



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
HALE PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Hale Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Hale Preparatory School		
DfE Number	358/6006		
Address	Hale Preparatory School Broomfield Lane Hale Altrincham Cheshire WA15 9AS		
Telephone Number	0161 9282386		
Fax Number	0161 9417934		
Email Address	<u>mail@haleprepschool.com</u>		
Headmaster	Mr John Connor		
Proprietor	Mr John Connor		
Total Number of Pupils	201		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (104 boys; 97 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 180
	3-5 (EYFS):	21	11-18: 0
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	201	
Number of Boarders	Total:	0	
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection Dates	06 May 2014 to 09 May 2014		

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 May 2008.

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. 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 proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Paul Spillane

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Janet Cooper

Team Inspector (Former head of ISA junior school)

Mrs Jane Huntington

Team Inspector (Head of ISA school)

Mrs Kirsten Jackson

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	2
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
(ii) Recommendation for further improvement	2
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	3
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	3
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	4
(c) The contribution of teaching	5
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	7
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	7
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	8
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	9
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	10
(a) The quality of governance	10
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	10

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Hale Preparatory School was founded in 1980 by the current headmaster as a co-educational school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years. The school is situated in the Greater Manchester village of Hale, about three miles from Manchester airport. The headmaster is the proprietor of the school and members of his family constitute the board of directors.
- 1.2 The school's stated aims are to provide a relaxed and secure environment for its pupils, one in which pupils are happy coming to school; to ensure that each child achieves his or her full academic potential; and to provide a well-rounded education ensuring that the wider academic curriculum and extra-curricular activities are regarded as crucial in a child's education. The school also seeks to achieve a harmonious and positive working relationship with its parents, based on mutual confidence and trust.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 201 pupils in the school, 104 boys and 97 girls, of whom 12 boys and 9 girls were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Most pupils come from professional or business families living within a three-mile radius of the school. About a fifth of the pupils have Asian ethnicity. None of the pupils has English as an additional language (EAL). The school has identified six pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), one of whom receives specialist learning support from the school.
- 1.4 The school prepares pupils for entry to grammar schools in Trafford and independent schools in Manchester and Cheshire. The ability profile of the school is slightly above the national average, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Hale Preparatory is a very successful school. Throughout the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the teaching is excellent, and the pupils' industrious approach to their studies, and exemplary classroom behaviour reflected in their rapid progress and substantial academic achievement at all levels. Indeed, in some cases, levels of progress and achievement are exceptional. In their response to the questionnaire, the pupils affirm that they are very pleased with their progress. Pupils display secure knowledge, skills and understanding of the material covered in their syllabuses. The pupils reach high standards of personal fulfilment. They participate enthusiastically in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Teams and individuals have achieved local, regional and national distinction in sport.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent, reflecting the school's highly effective emphasis on their welfare, safeguarding and well-being. The caring and supportive example set by the staff is mirrored in the considerate way in which pupils behave towards one another. They grow strongly in self-awareness and self-esteem. Relationships are excellent throughout the school, which is a vibrant, happy place: the pupils are very proud of it and feel a strong sense of belonging. The building at the heart of the school was originally a private house and pupils readily use the word 'family' when describing the atmosphere of the school. Parents commend the high standards of behaviour and evidence gathered during the inspection fully supported this judgement.
- 2.3 That the school's aims are being successfully realised is a strong testimony to the high quality of governance and to the dedicated leadership and clear direction from senior management. Leadership demonstrates vision and is energetic and self-critical, seeking further to improve its effectiveness. Taking their lead from the top, all staff put the best interests of the pupils at the heart of their work. Efficient management ensures that the school runs smoothly. The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection and has adopted the recommendation regarding professional development, appraisal and sharing good practice. When playing outside, pupils have a limited range of educational toys and recreational equipment. The school enjoys extremely good relations with parents, who express great satisfaction with the education which their children are receiving and the way in which the school is being run.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Broaden the range of educational and recreational resources available for use by all pupils, including EYFS children, in outdoor breaks.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The overall quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 In the EYFS, all children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. Extremely happy in the setting, they are keen to learn and work enthusiastically, maintaining concentration very well. Many arrive at school knowing only a very few phonics and by the end of the year they have learned and can use all of the basic phonics. All the children can read on their own, some at a high level. They are beginning to write independently and some can write complete sentences by themselves. They are able to write numbers up to 30 in order, and they understand comparatives such as 'longer' and 'taller'. They know that sequences occur in number, patterns, dance, physical education and stories. Very confident in the school grounds, the children enjoy exploring and investigating their surroundings. All staff, including playground assistants, help to develop the children's ideas by asking high level questions: pupils respond willingly, sharing their opinions articulately and confidently with adults, as they do with one another. During the inspection the children's lively creativity was seen in their response to a story, after which they made puppets and acted out their own version.
- 3.3 In Years 1 to 6, the pupils' high achievement in their studies ensures that the school successfully meets its aim that they should fulfil their academic potential. Throughout the school, pupils achieve excellent, and in some cases exceptional, levels of knowledge, understanding and skill. Literacy is a particular strength of the school, and literacy and numeracy skills are applied very well across all subjects. Pupils are highly articulate and read intelligently. They write fluently for a variety of purposes, and their achievements are celebrated in numerous displays of work, which are immaculately presented. Pupils exhibit strong powers of reasoning and maturity in pursuing an argument and show resourcefulness in conducting research and investigations. They apply information and communication technology (ICT) competently in all age groups and are skilful in their use of the recently acquired electronic tablets. Swift and effective support given to pupils with SEND or those who are experiencing difficulty with an aspect of their work enables them to achieve the expected standard.
- 3.4 The attainment of pupils cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence from work scrutiny, observations of lessons and discussions with pupils confirms this judgement. Tracking, target setting and levels of attainment indicate that pupils make rapid and, in some instances, exceptional progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. In their response to the questionnaire, all pupils said that they were making good progress in their work. The academic achievement of the ablest pupils and those with SEND is commensurate with their ability, and there is no discernible difference between boys' and girls' achievement. Pupils achieve excellent results in entrance examinations to senior schools.
- 3.5 Pupils avail themselves of the many opportunities for developing their talents. Sports teams have achieved success in local, regional and national competitions, with lacrosse, football, netball, cross country and athletics being particular strengths of the school's sporting performance. Dance groups and cheerleading troupes have enjoyed success in local festivals and tournaments, and the choir has performed in Manchester Cathedral and at the Royal Northern College of Music. All of these

experiences and successes give pupils further confidence and strengthen their pride in the school, as well as fulfilling the school's aim to provide a well-rounded education.

- 3.6 Throughout the school, the pupils display an excellent attitude to learning, in fulfilment of the school's aims. They apply themselves with evident enjoyment, keen to do well and eager to be challenged. Enthusiastic participants in their lessons, they are readily responsive, offering answers and opinions articulately and confidently. Their behaviour in class is exemplary. They work conscientiously, displaying perseverance and determination. When working in pairs or groups, they co-operate very well. They produce a good volume of work which is extremely neatly presented, reflecting pride and care. Excellent work is displayed on classroom walls. In their responses to the questionnaire, the pupils unanimously affirm that they find their work interesting and that they are encouraged to work independently, and this was borne out during the inspection. Pupils participate in extra-curricular activities in a similarly spirited and enthusiastic way.

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

- 3.7 The overall contribution of the curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The EYFS is excellent in meeting the needs of all the children who attend the setting. Its educational programmes enable all children to reach expected levels of development, and some to exceed them by a considerable margin. All the children are well known as individuals, with those who may need extra help being quickly identified and appropriately supported. Children read individually to an adult every day and consequently progress in reading is very carefully monitored. Those of high ability are given access to advanced reading materials which are in line with both their academic skills and their emotional needs at this young age. Reading is the basis for all formal learning and the excellent progress children make in EYFS enables them to be fully ready for the next stage of their learning.
- 3.9 The broad, balanced curriculum for Years 1 to 6 accords with the school's aim to provide a well-rounded education, with the wider academic curriculum and extra-curricular activities regarded as crucial. Thorough planning in each subject, catering for the needs of all pupils, enables them to achieve very high academic standards. Most lessons are taught by subject specialists, with pupils clearly benefiting from their expertise and subject knowledge. Linguistic breadth is achieved by the teaching of French in Years 2 to 4, Spanish in Years 5 to 6, and Latin in Year 6. Pupils acquire a good range of ICT skills; in recent years the ICT programme has been expanded, and the provision continues to develop with the introduction this year of electronic tablets. A distinctive feature of the academic curriculum is the wide-ranging ethics programme for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The well-planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme for older pupils is excellent, and highly effective in widening pupils' horizons and getting them to think for themselves. They examine a range of topical dilemmas and issues, such as cyber-bullying and whether prisoners should be allowed the vote.
- 3.10 Pupils needing either additional support or extra challenge are very well provided for across the curriculum. Pupils experiencing difficulty with an aspect of a subject are immediately given remedial help, either individually or in a small group. The ablest pupils receive extension work in various subjects in order to ensure that they fulfil their academic potential. In response to the questionnaire, a very small minority of parents felt that there was too much homework, but no evidence was found to

support this view and pupils seemed happy that homework supported their classwork and was manageable. At the heart of excellent provision for literacy is a well-stocked and newly refurbished library, regularly used by many pupils, who not only borrow books but also write reviews and recommendations for others.

- 3.11 Parents and pupils are unanimously happy with the range of subjects and areas of experience. The many extra-curricular activities which enable pupils to develop their skills and talents include dance, gardening, sewing, maypole dancing, judo, squash, golf and fencing, in addition to the team sports of cricket, lacrosse, netball, rounders and cross country. The annual residential outdoor pursuits camp in Wales for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is keenly enjoyed, as is the annual ski trip to Austria. Regular term-time trips and presentations by visitors for all year groups enrich their learning and experience. During the inspection, an EYFS visit to a football stadium was part of the children's study of buildings, and a visiting history and drama workshop for Year 4 pupils developed their understanding of the Tudors. Extra-curricular provision is excellent in its depth and breadth, but the range of educational toys and recreational facilities for use in outdoor breaks is limited.
- 3.12 The wider curriculum is enriched by various links to the community. Pupils give musical performances for charity and in a home for the elderly; they also participate in local drama, dance and music festivals. They enjoy visits to local places of interest and theatre trips; pupils returned from a visit to a local dramatic production with ideas for a similar production of their own. Pupils take the initiative in supporting a range of local, national and overseas charities, mainly relating to health and children.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.14 The staff in the EYFS work exceptionally well together to ensure that all children are engaged and well motivated. They have extremely high expectations of the children, who respond enthusiastically to all that is asked of them. A good range of resources enables a challenging and interesting curriculum to be taught. Knowledgeable about how to promote learning and development, the leadership of the EYFS undertakes meticulous assessment and recording of the children's progress at every stage. Passionate about their work with the children, staff constantly evaluate the curriculum and their contribution to the children's learning, carefully planning for the short, medium and long term.
- 3.15 Teaching in all years is extremely effective in enabling pupils, including the ablest and those with SEND, to make excellent progress and in supporting the school's aim that all pupils should achieve their academic potential. Furthermore, in accordance with the school's stated aims, teachers are successful in creating a secure, relaxed and stimulating learning environment.
- 3.16 Throughout Years 1 to 6, teachers are most enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subjects. They share with their pupils an infectious interest for learning, and lively teaching characterises the great majority of lessons. Pupils at all levels benefit greatly from the fact that in most subjects they are taught by subject specialists. Teachers enjoy excellent relationships with their pupils, who appreciate that they are always available with advice and support. Indeed, teachers give a notable amount of help outside timetabled lessons. They readily and consistently bestow praise and rewards which motivate pupils to strive for ever higher levels of attainment. In

classrooms and communal areas throughout the school, high-quality displays celebrate the pupils' work.

- 3.17 In their well-planned lessons, which are designed to stretch and challenge all pupils, teachers use a wide variety of teaching methods and resources to stimulate pupils' interest and to train them to think independently. In their response to the questionnaire, pupils unanimously agreed that they were encouraged to think for themselves and to work independently. Teachers also encourage pupils to be critical and creative in their thinking. During the inspection pupils were constantly seen to thrive on investigative work and to be developing their own lines of thought, either individually or with others. They work together very co-operatively, listening attentively to others' contributions and views. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to explain their thoughts and put forward their opinions during group work and class discussions. Central to their excellent teaching is the teachers' skilful use of questioning, using open-ended and straightforward questions to challenge the pupils, who respond eagerly and are keen to contribute. A strength of the academic life of the school is the maturity with which pupils read and respond to literature, which reflects the importance attached to books and the success with which pupils acquire the skills of reading.
- 3.18 Teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their lessons in order to adapt future teaching. A wealth of information from tests and assessment, in addition to individual teachers' knowledge of their pupils, is used to track pupils' progress. This information is also crucial in planning teaching that sets high expectations for pupils of all abilities, with appropriate support and challenge if and when needed. Teachers regularly discuss attainment with pupils and set targets relating to progress. Pupils value this individual feedback and are keen to attain any targets set. Marking of work is meticulous and in keeping with the extremely high standard of presentation observed in pupils' exercise books and files.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Children in the EYFS contribute positively to the life of the setting. They co-operate in their work, adapting their own ideas to those of others. They work well together when tidying up and are keen to accept responsibility in the classroom. They are aware of and sensitive to one another's feelings. Carefully considered induction arrangements are designed to allay any anxiety experienced by new EYFS children. By the end of the year, the children are very well prepared for a seamless transition into Year 1.
- 4.3 In Years 1 to 6 the pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They are confident and emotionally mature for their age. Their self-esteem is high because they feel valued as individuals and their achievements are celebrated by the whole school in assemblies and in displays and photographs in classrooms and corridors. Pupils gain confidence through performance in drama, music and assemblies, and by participating in classroom discussions. Visits to concerts, galleries, theatres and places of worship are among the uplifting experiences which enrich the pupils' spiritual development. The stimulating content of many lessons fires pupils' imagination and sense of wonder.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral awareness is extremely well developed. Dilemmas and issues are explored in Year 6 ethics lessons. They realise that decisions are not always clear-cut and the importance of listening to and respecting contrasting views. From an early age, pupils know right from wrong. They understand the high standards of behaviour expected of them. Excellent relationships, between staff and pupils and amongst pupils, are at the heart of the success of the school.
- 4.5 The social development of pupils is excellent. They are confident and respect one another, thriving in the close-knit school community of which they are very proud. Their concern for the welfare of those around them, both those in the same year group and in others, is consistently evident. They value opportunities to take responsibility in the library, on the school council and in class. They have an excellent social conscience and help those less fortunate by raising money for local and international charities that are researched and chosen by the school council. Charitable giving includes a Christmas collection of food items for a local charity. World Book Day involves dressing up as a book character, which raised money for national and overseas charities. Pupils acknowledge their own fortunate circumstances by their support for a children's hospice, a children's hospital and also for holidays for underprivileged children, as well as responding to the annual Remembrance appeal.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural development is strong. Pupils from diverse backgrounds learn and play together naturally and harmoniously across the school. They are enriched by many cultural experiences in school and on visits to galleries, theatres and different places of worship. Pupils show interest in and respect for the main faiths and cultures of the world about which they learn. Visits by local religious leaders deepen pupils' cultural understanding. They enjoy these stimulating experiences which help them to consider the beliefs and practices of others.

- 4.7 The pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school. They are mature and confident and fully ready to face life's new challenges.

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

- 4.1 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.2 The school gives excellent support and guidance for its pupils in accordance with its aims to provide a relaxed and secure environment, and one in which pupils enjoy coming to school.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, each child has a 'key person' who ensures that their individual needs are met. Care practices are excellent, ensuring high-quality personal and emotional development. Children are taught to behave well and they develop positive relationships with one another and with the staff. Staff know the children thoroughly and are alert to their feelings, responding quickly if a child is feeling unwell or upset. Staff ensure that the children feel safe; the children are confident that the staff care for them and about them.
- 4.4 Pupils at all levels are extremely happy at the school and parents agree that their children are well looked after. The school truly has a family atmosphere. In all age groups, staff know the pupils very well and relationships are extremely positive, both between pupils and staff and amongst pupils. Consequently, an atmosphere of tolerance and respect pervades the school. The pupils are extremely proud of their school, which is a vibrant and warm community.
- 4.5 Pupils are very complimentary about the food. The kitchen provides healthy, nourishing and tasty meals which encourage good habits for the future. The policy of healthy snacks and easy access to drinking water reinforces lessons about the value of a good diet. Children in the EYFS know that fruit is healthy and that it is important to drink water. They are fully independent in their personal care when using the lavatory and washing their hands. Staff promote a healthy lifestyle through encouraging exercise. Pupils take part in a wide range of sports activities both in lessons and in clubs, and they talk about these with enthusiasm.
- 4.6 The school employs many forms of reward and few sanctions. Pupils conform readily to the expected standards, disciplinary action is rarely necessary. Behaviour throughout the school is excellent. Pupils are polite and courteous and keen to help. Emphasis is placed firmly on the positive and pupils enjoy accumulating credits to gain certificates and prizes. Although a small minority of pupils in their response to the questionnaire expressed concerns about the fairness with which rewards were given, the inspection team found no evidence to support this. Staff and pupils are strongly aware of how to guard against and deter bullying and pupils know that any rare instances will be dealt with quickly and sensitively. The school has an appropriate and realistic plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.7 Evidence from the inspection did not support the view of a small minority of pupil respondents to the questionnaire that the school failed to ask for their opinions or respond to them. The school council flourishes effectively and has achieved initiatives such as support for charities, additions to the library and improvement to the menus, including the introduction of brown sauce as an accompaniment to Friday lunches.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements to promote the pupils' welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.9 The staff's personal knowledge of all pupils and awareness of their family circumstances underpin the school's success in looking after the pupils' general wellbeing. Clear procedures for safeguarding children, promoting their welfare and eliminating discrimination throughout the school, including the EYFS, are implemented highly effectively. The required checks on new staff are carried out and recorded correctly. All staff receive appropriate training in child protection at specified intervals. The school has made all the necessary arrangements to comply with the requirements specified in the most recently published safeguarding regulations.
- 4.10 The school provides effectively for ill or injured pupils. The needs of those pupils with existing medical issues are well known to staff. Medical facilities comply with regulations and detailed records of accidents and illness are filed. All members of staff are trained to at least first aid at work level, with three qualified in paediatric first aid. The school makes suitable provision for pupils with SEND.
- 4.11 Pupils receive training in e-safety, and access to the internet is filtered. Appropriate measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Consultants carry out annual checks of all aspects of the school's provision for fire prevention, staff undertake weekly checks and fire practices are held regularly. Electrical equipment is monitored through portable appliance testing. Staff receive training in fire awareness and other aspects of welfare. Since the previous inspection, added security measures have included CCTV cameras and an electronically operated main gate.
- 4.12 The admission and attendance registers are accurately completed and kept for the required period. Attendance is closely monitored, with a system of immediate response to pupil absence.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The headmaster is the founder and proprietor of the school; he and other members of his family, two of whom are deputy heads, constitute the board of directors. With a particularly intimate knowledge of the school, they exercise diligent and effective oversight of educational standards, financial and strategic planning, investment in staff, accommodation and resources, welfare, health and safety, and child protection.
- 5.3 A senior member of staff has been deputed to ensure that the school complies with all regulatory requirements. Policies are regularly reviewed and the directors undertake a thorough annual review of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the efficiency with which they are implemented. Directors regularly attend courses to ensure familiarity with current educational and regulatory developments.
- 5.4 The school development plan is clear and detailed. Realistic targets are identified, with suitable timescales for their successful achievement. The governance of the EYFS is highly effective, and the setting is given due attention in the school development plan, as elsewhere in considerations relating to the governance of the school. Indeed, the directors have demonstrated their understanding of the importance of the EYFS by providing a new classroom and new washroom facilities this year.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management throughout the school, including the EYFS, are of a high standard, and this is endorsed by the parents who responded to the questionnaire. The school is led with drive, passion and a distinctive personal touch, and the senior management team works purposefully and collaboratively to promote the school's vision. The high quality of teaching and the excellent pastoral care provided for pupils reflect the dedication and commitment of all of the staff.
- 5.7 The school is very well run, ensuring an environment in which pupils are safe and where they enjoy high-quality teaching and care. Very good communication among members of staff ensures a sense of corporate involvement and purpose, which also enables any problems to be nipped in the bud. There is a stated 'open door policy' and the accessibility of all staff is appreciated by pupils and parents. The management team has created a culture of trust and co-operation which is endorsed by the teaching and ancillary staff. The survey of parents' opinion, recently undertaken by the school, together with a detailed response to points made, illustrates the willingness of leadership to listen and to improve the educational provision still further.

- 5.8 Leadership and management have implemented policies and procedures for all aspects of school life which ensure its smooth operation and the provision of an excellent educational experience. The school is compliant with all required regulations. Its procedures for the recruitment and appointment of staff are appropriate and the centralised register of appointments is accurately completed. Safeguarding procedures throughout the school are properly implemented and all staff are appropriately trained for their roles in meeting the needs of pupils with regard to child protection, welfare, health and safety. The maintenance of the school premises is excellent, and there is a continuing programme of improvement to buildings and facilities, thus providing a setting which pupils can be proud of and which is conducive to effective learning and development.
- 5.9 Subject co-ordinators work collaboratively to ensure that curricular planning is developed with a focus on high academic expectations and with a common purpose that the particular needs of all pupils are met. Detailed recording of data from tests and assessments enables the close tracking of individual pupils' progress. Specialist support is provided as an immediate and constructive response to evidence of a pupil experiencing difficulty with a particular aspect of his or her work. Here, as elsewhere, members of staff liaise closely in the pupils' best interests.
- 5.10 Leadership promotes the continuing professional development of the staff, as recommended in the previous inspection report. The appraisal of all teaching staff includes lesson observations, discussions and scrutiny of pupils' work. Staff at all levels develop their skills through attendance at many in-service training courses and through the observation, sharing and discussion of good practice.
- 5.11 Peer observations in the EYFS help staff to be reflective practitioners and to strive to continually improve their teaching. The effective monitoring of the educational programmes and close supervision of staff leads to their sustained professional development. In accordance with the high aspirations and effective evaluative systems which staff have for the children, staff are ambitious for the future success of the setting and have clear priorities for improvement, exemplified by this year's major developments to the setting's premises. Like the rest of the school, the EYFS has made excellent progress since the previous inspection.
- 5.12 Staff in the EYFS regularly meet parents, both informally and at official parents' meetings, so that parents feel fully involved in their children's learning. Parents are well informed about the curriculum and how they can help their children with their education at home. Parents and staff share information through the reading record book and homework diary, with parents frequently commenting on which parts of the work their children have enjoyed. There is close liaison between staff and parents over extra support for those children who need it.
- 5.13 Parents of pupils of all ages are highly satisfied with the education provided for their children. They are fully supportive of the school and value its ethos. The excellent relationships between home and school are supported by the ready availability of leadership to listen and provide advice when necessary. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents agree unanimously that they are encouraged to become involved in the life of the school. The thriving parent-teacher association contributes positively to school life through its range of social and fund-raising activities. It has lately made a major contribution to restocking the library, as well as purchasing sports kit and equipment. Parents acknowledge that information is readily available to them and that they receive timely responses to their questions; all but a very small minority are satisfied with the way in which the school has handled their concerns.

The school complaints procedure meets all regulatory requirements; there have been no formal complaints in the history of the school.

- 5.14 Arrangements to admit pupils are well established and conducted; they include a familiarisation day in the summer term before entry in September. Parents benefit from regular communication, not only through the daily availability of senior management in the playground before and after school, but also by weekly newsletters and contact by text when information needs to be disseminated at short notice. Parents unanimously affirm that they are satisfied with the information which they are given about their child's progress, which they receive principally through parents' evenings and detailed termly written reports. They also appreciate the school's 'open door policy' and the readiness of staff to discuss matters of interest or concern at any time. In responding to the questionnaire, parents agree that the school is well led and managed and that they would recommend it to other parents.

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