senior management in framing the school improvement plan and also provide some level of challenge for the school's development.
- 5.3 The governors' committee structure supports the provision of human and material resources, as well as accommodation. Since the previous inspection, appropriate facilities have been provided for pupils who are ill and governors have ensured that effective teaching and communication can be carried out in all rooms. Evidence of governors' strong financial planning is seen in the refurbished junior school building, the recent development of the EYFS outside play area and realistic plans to improve the quality of other facilities. The strengthening of the education committee is providing a good foundation to enable the governors to support the school in introducing measures to raise academic achievement.
- 5.4 The board has a clear insight into the routines of the school through attendance at school events, meetings with groups of staff, including the senior management team, and visits to the school during the working day. All governors have established a direct link with different aspects of the school, such as child protection, or particular subject areas, for example music, drama and performing arts. They visit the EYFS regularly and show a keen and effective interest in the setting. The governors are relatively well known by the staff. The board has introduced a good induction programme for new members to ensure they are aware of their roles and responsibilities as governors and trustees.
- 5.5 Governors endeavour to keep abreast of their responsibilities for welfare, health and safety and for safeguarding, and the board has undertaken its annual duty to review the safeguarding policy and procedures. Systems to check regulatory compliance have not been sufficiently robust. They have not ensured that all required recruitment checks for staff have been carried out, although all governors are appropriately checked.

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 good.
- 5.7 Leadership and management are effective in meeting the aim to create a happy, caring school with equal opportunities for all. The school has recently undergone a period of change and consolidation. The leadership's clarity of vision and inclusive approach to school improvement have enabled the new senior management team to carry out an extensive review of curriculum, staffing and provision. They have identified clear priorities for the future development of the school. This process is relatively new, but it has permitted a rebalancing of some roles and responsibilities. The senior management team meets regularly and largely exercises effective oversight of the whole school, although managerial roles in the junior school and its links with the EYFS are, as yet, unclear.
- 5.8 Leadership and management of the EYFS are good overall. There is a good overview of the curriculum to ensure a broad range of experiences to help the children progress towards the Early Learning Goals. The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS are met. Policies and procedures are understood and implemented consistently.
- 5.9 The school has started to improve the monitoring of teaching and learning and the sharing of good practice through the newly established academic committee, in response to the recommendation of the previous inspection. Arrangements for the monitoring of teaching and learning currently lack formal structures to ensure consistency and raise standards. The school is developing use of assessment data to measure the pupils' progress effectively and creating further opportunities for the pupils' independent working. Senior staff have also identified the need to develop the use of ICT across the curriculum throughout the school although, as yet, no action has been taken.
- 5.10 Relationships between senior and middle management are open and candid. Those who lead sections of the school and individual subjects are both experienced and motivated, and take active responsibility in their roles. The management of provision for SEND across all years is very effective but provision for A, G and T pupils is not consistent in all teaching.
- 5.11 At all levels, staff motivation is high. External professional development opportunities cover training in safeguarding and welfare, health and safety. The local authority provides training and moderation for the EYFS Profile. Following the previous inspection appraisal was introduced and used to identify priorities and set targets. However, at present the system lacks coherence. In the EYFS appraisal is not linked to professional development. The school is committed to developing further training opportunities for all staff. Non-teaching staff, including those involved in catering, cleaning, grounds and administration, make a strong contribution to the support offered to pupils and enable the school to run efficiently.
- 5.12 The school appoints well-qualified staff. Recruitment checks on staff have not always been sufficiently rigorous. By the end of the inspection, the school had taken suitable steps to ensure that nearly all of the identified shortcomings had been dealt with, and more robust systems had been established to monitor regulatory

compliance, especially undertaking DBS checks, checks against the barred list and checks on the medical fitness of staff to work.

- 5.13 Links with parents, carers and guardians are strong. Throughout the school communication is open and straightforward. Staff are readily available to speak to parents and aim to deal with any concerns as soon as they arise. In the EYFS, staff work closely with parents and other agencies to settle children into school and involve parents in their children's learning.
- 5.14 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the vast majority of parents were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They are particularly pleased with the support given to pupils with additional needs. A small minority expressed dissatisfaction with the information given about their children's progress. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Informative reports are sent out annually and grade cards termly. Regular consultation evenings give parents the opportunity to meet with the staff to discuss their children's progress formally.
- 5.15 The formal arrangements for handling parents' complaints are thorough and in line with published procedures. Minor concerns are dealt with quickly and efficiently.
- 5.16 Opportunities are in place for parents to be involved in the life of the school. They are invited to meet the leadership every Friday morning for breakfast and the enthusiastic Parents' Association provides opportunities for parents to meet socially, as well as raising significant amounts of money for the school.
- 5.17 Detailed information is readily available to parents of current and prospective pupils, including all required information, through the prospectus, open days, notice boards and regular weekly email newsletters. An informative magazine is published twice a year covering all aspects of school life. Parents indicate that they are very happy with these arrangements, as well as the school's 'open door' policy. Parents also comment on the supportive family atmosphere of the school.

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