



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

SCARISBRICK HALL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Scarisbrick Hall

Full Name of School	Scarisbrick Hall
DfE Number	888/6006
EYFS Number	EY404867
Address	Scarisbrick Hall Southport Road Scarisbrick Ormskirk Lancashire L40 9RQ
Telephone Number	01704 841151
Fax Number	0845 505 7890
Email Address	enquiries@scarisbrickhallschool.co.uk
Head Teachers	Mr Antony McCoy (Early Years & First School) Mr Jeffrey Shaw (Middle School and College)
Chair of Governors	Mr Michael Headley
Age Range	0 to 16
Total Number of Pupils	429
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (218 boys; 211 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 92 5-11: 118 3-5 (EYFS): 61 11-16: 158
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Elizabeth Fortune-Price
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 April 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 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

Mr Ian Newton	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Pamela Craig	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Angela Culley	Team Inspector (Headmistress, ISA school)
Mr David Holland	Team Inspector (Headmaster, Society of Heads school)
Miss Margaret Pepper	Team inspection (Former Deputy Head, ISA school)
Miss Jacqueline Scotney	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Scarisbrick Hall School is a co-educational day school housed in a Grade I listed mansion set in 50 acres of grounds, comprising woodland, fields and a lake. The school was founded in 1963 and, after several changes in ownership, was purchased by the current proprietors in 2010. Since the previous inspection, buildings and resources have been improved, and heads of faculty and pastoral leaders have been appointed. The two new head teachers were appointed in 2011.
- 1.2 The school is organised into four sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children from birth up to the age of four; the First School, for pupils in Reception to Year 4; the Middle School, for pupils in Years 5 to 8; and College, for pupils in Years 9 to 11. One head teacher is in charge of the EYFS and First School, and the other has responsibility for the Middle School and College. At the time of the inspection, the school had 429 pupils, of whom 218 were boys and 211 were girls. There were 153 pupils in the EYFS, 71 in the First School, 105 in the Middle School and 100 in the College. Pupils are drawn from a wide area in West Lancashire, and the great majority are of white British ethnicity. No pupils have English as an additional language.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the school is in line with the national average. The school has identified 43 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 28 receive support. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 The school aims: to develop motivated, independent learners who achieve their potential; to create a happy, safe environment, where success is celebrated; to embrace diversity, foster confidence and value opinions and friendship; and for all pupils to develop an awareness of their responsibilities in a global society.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school from Reception to Year 11 and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the Nursery and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Class 1	Nursery (0 to 1)
Class 2	Nursery (1 to 2)
Class 3	Nursery (2 to 3)
Pre School	Nursery (3 to 4)

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The pupils' excellent achievement reflects exemplary attitudes to their learning and a willingness to think for themselves. As they move through the school, the pupils build on a firm grasp of basic skills, developing growing confidence in language and numeracy, alongside increasing creativity, physical skill and awareness of the world around them. Results at GCSE have improved in recent years and reflect the excellent progress that pupils now make, in light of their ability and needs. In particular, pupils with SEND progress extremely well as the result of a high standard of individual and group support. The excellent curriculum and extra-curricular activities support pupils' learning and interests well. Provision and outcomes are outstanding in the EYFS, however the outdoor areas adjoining classrooms do not at present match the high quality of indoor and woodland areas. The First School library is also used as a classroom, and is not currently promoted visually as an environment in which pupils can browse and develop a love of reading. Excellent teaching is underpinned by careful planning, a very good understanding of pupils' needs and strong individual attention. Almost all lessons observed had a brisk pace, a good variety of activities and lively discussion, and they made excellent use of support staff, though a minority provided too few opportunities for pupils' involvement.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. They grow into reflective, confident citizens, aware of the needs of others and caring towards those around them. Those with the responsibility of sitting on the school council take this seriously and the school is very sensitive to pupils' views. Pupils' strong social awareness is reflected in excellent relationships both with each other and with staff. Excellent pastoral care provides a high standard of support and guidance, and in the management of behaviour. The school has excellent procedures for safeguarding pupils and for their welfare, health and safety.
- 2.3 The proprietors give excellent support and oversight to the school, both in developing its facilities and in providing a clear vision for excellence; staff much appreciate the role they play. This vision is shared within the school leadership and many aspects of the school's provision have recently improved as a result. The recommendations of the previous inspection have been implemented in full. A developing leadership structure has been effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Links with parents are excellent.

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

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Provide an environment in the First School library which is conducive to developing pupils' enjoyment of reading.
 2. Extend opportunities for independent research and learning more consistently through the Middle School and College.
 3. In the EYFS, further enhance the outdoor areas adjoining classrooms to match the excellent quality of the rich indoor environment.

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 The pupils' high level of achievement, reflecting the school's aims, is supported by their willingness to think for themselves and to reflect on their work, as well as by their logical approach, commitment and hard work; it has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils throughout the school show a very firm grasp of basic skills, communicating clearly through language, applying a confident understanding of mathematics to a variety of situations, and understanding key ideas in science and the humanities. The youngest pupils progress very quickly in literacy and numeracy, and by Year 6 they are highly articulate and have become confident mathematicians. Older pupils develop considerable skill in physical education and produce highly imaginative work in textiles. They show technical skill and creative flair when improvising Indian music, and debate a range of issues that show a good understanding of the world around them. They make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum and are beginning to use e-books from the online library.
- 3.3 Outside the classroom a good number of pupils play sport, and have participated successfully in a number of regional and national competitions. Pupils' poetry is published and they achieve high standards in outdoor GCSE pursuits. The number of pupils taking music lessons is increasing rapidly, and their level of achievement has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- 3.4 Up to GCSE, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national norms but, on the evidence available during the inspection, it is high in relation to national age-related expectations. The analysis of GCSE 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 similar to the national average for maintained schools. The significant improvement that took place in the results from 2011 to 2012 continued in 2013; for example the proportion of A*/A grades in 2012 was just over 20 per cent, in line with the national average, but this had risen to 25 per cent in 2013. These levels of attainment, together with standardised measures of progress, and additional inspection evidence from lesson observation, pupils' written work and interviews with pupils, indicate that pupils make excellent progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND also make excellent progress, due to the high quality of support they receive in class, in small groups and individually; for example, they develop much increased reading or problem-solving skills. On leaving the school following GCSE, the great majority of pupils move on to a wide range of sixth-form and further education courses, and a small number enter business careers.
- 3.5 Pupils' attitude to their work is exemplary. In almost every lesson, pupils are consistently on task, creating a scholarly working atmosphere with an academic focus. A lively sense of purpose and a sense of enjoyment are supported by the excellent relationships pupils enjoy with their teachers. Pupils work well together, respecting each other's views and listening carefully to them. They discuss and share ideas, thereby enhancing the quality of their work. They are confident and communicate easily with others. They are often independent and creative thinkers

who take pride in their work, present it well and carry out their own research when given the opportunity.

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

- 3.6 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.7 The curriculum is highly successful in meeting the school's aim to develop happy, motivated learners who go on to achieve their potential. It covers well the requisite areas of learning, providing a highly effective contribution to pupils' development. In the First School, pupils benefit from both class and specialist teaching. They learn Spanish from Reception. The creative curriculum, covering humanities, the arts and science, is well constructed and, in most respects provides outstanding opportunities for younger pupils; this provision is improved since the previous inspection. However, the library in the First School does not create an appealing ambience to attract younger readers. A small number of pupils reported that the transition in teaching styles from Year 4 to the Middle School is initially a significant challenge. From Year 5, pupils benefit from further teaching by specialists, a second modern foreign language and early introduction of business studies.
- 3.8 In the College, three-year GCSE courses allow pupils to choose from a wide range of options and to study subjects in depth. Personalised courses of study give pupils the flexibility to take early GCSEs, or a reduced number, and separate sciences are available to challenge the more able. In addition, pupils enjoy opportunities for the development of physical skills, supported through the inclusion of games within the mainstream curriculum. Personal, social and health education is nurtured through the well-being course.
- 3.9 The curriculum provides excellent provision for pupils of all ages, abilities and needs. Timely identification of the learning needs of pupils with SEND ensures that they receive an exceptional level of support in or out of class for their needs, whilst enabling them to follow a full programme of study. Pupils appreciate the excellent support in the learning support centre, in individual tutorials and in class. Skilled and well-qualified teaching assistants play a key role, providing specialist support. More able pupils are challenged appropriately through setting or advancement. Pupils who are specially gifted benefit from programmes of accelerated study. Outstanding knowledge of pupils helps teachers and assistants to cater for each pupil as an individual.
- 3.10 The academic curriculum is very well supported by an exceptional range of activities. The programme is fully integrated into the timetable and is highly regarded by pupils. These activities are a key factor in the development and promotion of the pupils' personal qualities, such as leadership, teamwork and self-reliance. Activities range from fencing to computing, from taekwondo to drama and from rowing to charity fund raising. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, undertaken by a high proportion of senior pupils, provides outdoor education and leadership opportunities.
- 3.11 A wide programme of links with the local or international community allows pupils of all ages opportunities to develop their understanding of the world. These range from raising funds for schools in Kenya to support for a local food bank. Pupils can participate in excursions at home and abroad. Recently these have included sports tours, visits to New York and Iceland, and a First School visit to London.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.12 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.13 The consistency of teaching has been strengthened since the previous inspection and is now of high quality. This is enabled through careful planning, which makes use of a wide range of imaginative resources and activities; ICT is used more widely than previously. The pace of lessons is well matched to the pupils' needs, sometimes moving slower to allow time for consolidation, but more usually moving at a brisk pace to engage pupils and maintain their interest. Explanation, discussion, practical work and question and answer sessions are carefully deployed, and objectives are clear while, in the majority of lessons, allowing room for pupils to broaden their horizons. Some lessons, however, are overly led by the teacher, giving pupils too little opportunity to contribute. Throughout the school, teachers know pupils extremely well and they create a supportive and calm ambience in classrooms, which encourages pupils while offering challenge and fun. Teachers use questioning effectively, both to check understanding and to promote further thought. Pupils respond with questions of their own that teachers answer sensitively. Pupils are encouraged to engage in independent thought and analysis, are involved in a wide range of collaborative work and are treated with respect. This approach engages pupils of all abilities.
- 3.14 Teachers cater for the range of abilities in their classes extremely well. They organise pupils into groups, encourage pupils to explain points to each other, provide support to pupils with SEND and ensure that one-to-one help is easily available. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive appropriate support. Teaching is based on a high level of subject knowledge, on highly effective deployment of teaching assistants and other classroom staff, and on the care that teachers show for their pupils. In the great majority of lessons, classes are managed very effectively. The great majority of both pupils and parents are pleased with the quality of teaching and with the progress that it promotes; pupils are particularly appreciative of the help and support they receive from staff.
- 3.15 A high proportion of teaching uses effective personalised oral feedback, the setting of clear targets, written comments on how to improve work and clear assessment to support pupils' progress. Marking is of high quality and gives effective guidance on how pupils can improve their work. Teachers thus make excellent use of day-to-day assessment, monitoring the progress pupils make with care and responding well to any challenges.
- 3.16 Longer-term assessment contributes significantly to the rapid progress seen overall. The system of grades is well understood by pupils and is used consistently throughout the school to support learning and progress. The six-weekly feedback scheme is highly valued by pupils as a way of helping them improve their skills and knowledge. Arrangements for tracking pupils' progress are thus robust and support teachers' 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 This supports the school's aims to celebrate diversity, foster confidence, and value opinions and friendship. It enables pupils to develop an awareness of responsibilities within the wider world, and to show respect for themselves and those around them. The pupils are highly appreciative of their education and value the school's values and the guidance they receive. Their personal development is excellent by the time they leave the school.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. This is demonstrated by the personal reflective logbooks that they keep, which show considerable insight into their thoughts. High levels of self-reflection are encouraged through feedback from teachers and the highly supportive well-being programme. Pupils appreciate the school's environment. At all levels pupils feel valued. They take advantage of extensive opportunities to explore different values and beliefs, thus developing their spiritual awareness.
- 4.4 The pupils' excellent behaviour, together with their genuine care for each other, reflects their excellent moral development. They are courteous in conduct and demeanour, demonstrate a keen sense of fair play and take responsibility for their actions. First School pupils understand the value of giving and receiving praise, and of undertaking acts of kindness. Empathy and respect for others are prevalent. Pupils showed genuine shock and dismay when learning about the Holocaust. A broad range of theme days and outside speakers ensures that all pupils explore, discover and develop their own moral compass. Through discussion they are able to give convincing reasons for the moral values they espouse.
- 4.5 The pupils' social development is excellent. Their social, economic and political awareness is strong and relationships between themselves and the staff are sensitive and mature. Pupils make the most of the varied opportunities to contribute enthusiastically to the wider school and local community, for example through the competitive house system or by helping at a local nature reserve. Those on the school council take their responsibilities seriously. They appreciate the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves and support a wide range of charities. They warmly welcome and care for new pupils. Year 11 pupils serve as role models who are admired and respected by younger pupils.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural development is good. Through their school experience, the pupils have developed an easy approach to those of other nationalities and show conspicuous understanding of cultures other than their own. Pupils develop their understanding through modern foreign languages, through cultural celebrations such as Divali and Chinese New Year, and through the performing arts. Through discussion in lessons, they learn to appreciate a balanced view of a range of cultural issues.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Throughout, pastoral support for pupils fully reflects the school's aims. This creates a happy environment where all successes are celebrated. Staff know pupils extremely well and show genuine concern for them. Class teachers in the First School develop strong pastoral links with those in their care. In the Middle School and College, weekly meetings and half-termly reviews provide targeted intervention and support. Careers advice is provided through the well-being programme. Almost all parents feel that staff are supportive and caring. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent. In all areas of the school, there is a genuine atmosphere of support and care.
- 4.9 The school has strong and effective procedures to promote good behaviour and to guard against harassment and bullying. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all pupils and parents said they are confident that the school will deal effectively with any unpleasantness, and in interviews pupils said that they can seek help or advice from any member of staff. Pupils said that bullying is not an issue, and were confident that any concerns will be dealt with firmly. Behaviour around the school is excellent. Pupils are polite and happy, and have a strong desire to succeed. Sanctions are clear and understood by the pupils. A small proportion indicated in response to the questionnaires that teachers are not always fair in the way they give sanctions. However, in interviews with pupils this was not felt to be a concern.
- 4.10 Pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and are provided with an excellent choice of food. Opportunities for regular exercise are many and varied, in the curriculum, in activities and in sport.
- 4.11 The school council meets regularly, with representatives from Reception to Year 11. It gives an effective voice to pupils' opinions; for example, they have been proactive in changes to the catering arrangements and in the provision of play equipment in the playground. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.13 The school's safeguarding procedures are thorough and all staff receive the necessary training in child protection. Arrangements for staff recruitment are robust, and much improved since the previous inspection.
- 4.14 All necessary measures are taken to manage fire safety, and fire drill evacuation procedures were observed to be conducted efficiently and promptly. The school gives careful attention to health and safety, and provides suitable care for any pupils who are ill. The admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The proprietors display a clear vision for excellence in the quality of education the school provides, and recognise a need to monitor this rigorously in order to achieve the school's aims. Their understanding of their responsibilities is much improved since the previous inspection. In addition, they understand the school's needs in terms of staffing, accommodation and resources, and have developed a detailed plan for meeting these; much has been achieved in the past few years. Their day-to-day presence demonstrates their commitment to the school, and provides ample opportunity for both informal contact with staff and prompt decision making. Well-structured meetings provide opportunities for the review of performance and the setting of targets. External consultants are used effectively to provide an additional focus and to supplement the proprietors' own experience. As a result, they both support and challenge the school well.
- 5.3 The proprietors show a good understanding of their responsibilities and discharge their duties for child protection and welfare, health and safety effectively. They conduct an annual review of safeguarding, receive regular reports on health and safety and tour the grounds to check any potential hazards. Their commitment to the school and their focus on high standards are appreciated by both staff and parents.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.5 Since the previous inspection, excellent progress has been made in meeting the recommendations to improve the leadership and management of the school, the monitoring of the implementation of policies and the safeguarding of pupils. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents felt that the school is well led and managed. Senior leaders work closely together, sharing a clear vision for the educational direction of the school, as seen in the pupils' excellent progress and personal development, and in the quality of educational and pastoral provision. Faculty and Year Leaders provide effective leadership and day-to-day management of their areas, as well as sharing in some whole-school responsibilities. Job descriptions have now been provided for all staff and are reviewed annually.
- 5.6 Communication is excellent at all levels. This ensures that any concerns are quickly identified and remedied. The weekly pastoral and half-termly evaluation meetings track achievement, incidents and any patterns of poor behaviour, enabling any areas of concern to be addressed. Development planning is effective in identifying current priorities and longer-term needs; action plans to improve current standards and future facilities have been drawn up. The school has a strong ethos of evaluation and self-improvement, supported by increasing monitoring of teaching and learning.
- 5.7 Management is highly successful in securing, supporting, developing and motivating sufficient high quality staff. Staff value the appraisal system and are well supported

in their continuing professional development. The teaching staff are wholly committed to the school and enthusiastic to be part of its development. All staff receive appropriate training for their roles in meeting the needs of pupils in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.

- 5.8 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. Parents are extremely satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the school and there were no areas where significant numbers of parents expressed concerns. Every parent who responded said they would recommend the school to other parents.
- 5.9 Parents say that information about the school is readily available. They receive regular heads' bulletins and newsletters, and they appreciate the school's constantly improving website, with its open access calendar. They appreciate the school's regular text messages about school events or their children's achievements. They receive all the information that is required and have easy access to policies. School information booklets and welcome packs for new pupils ensure that parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with much information about the school.
- 5.10 Parents have excellent opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. They are frequently invited into the school to attend events such as phonics training for parents, and celebration assemblies. They feel very welcome, know that they can always discuss their children with staff or with the leadership, and are confident that their children are well known by staff. They say that the school is like 'one big family', and that any concerns are handled quickly and with great care and consideration, in accordance with the school's procedures.
- 5.11 Parents receive reports at appropriate intervals, and find the detail provided and the target setting and grading system very helpful. They also value the parents meetings.
- 5.12 The parents and friends association is a recently formed but active body which supports good communication, arranges social events for parents and their children, and raises money for the benefit of the pupils.

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 The EYFS provision is outstanding in meeting children's needs. The setting provides an excellent beginning to children's education, and meets its aim to provide children with the skills and confidence they need to fulfil their potential. Staff are fully committed to the care and education of every child and have high expectations. Skilful planning covers all areas of learning and is carefully matched to children's individual interests and needs; alongside interesting whole-class topics, this stimulates children's love for learning from an early age. Enthusiastic staff have a clear understanding of how children learn effectively. Through careful tracking and observation, the key people plan highly appropriate activities across all areas of learning which enable children to progress and achieve well. Staff develop children's independence by encouraging them to try out their own ideas. They expertly question children in order to extend their problem-solving skills. As a result, children are inquisitive and enjoy thinking about how to solve challenges. For example, older children worked out the best way to propel corks with water down lengths of drain pipes which they had joined together. Younger children learn about their environment as they are provided with many interesting resources that stimulate their senses. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care and education their children receive. They say that they are extremely well supported by staff, who are keen to work with families and offer advice. The inspection evidence fully supports this view. Information for parents is plentiful, ranging from daily reports on the youngest children to informative termly reports for older children which clearly identify attainment and targets for future learning.

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

6.2 The provision makes an outstanding contribution to children's well-being. Children are cared for and educated in a high quality environment, especially indoors and in the woodland learning environment. The outdoor areas adjacent to the classrooms, however, do not provide a similarly stimulating space. A major strength is the well-developed key person system. Great care is taken in matching children to their key person and the children are involved in this process. As a result, excellent relationships are formed, both between staff and children, and also with parents. This enables children to settle quickly and feel comfortable within their environment. Staff know the children in their care extremely well. Through observation and discussion, they react quickly to the children's needs and interests, thus providing enriching experiences for all. As a result children are happy, content and well behaved. Staff are excellent role models. They continually support children in their understanding of healthy eating, personal hygiene and the importance of physical exercise; independence in these areas is encouraged at an early age. For example, older children confidently select their healthy snacks and younger children begin to feed themselves well using cutlery at lunchtime. Transitions are handled extremely well both throughout the EYFS and into the First School. Children visit their new class several times before moving, with the youngest children accompanied by their key person. Staff place importance on including parents, arranging meetings to keep them informed and to allow them to meet staff prior to a change of class.

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

6.3 The EYFS benefits from outstanding leadership and management. This drives continual improvement and sets high standards in both care and education, to which the staff adhere extremely well. Consequently, children's experiences are of high quality. The proprietors are fully aware of their responsibilities and ensure that they have a clear overview of practice throughout the EYFS. Rigorous tracking and monitoring by the leadership and management team ensure that the children's learning and development requirements are met. The setting undertakes rigorous and insightful self-evaluation, which clearly identifies areas for improvement as well as celebrating achievements. Excellent systems enable staff to meet regularly and discuss the children in their care with their manager. This, alongside annual appraisal, enables staff to reflect on their training needs and improve their practice, for example training to run outdoor sessions in the woodland area in order to enable children to make greater use of this rich resource. Close links with the local authority provide staff with additional support when needed; this includes staff training or support for individual children. Advice is acted upon quickly, reflecting the desire for continual improvement. Children's needs are met very well due to the highly effective leadership given to partnerships between the setting, parents and, where necessary, external agencies. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are taken very seriously, reflected by exemplary record keeping and analysis of any accidents. Safeguarding policies and procedures are meticulously implemented and closely monitored, ensuring that staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and therefore keep children safe. The leadership and management of the EYFS maintain a secure and welcoming environment for children of all ages.

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

6.4 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are outstanding. Children make very good progress according to their starting points, and by the end of their time in the EYFS are generally achieving above national expectations. Key people plan activities that match individuals' needs and abilities very well. This allows all children, including any with particular needs, to work at their own level, developing their understanding. For example, younger children's early language skills are encouraged by the provision of picture books of familiar items. Older children with particular ability in phonics and reading are extended by working in groups with Year 1 pupils. Children enjoy using numbers in their play, often linking these to topics. For example, younger children role played counting candles on a birthday cake, whilst older children counted confidently back from ten whilst recreating an imaginary rocket launch. The setting successfully meets safeguarding and welfare requirements. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the policies and procedures to ensure children's safety. Since the previous inspection, considerable developments within the EYFS have enabled the recommendations identified at that time to be implemented. Appointment procedures are appropriately followed, and fire drills are routinely carried out and recorded. Documentation is now consistent. Continual improvement is driven by excellent evaluation undertaken by the leadership and management team. Any necessary improvements are made quickly, enabling the setting to provide consistently high quality provision that meets its aims extremely well.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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

Section 2 includes any identified action the Early Years Foundation Stage is recommended to take in order to improve its provision.