



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
HAWLEY PLACE SCHOOL**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Hawley Place School

Full Name of School	Hawley Place School			
DfE Number	850/6046			
EYFS Number	EY357013			
Registered Charity Number	N/A			
Address	Hawley Place School Fernhill Road Blackwater Camberley Surrey GU17 9HU			
Telephone Number	01276 32028			
Fax Number	01276 609695			
Email Address	office@hawleyplace.com			
Principals	Mr Trevor Pipe and Mrs Michèle Pipe			
Chair of Governors	Mrs Elaine Simpson			
Age Range	2 to 16			
Total Number of Pupils	368			
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (78 boys; 290 girls)			
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS)	14	5-11:	130
	3-5 (EYFS):	49	11-16:	175
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Jane Fraser			
EYFS Gender	Mixed			
Inspection Dates	21 Jan 2014 to 24 Jan 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 February 2008.

This inspection was conducted to assess the suitability of (name of school) for membership of (name of Association). It follows the *ISI schedule*.

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 proprietors, 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 Pamela Leech	Reporting Inspector
Mr Andrew Edwards	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mr Adam Pettitt	Team Inspector (Head Master, HMC school)
Mrs Ann Patricia Prior	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, ISA school)
Mrs Frances Willacy	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Balding	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Hawley Place School was originally founded in 1952 to provide education for senior school age girls. Since the previous inspection the ownership of the school has changed. After 23 years of ownership by the same co-proprietors, in July 2013 the school became part of the Minerva Education Group of schools. In order to facilitate the transition of ownership, the former co-proprietors have continued to administer the school as co-principals for the current academic year. The directors of Minerva Education Group now act as the school's governors.
- 1.2 The school campus, in a residential area of Camberley, occupies approximately 16 acres of gardens and woodlands, and comprises a large Victorian house, a more modern junior school and a specialist building offering science, art and home economics facilities.
- 1.3 The school now offers day education for girls and boys aged from 2 to 11 and single-sex day education for girls aged between 11 and 16. In total, 175 pupils are in the senior school, 130 are in the junior school and 63 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Of the 40 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 22 receive support at school. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Twenty pupils speak English as an additional language; all are fully bilingual, however one receives support for English.
- 1.4 Pupils mostly come from professional and business families living within ten miles of the school and represent a variety of cultural backgrounds. The overall ability profile is above the national average.
- 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 The school successfully fulfils its aim to provide a family atmosphere that is both nurturing and stimulating, and that encourages pupils to realise their potential academically, creatively, physically and spiritually. The quality of the pupils' achievements is good. Pupils thrive and develop excellent aptitudes for learning through the broad curriculum and wide range of extra-curricular activities. In the EYFS, children make outstanding progress in their learning and their achievement is also outstanding. The curriculum successfully incorporates all required areas of learning as well as drama, dance, music, several modern foreign languages and Latin, although the distribution of teaching time within the junior school results in an imbalance of subject allocation. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been implemented and teaching styles now incorporate strategies for meeting the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and those who are more able. Pupils are confident, highly articulate and well organised. They are able to work well individually or together. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively in many subjects. The processes for assessment and tracking for all pupils, including the EYFS, continue to be improved and are increasingly used to plan teaching methods and ensure appropriate levels of support and extension. Marking is generally consistent, sets helpful targets and provides valuable feedback.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils feel valued and cared for and enjoy being part of the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are genuine and respectful and in line with the school's promotion of courtesy, kindness and consideration. Behaviour is exemplary. A recently established school council is enabling pupils to express their opinions and to take an active role in shaping their community. Safeguarding procedures, including safer recruitment, are rigorous. Arrangements for health and safety are excellent and pupils feel safe. All staff receive training in child protection procedures and the school maintains strong links with local agencies.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are good. Since the previous inspection, ownership of the school has been transferred to the Minerva Education Group, which has initiated a process of management restructuring to further develop the role of heads of department and extend the opportunity for monitoring teaching and learning. At present, these roles and responsibilities are not yet effectively established and monitoring of teaching and learning is not secure across the school. Administration of the school continues to be effectively and sensitively carried out by the co-principals. The directors have a clear understanding of the individual qualities of the school and undertake their roles and responsibilities with vigour. They receive frequent reports, performance manage senior staff and make regular visits to the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

1. Clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning takes place across the whole school.
2. Adjust the allocation of teaching time within the junior school in order to secure balance within the curriculum.

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 successfully fulfils its aim to enable pupils to achieve their potential both academically and in personal development. The wide range of curricular and extra-curricular provision enables pupils to build on their basic learning skills and extend their knowledge and understanding.
- 3.3 Pupils of all ages are articulate and express their opinions with confidence and maturity. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate competence in speaking, listening, reading and writing that is at least in line with expectations for their age. In the EYFS, children listen to stories and are able to sing simple tunes, while in the junior school pupils develop their writing skills using increasingly complex syntax. Older pupils make confident use of language in class presentations and peer evaluation. Pupils also acquire and apply good skills in numeracy and ICT. Across the school, pupils apply these key skills in other areas of the curriculum. They also display well-developed independent and logical thinking as well as creativity to explore new ideas and extend their learning. For example, children in the EYFS use ICT to play simple games and investigate rhyming words, while older pupils enjoy using the interactive whiteboards and creating presentations with advanced use of graphics.
- 3.4 Pupils achieve success in a wide range of cultural and extra-curricular activities, including instrumental and drama examinations, creative writing, art and public speaking competitions. They enjoy considerable success in competitive team sports locally and nationally. Junior and senior swimming squads compete at county and national level, winning junior, senior and overall girls' trophies and jointly the junior boys' event at a 2013 Independent Schools Association regional swimming competition.
- 3.5 Attainment in the junior school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but on the evidence available, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence from observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils confirms this judgement. Boys in Year 6 are successful in obtaining places at local non-selective and selective maintained and independent schools. Most girls in Year 6 continue into the senior school.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative national statistics are available. Results at GCSE are above the national average for girls in maintained schools, with A* and A grades continuing to represent a higher percentage of results overall than in maintained schools. Pupils are successful in gaining places to sixth-form colleges and schools of their choice. The level of attainment indicates that pupils at all levels of the school make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. This is based upon the school's own analyses of progress in relation to prior attainment, as well as inspectors' scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussions with them. Pupils with SEND make good progress overall, as confirmed by the improvement of their academic skills. This is achieved by early identification and individually tailored support in classrooms, sessions with specialist teachers and the wide range of extra-curricular clinics available.

3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They are enthusiastic and willing, confidently expressing their enjoyment as, for example, in a Year 7 history lesson when interpreting a source correctly. They settle to work without prompting and sustain their concentration, listening intently both to their teachers and their peers. Equally able to work as individuals and in groups, pupils have excellent relationships that allow them to make swift progress in independent tasks, where they enjoy reasoning for themselves. They show independence and self-discipline: in a Year 7 drama lesson, pupils were directed by their peers, remaining focused on the task while their teacher monitored other groups. In lessons and work scrutiny, the pupils' files and exercise books were seen to be in excellent order; the pupils take pride in their work and care about their progress.

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 enables pupils to achieve high standards in all subjects. The provision supports the school's aims to provide a friendly, family atmosphere, conducive to learning, where courtesy, kindness and consideration for others are fostered in all pupils. The curriculum is generally broad and meets the needs of the pupils of all ages and abilities. It covers all required aspects of learning and presents excellent opportunities for developing pupils' intellectual curiosity. However, in the junior school an imbalance of teaching time across subjects has an adverse effect on progress because of the length of lessons and the range of subjects taught.

3.10 The curriculum provides continuity of experience across the age range, with specialist teaching introduced from Year 1. High value is placed on the wider educational experience, beyond academic achievement, with all pupils being well prepared for the next stage of their education and working life.

3.11 Since the previous inspection, the school has improved opportunities for independent learning. Pupils make good use of the library for reference books to research and extend their class lessons. Teachers often provide links to useful websites to encourage pupils to advance their ICT skills. Pupils are given extra support through regular clinics in, for example, modern foreign languages, English, mathematics, science and study skills. Response to the parents' questionnaire revealed that a very small minority of parents expressed dissatisfaction with provision for the more able pupils. This view was not supported by inspection evidence. Inspectors found that more able pupils enjoy good opportunities for extension and challenge in most subject areas, resulting in good progress over time.

3.12 Learning support assistants give excellent in-class help to those with SEND and some pupils have individual support lessons from specialist staff. More able pupils and those with particular talents, such as sporting or artistic skills, are identified and benefit from the provision of targeted extension tasks in lessons. The frequent use of ICT across the curriculum and in independent study is evident in exercise books, on display boards and in the creation of digital posters by Year 11. The curriculum is enriched by visits to museums, places of educational interest, and residential trips and exchange visits.

3.13 Extra-curricular provision is excellent and meets the needs of all pupils, as well as providing opportunities for more able pupils. Pupils and parents view this provision as a strong area of the school. The Mandarin club, for example, offers a new

perspective and the chance to expand horizons. Further opportunities include sports clubs that cater for both talented pupils and those who participate for recreation, and provide appropriate levels of teams and coaching to suit varied abilities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.15 The teaching supports well the aim of the school to pursue excellence and is effective in promoting the progress of pupils. Teachers know the pupils and their needs extremely well. Lessons are well planned, with many opportunities for pupils to make rapid progress in their knowledge and skills through tasks that are well matched to the different needs of individuals. Monitoring of planning, however, is not yet fully implemented across all subjects, resulting in some inconsistency of practice and thus progress.
- 3.16 The pupils benefit greatly from the teachers' excellent subject knowledge. Following a recommendation from the previous inspection, pupils are given good opportunities to develop independence and initiative. A large majority of lessons are taught at a brisk pace and make excellent use of well-chosen resources, including the effective use of ICT to enhance learning. These lessons very effectively exploit appropriate opportunities for research and investigation which develop the ability of the pupils to think for themselves.
- 3.17 The previous inspection identified a need for teaching styles to accommodate the different needs of both the more able pupils and those with SEND. The school has tackled this recommendation with vigour and pupils requiring support now make at least good progress as a result of small class sizes and additional teaching help. Individual education plans are accessible on the school's intranet, enabling teachers to select teaching strategies best suited to help individual pupils learn. Teachers make effective use of audio books and laptops for pupils experiencing difficulty with reading and writing. In some lessons, teachers' planning includes opportunities for extension tasks so that more able pupils can learn at their own individual pace.
- 3.18 Assessment is good and evolving. In the junior school, a comprehensive tracking system is used to provide information regarding prior attainment and to inform planning using nationally expected levels. Across the school, pupils understand the progress they are making through the attainment and effort grades provided for them and for parents in half-termly reports and through the marks given by teachers in their books. Most marking is prompt and thorough, with constructive comments to help pupils understand how to improve the quality of their work. In contrast, a small minority of marking is less helpful, and pupils' books and work are not systematically monitored 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 The school is outstandingly successful in achieving its aim to encourage pupils to show respect for and to celebrate the talents of others, and to create a sense of harmony. Pupils reach excellent standards of personal development. They exemplify the culture of a family school in which they take pride, and they understand the benefits and the obligations of belonging to a community. Pupils respond positively to the regular encouragement they receive to focus on improving themselves and doing their best. They value friendships and learn to look for and to see the very best in others. By the time they reach Year 11 they have developed a keen sense of their self-worth as individuals.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They are confident in themselves, take pride in their achievements and are unfailingly enthusiastic and motivated. For example, pupils in Year 1 reflecting on courtesy, kindness and consideration showed excellent awareness of how it feels to be valued. In a drama lesson, Year 7 pupils gave sensitive feedback on their peers' performance of a script exploring fate. Pupils develop a deep understanding of values and beliefs through the taught curriculum and also in thought-provoking assemblies. They are mature for their age, those in the senior school demonstrating notable mindfulness of their peers' differences in ability or background, and sensitivity to their feelings.
- 4.4 The quality of the pupils' moral development is excellent. In day-to-day school life this is demonstrated in the pupils' universal courtesy, good manners and friendliness to adults and amongst friends, and it was also seen in the way genuine respect for each other permeated pupils' responses to inspectors' questions. When asked to justify her view that this is a school 'without grudges', a Year 10 pupil commented: 'We are taught to forgive and forget.' Pupils have an acute sense of right and wrong. They discuss sensitive issues openly and maturely.
- 4.5 Pupils show an energetic sense of social responsibility in their own community and further afield. They accept responsibility readily, and recognise a duty to help those less fortunate than themselves. For example, Year 6 pupils organised a fund-raising Christmas Fair while form groups in the senior school raised money through sponsored activities for charities chosen by popular vote. Closer to home, pupils visit a local care centre to sing to residents. The process of contributing to the school community starts in the junior school, where pupils embark on teamwork and negotiation in the school council. By Year 11, pupils have developed a keen instinct to serve others, for example as prefects, acting as 'buddies' for Year 7 pupils or assisting in the production of the annual school musical. The pupils' political and economic awareness is enhanced through the wide-ranging curriculum, for example when pupils in an English lesson drafted a submission for a new theme park, showing a sophisticated grasp of its economic impact on the local community.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural awareness is extremely well developed. Pupils embrace opportunities to experience other cultures enthusiastically, in popular exchange programmes with French, German and Spanish schools or in activities. Pupils explore and appreciate Western cultural traditions, promoted through diverse curricular opportunities, for example in the study of medieval chants in music. Pupils of different cultures develop highly harmonious and sensitive relationships with each

other. In interviews, pupils from different faiths spoke approvingly of the respect and the welcome they are shown by their peers. These positive relationships are of particular pride to the pupils.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Staff provide excellent support and guidance for all pupils within the caring family atmosphere that is an integral part of the ethos of the school. A comprehensive pastoral system, with clear and effective lines of communication across all staff, allows tutors to quickly identify pupils' needs and share appropriate strategies to help tutees overcome difficulties, whether in their work or in their relationships with others. The school's care for its pupils is characterised by the thoughtful and sensitive approach of staff, who give generously of their time and act as good role models.
- 4.9 The teachers and tutors know their pupils extremely well and relationships between staff and pupils are warm and positive. A large majority of pupils who responded to the pupil questionnaire said that there is always someone to whom they could turn for help and advice. Pupils are also genuinely supportive, for example congratulating each other on achievement and arranging special treats to celebrate birthdays.
- 4.10 Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily, with nutritious lunches provided in the junior school and locally prepared meals in the senior school. Pupils take regular exercise both as part of the curriculum and through the many opportunities offered in extra-curricular activities. Many pupils enter national competitions designed to promote healthy lifestyle choices and this reinforces the importance of healthy eating and exercise.
- 4.11 Good behaviour is promoted by a suitable policy and procedures, which include termly prizes awarded for courteousness, kindness and consideration for others. Staff expectations, supported by a rigorous personal, social and health education programme, result in exemplary pupil behaviour. A small minority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that teachers are inconsistent in the way in which they gave rewards or sanctions. Inspection evidence, including discussions with pupils and examination of rewards and sanctions records, did not support this view. The school has a clear behaviour policy that encourages pupils to behave in a considerate and thoughtful way towards each other, and this is effectively implemented. In response to the questionnaire, a very small minority of parents expressed that they do not think that the school deals well with bullying. However, in response to the questionnaire and in discussions with inspectors, pupils indicated clearly that they are happy with the way the isolated instances of bullying or harassment are handled. Inspectors found that in the rare cases where a complaint has been made, it was handled appropriately and in line with stated procedure.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.13 The school has sought to deal with the pupils' perceptions that they are not able to express their views, by initiating junior and senior school councils, with elected representatives from all year groups. The senior council has already effected

changes to the lunch arrangements, and as the result of another suggestion from pupils, new button style house badges have been purchased.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 These support fully the school's aim to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for, and have meticulous regard for official guidance. All staff take part in a comprehensive programme of appropriate and regular training on the safeguarding of children. Safer recruitment procedures are followed rigorously and all necessary checks have been carried out and recorded.
- 4.16 Measures taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards are rigorous, with thorough risk assessments covering all areas of school life, including outings. Regular fire drills are held and detailed records kept. Health and safety procedures are reviewed and checked regularly. Electrical testing is regular and recorded correctly.
- 4.17 There are comprehensive arrangements for ensuring the health of pupils, including a clear policy for the administering of medicines; all details are recorded carefully. A comprehensive first-aid training programme is also in place and many staff have paediatric first-aid certificates. The admission and attendance records are completed and stored correctly.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Since the acquisition by Minerva Education Group, the school's historically strong and sensitive governance has been further enhanced by the oversight provided by a board of directors with a wide range of expertise. The aims and ethos of the school continue to be embedded in appropriate processes and procedures. Financial resources have been dedicated to facilitate extensive improvement of the facilities available for pupils and to support staff training and professional development.
- 5.3 Through a strong process of monitoring, excellent communication with senior management and frequent visits, the board of directors has a thorough insight into the way the school works. Appraisal of leadership and detailed reporting combined with a rigorous development plan provide stimulus and challenge for growth and improvement.
- 5.4 Across all levels of the school, the directors discharge their responsibilities for statutory requirements, including an annual review of the safeguarding and child protection arrangements by the whole body. Some identified gaps in the recording of checks in the single central register were rectified during the inspection and safe recruitment processes are now fully established. Policies are revised annually to ensure that they meet changing requirements and are correctly implemented. The directors have a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the requirements of the EYFS framework.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are successful in promoting the aims and ethos of the school, and this is reflected in the quality of the pupils' education and in the excellent standard of their personal development and care. Policies are rigorous and well implemented throughout the school, including the EYFS, and measures to safeguard pupils are appropriate. Appropriate and generally accurate self-evaluation procedures are in place and are effective in providing a targeted basis for improvement planning.
- 5.7 With the transition of ownership, changes in the structure of the leadership team have begun to have an effect on the delivery of core areas of teaching and learning. This process is continuing and, while there is much good practice, the responsibility for monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching is not always consistently understood as being an integral part of middle and senior leadership roles.
- 5.8 Senior leaders and managers deliver induction and guidance and oversee staff appraisal. Staff are encouraged to pursue further professional development in order to promote high quality practice, and they receive regular update training to ensure a clear understanding of safeguarding and health and safety. Suitable safer recruitment processes are in place and procedures are now rigorous and correctly

implemented. The staff handbook provides good guidance for staff. A very large majority of parents are satisfied with the way in which the school is managed. The grounds and buildings are well maintained, allowing pupils to enjoy a safe and pleasant environment.

- 5.9 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. The strong links that existed at the previous inspection have been strengthened further by the establishment of a parent teacher association, improvements to the website and increased reporting to parents. The very strong links that exist in the EYFS enable stable relationships to develop with parents and these are maintained as the children progress through the school.
- 5.10 Responses to the parents' questionnaire showed that parents are highly supportive and particularly happy with the family atmosphere that is a feature of the school. Parents feel that their children are very well cared for, and are satisfied with the range of subjects and extra-curricular areas of experience offered to pupils. Communication with parents is strong. In the EYFS, they have daily contact with staff at drop-off and collection times, and two-way written communication is enabled through the reading record, which becomes the reading diary further up the school. Parents are encouraged to take a full part in the development of their children and some help on trips such as a visit to a local farm. Published menus are a great help for parents when planning meals at home. Throughout the school, parents appreciate the 'open door' policy that allows consultation at any time and is a strength of the school. They enjoy receiving the termly newsletter, which describes the many activities that take place. The instant electronic contact which advises parents of immediate situations is particularly valued by parents. Parents are always welcome at the school to attend a variety of functions. The very active and successful parent teacher association organises a variety of fund-raising and social events, including an annual school ball, as well as running a thriving uniform shop.
- 5.11 In response to the parents' questionnaire, a small minority of parents felt that their concerns are not handled well. Inspection evidence shows that the concerns of parents are handled carefully and sensitively, and the close links with parents ensure that most matters are resolved informally and swiftly. An appropriate complaints policy is available should any parent wish to invoke the formal process.
- 5.12 A detailed website and school prospectus provide all parents of current and prospective pupils with detailed information about the school, including all required material. This is supplemented with 'taster' evenings and home visits.
- 5.13 In response to the parents' questionnaire a few parents were concerned that the school does not provide sufficient information about their children's progress. Inspectors judge that the information provided is appropriate. As well as the half-term grades for all pupils from Year 3 upwards, parents receive detailed written reports that provide a clear picture of a pupil's progress and also guidance about next steps. In addition, regular consultations take place between parents and staff at formal parents' evenings, and the 'open door' policy means that staff are always available for parents to discuss their children's progress.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

- 6.1 In meeting the needs of the range of children who attend, the provision is outstanding. The enthusiastic and caring staff, who have high expectations, know each child extremely well and plan detailed educational programmes that are tailored to every child's needs. This, together with high quality teaching, enables each child to make substantial progress in learning, and to become increasingly more independent. Checks provide information about those who need extra help and the school works closely with parents and outside agencies to support those children with SEND. This information is also used as a baseline to help assess progress. As a result, all children reach, and some exceed, the level of development expected for their age. For children under three years old, the curriculum is based on the three prime areas of developing personal, physical and communication skills. For those over the age of three in the Nursery and for Reception children, the curriculum embraces all seven areas of learning, and an introduction to specialist teaching in French, ICT, music and physical education (PE) enables children to be ready for their next stage as they increase their capacity for learning and range of skills.
- 6.2 The setting's welcoming classrooms are spacious and plentifully resourced, enhancing all children's experiences. Easily accessible, excellent outdoor areas enable all children to engage in imaginative role play as well as supporting all areas of their learning and physical development. In the Nursery outdoor area, the ship with its slide and climbing-ramp and the 'digging pit' are used constantly as the children develop physical and imaginative skills, with unobtrusive but effective help from the teachers. Throughout the EYFS, both child-initiated and adult-led activities are evident, often with children's suggestions altering a planned activity, as in a Reception role play-session involving planning a picnic for a trip to the Moon. Children respond to the high expectations of the staff as they enthusiastically take part in all activities. Careful staff observations enable individual children's profiles to be produced, which, together with a tracking system that operates throughout the EYFS, inform staff and parents about each child's progress and help to plan the next steps in their learning. Regular and strong contact with parents helps the children with settling in and development. Parents indicated that they are highly supportive of the school both in their responses in the parents' questionnaire and in discussions with inspectors.

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

- 6.3 Provision for the children's well-being is outstanding. For the under threes, each child has a key person who establishes strong relationships with both child and parents to promote the child's development. This enables children to learn to explore their surroundings, recognise simple shapes and become more independent with their personal care. The key person system continues throughout the whole of the EYFS, and the enthusiastic way that children take part in all activities shows that they are happy in the setting. Both individually and with others they work and play with enthusiasm. They demonstrate excellent courtesy and behaviour, willing to help each other to take turns. They listen well, act upon instructions and become increasingly articulate as they talk happily to each other and to adults. Well-planned teaching enables children to learn about healthy eating, developing personal hygiene habits and keeping themselves safe. Children benefit from the many opportunities for physical development, both in the outdoor areas and during PE sessions. This adds to the good personal skills they are acquiring to prepare them for the next stage of education. For children over three, the seamless transition process is helped by mixing with older children at playtimes and the subject specialist teaching in Reception, together with joint class activities with Year 1.

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

- 6.4 Leadership and management are outstanding. The plentiful resources are evidence of the excellent support by the directors, which ensures that children are well cared for in a welcoming and safe environment, and that all requirements are met. All staff have suitable safeguarding checks and receive regular training in child protection, and most are trained in paediatric first aid. Risk assessments and fire practices are carried out rigorously. Both the safeguarding and welfare of each child are given high priority by all involved in the setting. Regular evaluation of the setting by the close-knit, caring staff results in careful planning to enhance the children's learning experiences and personal development. Comprehensive appraisal and supervision procedures strongly support staff, who take every opportunity to attend training as part of their professional development. New ideas gained as a result of this training are shared willingly with colleagues. The setting's close links with parents and external agencies ensure that appropriate interventions are secured for children to receive the support they need.

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

- 6.5 The overall quality and standards are outstanding. All children, including those who require additional support, are happy in the setting and enjoy their learning, making substantial progress from a wide range of starting points which prepares them for the next stage of their learning. They develop fine motor skills, learn to make choices independently, and listen to and act upon instructions. Children under three begin to become independent as they learn to do more for themselves. Gentle guidance from the teachers enables them to be able to recognise their names and colours as well as helping to increase their social skills as they play together and learn to make friends. By the end of Nursery, children over three can recognise and order numbers up to ten and begin to recognise two-dimensional shapes. They demonstrate creative and manual skills as they paint pictures and learn to use computers to solve problems. At the end of Reception, most children have reached, and some have exceeded, the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Children deal confidently with numbers up to 20, adding or subtracting single-digit numbers. Most children are able to read at a level appropriate to their chronological age, while some are well above, and they write stories independently comprising simple sentences. Imaginative teaching helps children to develop creative skills that are demonstrated in the colourful paintings in many styles, displayed on classroom walls.
- 6.6 At all stages, children with SEND are identified and extra support is given. The children's personal and emotional development is outstanding, and children make friends readily, relating extremely well to their peers and to adults as they willingly share and show genuine care and respect for each other. All staff understand fully the requirements for children's safeguarding and welfare, and these are met effectively. Regular meetings of the whole team to discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting, together with future plans, show evidence of a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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