



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**PRINCE'S MEAD SCHOOL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

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## Prince's Mead School

Full Name of School	<b>Prince's Mead School</b>
DfE Number	<b>850/6002</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>288675</b>
Address	<b>Prince's Mead School Worthy Park House Kings Worthy Winchester Hampshire SO21 1AN England</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01962 888000</b>
Fax Number	<b>01962 886888</b>
Email Address	<b>admin@princesmeadschool.org.uk</b>
Head	<b>Miss Penelope Kirk</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Brian Welch</b>
Age Range	<b>4 to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>252</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (115 boys; 137 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): <b>0</b> 5-11: <b>234</b> 3-5 (EYFS): <b>18</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>252</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Yasmin Barlow</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>01 Mar 2016 to 04 Mar 2016</b>

## PREFACE

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](http://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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI standard inspection was in February and March 2010.

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 representatives of the 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**

Lady Fiona Mynors

Mr Paul Cozens

Mrs Stephanie Piper

Mrs Gillian Bilbo

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Prince's Mead School, established in Winchester in 1949, educates girls and boys between the ages of four and eleven. In 1999, it moved to its present site on the edge of the city, based in a Georgian house set within its own grounds. The school is a charitable trust and is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. The directors act as governors.
- 1.2 The school aims to prepare pupils for the challenges of life in the future by providing an imaginative, all-round education within a caring environment. It is a Christian foundation, which seeks to recognise and value other world faiths and respect cultural differences, emphasising tolerance within the community. Links with families are seen as an important part of the pupils' learning journey.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the school no longer operates a nursery, and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Reception class is an integral part of the school. A former coach house has been purchased to incorporate classrooms, a design and technology (DT) workshop, drama studio and library. Additional sports and outdoor facilities, which include leadership challenge equipment, have been developed, and information and communication technology (ICT) provision has been increased.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, 252 pupils were on roll, of whom 18 were in the EYFS. There were 63 pupils in Years 1 and 2, and 171 in Years 3 to 6. The overall ability of the pupils is above the national average. Most pupils have ability that is at least above average and there are very few pupils with ability that is lower than the national average. The pupils come predominantly from white British professional and business families who live within a 15-mile radius of the school. The school has identified 36 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 20 receive additional support. No pupil has an education, health and care plan. Three pupils have English as an additional language, but do not require additional support.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' achievement and learning, including the EYFS, is excellent across the full range of subjects and activities. Pupils' listening skills are a particular strength, and their positive attitude to everything they do is a significant factor in their many successes. Since the previous inspection, pupils' ICT skills have greatly improved. A broad, interesting curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities give pupils excellent opportunities to learn. The high quality of teaching enables pupils of all abilities to attain well and make excellent progress. In lessons and in marking, target setting and opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work are not consistently provided.
- 2.2 By the time they leave school, pupils have an outstanding level of personal development. From EYFS, pupils have a well-developed spiritual awareness, high levels of self-esteem, a strong sense of respect for others and a clear understanding that everyone has a part to play in the community irrespective of their background or tradition. They relish their opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative in fundraising for many charities. The pupils' personal development is strongly supported by excellent pastoral care which takes full account of the needs of each individual. This enables pupils to flourish in a nurturing environment. A very small minority of pupils and parents were concerned that bullying was not dealt with appropriately. Inspectors found that any incidents are dealt with sensitively and promptly in line with the school's procedures. Excellent welfare, health and safety policies, carefully implemented, ensure that pupils are educated in a safe environment. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous.
- 2.3 Knowledgeable and committed governance has ensured that the school is highly successful in meeting its aims. Governors have a good range of skills, which include an understanding of the EYFS, to support and challenge the school as a stimulus for future improvement. Leadership and management at all levels are excellent. The strong, yet approachable, leadership is well supported by the cohesive management team which has a clear vision for the development of the school. This vision, shared by the whole school community working together, has at its core the well-being of each pupil. Since the previous inspection, middle management roles have been strengthened. The efficient monitoring of teaching and learning, combined with regular peer lesson observation has improved the quality of teaching across the school. Strong links have been established with parents and the pupils' extended families. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were overwhelming in their support of the education their children receive and the high quality of communication. Parents in the EYFS do not receive sufficient information about their children's progress with reference to the Early Learning Goals. As recommended at the previous inspection, the pupils' summer report includes additional information on their progress.

## **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. In lessons and in marking, ensure that target setting and opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work are used consistently in all subjects.
2. At the end of the EYFS, provide further information to parents about children's progress with reference to the Early Learning Goals.



### **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 Children in the EYFS, including those with SEND and those more able, achieve well and make excellent progress in relation to their starting points because of their confident and attentive responses to their learning programmes. They all achieve their expected level of development. Most can write independently, confidently applying their phonic skills to write new words. Their descriptions of a walk in the woods were effectively recorded, creating a talking book, enhanced by excellent illustrations. They work accurately with numbers to 20, can describe and recognise 3D shapes and tell the time to the hour. Children used competent mouse control skills and an accurate recall of drawing programmes to produce mother's day cards. High levels of concentration and the determination to keep trying enabled most children to perform a complex dance routine, mirroring the actions of their partner and keeping in time with the music. They display a mature independence when choosing activities and make sophisticated links to previous learning, for example by using bricks to make a house for baby birds, which included a landing pad for the mother.
- 3.3 From Year 1, pupils demonstrate excellent knowledge, understanding and skills across their subjects and activities. They are extremely articulate, confident to express their opinions and enjoy taking part in discussions in a mature way. When comparing aspects of character in Shakespeare's plays, they were confident to challenge each other's opinions in a constructive, thoughtful manner. A particular strength is the way in which pupils listen to each other and their teachers. They read well, with good expression and projection. Their creative writing skills are particularly strong as they use increasingly mature and imaginative vocabulary. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. Their mathematical skills are strong and they apply them effectively. They investigate and research competently, and when given the opportunity, they evaluate their own work efficiently. Pupils use ICT with enthusiasm and confidence as a tool for learning, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Their physical abilities are outstanding. Pupils demonstrate excellent creative skills that are reflected in their music and drama activities, and the high standard of the art and DT work on display. Pupils with SEND achieve extremely well through the support they receive. More able pupils achieve high standards through additional challenges in the classroom and designated activities.
- 3.4 Pupils are successful in individual and team activities. They have been finalists in the national primary mathematics challenge, in local chess competitions and national word challenges. School sports teams are frequently successful in their matches, and the U11 netball team has been a finalist in the IAPS national netball tournament. A significant number of pupils play musical instruments and gain good results in external examinations. Pupils are also extremely successful in speech and drama assessments. Almost all pupils gain places at their first choice of senior school. In the previous three years, a quarter of the leavers have gained academic and non-academic awards.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of samples of their work and interviews with pupils, it is judged to be excellent. Pupils of all

abilities, including those with SEND, EAL and the more able make excellent progress. This supports the school in achieving its aims.

- 3.6 The pupils' attitude to their work and learning is excellent and strongly supports their individual success. They settle quickly to tasks set, and all pupils are eager to learn and demonstrate the ability to persevere in their work. They co-operate well and show initiative in their work.

### **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 curriculum, which includes all the requisite areas of learning, enables the school to fulfil its aims to provide pupils with a broad range of experiences. Pupils are extremely well prepared for their progression through the school and for transfer to the next stage of their education. In their responses to the questionnaire, all parents felt that their children were offered an appropriate range of experiences.
- 3.9 In the EYFS, high-quality planning ensures that educational programmes cover the prime and specific areas of learning, enabling all children to achieve their expected levels of development. The curriculum is enriched by specialist teaching in music, art, French, physical education (PE) and ICT, and by visits linked to topics, for example a visit to a farm. Children also benefit from extra-curricular activities in ballet, football and tennis. The recent inclusion of a range of woodland activities, within the school grounds, gives children exciting opportunities to extend their outdoor learning and provides for controlled risk taking and exploration of the wider world. The flexibility to include the children's interests in planning is a strong feature of the setting, for example in planning and dressing up for a wedding ceremony.
- 3.10 From Year 1, a regular programme of curriculum review, and the breadth of subjects and learning skills provided, enables pupils to develop a solid foundation and benefit from the many excellent and exciting opportunities. Within the curriculum, the activities programme and the new 'carousel' options give pupils the chance to focus on aspects of a much broader and extended curriculum, which include creative thinking, first-aid, thinking skills and girls' rugby. These options are carefully linked to the assessment and tracking programme, and include targeted activities for groups of pupils. This provides them with useful opportunities to extend or reinforce their learning. Pupils benefit from many opportunities for challenge, and an enterprise scheme for Year 6 fosters additional entrepreneurial skills.
- 3.11 The use of ability grouping in Years 5 and 6, and the increasing use of specialist teaching as pupils progress through the school, enhance their opportunities to access the curriculum at an appropriate level. Curriculum planning is thorough and has been fully reviewed over the past few years. Significant investment has been made to improve the provision of ICT, which is successfully used to increase the pupils' independent learning skills and develop observation and positive self-assessment skills. The systems to identify and support pupils with SEND are well established and successfully implemented. More able pupils are recognised and monitored, and they receive additional challenges.
- 3.12 The personal, social, health and economic education (PHSEE) programme enhances pupils' personal development and prepares them well for life in wider British society beyond school. A balance of political ideas is presented. Pupils are encouraged to argue coherently and logically as they develop an awareness of current ideological issues so that they keep an open mind on contentious concerns.

Great care is taken within the curriculum to support pupils in keeping themselves safe online.

- 3.13 An excellent range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities to represent the school in public and sporting events, in productions and musical ensembles supports the pupils' personal development. Many sports are offered and activities, as diverse as cheerleading and calligraphy, provide experiences to suit all tastes. The curriculum is enriched by visits and workshops which encompass a variety of learning opportunities. Pupils visit museums, and for World Book Day a workshop with a book illustrator was skilfully incorporated into the curriculum for the week. Pupils' independence is strengthened by regular residential trips such as a woodland activity challenge week and language visits to France and Spain. Strong community links with local churches, homes for older people and visits from speakers and other representatives of different backgrounds, broaden pupils' experiences.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.14 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teaching ensures that pupils achieve in line with the schools' aims. In questionnaires, all pupils agree that their teachers help them to learn and almost all feel that they are making good progress and find the work interesting. In response to the previous inspection, good teaching practice is now shared and the quality of teaching has improved.
- 3.16 In the EYFS, high-quality teaching, supported by strong teamwork and high expectations for attitudes to learning, stimulates and challenges the children so that they make excellent progress against the Early Learning Goals. Regular, focused assessments, recorded in individual online journals enable the children's progress to be effectively tracked and the next steps for learning planned. Incorporating children's ideas into the planning process fully engages their interest and stimulates their imagination. For example, the work on bird boxes was initiated by a bird's nest brought into class. Although there is no direct access to the outside from the classroom, outdoor activities are carefully planned to extend the range of opportunities and promote a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities inside and outside the classroom. High-quality and readily accessible resources, matched to the children's interests, and role play areas linked to current topics, are used to stimulate the children's language development and imaginative play.
- 3.17 From Year 1, the majority of lessons are carefully planned to reflect the differing needs and learning styles of all pupils. Activities are usually interesting and designed to capture the pupils' imagination, helping them to learn. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent, which enable pupils to learn in a supportive environment. Teachers are approachable and generous with their time, promoting tolerance and respect so that pupils are happy to ask for help when they do not understand, and are confident that they will receive the support they need. They feel supported by their peers and are not worried in revealing areas of concern or weakness.
- 3.18 Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge. Pupils are inspired by their enthusiasm and interest in their subjects, which provides an environment in which they are eager to learn. Most teaching uses time efficiently, and lessons proceed at a brisk pace and include a range of effective teaching strategies to challenge the

pupils' thinking skills so that they make excellent progress. In some lessons pupils benefit from opportunities to evaluate their own work. This is not consistent in all subjects. The pupils' progress is more limited on the few occasions when the pace of lessons is too slow and there was insufficient challenge to engage their interest. Question and answer sessions are effectively used to assess pupils' understanding. The recent focus on the use of more open-ended and probing questions provides stimulus for higher-level work and enables pupils to think critically and develop their own ideas.

- 3.19 Teaching makes excellent use of resources and ICT is used imaginatively in many lessons, where it greatly enhanced the pupils' learning, a significant improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils benefit from additional support from teaching assistants. On a few occasions, they are not deployed efficiently.
- 3.20 The school has a thorough tracking process which enables staff to identify pupils who need additional support or challenge, and areas of the learning which need further reinforcement. Pupils' progress is regularly reviewed across year groups and subjects. Marking is regular and thorough. In most cases pupils are given helpful written feedback, and areas to be improved are often indicated and a target is sometimes included. However this good practice is not consistent across all subjects. Where marking was less useful, it gave pupils insufficient information as to how to improve their work. In interviews, pupils expressed appreciation of the written and oral feedback they receive which indicates areas to develop.
- 3.21 Teaching is highly effective in supporting pupils with SEND and those who need additional challenges. Core British values are strongly promoted as teaching presents a balanced viewpoint on political issues, and pupils are encouraged to respect each other's differences and to voice their opinions.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 The quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 This is in accordance with the school's aim to have high expectations of personal behaviour and to inculcate a compassion and empathy for others. In the EYFS, core British values are actively promoted, as demonstrated as children interact respectfully with their peers and their teachers, helping each other and greeting staff politely during registration. Children take great pride in taking their turn to be a daily helper, and they understand the difference between right and wrong, for example when discussing the need to pay for everything you buy in shops. Special awards for acts of thoughtfulness are proudly recorded on the 'Golden Tree' in the quest to 'reach the sun' and gain a merit badge. Children play together happily and enjoy working co-operatively to complete a challenge. The family ethos of the school, and vertical grouping of house meetings ensure that children make friends across the age groups which supports them well for their transfer to Year 1.
- 4.3 From Year 1, pupils have high levels of self-esteem and take an obvious pride in their own and others' achievements. Their well-developed spiritual awareness is shown through regular, thoughtful contributions to pupil-led collective worship in assembly. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to reflect on life's meaning and purpose beyond the material through their artistic and creative work.
- 4.4 The pupils have a strong moral awareness. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, and of justice and fairness. They discuss pastoral matters and think about the consequences of their actions on others. All pupils know that they should treat people fairly and without discrimination and they understand the standards of behaviour expected of them. Mutual respect is at the core of the school community. Pupils have a growing understanding of English civil and criminal law. They consider world issues and understand the needs of people in other countries, through school partnership projects in India and Africa.
- 4.5 Pupils are extremely socially aware. They develop excellent co-operative team-working skills in lessons and through their involvement in a wide range of house and school activities. Pupils demonstrate mature and caring attitudes towards others and are regularly seen helping each other. Those who are grateful for what others have done for them complete 'Thank You Thoughts' which are displayed in the central school area. Senior pupils are excellent ambassadors for the school and enjoy a wide range of responsibilities. Each class has its own pair of ambassadors that change each half term. Leadership is a key element of the PSHEE programme and pupils not only learn the qualities needed for excellent leadership, but they also develop an understanding and appreciation of what it is like to be led. They understand how they can contribute to the local community through many fund-raising activities. Older pupils say how much they enjoy their weekly sessions as reading buddies with Reception, and they act as good role models for younger pupils.
- 4.6 Pupils have a strong appreciation and respect of cultural diversity through their religious studies work on world faiths, cultures and traditions, and the PSHEE programme. They understand about the festivals and places of worship in religions other than their own, having visited a mosque. Pupils also develop an awareness of

Western traditions through visits to museums and theatres and through their studies in music and art. The school's links with schools abroad also help pupils to appreciate different traditions.

- 4.7 Pupils have an excellent understanding of core British values, as they are embedded in all activities across the school. A recent assembly planned and led by Year 6 explored Parliament and British law, focusing particularly on the process by which bills are passed. Pupils recognise who is the prime minister and were able to discuss recent current events thoughtfully. From EYFS, pupils gain an understanding of democracy through contributing their ideas to the school council and food committee. In interviews, pupils articulated a clear understanding of people's differences and the fact that everyone has a part to play in our wider community regardless of their abilities or backgrounds. By the time they leave school, the pupils have outstanding standards of personal development.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school's caring, nurturing environment and excellent procedures for pastoral care enable pupils to flourish and feel a sense of belonging. In the EYFS, warm relationships with key staff and the strong family ethos of the school ensure that children feel welcome and safe and behave well. Staff know the children and their families extremely well, promoting a sensitive awareness of each child's interests and needs.
- 4.10 The quality of relationships between all staff and pupils and among pupils themselves is excellent. Staff have a clear understanding of the pupils' needs and pastoral matters are discussed and dealt with promptly and effectively. In questionnaires, almost all parents felt that their children feel safe and are happy at school.
- 4.11 Pupils of all ages including the EYFS, are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles through the PSHEE curriculum and the school's nutritious meals, which pupils enjoy. Catering staff are attentive to individual dietary requirements. All pupils take regular exercise as part of the PE and extra-curricular programme. Independent personal care is well established in the EYFS and the children recognise the need for regular hand washing.
- 4.12 The school has appropriate policies and procedures to promote good behaviour and guard against harassment and bullying, including cyber-bullying. In questionnaires, a very small minority of parents and pupils felt that bullying was not dealt with effectively. Inspectors scrutinised the detailed pastoral records and discussed the matter with pupils who stated that issues are addressed swiftly and effectively by staff. The inspection judgement is that any incidents are dealt with appropriately in line with the school's procedures. Pupils know to whom they can turn and feel comfortable talking to a wide range of adults, or their older buddies. A few pupils felt that staff are not fair in the way they give rewards and sanctions. Scrutiny of documentation and discussion with staff and pupils indicate that the reward system is applied fairly and sanctions are rarely used as the school focuses on encouraging positive behaviour.
- 4.13 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

4.14 The school has effective methods to seek the views of pupils. In questionnaires, a few pupils felt that their opinions were not considered. However inspectors judged that the school council and food committee have a prominent role within the community. In interviews, pupils felt their views are well represented and that the school both listens to and responds to their ideas and suggestions.

#### **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 Efficient policies, which include the EYFS, are carefully implemented to ensure that pupils are educated in a safe environment. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and have appropriate regard to official guidance, including the need to prevent radicalisation and extremism. Staff are trained regularly in safeguarding at the necessary level and understand what to do if they should have any concerns. In questionnaires, almost all parents felt that their children were well looked after. The school has excellent professional links with local agencies to support pupils when necessary.

4.17 Across the school, including the EYFS, all measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. The health and safety committee reviews all appropriate aspects of the school. Its membership includes a rotation of teaching staff to strengthen the whole school awareness of health and safety. Regular fire drills are carefully recorded and reviewed, equipment checked and staff trained appropriately. Comprehensive risk assessments, supported by a risk assessment policy, are in place for the whole school. The extremely well-maintained school site is regularly checked and any possible hazards quickly remedied. Off-site visits are carefully planned.

4.18 Excellent provision is made for sick or injured pupils with trained staff available at all times, including paediatric first-aiders. Meticulous records are kept of the administration of medicines and any accidents. These records are regularly reviewed to identify any areas or activities that need adaptation or improvement.

4.19 Electronic admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained, backed up and stored for three years, and prompt and regular attendance is encouraged. Efficient systems are in place to follow up any pupil absences.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Knowledgeable governance has ensured that the school is highly successful in meetings its aims to educate pupils in a stimulating environment in preparation for life beyond school. Governors have a good range of skills, and great care is taken in succession planning to maintain the breadth of experience necessary to support the school. Governors have attended appropriate training. An effective induction process for new governors enables them to understand their responsibilities and to recognise the important distinction between management and governance. An appropriate range of relevant committees meet regularly to enable governors to provide effective oversight of all the school's activities. Prudent financial and strong strategic planning are demonstrated by the continuing and imaginative development of the school and the investment made in staff, accommodation and excellent learning resources.
- 5.3 Governors have an excellent understanding of the day-to-day working of the school, including the EYFS, and provide support and rigorous challenge as a stimulus for future improvement. They receive informative reports and presentations from the leadership and staff, visit lessons, and attend formal and informal events.
- 5.4 The governors are effective in discharging their responsibilities for the welfare, safeguarding, health and safety of the pupils and regulatory compliance. School policies are reviewed annually. The single central register is monitored each term by governors. The safeguarding policy and its effective implementation are reviewed annually, although the minutes do not fully reflect the care taken to protect pupils and the detailed attention given to this review.

### **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 In the EYFS, stringent adherence to safeguarding and recruitment protocols and the richly resourced and carefully maintained premises ensure that the children flourish in a safe, exciting and welcoming environment. All staff work together to plan for improvement, regularly auditing the setting's progress against selected success indicators and setting ambitious targets. Regular meetings between staff ensure that educational programmes are closely monitored. Structured supervision sessions for support staff promote the sharing of any concerns about the children's well-being. The well-established appraisal system provides the opportunity for personal review and for setting future targets and training. The pairing of staff across the school encourages the sharing of good practice between different disciplines and age ranges. British core values are introduced at an appropriate level, for example encouraging good manners and respect for others.
- 5.7 In response to the previous inspection, a system for recording observations and identifying the next steps for learning has been carefully researched and recently implemented. Inclusion in local moderation of profile results at the end of Reception



ensures that children's achievements are measured against the Early Learning Goals. Parents of children in the EYFS receive a detailed summary account of their child's progress in the summer term. However this does not report on progress against the Early Learning Goals in quantitative terms. Outside agencies are contacted appropriately to address any concerns over children's individual development or progress.

- 5.8 Leadership and management at all levels are extremely successful in ensuring that the school achieves its aims, and enable pupils to develop excellent personal skills and achieve high standards in a nurturing environment. Strong yet approachable leadership, supported by a well-balanced cohesive management team, has a clear vision for the development of the school. This vision, shared by the whole school community working together, has at its core the well-being of each pupil, and is strongly reflected in all school policies and procedures.
- 5.9 Since the previous inspection, the role of middle management has been strengthened. Heads of department regularly monitor teaching and learning. This, combined with a system of peer lesson observation, has enabled staff to share their expertise, and the quality of teaching has improved. The useful whole school development plan is regularly reviewed and supported by departmental plans. Teamwork is encouraged, and staff feel positive towards the way in which they are supported by the school's leadership and management, who model mutual respect and a commitment to the democratic process.
- 5.10 The school is successful in securing and retaining high-quality staff. Thorough checks are carried out for the recruitment of suitably qualified staff, and recorded meticulously. Induction procedures are efficient and include safeguarding training, and new staff feel extremely well supported. All staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. An efficient appraisal system recognises staff strengths and identifies areas for their development. Staff are encouraged to undertake relevant external training for their professional development and training is also provided within school. The leadership and management are strongly supported by the excellent administrative and support teams, who are valued members of the school community.
- 5.11 The school fulfils its aim to promote excellent, positive relationships with the pupils' extended families. During conversations with the inspectors and in the questionnaires, parents expressed their overwhelming support for the education provided for their children and the communication that they received from the school. Constructive relationships are maintained with parents in accordance with the school's published procedures. Although a few parents thought that their concerns were not handled well, most felt that they received timely responses to their questions. Inspection of documentation shows that concerns are handled promptly and with great sensitivity.
- 5.12 Parents and their extended family have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They can attend the weekly family assembly, have a birthday lunch with their children, and grandparents are invited to tour the school with their grandchildren. Strong relationships between the school and the parents are fostered through the Prince's Mead Association which organises social and fundraising events, such as supporting the partner school in India. Parents are always welcome to help with outings and to support activities such as swimming.

- 5.13 Weekly newsletters, high quality publications and the informative website provide the required information for current and prospective parents. The school's open door policy, electronic communication and messages in the reading diaries ensure that any concerns are swiftly addressed. Curriculum evenings inform parents about the year ahead for their children, and parents of children in EYFS particularly enjoy the chance to join in with their children's learning during curriculum workshops. Termly meetings with the school's leadership provide an effective route for class representatives to share feedback from parents in their children's class.
- 5.14 Regular scheduled parents' evenings and written reports provide a detailed picture of each pupil's progress and achievements. Since the previous inspection, the summer term report includes additional information on pupil progress. However, reports do not consistently provide targets for improvements. In interviews during the inspection, parents said that they particularly appreciate the full report, as it really captures the essence of the child. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from detailed reports which support their 11+ applications.

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