



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

IMMANUEL COLLEGE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Immanuel College

Full Name of School	Immanuel College
DfE Number	919/6231
Registered Charity Number	803179
Address	Elstree Road Bushey Hertfordshire WD23 4EB
Telephone Number	020 8950 0604
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Email Address	enquiries@immanuel.herts.sch.uk
Head Master	Mr Charles Dormer
Joint Chairmen of Governors	Professor Anthony Warrens and Mr Edward Misrahi
Age Range	4 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	473
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (267 boys; 206 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 21 5-11: 35 11-18: 417
Acting Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Alexis Gaffin
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	08 Oct 2013 to 11 Oct 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2010.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Inspectors

Mr Timothy Holgate	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Zelma Braganza	Team Inspector (Former Head, GSA school)
Mr Richard Feldman	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Michael Goodwin	Team Inspector (Head, Society of Heads school)
Mr John Parsonage	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mrs Lynn Weeks	Team Inspector (Head of Early Years, IAPS school)
Mrs Rosamund Walwyn	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Immanuel College (formally named The Charles Kalms – Henry Ronson Immanuel College) was founded in 1990 by the late Chief Rabbi, Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, to fulfil his vision of an educational establishment that affirms Orthodox Jewish values and practice in the context of rigorous secular studies. The school is situated in the 11-acre grounds of a 19th century mansion, Caldecote Towers, in a residential area of Bushey, to the north west of London. It is a co-educational day school, originally for pupils between the ages of 11 and 18, but a preparatory school was opened in 2011 for those aged from 4 to 11, and it currently educates the first three year groups, aged between 4 and 6. Some lessons in Years 7 to 11 are conducted separately for boys and girls. The board of governors consists largely of parents of current pupils. They are trustees and directors of the school's charitable company and have proprietorial responsibility. A new head master and deputy head joined the school in September 2012.
- 1.2 The school aims to give its pupils a first-class education that encourages them to connect Jewish and secular wisdom, to think independently and to exercise responsibility. It seeks to be committed to a recognition of the unique worth and purpose of each pupil and to school life, which is an extension of that which gives meaning and purpose within their families. The school sets out to be characterised by academic excellence, expert pastoral care and inspiring Jewish education. It aims to offer all pupils the nurturing environment and individual attention required to maximise their academic potential. In addition, the school seeks to enable pupils to flourish in small classes that offer them the space to think independently and to develop their individual academic strengths.
- 1.3 The school provides education for 473 pupils (267 boys and 206 girls), of whom 56 are in the preparatory school, including 21 children under the age of 5 in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There are 307 pupils in Years 7 to 11 and 110 are in the sixth form. The school has identified 110 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 5 have a statement of special educational needs. All 110 are provided with additional support for their learning. Although some pupils come from families who do not speak English as a first language, nearly all are fluent in English; 15 are considered to have English as an additional language (EAL). Of these, three are provided with specialist support. The ability profile is generally above the national average up to Year 11, and in line with the national average in the sixth form.
- 1.4 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 meets its aim to provide both a secular and Jewish education that achieves high academic standards underpinned by excellent pastoral care. Pupils at all ages and stages are very well educated, and their achievement is excellent. They achieve significant success in their Jewish learning and in extra-curricular activities. Results in GCSE examinations have been above the national average for maintained schools, and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. International GCSE results have been higher than the worldwide average overall. Results at A level have been above the national average for maintained schools, and above the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2012 results were well above the national average for maintained schools. Pupils' progress, including that of the most able and of those with SEND, has been at least good in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability, and for those in the sixth form it has been excellent. Pupils show excellent attitudes to their work and study, and their learning is at a high level. The excellent curriculum makes a significant contribution to the pupils' success, and the good teaching, a significant proportion of which is excellent, strongly promotes their progress and learning.
- 2.2 Pupils, including those in the EYFS, show excellent personal development, and very high levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are very well behaved and show integrity, confidence and commitment. They are emotionally mature for their age. These high standards owe much to supportive relationships and the excellent pastoral care provided. Staff show a strong concern for the health, safety and well-being of the pupils, although the school has not implemented fully all aspects of its recruitment and safeguarding policies.
- 2.3 Governors provide strong support for the school and promote its ethos with conviction and enthusiasm. Leadership and management at all levels throughout the school are good and have provided the stimulus, support and resources to enable pupils to reach high standards. Priorities and targets to improve the school further have not yet been formally identified or clarified in detail. Systems for governors and leaders to monitor the implementation of some policies have not yet been fully effective. Progress in implementing the recommendations of the previous inspection has been satisfactory in all areas except for the recording of checks of medical fitness on new staff.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- implement fully all aspects of its safeguarding policy, in respect of training, obtaining references and procedures for staff starting work before receipt of a criminal records check [Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety];
- ensure that all necessary recruitment checks, including those on medical fitness, those required when staff return to the UK from overseas and those on the right to work in the UK, are carried out before staff start work and correctly recorded [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(b) and (d), 19.(3), 22.(3)(e) and (f), and 22.(4), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and for the same reason Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety];
- ensure that all required checks on supply staff are carried out and correctly recorded [Part 4, paragraphs 20.(2)(a), (b), (c) and (d), and 22.(5)(a) and (c), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and for the same reason Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety];
- ensure that identity and criminal records checks on proprietors are completed in a timely manner as required [Part 4, paragraphs 21.(6)(b)(i) and (ii), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and for the same reason Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety].

2.5 In order to comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school is required to:

- ensure that all staff receive regular appraisal and supervision to identify training needs and secure opportunities for professional development;
- ensure that written permission is sought from parents before children are given prescribed medication.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Create a rigorous system to enable governors to monitor the effectiveness of the school's procedures so as to achieve and maintain full compliance with all regulations.
2. Identify appropriate improvement targets to enable governors and managers to evaluate the school's success and assess its performance against clearly specified objectives.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 In the EYFS, children learn and develop well, making good progress in relation to their starting points, and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. They make sensible choices and are active and enthusiastic learners. Reception children enjoy learning about the properties of various two-dimensional shapes through a wide variety of both teacher-led and self-initiated activities. They also enjoy role-play activities in a 'doctor's surgery', where they have opportunities to develop and reinforce previous learning about how to promote health. At the start of the Reception year, most children correctly read and identify individual letters and numerals and many can also copy them accurately.
- 3.3 Elsewhere in the school, pupils are very well educated in line with the aim of achieving academic excellence combined with high levels of Jewish learning. Pupils of all ages have very good levels of knowledge and understanding in the subjects they study. Pupils observed in Year 2 could identify the letters and sounds of the Hebrew alphabet. Those in Year 9 showed high levels of research and articulacy in their presentations on aspects of Jacobean society in English. Pupils studying GCSE chemistry interpreted the properties of materials in terms of their atomic and molecular structures. In Year 12, pupils showed strong reasoning ability in explaining river erosion and transport. Pupils apply knowledge very well to new situations and show a marked ability to interpret the information they receive. Many pupils, particularly the most able, show strong analytical and deductive powers. Pupils generally have excellent communication skills, showing high levels of literacy and spoken English. They can make a case with reasoned argument. Their levels of numeracy are high and they show competence in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). Their art and photography demonstrate high levels of creative ability. Pupils' research skills are well developed. They achieve particular success in their own learning and knowledge of Jewish culture and religion, and in contributing to the learning of others.
- 3.4 Pupils show significant success in their many extra-curricular activities. This is illustrated by their performances in team and individual sports at district and county levels, in academic competitions such as mathematics Olympiads, and in contributions in activities and clubs, such as debating and the 'book awards'. Pupils' leadership skills are prominent in their initiative in running clubs and societies, in leading assemblies and in their organisation of charitable fund-raising events. Success in public examinations is particularly significant in relation to the available curriculum time in many subjects.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools, and are similar to that for maintained selective schools. International GCSE results overall have been higher than the worldwide average. Results at A level have been above the national average for maintained schools, and also above that for maintained selective schools. In 2013, just over half the GCSE results were graded A* or A, while at A level 65 per cent were graded A* or A.

- 3.6 This level of attainment, taken in conjunction with other inspection evidence and nationally standardised progress data, indicates that pupils make good progress throughout the school to GCSE and excellent progress between GCSE and A level, compared with similarly able pupils nationally. Pupils with SEND or EAL make progress above expectations, shown by the improvement in their study skills, their examination results and their increasing confidence in response to the support they receive. The achievements and progress of able, gifted and talented pupils are excellent: they achieve the highest grades in public and internal examinations, and secure places at highly competitive universities and on seminary and other further education courses. They also respond very well to the challenges of more advanced work, for example in the study of Biblical Hebrew.
- 3.7 Pupils' learning skills are excellent. They are well motivated, hard working and keen to do well. They thrive on opportunities to demonstrate their independent thinking, their ability to question and their keenness to explore new situations, observed particularly in the EYFS. They work very well in teams and groups, supporting and learning from each other, and respecting their views and contributions. When given the opportunity to do so, pupils work very well on their own.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The EYFS setting makes good provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend and preparing them for the next stage in their learning. Children are introduced to a varied programme of indoor activities that cover the required seven areas of learning. Although opportunities for outdoor learning are readily available, they are not fully utilised to support the children's learning. Suitable opportunities are provided for children to develop a variety of skills and make good progress. Planning usually takes account of the children's individual interests and the next steps needed for progress in their learning.
- 3.10 The curriculum throughout the school is broad and flexible. It covers all the requisite areas of learning thoroughly and contributes significantly to the pupils' intellectual, creative, physical and personal achievement. It is carefully combined with the extra-curricular programme, and successfully promotes the school's aim for commitment to recognition of the unique worth and purpose of every pupil, and to develop pupils' academic excellence in both Jewish and secular studies. The curriculum's flexibility enables the school to accommodate the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities. Since the previous inspection, the school has upgraded and expanded its ICT facilities, thereby increasing use of ICT by teachers and pupils.
- 3.11 In Years 1 and 2, pupils study a wide range of subjects, including Jewish studies and, in common with all pupils in the school, Modern Hebrew. As they progress through the senior school, they continue to enjoy access to a broad curriculum, which includes drama, music, art and photography. In keeping with the school's ethos, Jewish studies is taken by all pupils and is given a generous allocation of curriculum time. At GCSE level, pupils can study three sciences separately, although there is provision for combined science options for some. Provision of ICT lessons is available from Year 7. At the end of Year 9, pupils take a certificated qualification in ICT. Electronics has recently been added as a new technological option.

- 3.12 In the sixth form, pupils are able to choose from 24 subjects, including economics, psychology and history of art. Their educational experience is further enriched by a weekly programme of lectures given by outside speakers, which encourages them to think more deeply about themselves and the world around them.
- 3.13 Including those in the EYFS, pupils who are identified with SEND or EAL receive excellent specialist help. Detailed information and guidance are given to teachers to enable them to support their needs within the classroom. More able pupils are challenged by means of specific strategies and provision devised and monitored by each department. These pupils are given extension work, and have the opportunity to take part in more demanding courses and national events, such as the mathematics Olympiads. Those in the sixth form may take Open University modules alongside their A levels. Pupils are given good careers advice through individual meetings, information evenings and visits by outside speakers. The school also arranges a two-week work experience programme for all members of Year 12.
- 3.14 Pupils' personal development is well supported by a well-planned and comprehensive personal, social and health education programme that is embedded into the curriculum throughout the school. Key features of the programme include speakers and presentations, many within the life skills days held each term, and including topics such as drugs education and alcohol awareness.
- 3.15 The school organises a large number of educational and field trips and visits, which greatly enhance pupils' learning experience and personal development. Trips to Amsterdam, Strasbourg and Poland help to deepen their knowledge and understanding of Jewish heritage. The extended visits to Israel, in which every pupil is expected to participate, are particularly enriching.
- 3.16 Extra-curricular provision is excellent. Pupils can participate in a wide and diverse range of clubs and activities, such as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Mandarin and a rock band. Many activities are directly linked to Jewish life, faith and culture. Pupils have opportunities to develop their artistic, musical and theatrical talents, and academic societies enhance their intellectual development. A wide variety of sports is available. Many of the activities are run by the pupils themselves, which enables them to develop their leadership, teamwork and management skills. Pupils also greatly appreciate the opportunities to contribute to the school's well-established links with the local community through, for example, visits to the elderly in care homes.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.18 In a significant proportion of lessons, teaching is excellent and highly effective in promoting the learning and progress of pupils. Teaching supports the school's aim to help pupils to become confident learners.
- 3.19 In the great majority of lessons, including the EYFS, teaching is well planned and characterised by high expectations, effective time management, and the use of a wide variety of resources and tasks, including group and pair work. Teachers understand the needs of each pupil well. The brisk pace and regular checking of pupils' learning sustain their interest. Teachers establish excellent relationships with the pupils. Pupils are well motivated and clearly enjoy their lessons, and this contributes significantly to their progress. In many small A-level sets, the teaching resembles the style of a university tutorial, which works very well.

- 3.20 Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. This is used well to provide clear explanations and probe pupils' understanding more deeply. It is frequently used to place knowledge and information into the wider contexts of everyday life and contemporary global issues. Effective questioning techniques stimulate discussion and develop pupils' thinking skills and their ability to apply their knowledge. Explanations are often punctuated with quick-fire questions to enhance pupils' progress and assess their learning. The teaching employs a good variety of resources, including ICT, which are used to good effect. Subject-specific games such as dominoes and numerical puzzles accelerate pupils' learning and progress. Teachers are highly committed and give generously of their time outside lessons to support pupils. In all parts of the school pupils benefit from and value the high level of individual support they receive from their teachers. A small minority of pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire raised a concern about whether their homework helped them to learn. Inspection evidence did not support this view, and good examples of interesting homework tasks were seen.
- 3.21 Support for pupils with EAL or SEND, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is clearly and effectively focused, and this is complemented by the input of specialist teachers. Where necessary, pupils use laptops in class to assist them. In the EYFS, teaching is enthusiastic and engaging, and the many different activities provided develop the children's skills and enthusiasm. Teachers actively support individual children, showing sensitivity and concern when meeting their individual needs.
- 3.22 In a small proportion of lessons where teaching is less effective, the pace is generally slower and opportunities to develop higher-order thinking skills and to support pupils' independent learning are limited. Closely structured tasks prevent pupils from learning at their own pace and showing independent thought. Learning and progress are often hindered by lessons that are too tightly controlled and directed by the teacher. At times, classroom activities lack sufficient variety to sustain pupils' interest, particularly the more able.
- 3.23 The quality and frequency of marking and assessment vary across departments. High quality marking is provided in a range of subjects. The best includes comments that help pupils to understand how to make further progress, but some marking is cursory and less helpful to pupils. Frequent and helpful verbal feedback is provided in many lessons. Occasionally, in written work, there is little evidence of teachers' comments being acted upon by pupils. In the senior school, the use of standardised data to track pupils' progress is developing well, and middle management makes good use of the data available. A new tracking system enables staff to monitor pupils' progress closely and intervene appropriately to respond to any under-performance. These practices are starting to be more widely used in many departments.

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 are very friendly, confident, welcoming and self-assured. Pupils show very high levels of personal development by the time they leave school as confident and committed young people, sensitive to the needs of others and well equipped to make their mark in the world. The school's aim of ensuring that pupils feel at home in a school community based on Jewish values is thus well met. Children in the EYFS feel safe and secure, and quickly establish good, trusting relationships. They are provided with secure foundations for future learning and well-being. By the end of their time in Reception, the children are well prepared for a smooth transition to Year 1.
- 4.3 Pupils' outstanding levels of confidence, self-identity and spiritual awareness derive from the embodiment of the Jewish faith and its values. Younger pupils in Year 2, for example, sing prayers and worship with great enthusiasm. Pupils' mutual support for each other is very strong. This is demonstrated in the early morning prayers during tutor periods and in Beit Midrash, the Jewish learning centre. Pupils' spiritual awareness is heightened by these sessions, the Jewish studies programme, and the thought-provoking and, for many, life-changing visits to Israel and Poland. The pupils appreciate non-material aspects of life through cultural activities, lessons and the religious ethos of the school. They are emotionally mature for their age.
- 4.4 Through Jewish values promoted and reinforced by the school, pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They develop excellent moral values in and out of the classroom. In lessons, they are keen to learn and contribute; they appreciate each other's views and interact with adults and peers in a respectful yet relaxed manner. Senior pupils care for those younger, either as mentors or when organising activities for them in the EYFS. Pupils' understanding of moral and ethical issues, such as the purpose of laws in a democratic society, is strong, and they enjoy contributing to discussions in tutor periods and assemblies. Pupils are very sensitive to those less fortunate than themselves and benefit, for example, from such experiences such as supporting homeless people in Watford.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is outstanding. They willingly accept responsibility, contributing to the school community in many ways. They hone their leadership skills through leading services, running groups and clubs, and involvement in the school council, for example, as well as contributing to the world outside school. Pupils are involved in many community service activities in the area, such as the Yoni Jesner Foundation, promoting education, leadership and discussion of contemporary Jewish themes, and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Support for charity begins in the preparatory school. Pupils have a strong awareness of the concepts of charity and social justice, and themselves select two Jewish and one non-Jewish charities to support each year.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development and awareness are excellent. Pupils develop greater self-awareness, resilience and self-responsibility through their faith and other cultural opportunities, such as participation in Jewish boys' and girls' brigades. They demonstrate a strong understanding of and respect for other faiths and cultures, particularly through the wide range of prominent speakers from other traditions and religious beliefs. Pupils also respond positively to the diversity of nationalities,

backgrounds and depth of belief shown by their peers within the school. They appreciate western European culture through the inspiring art and music within the school, and their study of literature. The numerous trips abroad also help the pupils to understand the realities of other cultures.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Provision for the EYFS children's care and well-being is good. The adults and key people working with children know them well, and children develop secure emotional attachments. They successfully ensure that children are happy and enjoy what they are doing. Staff enable children to work co-operatively and develop independence. They encourage them to behave appropriately in different situations and reward children in a variety of imaginative ways.
- 4.9 The school is very successful in meeting its aim to nurture principled, enquiring and confident young adults. Pupils in both parts of the school are very well cared for by supportive and committed staff, who work well together and communicate very effectively. New pupils are welcomed and quickly integrated into the school. The tutor system is successful in monitoring pupils' progress and development, and enables efficient sharing of pastoral information and concerns. Pupils value the support, help and guidance of their tutors. Younger pupils develop confidence when talking to familiar adults. Prefects provide positive and supportive role models for the younger pupils.
- 4.10 Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves are excellent, resulting in a strong family atmosphere. Pupils value the strong sense of community fostered by the school and feel safe and secure. Throughout the school, pupils are very well behaved. They are respectful towards their teachers and each other. The management of pupils' behaviour is underpinned by an appropriate system of rewards and sanctions, although these are not published to pupils, and some pupils perceive that they are not always applied fairly. Pupils confirm that bullying and harassment are exceptionally rare and that they have great confidence that staff would deal with such situations very effectively.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 From the EYFS upwards, healthy eating is encouraged, discussed and researched in lessons. Meals provided at lunchtime are appetising and nutritious. Opportunities for regular exercise are many and varied, and are provided through the physical education and extra-curricular programmes.
- 4.13 A small minority of questionnaire responses indicated that some pupils felt that they are not encouraged to put forward their ideas and opinions. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Although the school council is the only formal system by which opinions are sought, many pupils feel that it works effectively, and pupils confirm that there are many informal ways in which they can raise concerns and contribute their views. Particularly important to them are the methods by which they choose the school's charities to support.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.15 Procedures to ensure a safe site and efficient working practices are good, however the safeguarding policy is not sufficiently implemented.
- 4.16 Procedures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards and to monitor fire safety procedures effectively across the site are very well managed. Safe working conditions and practices are maintained, and any potential hazards are quickly identified through a rigorous system of regular safety checks. Risk assessments for the different areas of the school are drawn up by staff but are not centrally monitored and systematically reviewed. Planning for off-site trips is thorough, but some procedures lack detail.
- 4.17 First-aid arrangements, treatment and resources are well managed and reported, ensuring good provision for all pupils, including those with SEND. Procedures for the issuing of prescribed medicines to EYFS children do not always ensure that parents' permission is sought.
- 4.18 Effective systems ensure that admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored for the required three years.
- 4.19 Relations with local welfare agencies are good, and staff have a high awareness of the importance of protecting children from harm. However, safeguarding procedures are not always carried out with sufficient attention to detail. The school's safeguarding policy now complies with official guidance, but it has not always been fully implemented with respect to ensuring appropriate and prompt child protection training for all staff, awareness of correct reporting procedures and recruitment of staff.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 Many aspects of governance are strong, and governors work very effectively to uphold and promote the aims of the school. However, their systems and procedures to ensure full regulatory compliance are not sufficiently effective.
- 5.3 An excellent structure of working groups ensures that governors have detailed oversight of the work of the school. Each working group, reporting to the full governing body, is linked to a member of the senior leadership team and has the further benefit of being able to co-opt additional parent members who bring particular skills and experience. These working groups oversee all major areas of the school's work very effectively in most respects. Governors' involvement in the EYFS is largely effective and the educational programme offered is discussed by the preparatory school working group.
- 5.4 Governors have a very good insight into the working of the school and have a good range of expertise. They share a common understanding of the broad vision and general direction planned for the school, in the absence of a formal written development plan. Financial planning is efficient, and governors provide valuable stimulus and drive, and are largely effective in both their support to and challenge of school leaders, with whom they enjoy an open and constructive relationship. Heads of department make presentations to the governors, who are thus well informed about the academic life and educational standards of the school. The process for the induction of new governors is relatively informal but, as the great majority are parents, they have a good existing understanding of the school's aims, work and challenges. Governor training is somewhat sporadic and there is no formal system for governors to review or evaluate their own governance of the school.
- 5.5 Governors have not been fully effective in discharging their statutory responsibilities. No formal system is in place for the regular review of many of the school's policies, and monitoring has largely been delegated to school leadership and management. The governors' annual review of the school's safeguarding and recruitment policies and of their implementation has not been sufficiently rigorous or efficient to remedy shortcomings, particularly those identified at the previous inspection.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.7 Many aspects are excellent, especially the strong corporate commitment to upholding and promoting the school's core principles and mission. Leadership and management are highly successful in providing the opportunities and stimulus for pupils to achieve high academic standards and outstanding personal growth and development. However, the key policies on staff recruitment and safeguarding are not being fully implemented.

- 5.8 Since the arrival of the new head master and a new deputy head, the school has responded well to change and to the new initiatives designed to focus more sharply on its continuing development, to enhance the quality of education provided and to raise standards further. Leadership and management have a good understanding of the different areas of the EYFS curriculum and ensure that the school is focused on the needs and well-being of its pupils. Excellent communication between academic and pastoral staff, and strong support from teachers and tutors, ensure that pupils' progress and development are carefully monitored and supported. However, this excellent practice is not always fully underpinned by appropriate policies and formal procedures. Appropriate procedures in the EYFS evaluate and monitor each child's progress, and staff work with parents to offer the support and encouragement needed. The leadership of the EYFS has a good understanding of the different areas of the EYFS curriculum and how to enhance children's learning. External agencies are involved in supporting children as and when necessary.
- 5.9 An effective culture of critical self-reflection, and of evaluation and analysis of the school's performance and pupils' progress, is becoming evident within the school. However, there is as yet no development plan to enable the outcomes of this analysis in order to identify concrete steps for future action. Progress in implementing the recommendations of the previous inspection has been satisfactory in the improved provision and use of ICT and in systems to monitor the use of assessment. Progress has been slow in addressing failures in the staff recruitment process. The leadership of the EYFS has a clear vision for development priorities to facilitate the children's learning, and the capacity for improvement in the setting is good. The overall quality of provision in the EYFS is good. Improvements are needed to meet some of the welfare requirements. Self-evaluation is rigorous and a clear vision for future development is promoted well.
- 5.10 Staff are efficiently deployed throughout the school. Although all staff have received a criminal records check, processes for the completion of other checks are not always sufficiently rigorous. Teaching staff participate in an annual cycle of professional review that involves monitoring of their teaching and identification of targets for professional development. Effective systems for professional development, monitoring performance, supervising staff and evaluating provision in the EYFS are not yet in place. The EYFS staff are well qualified and suitably trained to meet the children's learning needs. Appropriate training is given to many staff throughout the school in first aid and other welfare issues, although provision of training in child protection for new staff has not always been carried out promptly or sufficiently effectively.
- 5.11 The school has formed an excellent partnership with parents, including those of children in the EYFS. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that a very high proportion of parents are satisfied with the education, care and support provided by the school. They are particularly pleased with the school's leadership and management, and with its timely response to their questions. A very high proportion felt that their children are happy at school and well looked after, and that they feel safe. The school places a high priority on resolving any concerns that parents may have promptly and sensitively. The few formal complaints received in the last two years have been dealt with according to the published procedure.
- 5.12 The EYFS staff work well with parents to help induct children into their new setting and ensure that they feel secure as they arrive each morning. Parents appreciate the information and guidance given at induction sessions, when the EYFS curriculum provision and timetable are explained. They receive detailed written

reports at the end of the year about their children's progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals and are kept well informed about curriculum provision through a weekly newsletter.

- 5.13 Elsewhere in the school, communication between school and home is also very good. Regular letters are sent by email to the whole parent body as well as to specific groups of parents. Termly newsletters and half-termly updates of events at school and the successes enjoyed by the pupils enable parents to be fully informed about the school's life and work. This is supported by the school's website. Hitherto, many of the policies on the website had been up to three years out of date, but the school now makes available to parents all the required items of information and they are able to gain immediate details about events.
- 5.14 Parents are very active in supporting the school and being involved with its life and work. The parents' association is well supported, and parents contribute generously to many activities and clubs. Parent governors and the school's parental liaison officer provide effective links amongst parents and with the school's senior staff. Parents are also invited to participate in the governors' working parties. Parents attend year group meetings on specified topics or curriculum information. Full parents' meetings with teachers are held throughout the year for different year groups.
- 5.15 A small minority of questionnaire responses expressed dissatisfaction with the information parents receive about their children's progress. Inspectors judge that parents receive very good information. End-of-term full reports are informative and identify clear targets for improvement in each subject. They clearly demonstrate that teachers know their pupils very well. Full reports are well supplemented by interim progress checks and summary performance reviews.

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