



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

## **INTEGRATED INSPECTION RUSHMOOR SCHOOL**

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## Rushmoor School

Full Name of School	<b>Rushmoor School</b>
DfE Number	<b>822/6004</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY447731</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>307530</b>
Address	<b>Rushmoor School 58-60 Shakespeare Road Bedford Bedfordshire MK40 2DL</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01234 329259</b>
Fax Number	<b>01234 348395</b>
Email Address	<b>heads_pa@rushmoorschool.co.uk</b>
Head	<b>Mr Ian Daniel</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Graham Bates OBE</b>
Age Range	<b>2 to 16</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>322</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed</b>
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): <b>7</b> 5-11: <b>119</b> 3-5 (EYFS): <b>19</b> 11-16: <b>177</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>322</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Toni Djukic</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>26 Nov 2013 to 29 Nov 2013</b>

## 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 November 2010.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, 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](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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and another governor, 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 Beryl Fawcett	Reporting Inspector
Mr Marcus Culverwell	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mrs Myra Howard	Team Inspector (former Head of Department, GSA school)
Mr Alastair Reid	Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA and IAPS school)
Mrs Pam Simmonds	Team Inspector (former Headmistress, ISA school)
Mrs Eithne Webster	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Originally based in London, the school moved to Shakespeare Road in Bedford in 1918. Until 1965 the school was privately owned and educated boys aged 8 to 13. In 1965, it became a charitable trust and is now administered by a Board of Governors. It welcomes pupils of all denominations and offers education from 2 to 10 years of age for girls and 2 to 16 for boys. The school's facilities have grown and been improved over time, although there have been no major changes in the nature of the school since its previous inspection.
- 1.2 The school aims to enable pupils to acquire the knowledge, wisdom and self-discipline appropriate for adult life and employment. It seeks to develop the pupils' intellectual, physical and creative skills across a broad and balanced curriculum. The promotion of pupils' personal development is seen as of paramount importance to encourage lively and enquiring minds. By encouraging self-confidence, integrity, social responsibility and awareness, the school seeks to develop in pupils a sense of respect and active concern for their surroundings.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 322 pupils in the school. In the EYFS there were 26 children, who are admitted from the age of two. In the junior school (Years 1-5) there were 119 boys and girls and, in the senior school (Years 6-11), 177 boys. Nine pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Specialist learning support is given to 92 pupils who the school has identified as having some form of learning need and/or disability (SEND). One pupil has English as an additional language.
- 1.4 Entry to the school is not academically selective. Pupils attend taster days before joining. The school welcomes pupils at any age and admits them throughout the year. On entry to the EYFS, a wide range of abilities is evident. The ability profile of the main school is slightly above the national average overall with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented, and some variation in the average and spread of abilities between cohorts. Pupils come from mixed social and ethnic backgrounds that reflect the nature of the Bedford area.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

### ***Early Years Foundation Stage Setting***

School	NC name
Rushmoor Robins	Nursery

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

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

- 2.1 The school meets its aims successfully. Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to develop pupils' intellectual, physical and creative skills across a broad and balanced curriculum. The quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is good throughout the school. All children, including those with SEND or who are able, gifted and talented, make good progress. They show good understanding of the subjects they study and their speaking skills are particularly highly developed. The EYFS provision is good at meeting the needs of all children in its care. In the rest of the school, the curriculum and the extra-curricular programme make a good contribution to the pupils' success. They have positive attitudes to learning and approach their work and other activities with enthusiasm. Good teaching, accurately tailored to the pupils' needs and their levels of ability, makes a significant contribution to the achievement of all pupils. Pupils with SEND are provided for very well and parents are particularly appreciative of this aspect of the school's work.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils are well supported through highly effective pastoral care, provided with consistency by all staff who are guided by particularly strong welfare, health and safety policies. The contribution of the EYFS provision to children's well-being is good. Positive relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and staff, engender a family feeling in the school and contribute to the pupils' sense of security and well-being. This owes much to older pupils who willingly and cheerfully undertake their responsibilities for assisting in various duties and helping with younger pupils at various times of the day.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent and at all levels of the school, leadership and management are excellent. Senior management is committed to the pupils' good academic achievements and their excellent personal development and has a clear sense of direction for the school. The time available for leadership of the EYFS together with the junior school is, however, limited. The school promotes excellent links with parents. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were overwhelming appreciative of the school's provision. The school has tackled the recommended areas for improvement arising from the previous inspection to good effect.

**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. Ensure that sufficient time is available to fully develop the leadership roles in the EYFS and the junior school.
  2. Ensure that all planning in the EYFS includes next steps in learning.
  3. Provide more opportunities for developing the independence of the younger EYFS children.



### **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' achievement and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to develop the pupils' intellectual, physical and creative skills. Much of the effective teaching, accurately tailored to the pupils' needs and their levels of ability, makes a significant contribution to the achievement of all pupils. Tracking systems demonstrate accelerated achievement as pupils progress through the senior school.
- 3.3 Across all year groups, pupils respond to high expectations of personal development and academic attainment to achieve good levels of subject knowledge and understanding relative to their age and ability and show significant development of creative and physical skills. Abundant displayed work of good quality celebrates the high levels of creativity achieved. Throughout the school, pupils are extremely articulate. As they progress through the school, their writing shows a determination to structure their texts correctly and they pay attention to the clear guidance given through directive marking, paying attention to corrected spelling and grammar. Subject-specific vocabulary is used with ease in several subjects.
- 3.4 Pupils are able to use their knowledge and reasoning skills to express their opinions confidently and argue their point of view effectively in discussions. They are encouraged to think broadly about the significance of their studies.
- 3.5 Pupils express an enthusiasm for reading. Many read for pleasure and the more able read in public with clarity and confidence. Pupils build on an early facility with number to apply mathematical skills effectively across a range of subjects. The pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum is shown in a wide range of applications that are developed throughout the school.
- 3.6 Achievement in physical pursuits is good, with a growing strength in rugby, where the school has reached the final of the county cup for several consecutive years. A significant proportion of the school enters a local festival of speech and drama, with marked successes. The school has also gained the silver Arts Mark award in the school's first year in the accreditation.
- 3.7 As the junior school does not enter pupils for national tests, it is not possible to compare their performance with national norms, but on the available evidence, including the considerable achievement of pupils with SEND, attainment in the junior school is judged to be in line with national age-related expectations and pupils of all ability levels are suitably challenged and extended. As judged, this level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities.
- 3.8 Based on the three-year period from 2010 to 2012, the latest period for which comparative statistics are currently available, GCSE results are similar to the national average for boys in maintained schools. During this period results showed a decline, but results for 2013 show a marked improvement. This level of attainment, taken in conjunction with other inspection evidence and nationally standardised progress data, indicates that pupils make good progress to GCSE. At the age of 16, pupils leave to go to sixth forms in local independent or maintained schools, as well as some entering vocational courses at local colleges.

- 3.9 Pupils with EAL or SEND make rapid progress and achieve well as a result of the school's extremely effective support which is implemented across the age range through the use of effective individual education plans (IEPs) and one-to-one and in-class support.
- 3.10 Throughout the school, pupils have positive attitudes to their work and learning and are keen to succeed in lessons and extra-curricular activities. Pupils respond well to high expectations of personal development and academic attainment evident in teaching. They generally listen well to their teachers and their peers, showing respect for others. They work productively as individuals, in groups and in pairs. Pupils take a pride in their work and were keen to share their successes and enthusiasm with the inspection team.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.12 All areas of learning are covered thoroughly. The curriculum policy seeks to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, giving pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative education, meeting the needs of all. Classroom observations, work scrutiny and interviews confirm the success of this aim. Pupils study a reasonably broad range of subjects, taking into account the ability and skill range of the pupils and the size of the school.
- 3.13 The senior school curriculum allows the pupils to follow courses suitable to their interests and abilities, giving outlets for expression through creative and vocational disciplines such as GCSE drama, design and technology, and food technology. An effective three-year curriculum development plan actively supports development of lesson planning, expanding resources and consideration of extra-curricular provision to complement the curriculum studies. Schemes of work are thorough and include suggestions of different work for pupils of different abilities and assessment opportunities, but implementation is less developed in the junior school and the extent and effectiveness of planning to meet the different needs of pupils varies across the school.
- 3.14 The pupils' personal development is enhanced through the 'Education for Life' programme, which allows for discussion and debate. It includes careers advice and topics on social and cultural issues in the senior school and religious education with personal, social and health education (PSHE) aspects in the junior school.
- 3.15 Particular provision has been put in place for pupils who are able, gifted and talented, with extra challenges provided in class, a lunchtime club and some pupils working with older children for part of their timetable. This provision supports a number of pupils effectively but attention to the pupils' needs during lessons is not yet consistent and, in a few, the more able are not offered sufficient challenge.
- 3.16 Specialists provide strong support for pupils with SEND. This is achieved through individual lessons, links with local authorities, IEPs, liaison with class teachers and individualised support in lessons. The pupils' IEPs are reviewed regularly, in consultation with parents and teachers. Pupils with statements of special needs often make rapid progress and gain the confidence to work independently in class and to achieve a good standard of work. Small class sizes and the ready provision of learning support assistants (LSAs) at all age levels ensure that individual needs are met and pupils valued.

- 3.17 The extra-curricular programme is good. It offers a range of activities that are open to all ages and ability levels. Many after-school clubs are linked to the curriculum, especially in the senior school. There is strong support for sports activities but some pupils said they would welcome a wider choice of clubs other than those based on sport. A recent production of '*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*', involving pupils from junior to senior school illustrates the strength of curricular and extra-curricular drama, as well as improving opportunities in music.
- 3.18 Participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is strong and partnership with a neighbouring school's Combined Cadet Force has taken Rushmoor pupils into the local community and involved them in outdoor pursuits. Links with the locality are excellent as can be seen in the breadth of charitable endeavours. Excellent community interactions include speakers from inter-faith groups and visits from the fire service, police and ambulance services. The 'bikeability scheme' is promoted in the junior school upwards and junior pupils attend the 'hazard alley', giving life skills in danger awareness.

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

- 3.19 The overall quality of teaching is good.
- 3.20 Much teaching is excellent and supports the school's aim to provide a vibrant, supportive and challenging learning environment with traditional values. Teachers know their pupils well and are highly effective in promoting pupil progress across the school. This is an area where there has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection in response to the recommendation to ensure that best practice is shared with all staff through training and planning.
- 3.21 Teaching is generally well planned and takes careful account of the pupils' learning needs. Teachers show enthusiasm for their subject and high levels of subject knowledge. Marking is regular and the most successful includes constructive comments to show pupils what they need to do to improve, although this is not yet consistent across all areas of the curriculum. Assessment procedures to improve monitoring and tracking of the pupils' progress have successfully been put in place and are being developed to improve the setting of individual pupil targets. Best teaching practice is shared through staff inset, learning walks, and lesson observations with feedback to individual teachers. This has had a positive impact on teaching and learning, especially in the senior school.
- 3.22 Classrooms are organised well to provide attractive learning environments. Teaching seeks new and innovative approaches to stimulate the pupils' interest and uses a wide range of learning activities and resources, including the library and ICT to very good effect. Good planning makes learning challenging, motivating and enjoyable and promotes a fast rate of progress. The most successful teaching encourages pupils to ask questions, think for themselves and to make connections in their learning. Pupils thrive and learn quickly where teaching shows these qualities. Where teaching is less successful, classroom management and planning does not take sufficient account of the needs of individual pupils and so their progress is limited.
- 3.23 Teaching is carefully structured to encourage and motivate all pupils to become independent learners. This was illustrated in a drama lesson for younger senior pupils in which they worked in groups to produce a sketch to illustrate the sensation of taste and the effects of gluttony. The most effective lessons have pace and

variety, keeping all pupils keenly engaged throughout. However, restrictions on the time available for single lessons sometimes limit the progress made. Homework set reinforces the skills and knowledge taught during the day.

- 3.24 Small class sizes enable focus on ensuring that each pupil makes progress. Teachers are willing to give time and commitment to helping their pupils. Hard work and success are praised and celebrated.
- 3.25 The school ensures that teaching makes the provision set out in statements of special educational needs.

## **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 The school is successful in achieving its aim to enable pupils to acquire the knowledge, wisdom and self-discipline appropriate for adult life and employment.
- 4.3 The pupils' successful spiritual development is evident in their everyday exchanges in the school. They are courteous, confident and self-aware. They are articulate and express their opinions clearly and with confidence. Pupils have a strong sense of self-esteem as a result of the recognition they receive for their successes, both in class and in assemblies, and through the clear set of shared values which permeate the school. They take full advantage of any opportunities to explore beliefs, self-knowledge, relationships and the meaning and purpose of life. Assemblies exploring significant personal events in life, and involvement in drama and singing are amongst the uplifting experiences through which pupils develop a sense of harmony with themselves.
- 4.4 At all ages, pupils show clear moral development. A clear ethos of mutual trust exists throughout the school. Pupils show significant concern for each other within a clear set of shared values. They are kind and respectful to each other and mindful of the needs of others. They appreciate the importance of abiding by the school rules and understand that these are for the benefit of the school community; their clear understanding of right and wrong is reinforced in lessons and assemblies. Pupils are unfailingly helpful to one another, to the adults in the school and to visitors, and understand well that there are others less fortunate than themselves.
- 4.5 The pupils' developing sense of social awareness is strong throughout the school. They are at ease talking with adults and with pupils from different year groups. They support each other and contribute to school life, as exemplified by older pupils helping in the junior school, and carrying out their duties as prefects, lunch monitors and form captains. They aspire to take on roles of responsibility within the school and in the wider community. They are active in raising money for local and national charities and they help external groups in a variety of ways. Links with the community, such as with the Bedford Council of Faith, also developed through the school's children's theatre, help pupils develop into rounded and thoughtful individuals. Pupils develop strongly the social attitudes and values they need to make an active contribution to their communities. The school encourages outside visitors from local institutions and seeks to promote a balanced view of politics and government. In mathematics, pupils worked on the probability of them becoming Prime Minister.
- 4.6 Pupils appreciate cultural diversity and show respect and knowledge for the beliefs and customs of a wide range of different faiths and cultures. They visit different places of worship and have outside speakers to give a spiritual input in their 'Education for Life' programme. SMSC is given a high profile within the school through displays and is promoted by staff across the curriculum. In a biology lesson on evolution, for example, pupils explored the biblical view of creation.
- 4.7 By the end of their final year pupils have achieved a very high standard of personal development. They look forward towards their future in a sensible, mature manner and with a clear sense of purpose and direction.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The excellent pastoral care makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development and effectively fulfils the schools aims. Staff provide effective support and guidance that ensures pupils have confidence that they always have someone to whom they can turn for help, should they need it.
- 4.10 Good work and behaviour is rewarded by a system of merit points leading to the reward of trips and activities. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires a small number of pupils expressed a concern that there were insufficient rewards but the inspection findings are that the rewards systems are effective in motivating positive attitudes and in celebrating pupils' successes. In discussion with pupils, the merit system was popular and helps to motivate them. The pupils' successes and achievements are celebrated in assemblies, in the headmaster's weekly blog to parents and in displays around the school.
- 4.11 Relationships between pupils and staff are very strong with mutual respect shown. As a result pupils are polite and considerate, going out of their way to be helpful. The relationships amongst pupils are excellent, and this is particularly evident between different year groups where older pupils support the younger ones in a variety of ways. Pupils with SEND are well supported by their peers who show a genuine, family-like desire to help one another. The arrangements for pastoral care are managed very effectively, with excellent liaison across the school.
- 4.12 The school promotes healthy living well. Through PSHE, physical education and games lessons, the health benefits of fitness are promoted and a fitness suite has been established. In food technology, pupils are engaged in conversations about keeping down fat in their diets. The promotion of healthy snacks at break time and the development of new physical activities such as rowing demonstrate the school's commitment to promoting a healthy lifestyle. Lunch is nutritious and served in a communal dining room, where social interaction is enjoyed and where monitors diligently serve other pupils, taking pride in their roles.
- 4.13 Inspectors found that the school nurtures good behaviour. Effective arrangements are in place, and implemented, to deal with unacceptable behaviour. Disciplinary boundaries are clearly understood and pupils feel that they are fair. In interviews, pupils felt that bullying is not an issue. Pupils clearly feel safe and cared for by staff and peers, and confirmed that any unkindness is dealt with quickly and effectively by senior managers and staff.
- 4.14 Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the school community, and value positions on the school council, and as monitors, prefects and head and deputy head boy. These positions are effective in giving pupils a sense of self-esteem in the community and they are valued by the pupils. Those elected as representatives are proud of this honour and responsibility. Year 2 were pleased to have contributed to the playground design.
- 4.15 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**

- 4.16 The quality of the school's provision for welfare, health and safety is excellent.

- 4.17 Well defined systems and procedures ensure that the approach to welfare, health and safety is thorough and robust. The school has a clear safeguarding policy that is effectively implemented. Child protection training is carried out regularly for all teaching and non-teaching staff, who have a strong awareness of safeguarding issues.
- 4.18 All necessary measures are taken to reduce risks from fire and other hazards. Required documentation and records, including appropriate risk assessments, are carefully, accurately and comprehensively maintained. Arrangements to promote the pupils' health and safety are efficient and effective. Pupils who are ill or injured are treated in the well-equipped and managed medical room. The school takes all possible measures to promote and safeguard pupils with particular needs of any kind. Policies and procedures take account of off-site activities and portable appliance testing.
- 4.19 The school maintains accurate records of admissions and attendance, and registers are stored as required.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Arrangements for governance provide highly effective oversight of the school in line with its aims. Governors know the school well, as a result of the full and regular reports they receive from senior staff, the time they spend at the school and regular communication with the headmaster. The governing body brings a wide range of expertise and experience to its work and an effective system of committees enables thorough discharge of their responsibilities for financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and learning resources. Effective oversight of educational standards is achieved through careful scrutiny of the reports they receive and provides a rigorous check on the quality of the education the school provides. They are committed to the achievement of high standards set in the context of a broad education, and to providing a proper preparation for the challenges of adult life and work.
- 5.3 Governors have a strong insight into the working of the school and provide support, challenge and stimulus for improvement through regular visits each term. They observe lessons and give feedback to staff and notes expressing their appreciation. This enables teachers to get to know the governors and they value the contribution governors make. Governors understand the school's special features and share a common vision for its future.
- 5.4 The governors are effective in discharging their responsibilities for child protection, welfare, and health and safety throughout the school. Regular visits by designated governors provide checks on the quality of provision for health and safety, and review of child protection and safeguarding arrangements. The governing body as a whole carries out the annual review of this provision.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 The school has made very good and effective progress since the previous inspection in developing assessment procedures that have improved the monitoring and tracking of the pupils' progress as they move through the school, and ensuring that best teaching practice is shared with all staff through training and planning.
- 5.7 The work of those with leadership responsibilities makes a major contribution to the successful fulfilment of the school's aims, and the strong educational achievement and personal development of the pupils. At the most senior level, leadership and management is highly effective, vibrant and alert to all that happens within the school community, although the time available for leadership of the junior school is limited.
- 5.8 Senior leaders and governors have a sharp awareness of the school's strengths, weaknesses and areas for further improvement. The school development plan is an effective working document that identifies priorities to guide the next stage of the



school's development and benefits from consultation with, and input from, staff and parents as well as the governors.

- 5.9 Clear educational direction is supported by subject leaders who demonstrate a very strong sense of purpose and are clear about strategies and priorities to guide the school's future development, while ensuring effective implementation of day-to-day policies and procedures to enhance the welfare and well-being of the pupils. The clearly articulated school aims are disseminated to all of the school community and are met in the actions and planning of staff and pupils. This contributes to the hard-working atmosphere that is evident everywhere.
- 5.10 The school benefits greatly from the clear vision of its most senior staff which is promoted strongly among all members of the wider school community. Staff feel consulted and empowered to share in and embrace the drive to maintain high standards and develop policy and practice even further. An improving culture of self-evaluation and positive self-criticism is evident within the school through scrutiny of pupils' work and learning walks. Teachers visit each other's lessons and best practice has been shared at an INSET day when each teacher described what had gone well. Training has been given by specialist teachers of SEND for class teachers.
- 5.11 The school successfully recruits suitable staff. Teaching and non-teaching staff are committed to the school's success and care of the pupils and are well deployed throughout the school. All necessary checks, including disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks, are carried out when staff and governors are appointed. Staff are provided with the necessary training in child protection and other welfare, health and safety areas, and undergo an efficient induction process. Staff development procedures include a biennial appraisal process generating outcomes linked to whole-school development areas and an indication of training and professional development needs.
- 5.12 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents, in accordance with its aims, and the parents are extremely happy with the school's provision for their children.
- 5.13 From the prospectus onwards parents of current and prospective pupils receive informative and regular reports on and invitations to, a wide variety of school events, performances and fixtures and the school website provides further useful information as well as details of staff policies including all those required to be available. The headmaster's blog is greatly appreciated. There are further information evenings provided for parents on various aspects of education, such as the recent renowned speaker on autism, and these are well attended and appreciated.
- 5.14 The electronic alert system is an effective way of communicating with parents over such matters as changes in club arrangements. This service is also used for text messaging and is very effective at disseminating last-minute information such as arrangements on snowy days.
- 5.15 Parents are given many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school, through volunteering, either regularly or occasionally. These positive and welcoming relationships between school and parents contribute to the enrichment of the life of the pupils by drawing on the parents' expertise and enthusiasm, for example, supplying a police uniform for investigation of reflective materials and helping with costumes and make-up for shows.

- 5.16 The parents' council meets regularly and the opportunity for parents to suggest discussion topics and have an impact on policy is popular and appreciated. The parents, teachers and friends association (PTFA) also organise popular events, such as the annual ball and fairs. These social occasions all contribute to the openness and easy contact between school and parents which is of great benefit if parents have anything they would like to discuss about their child, reflecting the school's view that it is easier to talk to those with whom you already have a relationship.
- 5.17 Parents are well informed about their child's progress through thorough reports, grades, profiles and contact books as well as parents' evenings. Further discussions are possible at other times, either through appointments or via email. Parents spoke highly of the ease of contact with the school and how quickly emails were answered. Parents of younger pupils also appreciate the daily contact with members of the leadership team, as well as teaching staff, at pick-up and drop-off times.
- 5.18 The responses to the parental questionnaire were overwhelmingly appreciative of the school and the way it handles parents' concerns, and inspection evidence supports this.
- 5.19 Concerns are handled sensitively and in full accordance with the school's complaints policy, although it is rare that complaints progress further than the initial stage as the school works hard, and successfully, to resolve parental concerns as they arise.

**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 setting makes good provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Educational programmes cover all areas of learning. Profile results and tracking show that children achieve well relative to their entry levels in response, including those with SEND.
- 6.2 All children, both under three and over three, are helped to acquire the skills and learning needed for the next stage of their education. Staff show good understanding of how young children learn and develop. They are committed and enthusiastic and provide considerable extra help for children with SEND, such as enlarging books and providing one-to-one support for children with particular difficulties. More able children have their thinking extended and developed through some activities and questioning suitably tailored to their needs.
- 6.3 Parents are encouraged to be involved with their children's learning through being invited to contribute to the display boards that show pictures and accounts of significant activities undertaken outside school. They are also invited to describe the children and their interests in the home learning commentary sheets. This partnership between parents and children has a direct beneficial impact, as it enables parents to understand what is required to support their children's learning. Early Years profiles are completed carefully and the results communicated to parents along with summer reports at the end of the EYFS.

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

- 6.4 The contribution to children's well-being is good. All staff have a thorough knowledge of any potential harm to children. They clearly show that they know how to deal with any safeguarding issues and the premises have robust security procedures and routines that are meticulously observed.
- 6.5 All children clearly enjoy their school. They are increasingly familiar with the routines and know that the staff care for them and will help them. They frequently exhibit appropriately strong, trusting attachment to staff. Staff have high expectations of behaviour with the result that children are generally well behaved and respond well to the praise they receive. They co-operate and help each other, offering suggestions when pasting and model making. They enjoy taking on responsibility such as being the helper of the day.
- 6.6 The previous inspection recommended that activities in the EYFS should be organised and resourced to stimulate interest, imagination and independent enquiry. Recent reorganisation and investment in the EYFS have resulted in improvements to the rooms, the playground and the outside areas close to the classrooms. These areas provide not only enjoyable play but opportunities for developing imagination and learning for children under three and over three. Reception and Nursery children were seen counting and matching, through playing with the oversized dominos, counting pine cones and using the results to practise their number writing.

- 6.7 Most children have an excellent understanding of the need for clean hands, healthy snacks and exercise and can manage their own hygiene and personal needs. In some cases, however, opportunities for developing independence are limited because clothes have a variety of fastenings that younger children cannot yet manage without adult help.

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

- 6.8 The leadership and management of the EYFS are good. Governors and leaders are committed to improving the levels of care for the children. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities regarding the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS and monitoring of the implementation of these is thorough.
- 6.9 The previous inspection recommended that the school governance and leadership should develop oversight of the EYFS in order to monitor effectiveness and plan for improvement. Re-organisation of roles on the governing body and appointments in the EYFS meet this recommendation. There is now effective self-evaluation and a clear action plan to develop and improve the EYFS, although other responsibilities held by senior managers limit the full development of leadership.
- 6.10 The previous inspection also recommended that the EYFS take fuller account of children's age, ability and prior attainment in planning the next steps in learning for each child. This has been met by welcoming the contribution of parents in monitoring their child's attainment and an improved system to regularly assess and track children's progress. This planning does not yet fully reflect the prior attainment of all children and next steps in learning are not always clearly stated.
- 6.11 The introduction of two-year-olds into the nursery has resulted in new facilities and procedures to accommodate their different needs, including the required two-year-old progress check. Parents are invited to discuss this and contribute suggestions as to how they can help their children.
- 6.12 Children with SEND are identified and appropriate strategies, involving parents and, in some cases, outside agencies such as speech and language therapists, are put in place to meet those needs.

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

- 6.13 The overall quality and standards of the setting are good. All areas of learning are covered effectively so that children under three are developing good attitudes to school and those over three are making a good start into reading and writing. In Reception, nearly all can count and order to 10 and some to 20. Children with identified needs are well supported, contributing significantly to the development of their confidence and self-esteem.
- 6.14 All children appear happy and secure; they are friendly and confident when talking to adults, each other and to visitors. Behaviour is good, considerably helped by the positive interactions with staff, who guide children and obtain good standards by overwhelmingly positive comments.

### **Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three**

- 6.15 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.**