



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

SOMPTING ABBOTTS SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Sompting Abbotts School

Full Name of School	Sompting Abbotts School		
DfE Number	938/6125		
EYFS Number	EY40519		
Registered Charity Number	N/A		
Address	Sompting Abbotts School Church Lane Sompting Lancing West Sussex BN15 0AZ		
Telephone Number	01903 235960		
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Email Address	office@somptingabbotts.com		
Head	Mr Stuart Douch		
Proprietor	Mrs Patricia M Sinclair		
Age Range	2 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	105		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (69 boys; 36 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	2	5-11: 43
	3-5 (EYFS):	38	11-18: 22
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	105	
Number of Boarders	Total:	0	
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Katharine O'Neill		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	30 Apr 2013 to 03 May 2013		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in February 2008.

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

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

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

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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', 'satisfactory' 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 proprietor, 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 Susan Bailes

Mr Andrew Gough

Mrs Sara Robinson

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Sompting Abbotts School is an independent day preparatory school for boys and girls aged from two to thirteen. Founded in Brighton in 1875, the school moved to its present site in Sompting in 1921. The school has been owned by the same family for 67 years and its members act as proprietors, governors, principal and bursar.
- 1.2 The school aspires to provide a happy workplace offering security, friendship and respect within a strong moral framework in which children of all backgrounds thrive in all spheres of their development. It aims to nurture responsibility for social awareness and to encourage each to reach his/her maximum potential. The school wants its pupils to be responsible, reliable, and self-disciplined and to value care, consideration for others and good manners. Of major importance is 'the family sense of togetherness, a special atmosphere for learning, pleasure, shared experiences and success'.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, boarding ceased in 2009, there have been improvements to the accommodation and a new headmaster was appointed in January 2013 following the recent death of the previous headmaster.
- 1.4 There are 105 pupils, of whom twenty, (thirteen boys and seven girls) are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), together with sixteen part-time boys and four part-time girls. There were ten boys and nine girls in the pre-preparatory section together with twenty girls and 46 boys in the preparatory section. The ability profile of the school is above the national average. There is a fairly wide spread of abilities represented, although most pupils have ability that is at least above average.
- 1.5 Pupils live within a fifteen mile radius of the school. They come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds and in many homes both parents are working.
- 1.6 The school has identified fourteen pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) all of whom receive additional support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. One pupil has English as an additional language (EAL) and is given additional support.

- 1.7 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 tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
PP1	Nursery
PP2	Reception
PP3	Year 1
PP4	Year 2

Pre-preparatory/preparatory Department

School	NC name
III	Year 3
LIV	Year 4
UIV	Year 5
LV	Year 6
UV	Year 7
Vli & Vlii	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 From the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) upwards, pupils are successful in their learning and their personal development is excellent. The school meets its aims to provide a comprehensive, fully rounded education, in a calm, warm and friendly atmosphere. The superb, extensive grounds and outdoor learning area offer exciting experiences which encourage independent learning in the EYFS. The pupils' achievement is good and they are appreciative of the opportunities afforded to them both within and outside the curriculum. Good teaching by experienced staff contributes to the good progress of pupils so that they obtain places at selective senior schools with some scholarships awarded each year for academic, music, drama and art achievement. Older pupils are suitably challenged and make good use of the library and improved information communication technology (ICT) facilities.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent, in part a reflection of the school's small, close-knit community. Pupils are confident, articulate and listen well to one another. They are courteous and well-behaved and have a sense of their own self-worth, which is encouraged by the celebration of each individual's talents, progress and behaviour. The pupils receive excellent pastoral care and pupils are welcoming, courteous and thoughtful for others. However, the school's arrangements for welfare, health and safety are unsatisfactory because the school does not have suitable policies and procedures for child protection, risk assessments and safe recruitment.
- 2.3 Governance is unsatisfactory. Whilst governors are concerned for the school, they do not exercise sufficient oversight of the procedures and policies, especially those for safeguarding and recruitment of suitable staff, throughout the school. Arrangements overall for the monitoring of welfare, health and safety are unsatisfactory. High risk areas need to be regularly assessed. Leadership and management are sound. The good achievement and excellent personal qualities of the pupils are a direct result of the positive ethos which has been created within the school and the example which is set by the senior and middle leaders throughout. Staff training takes place and there are subject development plans but the previous recommendations in the previous inspection to ensure that all policies are systematically brought up for review and provide subject co-ordinators with sufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning have not been implemented. The provision for learning support and the inclusion of guidance in marking for pupils with SEND have been improved since the previous inspection.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2013, and therefore it is required to:

- ensure that arrangements to safeguard and promote welfare of pupils are effective and have regard to official guidance, including that all staff have training which successfully enables them to identify and refer concerns [Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8, under welfare, health and safety];
- ensure safe recruitment checks are applied to the appointment of all staff [Part 4, para 19.(2)(a-c) and (3) under suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors]
- ensure the central register is suitably maintained and accurately recorded [Part 4, paragraph 22.(3) and (4), under suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors]
- ensure suitable health and safety inspection is in place for areas of high risk [Part 3, paragraph 11, under welfare, health and safety];

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

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

1. Ensure all policies are reviewed systematically, regularly and are consistent throughout the school.
2. Develop a strategic school development plan with a clear time frame and proposed implementation steps for all areas of the school.
3. Ensure that leaders at all levels have sufficient time and training to carry out their full responsibilities, including those for monitoring and evaluation.
4. In the EYFS, ensure the Early Years management have suitable training to develop their expertise.

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 good.
- 3.2 The level of achievement contributes to meeting the school's aim to provide a comprehensive, fully rounded education.
- 3.3 Pupils are articulate and express themselves well. They justify their opinions and reason well. Pupils of all ages listen carefully and read competently. They write well in a variety of styles and genre, although the standard of handwriting is inconsistent. Pupils are able to apply their mathematical knowledge in a wide range of contexts.
- 3.4 Pupils have very well-developed creative skills, seen in the excellent standard of musical performances in assemblies and the high quality artwork evident in displays and lessons during the visit.
- 3.5 Extra-curricular activities such as, debating for the older pupils contribute to pupils' achievements so that they argue cogently. Pupils are also successful in speech and drama activities and in a variety of sports fixtures, with some pupils reaching county cricket standard.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against a fixed national norm or national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations and the pupils follow a wide-ranging curriculum successfully. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, scrutiny of written work and discussion with pupils and staff, confirms this judgement and also shows that progress is good in relation to pupils of similar ability nationally. Pupils with SEND and EAL make good progress as a result of the high quality of the support they receive in lessons and one-to-one. Boys and girls in Year 8 successfully move on to other independent schools which set demanding entrance requirements and each year a number are awarded scholarships for academic achievement as well as some for art, drama and music. A number of pupils each take examinations in speech and drama, and in music, achieving high marks.
- 3.7 Pupils work well individually as well as co-operatively. They have positive attitudes and show pride in the presentation of their written work. Pupils successfully undertake research independently. They make good use of the internet and library.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The curricular aspirations of the school are laid down in its curriculum policy and the school achieves these aims. The curriculum is well planned and effective, particularly on a departmental level, and covers all required areas of learning. It ensures that pupils acquire good speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- 3.10 A strong provision in the curriculum is personal, social and health education which is embedded in the ethos of the school and central to the entire curriculum. The curriculum effectively supports the aim of preparing pupils successfully for entry to senior schools in all the major subjects. The breadth and balance of the curriculum enables all pupils, regardless of their abilities, to develop their academic skills and interests successfully.

- 3.11 The good quality of the education and the care for each child are met through a diverse range of activities. The school provides an idyllic setting with extensive grounds and excellent sporting facilities which are used to ensure every child has the opportunity to participate in competitive games. The children also very much appreciate the facilities for play and recreation.
- 3.12 The curriculum provides an appropriate challenge for the more able. Recent improvements to the curriculum have also meant that children requiring learning support are identified early and increasingly good and suitable assistance is provided to them.
- 3.13 The curriculum presents good opportunities for pupils to develop their intellectual curiosity. In particular, art and music provide excellent additional opportunities for creative study and achievement. Since the last inspection the school has invested substantially in ICT and there is a much wider use of this technology in all subjects.
- 3.14 There is a good range of clubs and activities, as diverse as board games and shooting. Debating club is popular and frequent musical activities for choirs, recorders and ensembles are well attended. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire by the pupils indicate a very high level of satisfaction with the extra-curricular opportunities on offer. The school is generally successful in its aim of ensuring all year groups take part in an off-site excursion annually ranging from residential trips to France for the older pupils to local visits which enhance the pupils' educational experience. The curriculum is also enhanced by links with the local community, with visiting speakers such as a local police officer on talking on personal safety, and a parent on Divali.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.16 The quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection and enables the children to grow into positive, responsible individuals, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their academic, social and physical potential in accordance with the aims of the school.
- 3.17 The majority of teaching is well planned and caters for pupils' different abilities. For example, in one successful lesson each child was given equipment appropriate to their stage of development to achieve the goals set, and support was provided for one who had joined the school recently. Pupils who have EAL or SEN, are identified by accurate screening and regular assessments at an early age, and provided with additional individual education plans.
- 3.18 The best teaching challenges the more able pupils, without neglecting the needs of others. For example in a routine spelling test, different lists of words were used both to challenge an able pupil and to help a dyslexic child. Where teaching is less good the pace of learning is slow and the content too prescriptive, limiting pupils' opportunities to think and learn for themselves. In a small number of cases, content was not always suited to the age of the pupils and this meant they made less progress than they might. Teaching manages pupils' behaviour effectively to maintain focus and use praise well to encourage pupils of all levels of ability. In interviews, and in the response to the pupils' questionnaire, pupils of all ages reported they feel well supported and encouraged by the teachers. Parents are also

positive, feeling that pupils are well supported by the staff who are seen to be very caring, approachable, and valuing each child's individuality.

- 3.19 Teachers use good teaching resources to promote learning. In response to a recommendation in the previous inspection, the school has invested considerably in ICT and interactive whiteboards. The use of such equipment in lessons, and in some subjects for homework, significantly enhances and stimulates enthusiasm and learning. During the visit, older pupils explained in discussions how they are encouraged to produce homework regularly on the computer and undertake research. Other teaching resources are plentiful, from the well-equipped science laboratory to subject equipment in individual classrooms. Most classes have stimulating, up-to-date displays of pupils' work and items of topical interest. Practical and investigative activities are often used well, particularly in science. Teachers frequently create opportunities for creative, independent and collaborative work.
- 3.20 Marking is generally of good quality. The best recognises what pupils have achieved and helps them to see how to improve their work; it challenges and is well matched to pupils' needs. Less good examples leave areas unmarked, with sporadic comments on how to improve. Peer assessment enables pupils to share their achievements and ideas.
- 3.21 Most teachers in the preparatory department are specialists in their subject and this knowledge greatly enhances pupils' learning and depth of understanding. They have an accurate idea of the progress and position of their pupils not least because of the easy communication available in a small school but insufficient use is made of collective information and data to track pupils' progress and inform planning.

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 pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' personal development reflects the school's aim to provide a happy workplace offering security, friendship and respect within a strong moral framework in which children thrive in all spheres of their development. The high quality of pupils' personal development has been maintained since the previous inspection. All children are successfully prepared for the next stage of their learning, including those in the EYFS.
- 4.3 The quality of pupils' spiritual development is excellent. The pupils are confident, developing knowledge and understanding so that they reflect on their own behaviour and work in a mature way. They demonstrate an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, for example expressing awe and wonder at the beauty of their surroundings, or when responding to the work of famous artists.
- 4.4 The quality of pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils recognise their own strengths and those of others with a clear sense of right and wrong. From an early age they are encouraged to reflect on what kind of person they wish to be so that they do their best. Pupils appreciate and understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions and show mutual respect for one another.
- 4.5 The pupils' social development is excellent. They work well collaboratively and show a mature approach to relationships with others. They appreciate the needs of those less fortunate than themselves and regularly raise funds for charities. Pupils listen to one another and help others, whilst older pupils undertake a range of responsibilities, including the role of house captains, which involves choosing the team for house fixtures and they take responsibility for younger pupils. Pupils develop an extremely good understanding of the roles of people in public office and the institutions which govern the country, aided by the contributions of a wide range of visitors.
- 4.6 Pupils understand and respect those of other faiths and cultures. The ethos of the school ensures that pupils value their own culture including the work of British musicians and artists. Equally, pupils talk enthusiastically about their work on other cultures, where they demonstrate a wide range of understanding, as was seen in their work on Chinese New Year and their exploration of French culture. The everyday life of the school provides frequent examples of mutual understanding and harmonious relations.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The school successfully fulfils its aim to provide effective pastoral care. Pupils are happy and confident. Relationships are most positive between staff and pupils, and among the pupils themselves. Teachers know the children thoroughly and communicate successfully so that the needs of individuals are met. Pupils say they are very well supported by staff.
- 4.9 The pupils understand the importance of healthy eating. They thoroughly enjoy the delicious lunches provided and are encouraged to bring healthy snacks to school.

The extent and variety of physical activities, both within and outside the curriculum, promotes regular exercise as a key aspect of a healthy lifestyle. A comprehensive PSHE programme delivered by form teachers ensures that topics such as health, safety and healthy eating, as well as personal and sex education are fully discussed with pupils and understood by them.

- 4.10 Staff are thoroughly trained in the system of rewards and, punishments, contained in the policy introduced since the previous inspection. In this process, using behaviour consequence sheets, pupils are required to consider the effects of their actions on themselves and others. Full, thorough records of any such incidents are maintained. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, pupils and parents reported an almost complete absence of bullying. This was supported by the pupils' comments during discussions. Most pupils are confident that staff are fair in their use of rewards and sanctions.
- 4.11 Although there is no formal school council, pupils are confident that their views are listened to and taken into account. The school has a plan for improving educational access for pupils with SEND, but although goals for the next three years are included, they lack specific detail of implementation.

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

- 4.12 The arrangements welfare, health and safety are unsatisfactory.
- 4.13 Health and safety documentation exists but it is not comprehensive and has not been reviewed on a regular basis. The health and safety committee holds meetings to discuss issues of safety and the committee includes a representative of the pre-prep, which was a recommendation in the previous inspection. Records of accidents are maintained and stored appropriately and first aid training is undertaken by staff. Some risk assessments are carried out but areas of high risk such as the swimming pool, gymnasium and play equipment have not been fully assessed for safety.
- 4.14 The school has appropriate arrangements for fire safety. Fire drills are regularly conducted in school time and are logged and evaluated. All electrical and fire equipment is tested regularly by external contractors and any recommendations made are carried out. Staff completion of fire training is recorded.
- 4.15 Appropriate provision has been made for pupils who are ill or are injured in school and medicines are suitably stored and logged. Only prescribed medicines or household remedies are issued to pupils in accordance with parental consent forms.
- 4.16 The admission and attendance registers have not always been maintained accurately. The admission register did not have all the required information for all entries. Not all authorised absences in the attendance registers were explained. Both the admission and attendance registers were completed accurately by the end of the inspection with the additional information entered.
- 4.17 The school has not maintained suitable procedures for the safeguarding of children and child protection. The school's child protection policy does not meet requirements and procedures to keep children safe from harm are underdeveloped. The designated child protection officer has not received appropriate training, and not all other staff have received suitable training in child protection matters. Safe recruitment procedures do not reflect official guidance in terms of carrying out checks, whilst the central register of appointments is not accurately maintained.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is unsatisfactory.
- 5.2 Governance is provided by the two proprietors, who also act as the principal and the bursar, and aspires to support the ethos of the school and its aims. The overall vision to provide a happy workplace offering friendship and respect within a strong moral framework in which children thrive is largely achieved. Both of the proprietors are well-known to the entire school community as they are fully involved in the daily life of the school, but arrangements for them to have a good insight into the working of the school are essentially informal in nature. The proprietors have yet to develop an appropriate strategic development plan to oversee future developments of all aspects of school life.
- 5.3 Both the proprietors maintain good financial oversight for investment in staff and resources. In contrast, they have failed to discharge their responsibilities regarding the regulations for educational standards within the school. The proprietors are unaware of their responsibilities regarding child protection and safeguarding. The child protection policy does not ensure that children are protected from harm as it fails to reflect official guidance. The policy and procedures are not reviewed annually by the proprietors or monitored for their effectiveness. Training of staff on site in matters of child protection is not provided by a suitably-trained person.
- 5.4 The proprietors have not given sufficient attention to staff recruitment arrangements. Little attention has been made to securing evidence of identity, medical status and qualifications for all staff and some staff have been allowed to start work without the required checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service. The proprietors have not carried out a review of the central register of appointments to ensure all the necessary checks have been carried out and recorded accurately.
- 5.5 Key school policies are not reviewed regularly and the proprietors do not ensure that they are fully implemented by the leadership and management team. The premises are well maintained with appropriate facilities. Fire, hygiene and electrical health and safety matters are dealt with appropriately but some areas of potential high risk have not been assessed suitably for safety.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is sound.
- 5.7 The senior leadership and management team promotes and communicates the ethos and aims of the school. They effectively oversee pupils' pastoral care and personal development, and ensure there is a broad curriculum and good teaching. Regular meetings and effective communication ensure that pupils' personal needs are met. The senior management has an appraisal system involving lesson observations and staff are supported by continuous professional development. Management of the pre-prep implements a good educational plan and monitors and supports staff. Useful links have been made by some subject co-ordinators to share good practice with colleagues in other schools, alongside initiatives such as

involvement in local authority training or events such as art workshops. The leadership and management team has put in place a system for subject development plans and has successfully reviewed the curriculum balance.

- 5.8 A small minority of parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire reported a lack of satisfaction in the leadership and management and this inspection found evidence to support these views. Management meetings are held regularly but these are not sufficiently developmental in character, being more concerned with daily administration. Strategic development planning is weak in its vision for implementing future educational improvements so the school lacks clear educational direction. Leadership and management are not effective in implementing at all levels the school's aims in terms of safeguarding and child protection and the oversight of suitable educational policies. There are weaknesses in their monitoring of welfare, health and safety.
- 5.9 Some, but not all, of the recommendations from the previous inspection have been achieved. The provision for SEND pupils has been further developed with suitable resources and effective use of staff to provide continuity between different sections of the school so that the needs of individual pupils are met. In doing so the education provision of the school has been improved further. In addition, the recommendation to develop the use of library resources and ICT across all areas of the curriculum has been carried out. The further promotion of pupils' independent learning and study skills throughout the school has enhanced the education provision and challenged the more able. However, the recommendations to ensure that all policies are systematically brought up for review and to provide subject co-ordinators with sufficient time for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning have not yet been achieved.
- 5.10 The leadership and management provide newly appointed staff with induction. The systems to ensure the checking of the suitability of staff are not all in place nor are members of the leadership and management trained appropriately for their roles in safeguarding. Lack of expertise and training as well as insufficient time has meant that the leadership and management have not been successful in fulfilling all of their responsibilities.
- 5.11 The school has maintained its good partnership with parents since the previous inspection. Parents overall are very supportive of the school and appreciate the opportunity of day-to-day links with staff. The handbook for both prospective and pre-prep parents includes useful information about staff and the curriculum.
- 5.12 The parents' views as expressed in the pre-inspection questionnaire were positive overall about the school and the progress their children make. In particular they commented on the family atmosphere, the caring approach of staff and the happiness of their children. A small minority expressed some concern about the involvement of parents in events and other aspects of its work. The inspection team found no evidence to support this view. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the school through the parents' association. This supports the school in a variety of fund-raising events such as the Christmas bazaar and the summer fair. Parents are invited to attend larger scale events such as class assemblies, school concerts, drama performances and sporting events.
- 5.13 Reports throughout the school are sent to parents twice a year. These are of good quality and contain detailed information on pupils' knowledge and progress with a summary of work covered and details of how the pupil could improve further. Effort

and behaviour grades are also sent out each term from Year 3. Parents' evenings take place annually from Reception and provide parents with the opportunity to engage with staff and discuss progress. Some staff offer useful support by email to parents of older children, providing them with revision guidance.

- 5.14 The school now has an appropriate procedure to deal with complaints. Parents with a concern or query regarding their children are able to contact the school at any time and are secure in the knowledge that they will receive timely responses to their questions. Concerns are handled in a manner consistent with the procedure. Parents feel well supported in their choice of senior schools.

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 outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. The superb extensive grounds and outdoor learning area offer some exciting experiences of planned opportunities which encourage independent learning, exploration and problem solving. These, together with carefully planned indoor learning, ensure there is an excellent balance of adult and child-led activities. Supportive and caring key people have successfully created an environment where children can succeed, in line with the school's values and ethos. Careful questioning enables children to express themselves clearly and with confidence. Assessment of progress is regularly collated, clearly recorded and used to identify the next steps in children's learning. Those with SEND or EAL are identified early and are well supported. More able children have plenty of challenge to enable them to reach their potential. The required checks for two year olds have been effectively implemented and the information shared with parents and carers. The setting's engagement with parents is a strength. In questionnaire responses, they showed strong support for the setting and feel able to approach staff at any time. They receive regular updates on their child's progress and contribute to the record of achievement. The parents' association offers regular support with fundraising.

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

6.2 The provision for children's well-being is excellent. The high level of staffing, together with superb resources and well-qualified staff, enable all-round development. All staff form strong bonds with the children, promoting high standards of behaviour, courtesy and respect for one another. Key people recognise each child's unique qualities, know the children extremely well and meet their needs effectively. Staff give regular praise, and reward with stickers. They give children responsibility from an early age. Staff ensure that children feel happy and safe. Key people help children to develop a strong awareness of personal safety and to comply with the simple rules that relate to this; for example, even the youngest children negotiate the grounds and use climbing equipment safely, with just the correct amount of risk. Excellent induction procedures, together with strong links within the setting and beyond, ensure that children are prepared well for the next stage in their education. Staff promote self-help skills, and good hygiene practices, from an early age. Food provided is healthy and meals are well balanced. Key people encourage parents to send in healthy snacks for break times. All children have their own water bottles. Staff teach the benefits of healthy eating and the importance of physical exercise.

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

6.3 Leadership and management are inadequate. There are, however, some strong features of management within the setting, although the present lack of training has limited further development. The proprietor promotes a caring family environment, though obligations in the monitoring of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding, and the overseeing of educational programmes are not fully understood. The lack of an established programme for regular monitoring and

updating of policies and procedures means some do not meet requirements. There is an established programme for professional development, including in-service training and access to courses. However, staff have not received the necessary training in child protection procedures and not all staff have been appropriately checked with the Disclosure and Barring Service when appointed. Professional supervision for the monitoring of teaching and learning, and planning procedures are in place. Staff have a genuine concern for the welfare and personal development of children. Key people work hard to promote a positive and inclusive atmosphere and good teamwork contributes greatly to the progress and development of all children. Fire procedures are practised termly, although suitable risk assessments have not been carried out. Self-evaluation shows some understanding of areas for improvement, and targets these in a development plan. Children's needs are identified early and are well met through effective partnerships between the setting, parents, and external agencies.

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

The overall quality and standards are inadequate. Not all the requirements for training of staff in safeguarding have been met and since the previous inspection, not all recommendations have been met. Suitable risk assessments to identify specific aspects of the environment have not been carried out. The setting does now have systems to self-evaluate practice and identify areas for their development plan. All children including those with EAL or SEND make at least good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities; some progress particularly well. Many achieve the expected goals by the end of the EYFS, responding well to staff expectations and the high staffing level. All children show well-developed physical skills. They are effective communicators and active listeners and enjoy books. Younger children use language in role play and make up their own stories to books. They manipulate a computer mouse with increasing dexterity. They describe and name minibeasts they have found and they successfully count up to eight snail shells they have collected. All children showed awe and wonder when discovering plants, birds and creatures in the outdoor environment. Older children apply learned sounds to reading and writing simple words and sentences. They solve problems such as how to climb safely down from a tree. All children clearly understand the setting's expectations, taking turns and sharing toys and equipment sensibly. They learn about different cultures and faiths, respect one another and work in harmony. Children display increasing levels of independence, confidence, curiosity and concentration. Children are happy and feel safe and are confident to share concerns with staff.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.