INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST ANDREW'S SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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St Andrew's School

Full Name of School	**St Andrew's School**			
DfE Number	**822/6006**			
EYFS Number	**EY389096**			
Registered Charity Number	**307531**			
Address	**St Andrew's School** **78 Kimbolton Road** **Bedford** **Bedfordshire** **MK40 2PA**			
Telephone Number	**01234 267272**			
Fax Number	**01234 355105**			
Email Address	**sskehan@standrewsschoolbedford.com**			
Head	**Mr Sean Skehan**			
Chair of Governors	**Mr John Crawford**			
Age Range	**0 to 16**			
Total Number of Pupils	**264**			
Gender of Pupils	**Girls 0 to 16; Boys 0 to 9**			
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	**93**	5-11:	**63**
	3-5 (EYFS):	**14**	11-18:	**94**
Head of EYFS Setting	**Mrs Sarah Maycock**			
EYFS Gender	**Mixed**			
Inspection dates	**05 Mar 2013 to 08 Mar 2013**			

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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 2009.

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

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.**

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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 a 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

Dr Lynn Bappa	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Roberta Georghiou	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mr Peter Kelly	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mrs Carole Long	Team Inspector (Former Director of Studies, IAPS school)
Mrs Nicola Matthews	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mrs Sally Gray	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

1.1 Founded in 1894 as a boarding school for girls, St Andrew's School is a charitable trust run by a board of governors. It is now a day school for girls between the ages of three and sixteen, and for boys from three to nine. In 2009, Jumping Jacks Nursery at St Andrew's was opened. It offers full day care from the age of six weeks and is open each weekday throughout the year from 7.30 am to 6.30 pm. The school is located in central Bedford and occupies three Victorian houses that have seen various additions to meet its needs.

1.2 The school's aim is to provide education for the whole child, combining traditional values with the best of current practice. The school strives to provide a nurturing environment in which each child's talents are found and encouraged. It seeks for each pupil's individuality to be highly valued, fostered and developed.

1.3 The school and Nursery have a total of 264 pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) there are 107 children, of whom 14 are in Reception and the remainder are in the Nursery and Baby Unit. In the junior school, for Years 1 to 6, there are 63 pupils, of whom 3 are boys, whilst the all-girls senior school has 94 pupils. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, from Bedford and the surrounding areas.

1.4 The ability profile of pupils on entry to the junior school is broadly in line with the national average. Nationally standardised data shows that, on entry to the senior school, the pupils' ability is broadly in line with the national average, although year groups are small and it is difficult to make meaningful statistical comparisons. In recent years, the school has admitted higher proportions of pupils who are of below average ability. The majority of pupils are of white British origin, with English as their first language. Of the 8 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), none need support, and 61 pupils have been identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Of these, one has a statement of special educational needs and thirty-seven receive learning support.

1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school for Years 1 to 11 and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used by the school with regard to the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Babies	Nursery (0 to 2 years)
Toddlers and Pre-School	Nursery (2 to 3 years)
Foundation 1	Nursery (3 to 4 years)
Foundation 2	Reception

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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 provide a nurturing environment in which each child's talents are found and encouraged. All pupils, including those with SEND or who are gifted and talented, make good progress overall. They show good understanding of the subjects they study and their speaking skills are particularly highly developed. The curriculum and the extra-curricular programme make a good contribution to the pupils' success. They have excellent attitudes to learning and approach their work and other activities with enthusiasm. Well-planned and effective teaching is a significant factor in the pupils' success. Pupils with SEND are provided for well and parents are particularly appreciative of this aspect of the school's work. The quality of marking is often good, although in some cases it does not show pupils what they have done well and how to improve their work. Since the previous inspection, the school has worked hard to improve opportunities for pupils to work independently. Although good progress has been made in some areas, there are inconsistencies in practice, with some lessons continuing to be overly directed by the teacher.

2.2 The personal development of the pupils is excellent. It is supported by excellent pastoral care and positive relationships amongst all members of the school community. Pupils are self-confident and develop high levels of self-esteem by the time they leave the school. Arrangements for the pupils' welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding, are excellent.

2.3 The good quality of governance and of leadership and management is a significant factor in the pupils' success. Governors have a good oversight of the school and are effective in carrying out their responsibilities, including those for safeguarding. At all levels of the school, leadership and management are good. 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 school promotes excellent links with parents. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were particularly satisfied with the quality of pastoral care, the pupils' behaviour and the information provided about the school. A small number criticised the range of extra-curricular activities and the leadership and management of the school. Inspectors examined the evidence in these areas closely and found that it did not support these concerns, with the exception that opportunities for extra-curricular competitive sport are somewhat limited. The school provides a wide range of other extra-curricular activities. The school has tackled the areas for improvement arising from the previous inspection.

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2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Improve the consistency of marking, with a focus on ensuring that comments on pupils' work help them know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
2. Share good practice in enabling pupils of all abilities to think and work independently across the curriculum.
3. Develop the provision of planned outdoor learning opportunities for children in Reception.

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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 Pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims to produce a nurturing environment in which each child's talents are found and encouraged. Pupils acquire good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in both their academic work and in the wider curriculum.

3.3 In the junior school, pupils develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy necessary for progress through the curriculum. In the senior school, pupils continue to develop their capacity to learn and to understand how the subjects they are studying are preparing them for the next stage of their lives. Learning, however, goes well beyond basic requirements; pupils become confident speakers, able to express their opinions fluently, using a wide and varied vocabulary by the time they leave. They have good listening skills, and acknowledge and respect one another's views in discussions. Skills in reading and writing develop successfully, although more variably than in speaking. Pupils' numeracy skills are good and they apply mathematics successfully in a range of contexts. They demonstrate good thinking skills overall, although the style of teaching in some lessons sometimes limits opportunities for pupils to do things for themselves and think independently. They develop good creative skills, with high standards seen, for example, in drama and art. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) competently, but not sufficiently widely, in their academic work. They enjoy practical activities and perform them with confidence. Pupils achieve well in external examinations in music, and speech and drama, with almost all gaining distinctions. They achieve well in sporting, creative and cultural activities, with particular strengths in drama. Pupils progress successfully to a range of sixth-form courses, with all gaining admission to their first choice of institution.

3.4 In the junior school, attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance in national tests but, from evidence of work scrutiny, lesson observations and interviews with pupils, attainment is judged to be good. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress relative to their starting points. The following analysis for the senior school uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011, which are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Pupils' GCSE performance has been good in relation to the national average for girls in maintained schools. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability. Although the GCSE results for 2012 were lower than in previous years, they nevertheless represent good progress for the pupils in that year group.

3.5 Pupils with SEND make at least good progress, for example in speaking and reading and in organisational skills, as a result of carefully planned support both within the class and particularly in small groups. Those who are gifted and talented make good progress generally although they are not always given sufficient opportunity to fully extend their knowledge and understanding. The small number of boys in the junior school achieve as well as the girls.

3.6 Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning and show great enthusiasm in their lessons. They are highly motivated and work well both independently and in groups, willingly helping their classmates if they need support. Behaviour is very good in

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lessons and pupils show respect towards one another and to adults within the school community. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the pupils said that they find the work interesting and this was generally borne out during the inspection. Pupils produce a good volume of work that is, on the whole, neatly presented, reflecting pride and care.

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

3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.

3.8 The curriculum successfully covers all the requisite areas of learning and is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. It supports effectively the school's aims to offer the best possible standard of education to allow each individual to develop fully in both academic and personal terms. The curriculum provides good opportunities for the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. Religious education (RE) is a core subject throughout the school and French and Spanish are introduced to older children in the EYFS. German is currently offered to pupils in Year 8 and above.

3.9 The curriculum is suitable for all pupils. It is adapted from Year 9 onwards for those pupils who participate in extended work-related learning or who have individual strengths in a particular subject area. Similarly, for those who need to consolidate their learning across the curriculum, there is an effective reduction in the spread of subjects studied. A range of creative subjects is available to the pupils, such as graphics and food technology, and the related extra-curricular activities ensure that the pupils leave with a breadth of experience.

3.10 There is a well-embedded personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, which takes the form of the Lifetracks programme in the senior school. Within this, careers advice is offered in Years 10 and 11. Mock interview evenings are held with professionals from the local community. In the junior school, a wide range of topics is covered, including team building, friendships and the environment.

3.11 As pupils get older, subjects are more frequently taught by specialists and this is the norm in the senior school. A wide range of subjects is available at GCSE. The options programme offers a free choice for pupils, who are encouraged to study a language and a humanities subject in order to ensure breadth.

3.12 The provision throughout the school for pupils with SEND is strong. The timetable is flexible, enabling tailored programmes of study that meet the needs of the individual.

3.13 The curriculum is supported by a good range of trips and visits and, from Year 2 onwards, by residential trips. The house system aims to bring the whole school together to join in extra-curricular opportunities as a community. The range of extra-curricular activities is good, although extra-curricular opportunities for competitive sport are somewhat limited. Clubs support learning in the classroom; for example, art and design and technology provide time after school to work on individual projects. Other activities, such as orchestra, drama and dance, provide good opportunities for creative development. This is particularly evident in drama, where pupils' confidence is built through both performance and backstage responsibilities; in the recent school production, pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 were stage crew and responsible for lighting and sound. Most pupils in Years 10 and 11 participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. The pupils are encouraged to attend at least one extra-curricular activity each week and this is monitored by the form tutor.

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3.14 Links with the community are well established. Pupils take part in local festivals for music and drama. A competition for pupils in Year 11 involves a local entrepreneur and creates a business opportunity to raise money for charity. Each year, a 16-plus 'moving-on' event is held, when local schools and colleges are invited into the school.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.

3.16 This supports the school's aim to offer the best possible standard of education to allow each individual pupil to develop fully in both academic and personal terms.

3.17 Lessons are well planned and effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress. Teachers know their pupils well and small class sizes allow them to give individual support. Excellent behaviour from the pupils and friendly relationships between them and their teachers produce an atmosphere within the classroom conducive to learning. Teachers are fully committed to the pupils' progress and pupils confirmed that it is easy to approach them for assistance.

3.18 The best lessons are well paced and have clearly stated learning objectives, with effective use of questioning. In the small number of excellent lessons, characterised by strong subject knowledge on the part of the teacher and the use of a variety of teaching methods, work is effectively matched to abilities and the most able pupils are challenged and encouraged to take risks in order to work independently. The matching of work to pupils' abilities is not always evident, and in Years 9 to 11 in particular there is sometimes too heavy a reliance on uniform worksheets and exercises, so that learning is limited for the ablest pupils. The school has made the recommendation from the previous inspection, to encourage pupils to be more actively involved in their learning, a feature of its strategic planning. There remains some unevenness in outcome, with good practice being seen in the junior school, for example, in individually researched projects and in some lessons in the senior school, but some activities remain over reliant on teachers providing information.

3.19 Since the previous inspection, a formal review system of teaching, including lesson observation and work scrutiny, has been put in place. This helps to maintain standards and ensures that the leadership of the school has a good understanding of its strengths and the areas for improvement of its teaching. The school has also put in place systems for tracking pupils' progress and teachers now have a very good understanding of the abilities of individual pupils. Older pupils in Years 10 and 11 can describe the progress they are making against nationally agreed criteria, such as GCSE, but pupils in Years 7 to 9 are less aware. Pupils in the junior school track their progress against given criteria and this informs the teachers' planning.

3.20 Teachers and learning support staff have a good understanding of the learning needs of pupils with SEND and, as a result, the pupils make good progress. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, both parents and pupils made highly positive comments about the teaching and support for pupils with SEND and those with statements of special educational needs, and inspection evidence confirms their views.

3.21 The school has a clear marking policy but its implementation is uneven. In the best practice, marking is constructive, ensuring that the pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Elsewhere, marking does not follow the

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policy and consists of brief summative statements that do not indicate to pupils what they have achieved and how they might do better.

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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 Pupils have a strong sense of spiritual awareness. Through assemblies, PSHE and RE, they gain an excellent appreciation of the world's major religions. They understand a need to look after their community and the world in which they live. Pupils throughout the school have high self-esteem and a good appreciation of non-material aspects of life.

4.3 Pupils are friendly and confident, and have a clear sense of right and wrong. Older pupils often take the lead, reporting any concerns to staff or solving them themselves. The mixed-age tutoring arrangements in Years 7 to 9 encourage confidence and support high standards of behaviour. Pupils work and play together harmoniously and have excellent manners.

4.4 Pupils take on responsibility and contribute to the school and wider community. Local and international charities are well supported by the pupils. Senior school pupils take part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and volunteer locally, helping those less fortunate than themselves through community service and fund raising. The Enterprise Project and the Eco-Team are excellent examples of how the pupils engage with the broader community.

4.5 Pupils have a good awareness of their own and other cultures. Artwork from various cultures and faiths is displayed prominently throughout the school. Pupils have recently taken part in the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and an event to commemorate the Olympic Games. Those in Years 10 and 11 take part in a weekly current affairs quiz that covers national political issues as well as those from the wider world.

4.6 The quality of the pupils' personal development when they leave the school is excellent.

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

4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.

4.8 The school fulfils its aims to ensure that all pupils can develop in a safe, peaceful and caring environment in which each individual is valued and respected. Staff are committed to creating an atmosphere where all pupils can thrive. Pupils are well known by the staff and good systems of communication mean that care is well co-ordinated.

4.9 Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are excellent. There is a strong feeling of mutual respect and pupils display great loyalty to their school. The teachers act as excellent role models for the pupils and older girls are encouraged to become role models for younger pupils, helping them with their work or setting an example about good behaviour. Within the PSHE programme, the pupils work together to produce class rules that focus on respect for others and good relationships. Staff listen to pupils' views in class and through the school council. The school has a code of conduct that applies to every member of the school community and this encourages politeness, courtesy and respect.

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4.10 The pupils develop a thorough understanding of the importance of choosing a healthy diet and taking regular physical exercise to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of home cooked nutritious food, with many of the ingredients locally sourced. Meal times are pleasant, positive social occasions where different ages mix with each other.

4.11 The school promotes high standards of behaviour and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their conduct. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small number of pupils felt that teachers are not always fair in the way that they give rewards, that the school does not always listen to them and that bullying is not always dealt with well. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns. The school has an effective system of rewards and there are good procedures for dealing constructively with any unacceptable behaviour or bullying. In interviews conducted during the inspection, pupils were unequivocal that bullying is not an issue and that the school deals well with any cases that arise. They also felt that rewards and sanctions are fair and that the school listens well to their opinions.

4.12 The school has a comprehensive three-year plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND and supports them with great skill and care. The plan meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

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

4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.

4.14 The procedures for safeguarding pupils are clear and are implemented effectively. All staff are suitably trained in child protection. The required checks on staff are carried out and recorded correctly on the single central register of appointments. The school has good facilities for pupils who are ill and a large proportion of staff are trained in first aid. Accidents are suitably recorded and pupils who are unwell or injured are cared for by a qualified nurse.

4.15 Arrangements to ensure health and safety are secure. All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire practices are held regularly and fire protection measures are in order, with regular monitoring of equipment throughout the school. All appliances are tested regularly. Health and safety policies and procedures are thorough. Risk assessments are comprehensive.

4.16 The admission and attendance registers have been accurately maintained and stored in accordance with regulations.

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5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

5.1 The quality of governance is good.

5.2 The governing body is committed to the school and its aims, and members maintain a keen interest in it. The quality of governance has improved since the previous inspection and governance now plays a more active role in the school's development. Governors, for example, visit subject departments regularly and there are designated governors for both safeguarding and the EYFS. Governors successfully discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning, and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. They bring to the school a wide range of expertise and experience. Their sub-committees oversee key areas of the school and review policies and their implementation. Governors have a clear financial understanding and are aware of their legal obligations. They have been successful in ensuring that systems for welfare, health and safety work well. They understand their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils and have reviewed the policies and procedures as required. Recruitment systems are thorough. Premises have been imaginatively developed and well maintained. Governors take an active interest in all areas of the school's work through regular attendance at school events, and through links between designated governors and individual areas of the school's work.

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

5.3 The quality of leadership and management is good overall.

5.4 Good, caring leadership at all levels has ensured that the school successfully meets its aims. The vision to create a family environment in which pupils are valued as individuals is strongly supported by all members of the school community. Staff work closely together for the good of the pupils and show high levels of commitment to the school.

5.5 Excellent pastoral care has continued to ensure that pupils flourish, and health and safety in all areas of the school are maintained at a high standard. Expectations of the pupils are high. The excellent personal development of the pupils and the good quality of education provided are attributable to the effectiveness of senior leadership.

5.6 The school has identified clear priorities and strategies for the future. In addition, key policies are in place but monitoring of their implementation is not always sufficiently rigorous, resulting in, for example, inconsistencies in the quality of marking.

5.7 Middle managers are clear about the educational direction of the school, managing their own areas of responsibility effectively. Both teaching and support staff are deployed effectively and contribute successfully to the pupils' learning and welfare.

5.8 Senior leadership has been able to recruit high quality staff successfully and has ensured that they are suitably trained to meet the needs of the pupils, in safeguarding procedures and in welfare, health and safety. Checks are carried out

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for all staff appointments and these are appropriately recorded in the central register. The school has responded well to the recommendations of the previous inspection.

5.9 Links with parents are excellent. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very appreciative of the pastoral care, the high standards of behaviour and the availability of information about the school. A small minority of parents raised concerns about the provision for extra-curricular activities and the leadership and management of the school. Inspectors found that the school provides a reasonable range of these activities, although they are somewhat limited in competitive sport, and there was no evidence to support the concerns regarding leadership and management.

5.10 Throughout the school, relationships with parents are characterised by open and easy communication based on an in-depth knowledge of and genuine care for the pupils and their families. Staff are readily available to speak to parents at the start and end of the day or at other times by appointment. Procedures for handling parents' complaints meet requirements and concerns are handled appropriately. The views of parents have been sought in whole-school surveys and feedback is invited on a range of issues that are discussed in parent focus groups.

5.11 The Friends of St Andrew's School provide a link between staff and parents and plan for targeted fund raising. They also organise a range of social events for families, such as the Summer Ball and the family Fun Day, fostering the strong sense of community in the school.

5.12 Information is readily available to parents of current and prospective pupils through the website, prospectus, parent handbooks, newsletters and bulletins, both on paper and electronically, curriculum information evenings and a detailed calendar. Parents are kept very well informed of their children's progress through regular consultation evenings and twice yearly reports that give detailed summaries of their children's strengths, with grades for effort and achievement and targets for improvement.

5.13 There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in the school. Parents are welcomed at sporting, music and drama events and to junior school assemblies. Afternoon teas and family breakfasts are held at intervals through the year in the junior school and parents are invited to a barbecue after Sports Day. Parents come into the school to assist with costumes for productions and to use their particular skills in the classroom, such as preparing floral arrangements for Mother's Day.

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

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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 In meeting the needs of the range of children who attend, the setting is outstanding, successfully achieving its aim to educate children within a safe and peaceful environment that is both dynamic and caring. Enthusiastic and hard-working staff provide planned, purposeful activities, both indoors and out, so that children are able to develop and learn effectively, although the children in Reception are given fewer opportunities to take their learning outside. A variety of interesting activities promotes the children's enthusiasm to investigate.

6.2 Children of all ages concentrate well, express themselves clearly and enjoy their learning. Staff regularly assess children's progress to plan the next steps for each child's learning, including those with SEND or EAL.

6.3 Parents appreciate the continuous support provided to help their children settle. Parents are kept comprehensively informed about their children's progress through verbal and written reports. From discussions with them during the inspection, parents are highly positive about the care and education their children receive.

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

6.4 The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being is outstanding. A high priority is given to the safety of the children so that health and safety risks are minimised through risk assessments and good practice. In the Nursery, relationships between the children and the staff are excellent, ensuring secure and sensitive care. For those under the age of two, home routines are followed as closely as possible, so that children settle quickly and happily. Staff know the children very well and the older children form strong relationships and feel safe, happy and confident to share their concerns. Clear guidance is given on standards of behaviour, so that children demonstrate exemplary levels of conduct and play co-operatively together. Staff foster independence, both in the children's personal hygiene and in their learning. Good eating habits are encouraged through healthy meals and snacks, and children have many opportunities for physical exercise through their outdoor play, while physical education and swimming lessons are provided for the older children. All these factors ensure that children are well prepared for transition into the next stage of learning. To enhance this, there are good opportunities for the oldest Nursery children to interact with Reception children and teachers, with sessions where they move between the inside and outside learning areas.

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

6.5 Leadership and management are outstanding. Governors take a keen interest in the EYFS and receive regular updates through the school's EYFS forum. Robust procedures and effective policies, with thorough risk assessments, ensure that safeguarding and welfare requirements are met, so that the setting is a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment. High standards of planning and effective assessment evaluate the progress of each child to identify the next steps in learning, although this is not used as consistently to develop the skills of high achievers. There are good systems for self-evaluation that inform the setting's priorities and set targets for continuous improvement. The Nursery, now in its fifth year, has become rapidly established because of its ambitious vision and the high standards it sets for itself.

6.6 Staff hold appropriate qualifications and all necessary checks have been made before they are appointed. Those who work in the Nursery are extremely well supervised, with individual meetings that include target setting and are carefully recorded. All staff are encouraged to develop their skills through appraisal and rigorous training in child development and in child protection, first aid and health and safety.

6.7 The setting is highly effective in working in partnership with parents to support and celebrate the learning and progress of each child. Communication is outstanding, with information made available through a wide range of documentation.

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

6.8 Overall, the quality and standards are outstanding. The children, including those requiring support, make excellent progress. The youngest children, from the babies onwards, are introduced to books and counting using songs and rhymes. Older children in the Nursery learn initial sounds as they acquire early reading and writing skills. In numeracy, they recognise and use shapes and patterns, and can count to ten. At the end of Reception, most can order numbers beyond 20 and write simple sentences. Most children have achieved the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception, with many working beyond this. The children employ ICT confidently from an early age, using computer mouse skills to access programs.

6.9 The children's personal development is outstanding. They enjoy coming to school and they happily share resources, take turns and make independent choices about their play, learning and behaviour from a young age.

6.10 Links across the EYFS have strengthened since the previous inspection, in line with the recommendation, so that outstanding practice is shared.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

6.11 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.

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