



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST EDWARD'S JUNIOR SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Edward's Junior School

Full Name of School	St Edward's Junior School
DfE Number	916/6077
EYFS Number	EY309807
Registered Charity Number	293360
Address	St Edward's Junior School London Road Charlton Kings Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL52 6NR
Telephone Number	01242 538900
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Email Address	mainoffice@stedwardsjunior.co.uk
Head	Mr Stephen McKernan
Chair of Governors	Mr Peter Goatley
Age Range	2 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	370
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (207 boys; 163 girls;)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 31 5-11: 261 3-5 (EYFS): 78 11-18: 0
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 370
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Lynn Young
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	29 Jan 2013 to 01 Feb 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 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.

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

Inspectors

Mrs Susan Bailes

Mr John Connor

Miss Joanna Gay

Mrs Jennifer Moran

Mr Richard Balding

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)

Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head of Year 6, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Edward's Junior School is a co-educational day school for pupils between the ages of two and eleven. It is the junior school of the St Edward's School Trust, which is a Catholic foundation welcoming all faiths. The junior and senior schools are governed jointly by the board of trustees. Each school exists as a separate entity with its own headmaster, but having joint financial organisation. The junior school was established in 1996, in extensive grounds of forty five acres on the edge of Cheltenham, where it still remains. The three sections of the junior school are housed in separate buildings. The school aims to give its pupils an environment in which each individual can enjoy the opportunity to develop talents and interests to the full, within a caring Christian community, so that each one is well prepared to embark upon a satisfying and purposeful adult life. The school also seeks to enable all pupils to fulfil their potential academically, personally and spiritually. Since the last inspection a new headmaster has been appointed and the age of admission has changed very recently to admit children from the age of two to eleven years old, instead of entry from one year of age.
- 1.2 The ability profile of the junior school is above the national average, with most pupils having an ability that is at least above average, and around a quarter having well above the national average ability. At the age of eleven, about half of the pupils transfer to St Edward's Senior School and the remainder successfully transfer to local grammar, state secondary schools and other independent schools. Pupils attend the school from a wide area and from families with a variety of backgrounds. A small proportion of pupils are children of parents from the United States of America and other countries, who live and work in Cheltenham.
- 1.3 Currently there are 370 pupils on roll, 207 boys and 163 girls. Of these 109, (54 boys and 55 girls) are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), with 34 pupils full time and 72 part time. The school has identified 18 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and all of these receive additional support. Seven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and one of these receives additional help.
- 1.4 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
Kindergarten	EYFS
Reception	EYFS

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The overall achievement of the pupils is good. Pupils of all ages and abilities maintain a good rate of progress and demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning. They progress from St Edward's Junior School successfully to the senior school or to a number of competitive grammar schools, and some scholarships are achieved regularly. Pupils are interested in their studies and appreciate the many opportunities offered to them, both within and outside the curriculum, and greatly appreciate the enhancement to the curriculum afforded by trips and visits. Since the previous inspection the school has improved the provision of learning support so that it is offered throughout the school. Extra-curricular activities are excellent and all pupils enjoy them and participate fully. Good, and sometimes excellent teaching, contributes to the individual success of the pupils. In a small number of lessons observed, opportunities for individualised learning and independent research were limited. Marking is regular, and includes praise and encouragement. Since the previous inspection the senior management team monitoring of marking has increased to the full range of subjects. Whilst there were examples of target setting and helpful comments for pupils on how to improve these were inconsistent across the year groups. The quality of the provision in the EYFS is outstanding overall.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal qualities are excellent. Pupils often show maturity beyond their years in the way they care for each other and show mutual respect, valuing the opinions of others. Relationships within the school are extremely positive. All adults are excellent role models and provide a high quality of pastoral care for the pupils. Pupils are given opportunities to take on responsibilities within the school and use their initiative. Safeguarding the welfare of pupils is of paramount concern to all staff. Arrangements for health and safety are excellent.
- 2.3 The trustees are fully committed to the school and play an important part in its development. They discharge their duties diligently. Good leadership and management enable day-to-day life to proceed calmly and efficiently, ensuring the ethos of the school is upheld throughout. Since the previous inspection, the senior management team has been extended to include two SENCOs to support the learning needs of all pupils and the Early Years is managed jointly by the heads of infants and the Kindergarten manager, which has enhanced the provision. A number of improvements including a pastoral suite and a support card system, as well as enhanced play equipment, have successfully developed pupils' social skills further throughout the school. Although the school has appropriate systems in place to oversee the academic curriculum and teaching, the opportunities for lesson observations and evaluation of best practice are not fully developed to share best practice throughout the school. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is not yet fully embedded in all areas of the curriculum.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2013.
- 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. Put in place more directed support from the senior management team to achieve more rigorous implementation of the academic curriculum.
 2. Identify best practice in teaching and share it throughout the school.
 3. Create more opportunities for pupils' independent learning.

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' overall achievement is good.
- 3.2 The level of achievement contributes to fulfilling the school's aim to provide an environment in which each individual pupil can enjoy the opportunity to develop talents and interests to the full, so that he/she is well prepared to embark upon a satisfying and purposeful adult life.
- 3.3 Pupils of all abilities are articulate, have excellent listening skills and write fluently. They express their opinions confidently and thoughtfully as was seen in pupil discussions and in written work in a history lesson about Queen Victoria. Pupils recognise the importance of informed, reasoned decisions and when given the opportunity, they are creative and are able to evaluate their work, as demonstrated in a technology lesson when they created a structure that would stand on its own and hold a weight. High quality artwork was seen in displays and examples of pupils' work throughout the school. Mathematical skills are applied well with older pupils' science work demonstrating pupils' competent use of bar charts, diagrams and methods of recording experiments, as well as undertaking science investigations effectively. The practical application of geographical skills was demonstrated in subject interviews when older pupils showed and explained how, following a field study of Cheltenham promenade, they could analyse data. Younger pupils showed their enthusiasm for learning and successfully applied their ICT skills, taking turns to record sound clips into a story. Currently there is limited opportunity for pupils to learn independently and develop analytical thinking. Pupils achieve well in extra-curricular activities with successes in music and drama and to a very high standard in team sports, for example cross country, with many obtaining awards.
- 3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment as judged indicates that pupils make good progress. The pupils follow successfully a wide-ranging curriculum. Inspection evidence, including lesson observation, scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils and staff, confirms this judgement and includes consideration of the levels at which pupils are working in relation to national targets. The achievement of pupils with SEND or EAL is good relative to their starting points and shows the school supports their individual needs well. Pupils are successful in obtaining places at local competitive grammar schools and are regularly awarded scholarships.
- 3.5 The high quality of the school's ethos underpins pupils' daily lives so that they apply themselves to their learning and become confident, responsible, well-developed individuals. They express their opinions thoughtfully and confidently and show excellent application when faced with challenges. Pupils think logically and independently when opportunities for independent learning are provided. They carry out research and investigations, making excellent use of ICT and library books and use their initiative well both individually and collaboratively. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and apply themselves well in activities.

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

- 3.6 The quality of the curricular provision and extra-curricular provision is good overall.
- 3.7 The curriculum contributes to the good quality of the teaching and makes an appropriate contribution to the pupils' achievements. It serves to fulfil the school's aim of providing a broad and balanced education for all pupils. The breadth of the curriculum throughout the school contributes towards the pupils' development of knowledge, skills and understanding, and thereby enables them to make progress.
- 3.8 The requisite areas of learning are covered effectively and the curriculum is broadened by the inclusion of French, Spanish, drama, technology, PSHE and, in Year 6, Latin for those in the most able set in English. All classes have timetabled information communication technology (ICT) each week. The curriculum is enriched by visitors and visits, for example by a Roman soldier in Year 3 and, a Year 6 geography fieldwork visit to Cheltenham, as well as theatre visits and outings to places of historical interest.
- 3.9 Since the previous inspection the school has extended the good quality learning support for pupils with SEND or EAL more widely throughout the school. Clear targets are set in individual education plans (IEPs) which enable pupils' needs to be met effectively in individual and group lessons and with appropriate support in mainstream lessons, including the effective use of trained teaching assistants. A number of junior classes are divided into sets for the core subjects of maths, English and science, and are taught and supported appropriately. The majority of schemes of work are well-organised and specify the skills which need to be developed. Relevant senior staff have frequent meetings to ensure that transitions between year groups and phases of education are smooth.
- 3.10 Pupils in all sections of the school benefit from the excellent extra-curricular provision. A wide range of clubs such as chess, cookery, drama and martial arts allows pupils to develop their talents and broaden their educational experience. Pre-inspection questionnaires showed that parents and pupils value the extensive programme on offer. The impressive range of sporting activities fully utilises the outstanding sporting facilities. Pupils benefit from being given opportunities to represent the school in a wide range of competitive games arranged against local schools, including rugby, football, netball, cross country, hockey, cricket and rounders. Pupils enjoy performing in musical activities such as choirs, orchestra, or the infant and junior productions. The technology challenge club for older pupils extends the more able, whilst from Year 4 upwards, pupils learn about the world on outward bound residential holidays, including a visit to France.
- 3.11 Links with the local and wider community make a valuable contribution to the high quality of pupils' personal development. Pupils attend local church services. Of particular benefit, is the link with a local centre for children with disabilities, which enables pupils to learn how pupils of their age cope with difficulties. Further afield the school has developed links with a school in Sierra Leone and raised funds to refurbish a classroom there.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.12 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.13 Teaching is effective in promoting pupils' progress and supports the aim of the school for all pupils to develop their maximum potential academically.
- 3.14 Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and most deliver well planned lessons with a good pace. The enthusiastic approach and constant encouragement of much of the teaching, motivates pupils to 'have a go' and persevere. Good use is made of a variety of resources. For example, effective use was made of the interactive whiteboard, both as a learning aid and to display visual stimuli, while vocabulary prompt cards helped pupils make effective language choices when writing their own imaginative stories. Although some use is made of ICT equipment and the library, the opportunities for independent learning and research are limited.
- 3.15 Teachers know their pupils well and make provision for their different needs and abilities. The wide use of teaching assistants in lessons effectively promotes pupils' learning, particularly in the support given to pupils with particular learning needs. Setting in English, maths and science in Years 5 and 6 provides good opportunities to ensure that the teaching is targeted to the needs of the pupils. In the most successful lessons, teaching is planned thoroughly and thoughtfully to ensure the learning activities appropriately challenge the most able and support those with particular learning needs as well as opportunities for assessment. Whether mastering a netball skill in a games lesson, making a cubist model in an art lesson, discussing inspirational leadership in an RE lesson or identifying and sorting pyramids and prisms in a low ability maths group, the teaching enabled the pupils to make extremely good progress, as they were actively engaged in their learning throughout the lesson. In the few lessons where teaching was less effective the lessons were over-directed by the teachers and this limited pupil participation and progress.
- 3.16 Marking is regular and often includes encouraging comments and ideas for improvement. In discussions during the visit, pupils commented that the teachers' marking helped them to know how well they are doing and some were able to give examples of specific targets they were working on. In the lessons observed and in the scrutiny of work, some good examples were found of effective target-setting and self-assessment by the pupils. However, this is not consistent practice between or across year groups at present. The school has attempted to address the recommendation in the previous inspection to spread the high quality of marking into all areas of teaching by introducing regular book monitoring in all subjects. This monitoring is not yet sufficient to enable sharing of best practice and enable pupils to understand the skills they need to make further progress.
- 3.17 Thorough systems of assessment are in place and the assessment data is gathered and recorded appropriately. Standardised test results, optional national tests results and effort grades are reported to parents and are used to allot pupils to sets. The school has identified the need to make better use of the available assessment data to help teachers plan future work effectively and support the learning of individual pupils.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' personal development reflects the school's aims to provide an environment in which each individual pupil can enjoy the opportunity to develop talents and interest to the full, so that he/she is well prepared to embark upon a satisfying, purposeful adult life. Pupils show maturity and are self-confident. They demonstrate co-operation and willingness to support each other and thrive in the close-knit community. They respect one another and readily take responsibility for their actions.
- 4.3 The quality of pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Pupils' spiritual awareness is fostered through well planned assemblies, RE and PSHE lessons as well as the use of form time for reflection. During the visit the pupils clearly understood the inspirational Ethos Assemblies and were encouraged to be trusting, open and forward-thinking. They could identify these qualities displayed by a sports personality. In form time they demonstrated how they had applied these skills and values using individual examples. Pupils learn to think deeply about their own beliefs and values, whilst developing an understanding and respect for a variety of world faiths. In their discussions in lessons and in interviews, pupils of all ages show that they have a real appreciation for the non-material aspects of life.
- 4.4 The quality of pupils' moral development is excellent. From an early age, they develop a keen sense of right and wrong, are encouraged to reflect upon their actions and think carefully about how they relate to one another. Pupils are self-disciplined, respect one another and value friendship, courtesy and good behaviour. They listen attentively to others' opinions. Pupils appreciate and understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions; they are keen to achieve the best for themselves, and gain house points or, in infants, gold leaves for the 'Tree of Praise'.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. They are extremely polite, helpful and welcoming. From an early age, they demonstrate excellent social awareness and a mature approach to relationships with others. They co-operate readily in group activities and listen attentively to the ideas of others. Throughout the school pupils readily accept responsibilities and Year 6 are reliable ambassadors and carry out their duties as captains sensibly. Their excellent social skills were demonstrated in a pupil council meeting, organised and chaired by pupils from Years 3 to 6 themselves. They enjoy sharing each other's successes in assemblies, when individuals' academic, social, sporting, musical achievements are acknowledged.
- 4.6 The quality of pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. They have a very good understanding of the British culture and participated in a range of Jubilee celebrations last year. They show a real appreciation of the Christian tradition of their school and also demonstrate an easy and welcoming approach to pupils of different nationalities and religions. Pupils speak enthusiastically about visits to places of worship and culture and they look forward to the activity week in Torquay and the Year 6 residential trip to Burgundy. By the time that they leave the school, pupils have developed the maturity and self-confidence required for a successful transition to senior school.

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

- 4.7 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 The care and support of pupils is a particular strength of the school and fulfils the school's aims in providing a caring Christian community. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and the pastoral care system, which highlights the role of the form teacher, is well organised with clearly defined lines of communication to senior management. Records are rigorously kept, patterns of behaviour identified and incidents are resolved in line with the behavioural policy. Since the previous inspection the creation of an attractive pastoral suite allows pupils to share any pastoral issues with their teachers away from the hurly-burly of school life. Pupil questionnaires and interviews during the visit show most pupils feel they are well supported by their teachers and know whom to go to if they need help.
- 4.9 Throughout the school, pupils are well informed about what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. The school provides food of a high standard and there is plenty of choice. The curriculum ensures that all pupils participate in a wide range of physical exercise alongside ample provision of play equipment and playgrounds.
- 4.10 Excellent behaviour is effectively promoted through form time, assemblies and PSHE lessons and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions. Some pupil questionnaires considered that sanctions were not always dealt fairly but this was judged not to be the case. The comprehensive anti-bullying policy outlines procedures and the school deals constructively with unacceptable behaviour. Should bullying occur, pupils were confident that it would be dealt with swiftly and efficiently.
- 4.11 Pupils with SEND believe their needs are well understood and teachers encourage them to reach their full potential. The school has the requisite plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.12 Pupils are given the opportunity to voice their opinions and staff members are receptive to their ideas and suggestions.

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

- 4.13 The school's arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.14 Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed so that all necessary aspects of welfare, health and safety are in good order. Thorough attention is paid to child protection and appropriate arrangements to secure the health and safety of pupils. The designated person for child protection and the joint heads of the EYFS have had recent training in the safeguarding of pupils. The school has strong links with the local authority and recently conducted a rigorous audit of its provision. The protection of children is a high priority.
- 4.15 Fire drills take place regularly and suitable audits and records had been undertaken. Each drill is evaluated and steps taken to ensure pupils' safety in evacuation of the school in case of fire or other hazards. Risk assessments are comprehensive and include tours, visits and trips as well as for activities and locations in the school. The bursar and the school's health and safety committee monitor the site and systematically check water supplies, including labelling potable water, fire safety, electrical safety and the portable equipment used by pupils. Admission and attendance records are properly stored and maintained.

- 4.16 The facilities for pupils who are sick or injured are appropriate. Records are kept of accidents and the dispensing of medicines. The first-aid policy is comprehensive and the school has an appropriate number of staff with first-aid qualifications.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The board of trustees provide excellent oversight of all sections of the school including the EYFS. A variety of skills and experience across the membership of the trust brings a wide perspective to meetings and decision-making. They discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources diligently, fully supporting the aims of the school. Since the previous inspection, investment in the EYFS playground facilities and dedicated art area has effectively contributed to the pupils' learning and personal development.
- 5.3 Trustees provide strategic guidance and undertake training to keep abreast of regulations. They have an excellent insight into all aspects of the school and are effective in exercising their monitoring role, by providing support and challenge whilst encouraging a dialogue with the heads of both schools. A whole school development plan encompassing both schools is complemented by a separate operational plan which identifies specific needs of the junior school. A comprehensive number of committees chaired by trustees, and meeting with key staff on a termly basis, ensure that requirements are implemented and policy documents are commented upon, with suggested improvements for the whole board to consider and ratify.
- 5.4 The trustees rigorously discharge their responsibility for all statutory requirements, including their annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements throughout the school. They ensure safe recruitment and that the admission registers are maintained. The clerk to the trustees and audit committee ensures careful monitoring and checks that trustees are well informed of regulatory changes.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.6 The leadership and management is committed to fulfilling the aims of the school and is effective. The excellent personal qualities of the pupils are a direct result of the ethos that has been created, and the example set by the school leaders.
- 5.7 A sharp focus exists for future and continuous improvement and senior leaders provide clear educational and pastoral direction. The school undertakes self-evaluation and recent improvements in pupils' writing, the introduction of support cards, as well as enhanced learning support, have been a consequence of the management focus. Subject leaders play a significant role in developing teaching and learning but despite scrutiny of pupils' work to monitor marking, the use of target setting is inconsistent and the monitoring of lessons is not yet sufficiently rigorous and regular to enable sharing of best practice.
- 5.8 The leadership and management have made substantial progress since the last inspection and have had a strong impact on pupils' learning and well-being. Since the previous inspection, the senior management structure has been extended to

provide clear lines of responsibility for the delivery of learning support, as well as shared responsibility for the EYFS which promotes continuity.

- 5.9 The leadership and management hold regular meetings, some of which also include staff with responsibilities in the senior school, and effective communication ensures that pupils' personal needs are fully met. The safeguarding policy and its rigorous implementation by the senior management team ensure the safety of all pupils. The staff are trained in child protection matters and the school adheres to effective safeguarding practices. The senior management have developed excellent links with the local social services and have had the school's provision monitored and evaluated in addition to the school's own audit undertaken with trustees.
- 5.10 Management successfully recruit and retain suitable staff. They ensure staff are suitably equipped and trained for their roles and staff value the support given to them for professional development which supports the pupils' learning. Induction procedures for new staff provide an introduction to safeguarding, training and an understanding of the fundamental ethos of the school.
- 5.11 The school has responded positively to the recommendation concerning the provision of learning support throughout the school. Careful monitoring ensures all pupils make progress and individual action plans are effectively implemented. The senior management team ensures assessments are undertaken systematically and this information is one of the ways used to identify setting for core subjects and inform planning. Management has identified the need to enhance assessments further with a digital tracker system so that individual learning needs can be shared and acted upon.
- 5.12 The school has responded positively to the additional recommendation in the previous inspection report to improve marking. Subject co-ordinators and senior management now monitor marking in both core and non-core subjects, however the use of target setting is not yet fully consistent.
- 5.13 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. They are stronger than at the previous inspection and the very strong links that exist in the EYFS enable good stable relationships to develop between the school and parents that are maintained as the child progresses through the school. Parents' questionnaires showed that parents are highly supportive and particularly happy with the way that their children are well cared for, that they feel safe and happy in school and that there is a broad range of subjects and extra-curricular areas of experience offered to all pupils.
- 5.14 Communication with parents is very strong and they are welcomed to a wide variety of school events. In EYFS and Infants they have daily contact with the staff at drop-off and collection times and there is the opportunity for two-way written communication through the reading diary. The parental handbooks produced for each stage of the child's development provide details of what is required and expected of parents and the role they play in the development of the child. Parents enjoy receiving the weekly newsletter that describes the many activities that take place at the school. The instant electronic contact that advises parents of immediate situations is particularly valued and parents appreciate being made welcome to watch matches, plays and concerts including a recent food sampling in the dining hall, which was highly successful.
- 5.15 The very active, successful parent teachers association supports the school and organises a variety of fund-raising and social events which are well attended. Links with the local community are a strong feature.

- 5.16 A detailed website, school prospectus and parents' handbook provide all current and prospective parents with comprehensive information about the school including policies and procedures as well as school events and activities. Additional information is provided in regular newsletters. The school has an appropriate complaints policy which is made available to parents, and the school follows its published procedures.
- 5.17 Detailed termly reports provide parents with a clear picture of their child's progress, as do the regular consultations between parents and staff at formal parents' evenings. A particular strength is the open door policy that allows consultation at any time as described in the parents' handbook.

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 In meeting the needs of the range of children who attend, the provision is outstanding. Staff know the needs of each child extremely well and educational programmes are planned to provide many opportunities for them to develop, becoming increasingly more articulate and independent. This can be seen in the provision for children under three in the purpose-built accommodation where the learning resources become more complex as they progress through the rooms. They also begin their creative experience in a striking Italian inspired studio where displays of their work provide evidence of their development. The safe, superbly equipped outdoor area provides many opportunities for imaginative role play, as well as supporting all areas of learning and physical development. For those aged over three, making igloos from sugar cubes, was enjoyed as a child-initiated activity. The older children also benefit from welcoming rooms that are extremely well resourced and the imaginative outdoor area enhances the children's experiences in all areas of learning. Throughout the EYFS, a balance exists between child-initiated and adult-led activities and all children respond to the high expectations of the staff as children enthusiastically widen their experience and vocabulary. Careful observations enable individual detailed profiles to be produced which inform staff and parents about each child's progress and help plan next steps, also identifying those with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that extra help can be arranged.

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

6.2 Provision for the children's well-being is outstanding. Beginning with those children under three, each child has a 'key person' who establishes strong relationships with both child and parents to promote the high standards of courtesy and behaviour expected. This results in children developing their independence and they learn to explore their surroundings, use their imagination and interact with each other and adults. Children are taught about healthy eating and keeping themselves safe, adding to the considerable personal skills that they are developing to help them with transition to the next stage and this is also helped by the children having the opportunity to mix with older children at playtimes. Risk assessments and fire practices are carried out regularly.

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

6.3 Leadership and management are outstanding. The plentiful resources are evidence of the trustees' support for the setting, resulting in all children being cared for in a welcoming and safe environment. All staff have satisfactory checks with the Criminal Records Bureau and receive full training in child protection.

6.4 Staff meet regularly, using information gained by the excellent tracking of each child's achievements, to evaluate the progress of individual children and to plan the next steps in learning. Rigorous self-evaluation of the setting enables the clear vision to be shared by all staff who take every opportunity to attend training as part of their professional development. The very close links with the local authority and

external agencies ensure that appropriate interventions are secured for children to receive the support they need.

- 6.5 The pre-inspection questionnaire shows parents to be highly supportive of the setting and appreciate the opportunities to talk to staff at drop-off and collection times and the many opportunities to come in to the school on various occasions.

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

- 6.6 The quality and standards are outstanding. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are happy in the setting and enjoy their learning, making good progress from a wide range of starting points. Children under three are beginning to become independent as they are able to do more for themselves, including pouring their own drinks at snack time. They behave well, listen to and follow instructions and increase their social skills as they play together. By the time they are four, children can recognise and order numbers up to twenty and their increasing manual and creative skills can be seen in displays all around the setting. They know most of the sounds associated with letters, and are beginning emergent writing. At the end of their time in the EYFS, extremely high profile scores show that the expectations of the Early Learning Goals have been well exceeded. Children will deal confidently with numbers up to twenty, adding or subtracting single digit numbers, they also understand and can describe the properties of three-dimensional shapes. Most children are able to read at a level above their chronological age and write stories independently, using full stops and capital letters. Their considerable creative skills were demonstrated by the imaginative pictures that they produced on the playground, using materials gathered during a woodland walk. At all stages, those with special needs are identified and extra support is given.
- 6.7 The children's personal and emotional development is excellent and all children make friends readily, relating extremely well to their peers and to adults, as they willingly share, take turns and show genuine care and respect for each other.
- 6.8 All children are very happy within the setting knowing that their welfare is safeguarded effectively and trust in the support of the trained and caring staff. The considerable recent developments together with continuous discussions of future plans, show evidence of a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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