



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

HOE BRIDGE SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Hoe Bridge School

Full Name of School	Hoe Bridge School		
DfE Number	936/6395		
Registered Charity Number	295808		
Address	Hoe Bridge School Hoe Place Old Woking Road Woking Surrey GU22 8JE		
Telephone Number	01483 760018		
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Email Address	headmaster@hoebridgeschool.co.uk		
Head	Mr Nick Arkell		
Chair of Governors	Mr Ian Katté		
Age Range	3 to 14		
Total Number of Pupils	486		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (355 boys; 131 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 352
	3-5 (EYFS):	91	11-18: 43
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	486	
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Linda Renfrew		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection Dates	14 Oct 2014 to 17 Oct 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 March 2011.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. 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 chair of governors and a representative governor for the EYFS, 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

Lady Fiona Mynors

Mrs Anne Camm

Mrs Jane Crouch

Mr David Edwards

Mr Michael Higham

Mrs Julie Jackson

Mr David Sibson

Miss Mary Regan

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Hoe Bridge School is a co-educational school for pupils from three to thirteen years created from the merger in 1986 of two former proprietorial boys' schools, Allen House and St Michael's School. In 1987 it became a charitable trust administered by a board of governors, and developed to include girls up to Year 6 in 1999. The school, based in a seventeenth century house, is set in its own grounds in Woking, Surrey. The headmaster has overall responsibility for the whole school. The head of the pre-prep has delegated responsibility for the day-to-day management of the pre-prep department. Since the previous inspection, plans for a new pre-prep department had been agreed, and building was taking place at the time of the inspection.
- 1.2 The school aims to work closely with parents to provide a Christian environment in which happy children can develop as self-reliant, confident individuals, fulfilling their potential in academic, sporting and creative activities. A particular emphasis is placed on respect for others, courtesy and kindness and giving pupils the skills and experience to prepare them for life beyond school.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the pupils is above the national average as indicated in standardised assessments. The majority of pupils come from business and professional families of white British origin who live within a six-mile radius of the school. About one sixth of the pupils come from families of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 486 pupils on roll, of whom 91 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which is an integral part of the pre-prep department for pupils from the Nursery to Year 2. There are 115 pupils in Years 1 and 2 (pre-prep). The prep department caters for Years 3 to 8, with 237 boys and girls in Years 3 to 6 and 43 boys in Years 7 and 8. At the age of 11, most girls and a few boys transfer to independent day schools. The remaining boys leave at the age of 13, transferring to independent day or boarding schools.
- 1.5 The school has identified 66 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 40 receive additional support. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Nine pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), and five receive extra support.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Twigs	Pre-Nursery (age 3)
Ash, Aspen	Nursery (age 3-4)
Beech, Cedar, Chestnut	Reception (age 4-5)

Pre-preparatory Department

School	NC name
Elm, Maple, Mulberry	Year 1
Oak, Pine, Rowan	Year 2

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent. Pupils are extremely well educated in line with the school aims. From the EYFS onwards, pupils achieve high standards and make excellent progress, including those with SEND and EAL. More able pupils make rapid progress in relation to their abilities. Pupils almost always gain places to their first choice of senior school, many with extremely competitive entry requirements. Each year, a significant number of pupils gain academic and non-academic awards. Preparation for senior school entrance examinations is meticulous. Pupils display extremely positive attitudes to their learning and activities, and achieve well as individuals and in teams.
- 2.2 The pupils' experiences, including in the EYFS, are strongly supported by the excellent curriculum. A particular focus is given to developing a firm foundation in literacy and numeracy. Although the provision of information and communication technology (ICT) equipment has been enhanced, pupils have insufficient opportunities to use it consistently across the curriculum. The systems to identify and support pupils of all ages with SEND and EAL are excellent. The more able are identified and their needs are well met. Opportunities for pupils' independent learning have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils of all ages are extremely well prepared for transition across the school. The pupils' educational experience is enhanced by the well-planned extra-curricular programme. The quality of teaching is good, and a significant proportion of lessons observed were excellent. Much teaching is exciting, encouraging pupils to think independently. It is less successful when it is over directed and there is a lack of variety of tasks set, which restricts the opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.
- 2.3 The personal development of pupils is excellent. They exhibit high standards of personal confidence and consideration for others. The quality of pastoral care is excellent. Staff provide extremely effective support and guidance for the pupils, and relationships across the school are strong. The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are highly efficient. Great care is taken to safeguard all pupils. The quality of governance is excellent, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The governors are effective in discharging their responsibilities for statutory requirements, including a thorough annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements. The quality of leadership and management is excellent. Strong, approachable leadership has a clear vision for the school which is shared across the whole school community. At all levels, managers carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. Middle management roles have been strengthened. In the pre-prep, the appraisal system works efficiently. In the prep, the allocation of responsibilities for senior managers is uneven, as they do not all undertake staff appraisals. As recommended at the previous inspection, development planning has been strengthened. Links with parents are excellent. Parents overwhelmingly support the education and care that their children receive.

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 improvements.

1. Develop ways to exploit further the breadth of the use of ICT in lessons, and increase the opportunities for pupils to interact and undertake open-ended activities to match the most effective practice in the school.
2. Ensure a greater balance in the roles and responsibilities for senior managers, including the use of systems for individual appraisal.
3. In the EYFS, enhance children's learning and progress by developing the use of available assessment data to inform teachers' future planning.

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 excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are extremely well educated in line with the school aims to promote their confidence in an environment which enables them to achieve high standards. In the EYFS, children, including those with SEND, make excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points. They are highly confident and relate well to adults. By the end of the Nursery, children can express themselves effectively, listen for extended periods of time and recount a story. They can count objects to ten and often beyond, and can talk about familiar shapes. By the end of Reception they are confident ordering numbers to 20 and can recognise and count many of the numbers on a 100 square. They are confident using coins in role play. Most of them can tell the time on the hour and half hour. All children are reading at their own level with increased fluency. They can write independently using a sound mat while the most able use word books. By the end of Reception, most children reach expected levels of achievement while the more able exceed expectation in some areas of their development.
- 3.3 From Year 1, pupils' literacy and numeracy work is of a high standard. Pupils are highly articulate, speaking clearly and expressing their opinions thoughtfully and logically. Their linguistic, reasoning, analytical and investigative skills are well developed. Pupils write imaginatively and can apply their mathematical skills. Their ICT skills are good. They are beginning to develop their learning and independence through evaluating their own learning. All pupils take great pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils' physical skills are excellent. Pupils demonstrate high standards of creativity in the art and design and technology (DT) work on display. They have excellent musical skills as demonstrated during choir practice and musical ensembles.
- 3.4 Over half the pupils learn musical instruments, achieving well in external music examinations in a range of instruments. They have been successful in winning prizes for inter-school design and engineering projects, and are involved in an exciting kit car building project in collaboration with a local engineering firm. Successful drama productions, such as *Bugsy Malone*, demonstrate the pupils' commitment to public performance and strong artistic achievement. Pupils almost always gain places to their first choice of senior school, many with extremely competitive entry requirements. Each year, a significant number of pupils gain academic and non-academic awards.
- 3.5 Pupils achieve well as individuals and in teams. Among many sporting achievements pupils won the 2014 IAPS national championships for Under 11 girls' netball and boys' hockey, and as athletics finalists. Pupils also demonstrate competitive spirit in weekly matches against other local schools and initiate and organise many charity events.
- 3.6 Pupils with EAL show a high degree of language fluency and understanding. Those who are more able or who have SEND achieve extremely well. The school's analysis of assessments indicates that most pupils with SEND or EAL make excellent progress. This was confirmed by evidence from inspection activities. Early identification of individual needs and excellent provision for intervention contribute to

high outcomes for these pupils. Pupils who are more able make similarly rapid progress in relation to their abilities.

- 3.7 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but based on standardised tests, lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils, it is judged to be excellent in relation to pupils of similar ability, and they make rapid progress.
- 3.8 EYFS children are highly motivated and engage enthusiastically in many well planned activities. From Year 1, pupils are successful in their academic work and the wider curriculum through their strong motivation to do well. They are enthusiastic, confident and self-aware, with extremely positive attitudes to learning.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and the extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 In the EYFS, the educational programmes for the prime and specific areas of learning help all children to reach the level of development typical for their age, while the more able children exceed expectation in some areas. All children receive very good support so that they develop the necessary skills to learn effectively through play, exploration and active learning. They benefit from access to the school's facilities, and increased use of the outdoors for learning. From Year 1, the broad curriculum is well matched to pupils' abilities and needs, supporting the school's aims to enable them to be successful academically and to be confident for transfer to senior school. It enables the pupils to use the school's excellent facilities and resources. The overwhelming majority of parents are extremely pleased with the curriculum and the wide range of activities available to their children.
- 3.11 In Years 1 to 2, the curriculum includes all requisite areas, and supports the pupils' enthusiasm. A particular focus is given to developing a firm foundation in literacy and numeracy. Creativity is at the heart of the curriculum, harnessing the pupils' love of learning and relating it to their own experiences. However, there is an imbalance in the provision of physical activity with younger pupils having fewer opportunities for physical development. From Year 1, pupils benefit from being taught by specialists across a range of subjects and their individual needs are supported by careful setting and streaming which begins in Year 2.
- 3.12 From Year 3, the curriculum maintains the emphasis on literacy and numeracy, while ensuring appropriate balance. Pupils' linguistic skills benefit from learning French from Year 1, and Latin from Year 5. Many opportunities are available for the pupils to develop their investigative and practical skills. Sports opportunities are plentiful, and from Year 5 all pupils have the chance to play for a school team. A comprehensive scheme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) underpins the pupils' personal development, and Year 8 benefit from an appropriate leavers' course. Although the provision of ICT equipment has been enhanced, pupils have insufficient opportunities to use it consistently across the curriculum.
- 3.13 From the EYFS onwards, the systems to identify and support pupils with SEND and EAL are excellent. Their progress is closely tracked and appropriate work is set in classes and for individual lessons. All teachers are involved in devising pupils' individual educational plans which are reviewed and evaluated most efficiently. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and their needs are very well met. Opportunities for pupils' independent learning have improved since the previous inspection.

- 3.14 Pupils of all ages are extremely well prepared for transition across the school. In the EYFS, all teachers are well known to the children, and they are given an opportunity to spend time with their new teacher in their classroom prior to the new term commencing. Preparation for senior school entrance examinations is meticulous, as the curriculum is tailored to meet the individual demands of the wide range of senior schools to which the pupils transfer.
- 3.15 The pupils' educational experience is enhanced by the good quality and well-planned extra-curricular programme. Clubs which enable pupils to develop high level sporting skills, and hobbies, are much enjoyed by pupils and cover a broad range of activities. Pupils' creative experiences are enhanced by activities in music, DT, art and drama. A wide variety of speakers and workshops enrich the pupils' learning experience, giving them opportunities to investigate and learn independently. The pupils' emotional intelligence and resilience are strengthened through a number of exciting residential trips, as diverse as visits to France or a bushcraft camp where pupils create and sleep in their own shelters. Pupils gain an understanding of the local and wider community through supporting a variety of charities, links with a local hospice and an international school, as well as events such as inviting senior citizens from the local community into their Pre Prep Harvest Festival and the Prep school choir sing at Christmas time for a local church group.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.17 Most teaching is at least good, and a significant proportion of lessons observed were excellent, fostering pupils' enthusiasm to learn and promoting their excellent progress in support of the school's aims. In the EYFS, teaching strategies and timely support and intervention ensure that many children make very good progress. Teaching is often carefully matched to children's individual needs, encouraging them to be highly motivated and engage enthusiastically in many well-planned activities. In some areas of children's learning and development, there is not such a good match, and on these occasions children's progress is limited. Teachers use the excellent resources efficiently.
- 3.18 Across the school, teachers are dedicated, well qualified and knowledgeable. Relationships in lessons are excellent, and teachers know their pupils and their needs extremely well, and have high expectations. At its best, teaching is exciting. Lessons are carefully planned, a brisk pace is maintained and time used effectively. Good questioning is used to confirm pupils' previous learning, and open-ended questions encourage them to think independently. Teaching is less successful when it is over directed and there is a lack of variety of tasks set, which restricts the opportunity for pupils to take sufficient responsibility for their own learning. Classrooms are well equipped and staff use the resources well. Although interactive whiteboards are used effectively for teaching, pupils have limited opportunities in lessons to use ICT across the curriculum to support their learning.
- 3.19 Teaching ensures that the needs of pupils with SEND and EAL are met extremely well, which enables them to make particularly good progress, and additional challenges for the most able are usually planned. Teaching is well supported by a large number of highly efficient teaching assistants. Useful cross-curricular links are made in teaching, enriching pupils' understanding on topics such as the recent focus on the First World War linking history, DT, art and English.

- 3.20 In the EYFS, teachers carry out and record regular observations of the children as part of ongoing assessment, but these observations do not always identify the areas of children's learning and development being observed. As a consequence progress in these areas is limited. The school's clear marking policy is not consistently implemented across the school. Marking is consistently good in Years 1 and 2. From Year 3, it is regular, and at its best pupils are given explicit advice on ways to improve and meet individual targets. However, at times, it is more cursory and less helpful. In discussions, pupils stated that they greatly valued the verbal feedback and support they received from their teachers, who were usually willing to give them extra individual attention when needed.
- 3.21 From Year 1, a comprehensive assessment system allows the pupils' progress and development to be tracked efficiently. Pupils take standardised and school assessments. The recent introduction of a new management information system, and the appointment of a senior manager to take overall responsibility for assessment analysis, are intended to extend the school's ability to use pupil data to inform planning.

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 Pupils thrive in an environment where they feel safe and secure, supported by all members of the community in line with the school's aims. In the EYFS, children are happy at school and arrive with great enthusiasm for the day ahead. They trust all the adults in school and enjoy being with them. They gain independence and have high self-esteem. Children understand why it is important to listen to others, to show respect, to share, cooperate and take turns.
- 4.3 From Year 1, the pupils have a well-developed sense of spirituality that reflects the school's pervading Christian ethos. Pupils are confident and friendly, express themselves and their feelings clearly and have high self-esteem which is encouraged by the effective system of rewards, praise and celebration of success. Pupils' imagination, inspiration and insight are enhanced by the opportunities to participate in a variety of musical and dramatic productions and in their art work. In religious education (RE), circle discussion times, PSHE and assemblies, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the non-material aspects of life. Pupils explore feelings and emotions, developing values and principles to embrace their future life.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is well advanced. They develop a strong moral code through the school's clear ethos, and the excellent example set by staff. As a result, pupils justify their opinions, actions and decisions, and contribute ably to discussions on matters of democracy and current affairs such as the comparison of Ebola to the Black Death. Pupils understand and readily accept the need for rules and boundaries for the good of the community, and are clear on ways in which to resolve disputes. Pupils are encouraged to look after each other and manage their emotions. They explore sensitive or personal issues within the curriculum, confident that their views and experiences are respected. Their behaviour is always good, and frequently exemplary, reflecting the moral code of the school.
- 4.5 Pupils develop a happy, caring disposition from an early age reflecting their strong social development. They play and work together harmoniously, helping others when needed. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and pupils are confident and articulate when speaking to adults. All are proud of their school, their personal achievements and feel valued and appreciated. Pupils accept responsibility with enthusiasm, responding well to leading and helping. Pupils display an excellent appreciation of those less fortunate than themselves, demonstrated through the involvement of the pupils in raising a substantial amount of money each year for charity. They understand about British institutions and the value of democracy through their work on the school council and in discussions on current affairs.
- 4.6 Pupils have an excellent appreciation of cultural diversity as it is a feature of their everyday lives within the school community. They are strongly aware of Western traditions through music, art and drama. Cultural differences are readily accepted and celebrated through RE, assemblies and celebrations, where pupils learn about other faiths, cultures and traditions. They happily share their personal experiences, and parents and speakers visit to enable a deeper understanding and tolerance of a variety of beliefs, cultures and faiths. A sense of tolerance and harmony pervades the school community.

- 4.7 The pupils' excellent personal development means that by the time they leave the school they exhibit confidence, have clear understanding of the needs of others and are well prepared for the next stage of education. EYFS children are thoroughly prepared for the transfer to Year 1.

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

- 4.8 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Staff provide extremely effective support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the school's aims, contributing to their excellent personal development. The efficient, well recorded and monitored pastoral system involves all staff, and clear lines of communication between staff, senior management and parents are maintained. Relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils themselves are excellent, and pupils feel confident that staff are available and approachable. In the EYFS, teachers and support staff ensure that all children, including those in need of additional support, enjoy very positive relationships with adults and form secure emotional attachments.
- 4.10 Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. In the EYFS, children understand the importance of physical activity and eating appropriate snacks and meals. They are increasingly independent and can confidently manage their own personal hygiene. From Year 1, concerns were expressed by pupils and parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses about the quality of the school food. Food is nutritious and plentiful, but menu options are not always attractive nor do they always provide a healthy balance. Pupils benefit from regular exercise through an extensive physical education programme.
- 4.11 The school is highly effective in promoting excellent behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. The anti-bullying policy is appropriate, providing a clear message that the school should be a kind environment. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of parents and pupils expressed concern about the way the school handles cases of bullying. Careful scrutiny of documentation and discussions with pupils indicate that the school has robust yet sensitive procedures for managing bullying and developing positive behaviour.
- 4.12 A detailed and thorough action plan is in place to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.13 Although a small minority of pupils in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires felt that school did not ask for nor respond to their opinions, inspection evidence indicates that this is not the case. As observed on inspection, staff and senior managers are easily accessible to pupils who feel confident to approach them, and the school council provides a formal forum for pupils to share their views. However, class representatives have yet to meet in the term of the inspection. Pupils described examples where their opinions and suggestions had been acted upon, such as a change to the summer term hobby afternoon for seniors, and changes to the lunch menus.

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 Efficient policies and procedures for the whole school, including the EYFS, ensure that pupils are well looked after in an extremely well-maintained and safe

environment. The provision for children's well-being in the EYFS is excellent and a particular strength of the setting. Parents overwhelmingly recognised that their children were well looked after and felt safe in school. Great care is taken to safeguard all pupils, including the EYFS children, and the school's policy is implemented effectively. Designated senior staff who have had appropriate specialist training ensure that all staff have regular training, and are clear about what to do and whom to approach if they have any concerns about the safeguarding of pupils. Strong links have been established with local agencies, and a knowledgeable designated safeguarding governor gives support to the school.

- 4.16 All necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are in place. Systematic checks of safety equipment are carefully recorded and regular fire drills take place. Appropriate risk assessments are prepared for activities, and trips are meticulously planned.
- 4.17 Many staff have first-aid qualifications, including paediatric training for EYFS, and the first-aid policy is appropriate. Pupils who are ill or injured are well cared for, and detailed records of accidents are maintained.
- 4.18 The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored, and efficient systems are in place for following up any pupil absences.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 It has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The governing board, under shrewd leadership, maintains effective oversight of the school to ensure that it is extremely successful in achieving its aims and ensuring that the pupils achieve high standards. Committed governors, many of whom are current or past parents, have a broad range of expertise and skills to support the school. Governors' support and understanding of the learning and development requirements of the EYFS are excellent. Plans to formalise the current induction process are being developed, and governors are involved in appropriate training for their roles. They receive informative reports from the school's leadership about all aspects of the education, standards and care provided for pupils. Through exercising stringent financial controls, and as part of comprehensive development planning, the school has been able to embark on an exciting project to rebuild the pre-prep which will be completed in the term following the inspection. This will enable the EYFS setting to be located in one place. Governors have ensured that excellent investment has been made in staff, well-maintained accommodation, and comprehensive learning resources.
- 5.3 Governance has been strengthened by the creation of an efficient committee structure. Detailed minutes from meetings indicate that governors are highly effective in exercising their monitoring role, providing support and pertinent challenge for senior leaders to provide a good stimulus for the growth and improvement of the school. In response to recommendations in the previous inspection, governors are now fully involved in the life and work of the school. They are regular visitors to the school, attending formal and informal events, observing lessons, and designated governors take a particular interest in the EYFS and safeguarding. An appropriate system for appraising the heads and bursar is in the early stages of implementation.
- 5.4 The governors are effective in discharging their responsibilities for statutory requirements, including a thorough annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements throughout the school. The monitoring of regulatory policies is effectively assigned to different committees.

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 and others, is excellent.
- 5.6 The school is extremely successful in achieving its stated aims to enable pupils to become self-reliant, confident individuals well prepared for transfer to their senior schools. Strong, approachable leadership has a clear vision for the school which is reflected in all its policies which are implemented effectively. This vision is shared across the whole school community. Great care is taken to ensure that staff, including those in the EYFS, are properly trained for their roles in the safeguarding, welfare and safety of pupils. All necessary checks on the suitability of staff and governors have been carried out and recorded appropriately. New arrangements for

- checking whether those in teaching positions are prohibited from teaching were suitably embedded by the end of the inspection.
- 5.7 At all levels, leadership and management carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. Regular meetings across the school ensure that communication and systems work well. Senior managers work well together for the benefit of the school, creating a common sense of purpose and a united community. Middle management roles have been strengthened since the previous inspection. Curriculum co-ordinators in the pre-prep work closely with heads of department in the prep to ensure that the curriculum and pupils' learning is continuous. Curriculum co-ordinators and heads of department undertake regular lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. An excellent development is the regular opportunity for teachers to undertake lesson observations across the school to enhance their own practice.
- 5.8 The school is successful in recruiting well-qualified staff. The induction process for newly appointed staff is efficient. They are appropriately mentored and made to feel extremely welcome by the whole school community. Gap students receive good training and enjoy their work, enhancing the community feel of the school. Professional development training for staff is good. In the pre-prep, the appraisal system works efficiently. In the prep, the allocation of responsibilities for senior managers is uneven, as they do not yet share responsibility with the head for undertaking staff appraisals, which represents a significant imbalance in management workload.
- 5.9 As recommended at the previous inspection, development planning has been strengthened. An ambitious whole-school development plan is supported by shorter two-yearly plans which indicate those responsible for implementation and outcome evaluation.
- 5.10 Leadership and management of the EYFS are excellent, ensuring that the setting is welcoming, safe and stimulating. A commitment to evaluating practice and to securing continuous improvement is evident in the detailed development plan, which highlights priorities and helps determine future necessary action. Effective systems are in place for supervision, staff appraisal and the continuous professional development of staff. A positive and effective partnership has been established with parents, and local agencies to ensure that children receive the support that they need.
- 5.11 The EYFS setting has made good progress since the previous inspection. New leadership and governor involvement in the setting is in place, and the role of the key person has been implemented. Resources have been updated and more learning takes place in the outdoor environment. The recommendation to allow children in the EYFS more time to develop and review the learning which they have initiated has been achieved.
- 5.12 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents overwhelmingly support all aspects of the education and care provided, and they are particularly pleased that their children feel happy and safe at school. In the EYFS, parents are kept well informed about their children's achievements and progress through informative written reports. Parents' meetings are arranged termly, and the parents are actively encouraged to discuss and share information and observations about their children in their progress books.

- 5.13 The school maintains an extremely constructive relationship with parents in accordance with its aims, and handles any concerns or complaints with care, in accordance with its published procedures. All staff are approachable, and during the inspection, parents were frequently observed speaking to staff raising any concerns. Working parents are supported by the school's provision for before- and after-school care. The welcoming atmosphere of the school is enhanced by the extremely efficient administrative team who respond to enquiries promptly and courteously.
- 5.14 Parents have many opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. Induction sessions for pupils and parents and a Year 2 and 3 parents' meeting help to allay anxieties about transfer across the school. Teaching and learning evenings are held for parents to support their children, and excellent guidance is given on appropriate destinations for senior schools. Parents are invited to school functions and have opportunities for assisting in special events. The strong family atmosphere is enhanced by the parents' organisations which contribute positively through their range of social and fund raising activities.
- 5.15 Parents of pupils and of prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school. The school's website is informative and parents benefit from regular communication, not only through the daily availability of the senior leaders in the playground, but also by weekly bulletins. Parents feel that they are kept well informed about the school's activities.
- 5.16 Parents receive clear and useful frequent written reports about their children's work and progress. Formal parents' evenings are also held to enable them to discuss their children's learning and attainment during the year.

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