



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

MANOR LODGE SCHOOL

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Manor Lodge School

Full Name of School	Manor Lodge School
DfE Number	919/6232
Registered Charity Number	1048874
Address	Manor Lodge School Rectory Lane Ridge Hill Shenley Hertfordshire WD7 9BG England
Telephone Number	01707 642424
Fax Number	01707 645206
Email Address	enquiries@manorlodgeschool.com
Head	Mr Gil Dunn
Chair of Governors	Mr David Arnold MBE
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	437
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (212 boys; 225 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 95 5-11: 342
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Alyson Lobo
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	16 June 2015 to 19 June 2015

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in May 2009.

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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations 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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Jan Preece	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Helen Lowe	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Frances Mwale	Team Inspector (Head of Prep, IAPS and GSA school)
Mr Richard Yeates	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Yvonne Parry	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Manor Lodge is a co-educational day school for pupils aged three to eleven. It is situated in a rural location close to the village of Shenley in Hertfordshire and was founded in 1991. The school's teaching accommodation is arranged around the original manor house and its site encompasses woodland, games fields and all-weather areas. A self-contained Nursery for siblings of older pupils is situated on the site, in its own area. The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. The current headmaster was appointed in June 2011. Since the previous inspection the school has extended its playing fields, added a sports pavilion and renovated various teaching facilities. A new building to accommodate sports, performing arts and general classrooms, is nearing completion.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide excellent teaching and learning opportunities within a caring environment. It seeks to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential and are prepared for the secondary school of their choice through provision of a broad and balanced curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school seeks to encourage tolerance of different cultures, and moral and spiritual development, through awareness of the needs of the wider world, and to create an effective partnership between staff, parents and children.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 437 pupils on the school roll, of whom 212 were boys and 225 girls. Ninety-five children were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Of these, 27 children with siblings in the school, attend Nursery part-time. Pupils come from a broad range of backgrounds and ethnicities and from a wide catchment area. Most pupils join the school in Reception. The ability profile of the school is above the national average. There is a fairly wide spread of abilities represented, although most pupils are of at least above average ability. The school has identified 35 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 27 of whom receive additional support. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Forty-eight pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), though none requires extra support.
- 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 is extremely successful in meeting its aims. From the EYFS onwards pupils' achievements are excellent so that most gain admission through competitive entrance tests into their first choice senior school. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes towards learning and take great pride in their work. The excellent curriculum is broad and balanced. It includes specialist teaching for some subjects and extensive opportunities for pupils to develop independence, co-operation and initiative. Excellent teaching, planned to take into account differing abilities is characterised by teachers' enthusiasm and confident subject knowledge, which encourages pupils to think independently and become enthusiastic and focused learners. Occasionally teaching is overly directed so that opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative and reasoning skills are reduced. Effective use of assessment data ensures that the individual needs of all pupils, including those with SEND are well met through support in class or individually. The most able pupils are provided with suitable challenge within teachers' planning and in extra-curricular activities. This provision ensures that pupils of all abilities make good or rapid progress.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. From an early age they treat each other with care and respect and their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils develop a strong awareness of themselves and others and have high self-esteem. They are keen to take responsibility within the school community and display outstanding sensitivity and respect for one another's faiths and cultural backgrounds. Staff provide excellent pastoral support so that pupils are confident that they are well cared for and feel safe. Although in questionnaires a few pupils indicated dissatisfaction with the awarding of rewards and sanctions and opportunities to express their views, these views were not supported by inspection evidence. The pupils' welfare, health and safety are given high priority so that they work and play in a safe and secure environment.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent. The governing body employs its broad range of expertise to discharge its responsibilities well and to help the school achieve its aims. Governors have strong oversight over the school and have identified the need to further strengthen their liaison with the EYFS. Cohesive leadership and management, including in the EYFS, is focused on achieving excellence for all aspects of provision and on ensuring that the safeguarding and welfare, health and safety of the pupils is secure. Staff at all levels display strong teamwork and a clear sense of direction due to a clear focus on self-evaluation and school improvement. Links with parents are excellent and most of the parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire were extremely satisfied with the school's provision. A concern by a few parents about the school's handling of any bullying was not supported by inspection evidence. The school has successfully met the recommendations of the previous inspection.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that teaching strategies across the curriculum provide consistent opportunities for pupils to investigate and develop their own ideas.
2. Ensure that governance has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the EYFS to provide effective support and involvement.

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 school is successful in achieving its aim to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential and are prepared for entry to the secondary school of their choice, appropriate to their ability. In the EYFS, children learn and develop well through participation in purposeful and well-planned activities, which require them to explore, reason and be creative. Most children, including those with additional needs make at least good and often rapid progress and achieve well relative to their starting points. In the Nursery, children begin to link letters and sounds, and count accurately in response to everyday situations, such as counting the number of children sitting on the carpet. They develop their physical skills well by handling simple tools during a range of fascinating activities. Older children continue to develop their phonic skills so that they become enthusiastic readers who are able to write independently for different purposes. They use tablet computers and other materials for problem solving activities confidently, and solve simple addition and subtraction tasks competently. Some of the most able have moved on to working with three digit numbers.
- 3.3 From Year 1, pupils demonstrate well-developed knowledge, understanding and skills in all subject areas. Their work in literacy is of a high standard; they are articulate and confident communicators and use a wide vocabulary. Most pupils read fluently and expressively for their ages and demonstrate competent comprehension. Pupils' mathematical skills are particularly strong throughout the school and demonstrated in the confidence with which they approach challenging problems. The pupils have a secure grasp of scientific concepts, though they do not always develop these through independent investigation. They apply their capable information and communication technology (ICT) skills using a range of electronic devices, both for programming and to support research, recording and presentation in many subjects. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and peers and often given thoughtful responses. They display particularly competent reasoning skills.
- 3.4 Pupils' physical skills develop well so that the school's teams have competed successfully at local, district and national level, and individuals have been selected to play for the county. Their musical achievements are notable and many pupils enjoy singing in the school choirs. Others who learn an instrument perform in the school's orchestra, jazz band or ensembles and individuals have been selected to play in national children's orchestras. Pupils are successful in external instrumental and drama examinations. They develop an enjoyment and enthusiasm for performance in numerous opportunities provided across the school. The pupils' creative development is strikingly expressed in their vibrant artwork using a variety of media displayed around the school, as well as in the quality of their creative writing. Many of the school's chess players represent the county and the school's teams compete successfully in national tournaments.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence, as judged by the school's assessment and tracking data, scrutiny of the pupils' work and curriculum interviews, together with the pupils' response to a broad curriculum which is consistently aimed a year higher than their chronological ages, indicates that they make progress that is

at least good and often excellent in relation to those of similar ability. Pupils with SEND make at least good progress relative to their starting points, as indicated in their test results and class work, due to well-targeted support. The more able and those with particular talents make similarly good or rapid progress due to challenging extension activities, which are generally provided in class and participation in extra-curricular scholarship classes. When they leave the school, a high proportion of pupils transfer to senior independent or maintained schools with highly competitive entrance requirements, and each year a significant number gain scholarships.

- 3.6 Pupils' achievements are exceptionally well supported by their positive attitudes towards their learning. They are highly collaborative, keen to contribute their ideas and settle to work quickly. The pupils have high aspirations, are well organised and take great pride in the presentation of their work. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, completed by pupils in Years 5 and 6, the overwhelming majority expressed the view that they are making good progress, find their work interesting and enjoy their extra-curricular activities, a view which was confirmed in their conversations with inspectors.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The educational programmes for all areas of learning in the EYFS help almost all children, including those with SEND, to meet the expected levels of development and in many cases exceed them. Opportunities for creativity and problem solving are greatly enhanced by the new resources inside and out, which provide a wealth of opportunity for active play and exploration. These are imaginatively deployed to support both child- and adult-led activities and are readily accessible. Outdoor provision has been significantly redeveloped and offers exciting opportunities for physical challenge and managed risk-taking across the age range. Specialist teaching of French, drama, ICT, physical education and music further enriches the children's experience.
- 3.9 The aims of the school to provide excellent teaching and learning opportunities within a caring environment are well met through a broad and balanced curriculum. The use of specialist teachers for subjects such as music, art, sports, languages and science, and the effective use of resources in well-designed facilities promote high standards. English and mathematics are given high priority throughout the school, but not at the expense of a full curriculum. Spanish has recently been added alongside French. All the required aspects of learning are well covered, and there are ample opportunities to develop all pupils' reasoning and intellectual curiosity. Creativity is strongly developed through art, music and design technology, while good resources enable pupils of all ages to develop computing skills. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) and religious education (RE) lessons enable pupils to develop an appropriate and balanced understanding of political issues and British values, as well as ethical matters. The recommendation in the previous inspection to increase opportunities to undertake practical science investigations has been met by the introduction of a specialised facility and the addition of regular practical sessions.
- 3.10 The curriculum provides extensive opportunities and encouragement for pupils to develop independence, co-operation and initiative. It engages pupils of all abilities, enabling them to enjoy all aspects of school while making progress academically and socially. Cross-curricular links are made successfully between subjects across

the school. Pupils are supported by specialist staff in choosing appropriate library books and use the extensive collection of non-fiction books, together with computers and portable devices, to undertake research. The use of setting from Year 2 in mathematics and in further subjects as pupils grow older, allows all pupils to work at suitable levels for their ability. Pupils with SEND have individual education plans and are also offered individual support where appropriate to help them reach their targets. The more able receive additional challenge in class.

- 3.11 Pupils told inspectors that they particularly appreciate the wide programme of trips, including residentials, for those in Years 5 and 6, together with special events that enhance the curriculum. A wide range of well-attended, extra-curricular activities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 enables the school to achieve its aim of fostering confidence and enthusiasm through a variety of relevant opportunities. The strong emphasis on creative and expressive arts in the curriculum is further nurtured through the art, drama, choir and street dance clubs. Pupils are also offered a variety of sporting activities to develop their interests and abilities. Pupils experience challenge in chess club and many hone their musical skills in the music scholars' activity, which supports pupils in securing awards to their senior schools.
- 3.12 A range of links with the community enhances pupils' awareness of life outside school. Houses select charities which they wish to support through fund-raising activities, developing an awareness of those who are less fortunate. Some pupils volunteer to visit the local animal protection centre, and others visit a local care home to entertain the residents. These links develop pupils' understanding of the value of supporting others.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.14 In the EYFS, the committed team plan very carefully to meet children's needs and interests so that activities provide appropriate challenge. All children are supported to learn and develop effectively in preparation for their next stages in learning. Tasks are appropriately challenging and well matched to ages and stages of development. Younger children are provided with many opportunities for child-initiated learning and older children concentrate well during longer periods of teacher-led activities. All the children respond extremely positively to the high expectations of the staff who enthuse, engage and motivate them with the exciting learning opportunities they provide. In response to the previous inspection's suggestions for improvement, staff now utilise a more extensive range of resources, indoors and outside, which stimulate children's physical and creative development. The staff now plan more specifically so that all tasks and activities are carefully matched to individual needs for the younger children.
- 3.15 Throughout the school, teaching successfully promotes the school's aims to provide excellent teaching and learning opportunities and to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential. Well-planned lessons in which learning objectives are made clear and activities are purposeful, provide pupils with clear direction. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and focused learners in all subjects, which supports their excellent achievement. Teachers know the pupils and their individual needs extremely well so provision for all abilities is carefully prepared. Planning is detailed and generally enables pupils to use their own initiative and engage in independent thinking. Much teaching makes effective use of talk partners to foster participation and understanding as well as to develop pupils' ideas. A strong focus on practical work

in mathematics is greatly appreciated by pupils, helping them to feel confident and enjoy the subject. Since the previous inspection, the school has increased opportunities for practical work in science, though opportunities for pupils to engage in more open-ended investigations are not consistently provided so their capacity for independent learning is reduced.

- 3.16 Teachers have strong subject knowledge, which enables them to provide clear and enthusiastic instruction and most to use a varied range of teaching strategies. Generally, teaching uses questioning effectively to clarify pupils' knowledge and understanding, but occasionally it does not fully use pupils' answers to develop their thinking. Teaching includes skilful use of a wide range of resources to enhance learning and engage the pupils; for example exciting video clips which stimulate discussion. In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, teaching now includes more extensive use of ICT by pupils to support their learning. Most lessons are lively and time is used efficiently so that opportunities for learning are maximised. However, occasionally when teaching is overly directed and lacks pace, insufficient time is given for pupils to engage in active learning. They then find it hard to maintain attention and thus make less progress.
- 3.17 Careful planning and support ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are effectively addressed. Teachers use assessment information to gain a clear understanding of their individual needs, and plan suitable work to enable them to progress independently. Additional help is often offered in class through the use of efficient teaching assistants. When teachers effectively plan for, and deploy, their support, it is highly effective in promoting progress. In response to a recommendation from the previous inspection, teaching now includes additional challenge for high attaining pupils. Occasionally when teaching requires these pupils to complete a common task first, they have insufficient time to work at a challenging level.
- 3.18 Since the previous inspection, the school has refined its systems to ensure teachers have a clear picture of pupils' abilities and progress. The school is four years into a six-year programme to establish a diagnostic assessment scheme across all years. Results of these assessments and internal exams are carefully analysed to check the progress of individuals, as well as to ensure that cohorts of pupils make consistent progress. The marking of pupils' work is thorough and rigorously monitored by subject leaders and senior managers. Most marking gives praise and encouragement and usually offers advice for pupils on how to improve. Self and peer assessment are used effectively and raise pupils' self-knowledge and esteem, particularly in sports and the creative subjects.

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 Fundamental values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are comprehensively and actively promoted by the PSHEE and RE curricula where pupils are both informed and encouraged to form their own opinions.
- 4.3 In the EYFS the children's personal development is excellent. The younger children happily share and join in at circle time, older children treat each other with care and respect and listen enthralled to visiting speakers. The staff have a shared understanding of how to protect children so they feel safe, secure and happy within a nurturing family atmosphere and behaviour is exemplary and reflects the staff's high expectations. The children are very happy and obviously enjoy their activities. They play imaginatively and talk freely with staff and peers whilst exploring the highly stimulating surroundings and engaging in new experiences. The staff are excellent role models who consistently promote children's independence, tolerance and co-operation. Excellent links between Nursery, Reception and other parts of the school help prepare both parents and their children to move class.
- 4.4 Pupils have a well-developed spiritual awareness. They demonstrate a mature sense of self, their self-knowledge gained through discussions in class, as well as through reflection on non-material aspects of life in assemblies. Through a carefully planned assembly programme, pupils are able to share aspects of their faiths. They demonstrate respect and empathy for one another, since teaching focuses on similarities rather than differences. The celebration of achievement through rewards for both work and good conduct contributes to their strong self-esteem and confidence.
- 4.5 As a result of pupils' strong moral development they prompt one another to think about the consequences of their actions, and clearly distinguish right from wrong. Pupils show a keen sense of fair play and appreciate the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves. They closely adhere to the rules and values of the school and understand that sanctions are a consequence of poor behaviour. At break times, pupils are watchful for anybody who might be lonely, hurt or in need of help. Polite and caring, they exchange greetings naturally and courteously. They learn to respect the laws of the country through talks from visiting police and a magistrate and also consider moral issues within the curriculum.
- 4.6 The pupils' social development is excellent. They are co-operative and develop strong teamwork, promoted by residential trips. Pupils understand how parliament operates, and their regard for the democratic process is evident in their enthusiasm for the recent elections to the school council. Elections are taken very seriously and pupils prepare speeches for the hustings. They view election as a badge of honour, since they become ambassadors for the school. Pupils are interested in the world around them and seek out stories from newspapers that illustrate issues of concern. Keen to serve the school community, they are eager to take responsibility such as being chosen for the eco-team, as friendship buddies or class helpers. Their sense of service extends more widely to charity fund-raising. Pupils have a wide general knowledge and respect for public services through consideration of the roles of the public services and the British royal family.

- 4.7 The pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. They show mature sensitivity to different faiths and cultures and are keen to learn from one another. Visits to places of worship deepen their experience and they gain greater insights through discussions about the cultural backgrounds of wider family members. They demonstrate a good awareness of other cultural traditions gained through their study of music and art as well as from visits and visitors. Pupils exhibit high degrees of respect and tolerance for one another. They treat all their fellow pupils equally, without discrimination and are supportive of one another.
- 4.8 By the time they leave the school pupils have developed their personal qualities in accordance with the school's aims. They are confident, thoughtful and very supportive of one another, showing mutual respect and high levels of maturity, often beyond their years.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 The EYFS provision makes an excellent contribution to children's well-being. The members of staff form an effective team who work hard to create a secure, nurturing environment which enables children to settle quickly into school life. Key persons work sensitively with families so children quickly form secure emotional attachments. The importance of healthy eating is strongly promoted during cooking activities, lunch and snack times which are happy, social occasions. Consistent routines and sensitive reminders reinforce from an early age the importance of personal hygiene and self-help skills. Even the youngest children are encouraged to be as independent as possible in personal care, dressing after PE, washing their hands independently before eating and helping with social tasks.
- 4.11 Staff provide highly effective support and guidance to all pupils and warm teacher-pupil relationships are clearly evident. Class teachers deal with most pastoral issues, well supported by heads of house and the school's leadership. Weekly staff meetings provide an opportunity for staff to discuss any concerns, and class teachers carefully monitor and record pupils' pastoral development. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, most pupils agreed that teachers give them help when they need it, show concern for them as a person and can be turned to for help should they have a personal difficulty.
- 4.12 The inclusive range of sporting activities encourages pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. Pupils are taught about healthy eating and the importance of exercise, in science and PSHE lessons, and there is a healthy snack policy. The school provides healthy, balanced lunches. At lunch they are encouraged to try a food new to them, and staff sit with the younger pupils to provide support and encourage good manners. Pupils are encouraged to have their water bottles in class, re-filled from drinking fountains, located around the school.
- 4.13 Pupils are conversant with the school rules and understand the importance of behaving well. In the questionnaire, a few pupils expressed dissatisfaction with the rewards and sanctions system. Evidence from inspection of behavioural records, which are monitored by heads of house, as well as discussions with pupils, indicates that rewards and sanctions are proportionate and used consistently. A few parents, in the questionnaire, had concerns about the school's handling of bullying. Records indicate that incidents are rare and handled in line with the school's policy. In interviews pupils confirmed the view of the vast majority in the pupil questionnaire,

that they had no concerns about bullying, and are confident in the staff's ability to address any incidents. Lessons, talks and displays inform pupils about how to stay safe online and deal with cyber-bullying.

- 4.14 The school has suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, including a policy and procedures for individual needs. In the questionnaire, a few pupils indicated that they felt that the school does not seek or respond to their views. This view was not supported by inspection evidence. Pupils said that the school council has had significant impact in reflecting the views of the pupil community and in initiating improvements. They also said that the eco-team seeks out their ideas, and where practicable, puts these into action.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.16 The school, including the EYFS, places a high priority on the promotion of the pupils' welfare, health and safety and provides a safe environment in which they may learn. The safeguarding policy fully meets requirements. Several senior staff have received higher level training and a nominated governor maintains effective liaison and reports to the main board. The staff receive appropriate training at regular intervals, and the school has established effective links with local safeguarding agencies. The staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and lines of communication.
- 4.17 Health and safety procedures are effective. Detailed risk assessments are completed for the premises, hazardous activities and external visits, and are regularly monitored by senior managers. Maintenance records are meticulously documented and arrangements are closely monitored by the health and safety committee, which meets termly and is chaired by a governor. Fire prevention measures are thorough. Equipment is regularly maintained and staff have undertaken relevant training. Fire drills take place at appropriate intervals and are carefully evaluated and recorded.
- 4.18 The school makes appropriate provision for pupils who are ill or injured and nearly all the staff have undertaken first aid training, including, where relevant, paediatric training. The admission and attendance registers are well maintained and stored correctly. The school ensures that reasons for pupils' absence are quickly ascertained.

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 governing body provides strong support to help the school secure its aims. Governors bring a good balance of expertise to their role, which enables the board to discharge its responsibilities very effectively. Prudent financial control supports the school's development programme, such as enabling the new building, as well as ensuring that material and human resources are provided efficiently. New governors receive effective induction, and some governors have undertaken additional training to further their understanding of their responsibilities.
- 5.3 Governors have a strong insight into the workings of the school to provide effective support and challenge. Their committee structure, which reports to the main board on matters such as education, health and safety and finance, enables them to gain a comprehensive oversight of the school's operation. This understanding is further increased through informative termly reports from the school's leadership, and regular presentations to the education committee by staff with departmental responsibilities. Governors visit the school frequently. They attend special events, visit classes, observe some staff meetings and take lunch with the pupils. The board's leadership has frequent informal contact with the school's leadership. This enables governors to gain a keen understanding of the school community and to develop a useful working relationship with senior managers.
- 5.4 Minutes of meetings demonstrate that the governors have a clear understanding of their regulatory responsibilities. The full board's annual review of the school's policy and procedures for safeguarding is well informed by a thorough audit, and they carefully monitor other policies including health and safety and recruitment procedures. Governors are supportive of the EYFS, and in line with their statutory responsibilities, regularly oversee educational programmes and review and update policies and procedures. The governing body is currently at an early stage in recruiting a governor who will link with the EYFS.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 The leadership of the school is effective at all levels and is rigorous in its pursuit of excellence and in ensuring that the safeguarding and welfare, health and safety of pupils of all ages, including children in the EYFS, is secure and that the school environment is welcoming and safe. The high standards identified in the previous inspection have been built on significantly. A strong commitment to achieving the school's aim of providing excellent teaching and learning opportunities is highly successful. Clear roles and responsibilities for senior and middle management enable robust oversight of the delegated responsibilities. The cohesive senior management team has a united purpose with the interests of the pupils at its core. Consequently in questionnaires, a large majority of parents agreed that the school is well led. In the pupil questionnaires, most pupils indicated that they like being at the school and this was warmly confirmed in interviews. Careful and thoughtful

modelling of the school's declared values ensures that the leadership secures its aims of developing tolerance, respect, democracy and an awareness of different cultures in a family friendly atmosphere.

- 5.7 Excellent educational direction is provided in line with the aims of the school. Subject leaders discharge their roles in a consistent and thorough manner, meeting regularly with their departments to monitor and develop standards. Highly reflective practice is shared freely and openly which results in high standards. Extensive, regular support is given to staff and performance is monitored carefully. Expectations are made clear, acted upon and consequently reflected strongly in the pupils' education, including the high standard of their personal development.
- 5.8 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS there is a particularly strong focus on self-evaluation and school improvement. This has ensured that all recommendations from the previous inspection have been met. Areas for improvement are identified in each subject, as well as for other aspects of the school, and fed into the whole school development plan during regular meetings for staff at all levels. Priorities are identified, agreed and shared with staff so that everyone is able to work towards achieving clear targets. Requests for resources are carefully evaluated with ample, well-targeted provision being made.
- 5.9 Senior leaders ensure that the process for recruiting suitably qualified staff is robust. The school ensures that recruitment checks for new staff, including governors and volunteers, reflect the most recent guidance and are carried out efficiently. The single central register is rigorously maintained. New staff receive effective induction training to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities in meeting the needs of all pupils. Subject leaders and senior managers undertake regular observations of each teacher and give them useful feedback. The biennial appraisal system defines clear targets for each member of staff relating to their own professional interests as well as to whole school priorities. The quality of leadership in the EYFS is excellent and ensures that the children's educational programmes are carefully monitored and evaluated. All staff are well trained to meet all the needs of the children and in particular with regard to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Opportunities for regular supervision, coaching and focused professional development have a significant impact on teaching and care. Rigorous evaluation ensures that the setting has made good progress since the previous inspection and that there is a clear focus on improvement, informed by the establishment of clear priorities.
- 5.10 The school has excellent relationships with parents and achieves its aims to encourage communication and to develop an effective partnership between staff, parents and children. In discussion with inspectors and in the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents were extremely positive about the educational provision for their child, stating how happy and safe their child feels, praising the high standards of behaviour promoted and confirming the ready availability of information about the school and its policies. Parents say they feel welcome and able to approach teachers with questions or concerns, and that the school contacts them promptly if there is an issue that requires discussion. The school handles parents' concerns carefully in accordance with its policy.
- 5.11 Partnership with parents is a strength of the EYFS, and parents are always encouraged to be involved in their children's learning through parents' evenings, assisting with trips and the *Magic Moments* scheme whereby they may contribute to children's records. Productive partnerships are well established and ensure early intervention when necessary. In the questionnaires and in discussion with

inspectors, parents in the EYFS expressed their appreciation of the setting, emphasising strongly how happy and safe their child feels, how well-looked after and how well-led and managed the setting is.

- 5.12 Parents across the school have many opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They are invited to sporting and musical events, assist with trips and visits and share their professional expertise for topic work and special events. In the autumn term, curricular meetings ensure parents are well informed about the work their child will be doing, curricular reforms and ways in which they may support at home. An active parents' committee gives many opportunities for those who wish to be involved in various activities that bring parents and children together. Some of these activities are to raise funds, but others are simply for pleasure and to strengthen the school's friendly, family atmosphere.
- 5.13 The school uses a variety of media to communicate effectively with parents and to ensure that current and prospective parents are provided with the required information about the school. The website is easily navigable and contains high-quality information including newsletters, calendars, sports fixtures and other major events as well as important policies and curricular information. The school provides clear and useful reports that keep parents informed about their child's progress and achievements. These include termly target cards linked to biannual parent consultations, and an annual written report in the summer term. The written reports are personalised to pupils; they are detailed, informative and subject-focused, but do not consistently identify targets for improvement.

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